



Warren Farm Community Project
Charity Number: 1120869

New Heights Warren Farm Community Project

Volunteer Handbook



Name of volunteer _____

Volunteer role _____

108 and 124 Warren Farm Road, Kingstanding, Birmingham, B44 0QN
Tel: 0121 386 434 (St John's Centre) 0121 384 2333 (Community Café)
Web: www.new-heights.org.uk

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Welcome to New Heights Warren Farm Community Project

Thank you for choosing to volunteer with New Heights Warren Farm Community Project. You will help in making a difference to the lives of so many people living within the Kingstanding community.

We know that people are experiencing social isolation and inequality. We also know that by investing in people through volunteering, we can reduce inequalities and isolation to build stronger more inclusive communities, in line with our charities aims and objectives.

The vast majority of people actively involved in our project are volunteers. Volunteers have been pivotal in the success of our organisation since it began. We rely heavily upon their hard work and dedication in continuing to deliver quality services. Volunteers are at the heart of what we do.

People choose to volunteer for a variety of reasons. It may offer the chance to give something back to the community, kindle new relationships or provides an opportunity to develop new skills to build on existing experience and knowledge. Regardless of your motivation, what unites all our volunteers is the fact that they find the opportunities afforded both challenging and rewarding.

We aim to make sure that anyone who gives their precious time feels valued and proud to be a part of our organisation.

This Volunteer Manual contains useful guidance to explain the things you need to know about volunteering with us. We hope you find it useful. Please ask if you need more detailed information.

We hope you will enjoy your time with us.

Thank you once again for deciding to join our team as a volunteer.



Anna Freeman - Project Manager

Our History

New Heights Warren Farm Community Project has grown out of Christ the King parish's concern for the community and its wish to reach out and help where needed. Its origins go back to 2003 when Fr. Michael White came to the area. After much discussion and consultation, a community group was formed in 2004 to try and bring about change and to identify and support those in need whatever their background.

From these small beginnings, a Management Committee was formed and was registered as a charity in December 2006. The first chair was John McCarthy who was to give many years of sterling work to help develop the charity. Karen Spence from Birmingham City Council offered valuable support in fundraising. Doreen Jaen-Mooney was appointed as the project manager and she brought charisma and a huge talent to this role. Tragically Doreen died in February 2015.

The Parish borrowed some money and bought a nearby shop premises which was then refurbished and redesigned to become a Community Café facility for the project. This was then made available for use by the wider community. It was later extended to include office space, part of which is used by partner agencies including The Kingstanding Regeneration Trust (KRT) and Stonham Carers' Support Service. Additionally we deliver our own services from the café including The Legal Welfare Project.

To the side of Christ the King Church, the charity has built St John's Community Centre with the support of Lottery funding and many other fundraising activities from large to small. It provides multi-purpose accommodation from which a wide range of services are delivered – many in conjunction with statutory and voluntary partner agencies.

The strength and success of the New Heights Project lies in its many volunteers who give tirelessly to help pursue the aims and objectives of the charity. It is our mission to build on this history and to develop further initiatives for the good of the people we serve.

Our Aims and Objectives

Aims

- To meet the needs of the most disadvantaged members of the Kingstanding community and to help to bring about social cohesion.

Objectives

- Reducing the isolation of **older people** living within the area and promote their independence, health and well-being.
- Working with **younger people**, supporting their development needs and helping them to raise their aspirations, addressing social & health, educational, unemployment and leisure issues.
- Working alongside **families and parents**, particularly lone parents, helping them to face the challenges of family life and parenthood by helping them in their personal and social development.
- Supporting **those who are ill and their carers** and address the consequences of their health issues.
- Supporting **those who have disability and their carers** and addressing the consequences of these disability issues.
- Addressing issues of **poverty and debt** in the local community.



Benefits of volunteering

Volunteering is a rewarding and sometimes challenging experience. It offers people the chance to give something back to the community or make a difference to the people around them. For others it provides an opportunity to develop new skills or build on existing experience and knowledge.

There are many reasons why people choose to volunteer which includes:

- Giving something back to an organisation that has impacted on their life, either directly or indirectly.
- Making a difference to the lives of others.
- Helping the environment.
- Helping others less fortunate or without a voice.
- To feel valued and part of a team.
- Spending quality time away from work or a busy lifestyle.
- Gaining confidence and self-esteem.

For some, volunteering can be a route to employment, or a chance to try something new which may lead to a career change. From this perspective, volunteering can be a way of:

- Gaining new skills, knowledge and experience.
- Developing existing skills and knowledge.
- Enhancing a CV and improving one's employment prospects.
- Gaining an accreditation.
- Using one's professional skills and knowledge to benefit others.

