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Supporting people who have a learning disability and live  
in West Northumberland to access leisure and learning  
Registered Charity No. 1093566

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## **Volunteering Policy**

### **Introduction**

Gateway into the Community is a registered charity which supports people in West Northumberland who have a learning disability to access leisure and learning opportunities within their own communities.

Volunteers are essential to the project. They befriend Gateway into the Community members, introduce them to new experiences and people, encourage them to participate actively and enable them to make choices. Volunteers play a central role in the social and self-development of members.

### **Equal Opportunities**

Volunteering is a right, open to everyone. Volunteers are recruited in accordance with Gateway into the Community's Equality and Diversity Policy, subject to having the necessary skills and meeting the necessary requirements to pass clearance for working with children and vulnerable adults who use the service.

### **Recruitment**

Volunteers are recruited subject to passing necessary requirements as stated in the role description.

Each candidate is expected to spend some time with potential members before interview. This helps to give the candidates an insight into their future roles and the skills they will need to participate successfully in the work of the Charity. Every candidate must fill in an application form and supply two references which are used to help assess the candidate's suitability for the role. These references are held in the strictest confidence.

Volunteers also undergo a police clearance procedure (DBS enhanced check) as they may have unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults as part of their role. Successful applicants are given a volunteer role description which clearly states expectations and duties. They are also expected to sign a Volunteer Agreement (copy attached).

## **Management and Support**

This is provided through the Chief Executive with the support of the Gateway into the Community Management Committee and includes:

- A period of induction
- Clear guidelines on rights and responsibilities
- Regular supervision
- Training
- Opportunity for individual support when needed

## **Insurance and Health & Safety**

Gateway into the Community's Charities Insurance Policy includes Employer's Liability, Public Liability and personal accident insurance. Volunteers are specifically covered in exactly the same way as paid employees. During the induction period volunteers are made familiar with Health & Safety procedures as well as being given instruction on procedures in case of accident or illness.

## **Confidentiality**

Volunteers are expected to respect the right of individuals to confidentiality about their personal information (see the Confidentiality Policy) and will be expected to sign a Confidentiality Agreement during their induction period.

## **Volunteer Expenses**

Volunteers are not expected to be out of pocket by undertaking voluntary work and are able to claim reimbursement of reasonable expenses by filling in claim forms and producing receipts where reasonable.

Volunteers claiming benefits should reference <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/volunteering-and-claiming-benefits> which explains the rights of people in receipt of benefit to volunteer.

## **Volunteer Drivers**

Volunteers using their own vehicles while working for Gateway into the Community are expected to produce their driving licence, insurance and MOT at interview and on a yearly basis for inspection to ensure that they have appropriate cover.

Mileage is paid for agreed journeys.

Volunteers driving minibuses must be fully Minibus Driver Awareness trained.

Volunteers will be made aware of the policy on Responsibilities of Drivers and Escorts on Gateway into the Community trips and must sign to confirm that they have read it and will comply.

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