



# Compact

for Havering

*Code of Good Practice*

*Promoting Volunteering*

*March 2008*

supported by



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## **1: INTRODUCTION**

### **Guidelines for Promoting Volunteering**

Volunteering is regarded as an essential element of community life and active citizenship. It ranges from personal support to individuals to activities in the community. It is a commitment of time and energy for the benefit of the community, undertaken freely by choice and without concern for financial gain.

Volunteering is a substantial social investment that creates social capital and makes a major contribution to the services available in Havering.

The Havering Strategic Partnership has a pivotal role in ensuring all of the principles in this code of practice are adhered to and would be able to offer assistance to organisations in complying.

The role of HAVCO is to offer assistance to organisations in understanding and implementing this code and to ensure good practice by all partners in the borough

The COMPACT Partners, the statutory sector and voluntary and community sectors – are committed to the following guiding principles of volunteering:

## **2: GOOD PRACTICE ON PROMOTING VOLUNTEERING**

### **Recognition, Value and Respect**

Recognition, value and respect for volunteers are of paramount importance in acknowledging their contribution to society. Formal induction, training, support and supervision should be provided to each volunteer.

A Volunteer agreement should be developed encompassing clear commitment requirements; e.g. a duties/task sheet and it should reflect the rights and expectations of the volunteers and the organisation. Where possible, all reasonable expenses incurred by a volunteer should be reimbursed by the organisation.

### **Promoting Variety and Choice**

Efforts should be made to recruit volunteers from all sectors of the community, presenting to them a wide variety of opportunity, suitable to their needs and abilities. Where possible, training and support should be given to raise aspirations and encourage exploration of all available avenues for personal development and satisfaction. Effective internal communications methods should be in place and monitored regularly.

HAVCO will develop and facilitate publicity to raise the profile of volunteering and attract new volunteers by such means as networking for organisations; promotional events; raising public awareness; facilitating training opportunities and prepared courses.

### **Valuing Diversity**

Organisations need to develop appropriate structures and to plan for flexibility in volunteering opportunities.

As diverse a choice of opportunities as possible should be available to all volunteers taking into consideration at all times aptitude and ability. Therefore volunteering should be open to all, regardless of background. Inclusiveness can help a diversity of people feel usefully involved and recognise and value their differences. Building bridges and widening understanding breaks down barriers to social inclusion and increases confidence and knowledge of others.

People in all sectors can gain a great deal from working with volunteers from different ethnic communities, age groups and other demographic sectors whose relevant experience from their cultural and other backgrounds may be considerable. The principals of equal opportunities are vital to supporting diversity.

### **Choice**

Activities are undertaken by choice without coercion or compulsion. An element of choice only exists in reality if an organisation plans flexibly to offer a wide variety of choice to diverse groups of people. Organisations should also be aware of current and relevant legislation.

### **Reciprocity**

Volunteering should be a reciprocal arrangement. Benefits a volunteer can expect include a sense of worthwhile achievement, useful skills, experience and contacts, sociability and fun and feeling a part of the organisation where they can make a difference.

### **3: GUIDELINES FOR SUPPORTING VOLUNTEERING**

#### **The Statutory Sector will:**

- Assess how voluntary and community activity contributes to achieving its

Vision and Corporate objectives, including the achievement of quality of life indicators reported on by the statutory sector. This should be done in consultation with the Voluntary and Community Sector and take account of:

- The kind of volunteer and community activities that support statutory sector objectives
  - The numbers of people involved in volunteering and details of the types of activity they are undertaking
  - The diversity of people involved
  - The extent of support for voluntary and community activity provided by the statutory sector and the form this takes
  - Any barriers preventing involvement by specific groups of people especially socially excluded groups.
- Support initiatives that will allow and encourage volunteers to engage in local strategic planning
  - Support initiatives to recruit and engage new volunteers

#### **The Voluntary and Community Sector will:**

- Ensure that volunteers are not used to replace paid employment posts
- Identify a champion for volunteering within their management committee/ trustee board and a senior manager with responsibility for volunteer involvement
- Apply relevant management controls and record keeping when involving volunteers, including
  - the number of volunteers working for an organisation,
  - how funding supports volunteering
  - the value this produces

