



**Volunteer** *Centres*

Bradford & Keighley District

# Customer Care Policy

## **CUSTOMER CARE POLICY**

Keighley & District Volunteer Centre and Bradford Volunteer Centre are independent charities that work in partnership to promote volunteering and to support local voluntary and community organisations across the Keighley & Bradford districts.

This policy is used by the staff in our Volunteer Centres as a guide to ensure you receive the best possible services from us. It is also on our website so that you can access it and know what to expect from our services.

### **We aim to help the community in two main ways**

#### Encouraging people to volunteer and supporting existing volunteers by:

- Developing and seeking out volunteering opportunities
- Promoting those opportunities to as wide a local audience as possible
- Offering training and support, where possible, to those looking to volunteer
- Making sure that the hard-work done by volunteers in the area is recognised
- Lobbying for the rights of volunteers

#### Supporting organisations who involve volunteers in their work by:

- Promoting volunteering and voluntary opportunities on behalf of organisations
- Recruiting and basic selection of volunteers
- Offering advice and information on good practice when working with and selecting volunteers
- Through the volunteer coordinators' forum, offer networking and support opportunities
- Offering training and support in all aspects of volunteer recruitment and management
- Working as a registered umbrella body with the CRB, we can process CRB checks on behalf of organisations
- Providing discounted ancillary services such as photocopying/printing and room-hire

## **The Volunteer Centres have six core functions:**

1. Volunteer brokerage
2. Marketing volunteering
3. Good practice development
4. Developing volunteering opportunities
5. Policy response and campaigning
6. Strategic development of volunteering

## **Our two main customers groups are:-**

- People who want to volunteer,
- Organisations that involve or would like to involve volunteers, this includes public, private, voluntary and community groups.

## **PEOPLE WHO WANT TO VOLUNTEER**

### Making an enquiry

Volunteer Centres Bradford & Keighley District define a 'volunteer enquiry' as initial contact between the volunteer centre and a member of the public. This could include a request for information about volunteering in general or relating to a specific opportunity. Enquiries may be made by phone, email, in person or via the Do-it website.

### Our commitment to you

- All telephone calls will be answered in a prompt and helpful manner.
- Do-it and email enquiries will be responded to within 10 working days.
- Where we are unable to do this (for example if someone is on annual leave) we will inform you as soon as possible and agree a new deadline.
- Upon request, staff will book confidential, one to one interviews/appointments at the earliest available time.
- We will be punctual for all appointments.
- We will take required information from our customers in a courteous and sensitive manner.

## **Helping you find a volunteering opportunity**

By 'opportunity' we mean a volunteer role available for members of the public to become involved in – this could be a one-off activity or a long-term activity.

Our commitment to you

- We will use a variety of methods to match volunteers to appropriate volunteering opportunities, including telephone and one-to-one interviews, drop-in sessions and Do-it (the national volunteering database).
- We will collect and use information (such as your contact details, the type of volunteering you are interested in and some personal details like your age, gender and ethnicity) in line with our confidentiality and data protection policies and data protection legislation (For a copy of our Data Protection Policy please contact the centre on 01535 609506 )
- We will use your details to demonstrate to our funders and partners that we are able to reach all sectors of the community, but we will never identify you individually without your permission.
- We will operate within current equality legislation (the Equality Act 2010).
- We will do our best to match your skills, experience and background to an appropriate volunteering opportunity.
- If we think an opportunity is unsuitable for you we will always explain the reason why and offer a suitable alternative.

We work hard to ensure that we have a wide variety of opportunities to offer to people, but there may be times when we do not have the placement you want. In this case we will

- Keep records of areas of volunteering that are in high demand, promote our services to, and work with, organisations in these fields to help them develop and create more opportunities.
- Offer you alternative opportunities based on your interests.
- Where possible, we will inform you about what to expect from different recruitment processes for the opportunities you are interested in. We will keep an up to date database of volunteering opportunities and individuals who want to volunteer.
- Where no suitable volunteer opportunity exists, the Volunteer Centre will follow its mismatch process.

## **Screening**

Different volunteering opportunities will require you to undergo different levels of screening. This could include interviews, providing references and Criminal Record Bureau Check (particularly opportunities that involve working with children or vulnerable adults). If you have any previous convictions this will not necessarily stop you from volunteering.

Our commitment to you

- We will inform you if an opportunity requires any kind of screening
- We will explain what to expect.
- We will discuss any concerns you might have about this in a confidential interview.