For others, volunteering appeals because of its social benefits. These include:

- Meeting new people and making new friends.
- A chance to socialise.
- Getting to know the local community.



What you can expect of us:

- A full induction and support through your volunteering journey.
- A role description so you know what your role will be.
- A named contact at New Heights Warren Farm Community Project who will give you support and supervision.
- Volunteer support and supervision several times a year.
- Regular volunteer meetings for support and on-going training which is relevant to your volunteer role.
- To be treated with respect.
- To be appreciated for the invaluable support you give to the project.
- A reference where appropriate.



Our expectations of you:

New Heights Warren Farm Project has certain standards which volunteers are expected to adhere to. We ask you to:

- Behave in a way that is consistent with the aims of the project and the policies and procedures.
- Carry out your volunteer role with skill, competence and reasonable care.
- Be reliable and inform your Volunteer Coordinator or project/service lead if you are unable to keep any volunteering commitments.
- Raise any concerns or difficulties with the Volunteer Coordinator or project/service lead.
- Keep the Volunteer Coordinator informed of any convictions or charges during the course of volunteering which is relevant to your volunteering role. Failure to do so may result in the termination of the volunteering role.
- Undertake a DBS check where the voluntary role requires it.
- Act within the law and not bring the charity into disrepute.
- Maintain confidentiality.
- Seek permission from the Project manager before talking to the media.
- Be open to any feedback that may be given regarding voluntary work.
- Participation in training and/or group meetings as arranged/required.

Volunteer support and supervision

As a volunteer you play an important part in delivering services within the New Heights Warren Farm Project. It is important that as a volunteer you receive supervision while you are volunteering with us. Supervision plays an important part in ensuring you are able to undertake a role that may at times be demanding and stressful whilst at the same time provide you with an opportunity for personal development.

- Supervision is a chance for you to tell us what you think of the role you are undertaking at New Heights Warren Farm Community Project.
- During this time you can tell us how the role is working for you and whether you need some help or guidance.
- You can discuss any additional training needs you might be interested in.
- It provides an opportunity to discuss any problems or difficulties you may be experiences and to find solutions.
- It is a chance to discuss personal development and celebrate success!



Policies and Procedures

Policies and procedures help to guide the actions of all individuals involved in our services. They ensure and endorse the well-being of everyone connected to our service. They provide clear instructions and guidelines on what should/must be done in a particular set of circumstances or with regard to a particular issue. Below is a summary of our Health and Safety Policy, Safeguarding Children and Safeguarding Adults Policy. You will receive more information about our policies and procedures during your induction.

Health and Safety

New Heights takes the health and safety of everyone connected with its services seriously. It is the general duty of employees, volunteers and visitors to:

- Take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions.
- Co-operate with both New Heights and other parties insofar as it is necessary to provide a safe working environment.
- Not to intentionally misuse or interfere with anything that has been provided to ensure the health, safety and welfare of employees or the general public.
- Ensure they are both conversant and compliant with this Health and Safety Policy and Procedure and any procedure that has been provided to them.
- Bring to the attention of the Project Manager any deficiencies they detect in Health and Safety arrangements.
- Report any accidents or incidents immediately to the Project Manager.



Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure

Safeguarding children means working together to keep children safe in a nurturing environment. As a charity that regularly comes into contact with children and families, we are committed to providing services based on the principle that children's safety and well-being are paramount. All staff have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who access our services.

We recognise that the term child protection is a part of safeguarding. This refers specifically to the activity that is undertaken to protect children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm through abuse and neglect. Effective child protection is essential as part of the wider work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Safeguarding and promoting welfare therefore includes:

- Protecting children from abuse and neglect (child protection).
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development.
- Ensuring children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances.

Our Safeguarding Children Policy addresses two aspects of safeguarding:

- To provide clear and specific guidelines enabling staff to deal appropriately and effectively with child safeguarding issues including child protection concerns.
- To ensure, as far is possible, that all staff representing New Heights Warren Farm Community Project (NHWFCP) are fit to work with children.

The term 'staff' refers to all employees, volunteers and anyone involved in paid or unpaid work on behalf of NHWFCP. It also includes all board members, trustees or management committee members, whether voluntary or remunerated and facilitators of services using NHWFCP premises or funded through NHWFCP.

Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedure

This policy and procedure has been introduced to take account of the Care Act 2014 which came into effect from 1st April 2015. The Care Act 2014 has placed 'Safeguarding Adults' on a statutory footing and sets out a clear legal framework for how Local Authorities works with other agencies and individuals to protect adults with care and support needs who may be at risk of abuse and neglect. It is the most significant legislation on care and support in England for over fifty years and replaces the former "*No Secrets*" guidance. The basic values underpinning The Care Act 2014 are that of promoting the 'wellbeing' of adults and making safeguarding 'personal' for the adult involved.