- Ensure that volunteers receive fair treatment, training and support from the organisation with which they are involved and in accordance with their needs
- Adopt appropriate volunteer policies, in accordance with best practice and this Code

**Together the Voluntary and Community Sector and the Statutory sector in Havering will:**

- Promote volunteering in Havering, recognising the importance of high standards and effective management of volunteers and that fulfilling this responsibility requires dedicated resources
- Ensure that training and support is provided to staff who recruit, induct and manage volunteers and that it is written into their job descriptions and work plans
- Increase staff awareness in supporting volunteers who come through local authority initiatives such as: Active Citizenship, Social Inclusion, Lifelong Learning, Work-Life-Balance and other relevant social policy objectives
- Encourage and enable accreditation of skills acquired through volunteering for recognised qualifications
- Ensure that volunteers are informed and involved in policy development and service provision.
- Follow the same standards that are required of the voluntary and community sector.
- Be encouraged to follow the private sector in creating employee volunteering opportunities within the local community;

## **4. CHECKLIST: GOOD PRACTICE ON MANAGING VOLUNTEERING**

This Good Practice Checklist is designed for use by Statutory & Voluntary sectors.

### **A: Recruiting volunteers**

- Be clear about why volunteers are wanted / needed. They should not be recruited to fill the place of paid staff, as this could be perceived as exploitation of the volunteer and to the detriment of someone's livelihood.
- Ensure that the work and contribution of the volunteer adds quality and value to the organisation's aims and objectives.
- Approach hard-to-reach groups to find out what would make volunteering more appealing to them.
- Ask volunteers what they want to gain from their volunteering experience. Any placement should be by mutual consent.
- Provide volunteers with:
  - A clear role/task description identifying requirement/s of the organisation
  - The organisation's policies/guidelines and procedures
  - An initial induction and training programme
  - Appropriate line management
  - Appropriate work area and equipment.
- Encourage volunteers to participate in the organisation's wider decision-making process, where relevant, through regular meetings/forums.

### **B Guiding Principals**

- Offer volunteers appropriate opportunities relevant to their skills, experience and aspirations.
- If funds allow, offer to reimburse out-of-pocket expenses ie. Travel costs.
- Offer opportunities for personal development, including training to achieve personal goals.
- Offer support, supervision, feedback and regular reviews.
- Provide opportunities for volunteers to acquire or develop new or existing skills.
- Help volunteers to gain accreditation towards recognised qualifications if they want to do this.
- Recognise volunteers as valued team members.

- Give appropriate forms of recognition for their contribution to the organisation
- Ensure effective methods to disseminate information, i.e. newsletters, notice boards, emails, regular meetings / social events.

### **C: Policy and Practice**

- Ensure that the organisation has a Volunteer policy for guidance.
- Ensure that Health and Safety Policies and procedures are in place.
- Ensure that insurance policies are extended to cover the organisation's volunteers
- Ensure that Equal Opportunities and/or Diversity Policies are in place.
- Ensure that volunteers have an awareness of all other policies relevant to the organisation and volunteering.

## **Additional Resources**

Mark Restall -Managing Volunteers – A good practice guide,  
Volunteer Community Action Havering

Steve McCurley and Rick Lynch -Essential Volunteer Management  
Directory of Social Change

Volunteering -Employee Volunteering – the guide, England

HOME OFFICE, 1999 -Volunteering – A code of Practice, Available from  
[www.thecompact.org.uk](http://www.thecompact.org.uk)

VOLUNTEERING ACT, 2001 – Code of Practice for Employing Volunteers  
[www.volunteeract.com.au/COP.htm](http://www.volunteeract.com.au/COP.htm)

## Contact Page

If you would like to make any comments please contact  
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The Funding Sub-Group is open to all sections of the Community to join. And the more people who are part of it, the more effective we can be.

New members are welcome in order to continue making the Compact work.

Please contact Michael at the above address if you would like to join the Sub-group