## **Expenses**

Our commitment to you

- We always encourage organisations to pay their volunteers' expenses. Including travel to and from the volunteering opportunity and the cost of any training or equipment that you need to carry out your volunteer role.
- If an organisation is unable to pay expenses we will inform you of this so that you can make an informed decision as to whether you want to volunteer there.

## **ORGANISATIONS THAT INVOLVE OR WOULD LIKE TO INVOLVE VOLUNTEERS**

### **Registering an Opportunity**

'Opportunity' is an activity or the delivery of a service that benefits someone else, the local community or the environment and is done by someone on a voluntary basis, i.e. they have chosen to do it, unpaid. A volunteering opportunity can be long-term, short term or one off.

If your organisation has a volunteering opportunity that you wish to register with Volunteer Centres Bradford & Keighley District, you will be required first to register your organisation with us. This involves completing a registration form.

We'll ask you about your organisation, its aims and area of work. We'll also ask about some of the policies and procedures you have in place to ensure the safety and fair treatment of volunteers. We may choose not to register your opportunities until you have certain policies and procedures in place, but we will support you in developing the necessary policies and procedures wherever possible.

With regard to your volunteering opportunity, we'll want to know all the details of what the role is, where it'll be based, your recruitment and screening processes if applicable and whether or not you'll pay travel expenses.

## **Helping organisations to find volunteers**

Our commitment to you

We will:

- Support you to develop all the appropriate policies and procedures needed to register with us.
- Pass all relevant information about your volunteering opportunity to potential volunteers.
- Support you to put appropriate recruitment processes in place
- Keep you informed of any progress made towards finding the right volunteer for your opportunity.
- Inform you of any additional volunteer recruitment opportunities in your area.
- Help you to make your opportunity as appealing to potential volunteers as possible.
- Support you to develop new volunteering opportunities.

## **COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS**

Our commitment to you

In order to get your feedback about our services we will send out an annual comprehensive follow up survey to organisations and volunteers on our database. We will use your feedback to improve the way we deliver our services.

Occasionally users of the Volunteer Centre may feel they have not received the standard of service that they expect. This can lead to dissatisfaction and frustration. In recognising this, Volunteer Centre has set out a procedure to enable individuals to raise their concerns and for us to respond to them in an appropriate way. Any individual who wishes to make a complaint should be advised to talk to the Centre Manager in the first instance and will be given the appropriate telephone number / email address. Alternatively if this is not appropriate as the complaint refers to the manager in question the complainant should be given the details of the relevant trustee or member of the Management Committee. An accessible version of our complaints procedure is available upon request. We will also make our complaints procedures available on line at [www.keighleyvc.co.uk](http://www.keighleyvc.co.uk) and [www.volunteeringbradford.org](http://www.volunteeringbradford.org).

## **MISMATCH BETWEEN THE NEEDS OF VOLUNTEERS AND ORGANISATIONS**

An annual check will be made on the variety of organisations and active volunteering opportunities registered with the Volunteer Centre, checking that the types of opportunities on offer reflect the interests of potential volunteers. We should aim for a ratio of 1 volunteering opportunity for every 10 expressions of interest in a particular area of interest. Any specific actions required will be documented and progress regularly monitored.

If a specific volunteering gap is identified or a volunteer expresses an interest in a certain type of volunteering opportunity that is not currently registered with the

Volunteer Centre, then the Volunteer Centre should be pro-active in researching and contacting member organisations that could offer that type of volunteering experience. If there are no member organisations that can offer the identified volunteering experience, then the Volunteer Centre should be proactive in going out and contacting organisations that could provide that opportunity and encourage them to register with the Volunteer Centre.

If work with member organisations identifies a need for volunteers with a particular skill that they are finding it hard to recruit, then the Volunteer Centre will be pro-active in engaging in marketing activities to reach potential suitable volunteers. If any "hard to fill" opportunities are identified, then the Volunteer Centre will discuss this with the volunteer-involving organisation, looking at adjusting the role description, re-targeting the opportunity or developing a new opportunity that incorporates some of the activities that have not been filled.

An annual approach will be made to registered organisations that have no active volunteering opportunities registered with the Volunteer Centre, to see if their volunteering needs have changed.

The Volunteer Centre should work with other local Volunteer development agencies to share information and develop other volunteering opportunities jointly.

## **FOLLOW-UP AND EVALUATION OF BROKERAGE SERVICE FOR VOLUNTEERS**

### Definition of Follow Up

Volunteer Centres Bradford & Keighley District define follow ups as contact with people who have accessed volunteer centre services in order to establish how the person feels about their volunteering experience and what impact volunteering has had for them.

The Volunteer Centre conducts quarterly surveys of all individuals who have used the brokerage service in the previous quarter. These are referred to as '*Follow Up Enquiries*' and are undertaken to ensure that everyone who has used the service has the opportunity to share their views and experiences. This process enables The Volunteer Centre to identify examples of good practice, service deficits and areas in need of attention.

The follow up is undertaken 12 weeks after the person's initial enquiry. This allows time for the person to undergo the recruitment processes of the organisation(s)/group(s) and to have commenced their volunteer placement(s).

A questionnaire is sent to individuals through the post with a cover letter explaining the reason for the survey. On occasion where deemed more appropriate (for example if the questionnaire would be inaccessible to a person) the survey is conducted over the telephone or via email. A follow-up enquiry should be undertaken with all volunteer enquirers 12 weeks after their initial enquiry. This can be done by telephone, email or letter.

### Follow-up Questions should include:

- Whether they had volunteered before
- Did they take up volunteering after visiting the volunteer centre?
- If so, for which organisation/s?
- Do/Did they enjoy their volunteering?
- If they are not volunteering or are not happy in their volunteering, why is this?
- What the person has gained from their volunteering experience
- If they chose not to take up volunteering why not

The Volunteer Centre aims to determine an accurate account of the quality of service delivered and it is recognized that to achieve this, a high response rate is necessary. Whilst it is acknowledged that 100% response rate is unachievable, The Volunteer Centre makes the following efforts to encourage and facilitate replies.

- Questionnaire is clear, concise and easy to read.
- Questionnaire allows respondents to remain anonymous if they wish.
- A cover letter is sent with questionnaire stressing that The Volunteer Centre values the person's opinion and that we are keen to receive feedback to enable us to improve the brokerage service.
- Recipients are invited to contact The Volunteer Centre if they require any additional information or support with completing the form.
- Recipients are encouraged to contact us if they require further help with volunteering.
- A pre-paid envelope is included for returning the questionnaire.
- A prize draw with gift voucher prize is offered as an incentive to maximize responses.

Recipients are requested to return their questionnaires by a specified date and upon return of the completed forms the results are collated and analysed.

A report of the findings of the survey is produced identifying points for action and/or recommendations for improvements. Any dissatisfied respondents or respondents who require additional contact for any reason (who provide contact details for the purpose of follow-up) are then contacted to enable us to address any issues.

Any examples of poor practice from volunteer-involving organisations will be followed up by The Volunteer Centre. Actions will be delegated to appropriate The Volunteer Centre staff members to undertake within a specified time span.

The consolidated feedback responses from each quarterly survey will be compiled into an annual service evaluation report which will go to members of the Volunteer Centre board to inform them of the review and development of The Volunteer Centre services to volunteers.

### Definition of Service Evaluation Procedures

Volunteer Centres Bradford & Keighley District define service evaluation procedures as contact with people who have accessed volunteer centre services in order to establish the quality and effectiveness of the brokerage service provided.

The volunteer centres conduct quarterly surveys of all individuals who have used the brokerage service in the previous quarter. These are included on the 'Follow Up' form but questions pertain to the quality of service provided by the volunteer centre as opposed to their volunteering experience. This process enables the VC to identify examples of good practice, service deficits and areas in need of attention.

### Service Evaluation Questions should include:-

- How the person heard about the volunteer centre
- How the person first contacted the volunteer centre
- Whether another agency referred the person to the volunteer centre
- How the person feels about the service provided by the volunteer centre
- Would they recommend the service to others
- Would they like any further information on volunteering opportunities (either previously discussed or new ones) or advice from the Volunteer Centre on issues like volunteer expenses, etc.?

Feedback will be responded to as needed on an individual basis and any examples of poor practice from volunteer-involving organisations will be followed up by the volunteer centre. A report of the findings of the survey is produced identifying points for action and/or recommendations for improvements. Any dissatisfied respondents or respondents who require additional contact for any reason (who provide contact details for the purpose of follow-up) are then contacted to enable us to address any issues.

The quarterly responses from volunteers will be compiled into an annual service report which will go to members of the Volunteer Centre Board and will inform them of the development of the organisations services.

### **FOLLOW-UP AND EVALUATION PROCEDURES FOR ORGANISATIONS**

All organisations advertising opportunities with the volunteer centre will be contacted at least annually to review their existing opportunities, to ask them to consider advertising alternative opportunities and to remind organisations of the other services that the centres can provide.

Each year all the organisations that have used the centre will be asked to complete a feedback form on the performance of the centre.  
(See Organisations Annual Evaluation Form)

The annual evaluation is a survey of all organisations who are registered as using the brokerage (and other) services (including training, CRB services, good practice development and information and support).

This ensures that all organisations have the opportunity to share their views and experiences. A questionnaire is sent to organisations through the post with a cover letter explaining the reason for the survey. Where deemed more appropriate the survey is conducted over the telephone or via email.

This process enables each volunteer centre to identify examples of good practice, service deficits and areas in need of attention. In particular we hope to ascertain how successfully the centre performs in delivering the intended outcome of the brokerage (and other) services and to identify areas for further development of the brokerage (and other) services (including training, CRB services, good practice development and information and support services).

Service Evaluation Questions for Organisations should include:-

- How they found out about the volunteer centre
- When the organisation first contacted the volunteer centre
- What support they received from the centre
- How they would rate the support/Information given
- How effective the volunteer centre has been in the development of volunteering opportunities and the involvement of volunteers
- Whether they would recommend the volunteer centre services to others
- Whether they recruited volunteers that had been referred to them via the volunteer centre brokerage service
- Whether they would be interested in attending a Volunteer Organisers Forum
- What training is required by staff and volunteers
- How satisfied organisations are with their experience of the volunteer centre services

Volunteer Centres Bradford & Keighley District aim to determine an accurate account of the quality of service delivered to organisations and recognises that to achieve this a high response rate is necessary. Whilst it is acknowledged that a 100% response rate is unachievable, the Volunteer Centres have made the following efforts to encourage and facilitate replies:-

- **Questionnaire is clear and concise.**
- **The questionnaire states that we are grateful for feedback to enable us to improve our service.**
- **Recipients are encouraged to contact us if they require any further help with brokerage or any volunteering related issue.**
- **Recipients are encouraged to provide contact details if they require us to respond to their comments.**
- **Recipients can remain anonymous if they prefer.**

Recipients are requested to return the completed form as soon as possible and after a specified period of time, results of the survey are collated and analysed.

The findings of the survey are consolidated into a report and analysed. The consolidation identifies any points for action and/or recommendations for improvement. Actions are delegated to appropriate Volunteer Centre staff to undertake.

Respondents (who provide details for the purpose of follow-up) are contacted to enable us to address any issues or to provide additional support.

The annual service evaluation report will go to members of the Volunteer Centre board to inform them of the review and development of Volunteer Centre services to organisations.

### **Updating Organisations & Advertised Opportunities on V-base**

In addition to contacting the organisations to undertake an annual survey, Volunteer Centres Bradford & Keighley District also contact all registered organisations annually to ensure we have up-to date details and opportunities on v-base.

Each month, the v-base database is used to flag up any volunteering opportunities (across the Bradford District) that have expired during that month.

Unless specifically stated otherwise, organisations are encouraged to advertise their opportunities for a maximum one year period so that Volunteer Centres Bradford & Keighley District can make contact at least annually to review the opportunity details.

During this telephone/email contact, the organisation is asked about all other opportunities they are advertising and all records (contact details etc) are checked through to ensure accuracy. The organisation is also asked if they would like to advertise any new opportunities and whether they require any additional services from Volunteer Centres Bradford & Keighley District.

A v-base update partnership bulletin is compiled with all new opportunities and updated details and this is sent between partnership organisations Volunteer Centres Bradford & Keighley District so each party can update their records and maintain accurate correlation with their v-base.

## **Evaluation of Training & Information Sessions**

Volunteer Centres Bradford & Keighley District are committed to providing quality training on a wide variety of topics to both volunteers and organisations.

All training delivered by Volunteer Centres Bradford & Keighley District are evaluated after each session. Attendees are requested to complete a training feedback form which provides an opportunity to comment on the following aspects:-

- **Relevance of topic**
- **Trainers Delivery**
- **Training Methods**
- **Resources Used**
- **Venue**
- **Refreshments**
- **Areas for improvement**
- **Any other comments**

Attendees are requested to return the form before leaving the session. The findings of the evaluations are then consolidated into a report and analysed. The consolidation identifies any points for action and/or recommendations for improvement.

## **Compliments & Complaints**

All users of Volunteer Centres Bradford & Keighley District services are welcomed to feedback about the services delivered at any time. Should any person wish to complain about a Volunteer Centre service the complaints procedures are available upon request and also online at the relevant organisation [www.keighleyvc.co.uk](http://www.keighleyvc.co.uk) or [www.volunteeringbradford.org](http://www.volunteeringbradford.org).

## **Related Policies & Procedures:**

KDVC Complaints Procedure  
BVC Complaints Procedure

**Date Reviewed:**

Reviewed: 16<sup>th</sup> August 2010