

Dated 10th March 2024



VOLUNTEER POLICY

Newbury Soup Kitchen is a Charity run by its founder and now paid CEO along with a team of volunteers and Trustees. Providing help and support to the Newbury homeless, rough sleeper community and those less fortunate than others. The primary operation is a friendly drop-in centre for vulnerable adults who perhaps have mental health issues or are just lonely. All are greeted with hot food and drinks every Thursday evening at present from The Salvation Army Hall, Newbury. We have food provision sessions from our specific purpose converted van in The Wharf on a Wednesday and Saturday. We provide outreach sessions on a Tuesday providing Community Nurse an eye test appointment. A warm welcome awaits people who wish to socialise, find support, enjoy a hot meal and interact with like-minded people.

Definition

A volunteer is a person who gives up their free time to work for a charity or organisation without being paid.

Getting Started

Whether you're already 100% committed to volunteering or are in two minds about whether it's right for you, ask us questions. We hope to answer any questions you have about volunteering for Newbury Soup Kitchen, perhaps put you in touch with other volunteers who can share their experiences.

Requirements

Newbury Soup Kitchen expects the volunteer to be prompt and reliable with a polite manner. We expect your role too adhere to the volunteer guide. If you require a copy emailed to you again please contact meryl@newburysoupkitchen.org.uk

The Work of our Volunteers

We ask anyone interested in volunteering how much time they have to give, what interests them and what skills they have. This helps us create an opportunity that is right for you. You could find yourself working on different things – from providing companionship to a client, assisting in food collections from supermarkets, or helping run fund raising events. Perhaps you have knowledge of about housing, or universal credit. Whatever your knowledge or interest, we are sure you can add something to the Team. Your volunteering experience may vary depending on the role you are doing. The aim is to make sure our volunteers really enjoy their experience. This also allows for the kind of flexibility that helps people get the support they need.

Induction Training

We take volunteering seriously and aim to make your time with us as easy and enjoyable as possible. This starts by introducing you to what we do, how we do it, and who we engage with. For example, we refer to the service users as Clients. Some things you can only get to grips with over time, but a couple of trial evenings is the best way to understand how we function.

Recruitment Process

Given the very nature of our services and our regular engagement with Clients regarding a wide-ranging number of issues, it remains of paramount importance to ensure volunteers are both suitable and appropriately experienced.

Our screening and vetting process includes (but is not necessarily limited to):

- Interview with a CEO, Trustee or Operations Manager
- Verification of Personal Information provided by the applicant
- Assessment of Personal References by referees provided by the applicant
- Enhanced DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) Check*
- Annual Review of Enhanced DBS Status
- ****In short, there are no official expiry dates on DBS checks, meaning your DBS certificate will still be valid. However, your certificate will state the date it was issued to you, which states that the DBS check is only truly accurate at that time of clearance.**
- **Newbury Soup Kitchen feel older certificates are less accurate as you may have had a conviction recorded against since your DBS check was completed. NSK will after 3 years as a matter of best practice. ****
- **If a volunteer or employee has a break for 3 months or more a recheck of the DBS will be required.**

* Safeguarding of Vulnerable Groups Act 2006:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/47/contents>

It is important that potential volunteers understand the nature and scope of the work NSK carries out; how we engage with a variety of Clients with a variety of different problems and issues – in short, we look for individuals who share the same ethos.

Dismissal

Where appropriate Newbury Soup Kitchen will give one weeks notice of the termination of your volunteering opportunity. In some circumstances where the volunteer and confidentiality agreement has been broken, dismissal will be of immediate effect.

References

When the volunteering role comes to an agreed end through either party giving notice, Newbury Soup Kitchen will be willing to give a reference for future volunteering opportunities.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding vulnerable adults is defined in the care and support statutory guidance issued under the Care Act 2014* as:

- protecting the rights of adults to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.
- people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect.
- people and organisations making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, taking fully into account their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action; and
- recognising that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances and therefore potential risks to their safety or well-being

* Care Act – Statutory Guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-statutory-guidance>

Professional Boundaries

Professional boundaries are what defines the limits of a relationship between a volunteer and a client. They are a set of standards we agree to uphold that allows this necessary and often close relationship to exist while ensuring the correct detachment is kept in place. This guide is not exhaustive but identifies the general expectations of professional conduct.

Prohibited Conduct

- Giving and receiving gifts: NSK does not allow volunteers to give gifts to or receive gifts from Clients. However, gifts may be provided by the organisation as part of a planned activity.
- Volunteer contact with user groups. Personal relationships between a volunteer and a client or vulnerable adult who is being provided with support is prohibited. This includes relationships through social networking sites.
- It is prohibited to enter a personal relationship with an adult who has been provided with a service in the previous 12 months.
- Use of abusive language, inappropriate behaviour / language
- Use of punishment or chastisement
- Passing on service users' personal contact details, providing personal contact details
- Taking family members to a client's home or place or residence
- Volunteers meeting or working with clients or vulnerable adult outside Newbury Soup Kitchen sessions without prior consent.
- Selling to or buying items from a service user
- Accepting responsibility for any valuables on behalf of a client
- Accepting money as a gift / borrowing money from or lending money to service users
- Personal relationships with a third party related to or known to service users/clients
- Accepting gifts/ rewards or hospitality from organisation as an inducement for either doing/ not doing something in their official capacity
- Personal contact with clients

Expenses

Fuel expenses 0.45p per mile and agreed expenses will be covered **ONLY** with prior agreement.

Equal Opportunities

Newbury Soup Kitchen is open to any individual regardless of gender, race, religion, disability age or marital status.

Health and Safety

Newbury Soup Kitchen requires all volunteers to read the Health and Safety Policy document.

Confidentiality

ALL volunteers are required to sign a NEWBURY SOUP KITCHEN Confidentiality Agreement