"Wellbeing" is a broad concept, and relates to the following areas in particular:

- Personal dignity (including treatment of the individual with respect).
- Physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- Protection from abuse and neglect.
- Autonomy by adults over day-to-day life (including over care and support provided and the way it is provided).
- Participation in work, education, training or recreation.
- Social and economic wellbeing.
- Domestic, family and personal relationships.
- Suitability of living accommodation.
- The adult's individual's contribution to society.

There are six core principles outlined in the Care Act 2014. The principles inform the ways in which we will work with adults, all share equal importance.

- **Empowerment** – This means adults will be supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and give informed consent in respect of any action being taken involving them.
- **Prevention** – This means it is better that we take positive action with an adult before any harm occurs.
- **Proportionality** – This means that we consider taking the least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
- **Protection** – This means we support and represent those adults in greatest need to 'have a voice' and participate in safeguarding processes to the extent in which they want.
- **Partnership** – This means that we will work with our community to find local solutions. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting the neglect and abuse of adults with care and support needs.

- **Accountability** – This means we will be responsible for and transparent in the way we promote and engage in safeguarding processes.

As a charity that regularly comes into contact with adults, we are committed to providing services that incorporate the above principles. Whilst recognising that each adults needs are different, all staff have a duty to safeguard adults with care and support needs who at risk of abuse and neglect.

Our Safeguarding Adult Policy:

- Provides staff with clear and specific guidelines to deal with adult safeguarding concerns.
- Ensures, as far as possible, that all staff representing New Heights Warren Farm Community Project (NHWFCP) are fit to work with adults with care and support needs.

The term 'staff' refers to all employees, volunteers and anyone involved in paid or unpaid work on behalf of NHWFCP. It also includes all board members, trustees or management committee members, whether voluntary or remunerated and facilitators of services using NHWFCP premises or funded through NHWFCP.

Frequently Asked Questions

I'm currently receiving benefits, will volunteering affect this and should I let the Job Centre know?

You can volunteer whilst on benefits and there is not set limit to the number of hours you can do. You must be able to demonstrate you can meet the conditions for receiving your benefits. For example, if you are receiving Job Seekers Allowance you must be actively looking for work and willing to stop volunteering if you get a job (be able to start a job within a week of being offered one). It is best to inform the Job Centre that you are volunteering.

If I volunteer at New Heights Warren Farm Community Project for long enough will you employ me?

No, is the simple answer! Volunteering with us does not automatically lead to any paid employment. However, if any paid jobs do come up you are very welcome to apply. Often the experience that you gain from your time as a volunteer here can put you in a stronger position than other candidates. Unfortunately, as a charity we have limited paid posts. Our success is largely dependent on volunteering.

If you are looking for a job do mention it to the staff here as we could keep a look out for similar jobs. We may also be able to assist you with your application or CV or signpost you to agencies that can help.

Can I get a reference from you?

Yes, after 3 months as a volunteer with us you can get a reference, but please let us know if we are going to expect a reference request. It is important that you make sure you keep your volunteer diary up to date so that when we write your reference, we can see what you have done with us.

What happens if I don't get on with someone or things don't work out?

If you feel that something isn't working out or your volunteering isn't meeting your expectations talk to the Project Manager or Volunteer Coordinator and see if something can be changed.

Can I do more if I want to? And what happens if my role changes?

If you ever want to try something different or want to extend your role, talk to the Volunteer Coordinator to see if it is possible. Sometimes it is, but sometimes there may be other factors which mean that it is not. Conversely, if you don't want to, we cannot ask you to do something completely different from what we agreed with your role description.

What happens if I'm ill?

Don't worry if you're ill, please let us know that you can't come in. If possible let us know before 10am so we can find someone to work on your tasks.

What happens if I need to have some time off?

As a volunteer it is not the case that if you agree to come in on a Thursday you have to come in every Thursday forever more. If you need to miss some weeks please let us know. The more advance warning that you give us the better it is.

If there is anything else you want to know please do not be afraid to ask.



When your volunteering at New Height Warren Farm Community Project comes to an end ...

- We will conduct an exit interview with you at the end of your volunteering opportunity.
- You will be provided with a certificate recognising your contribution to our services.
- Where appropriate we will provide you with a reference.



Useful contacts

St. John's Centre
124 Warren Farm Road
Kingstanding
Birmingham
B44 0QN
Tel: (0121) 386 4345

Community Café
108 Warren Farm Road
Kingstanding
Birmingham
B44 0QN
Tel: (0121) 384 2333



Other useful numbers:
