



## COMMUNITY EDUCATION SERVICE VOLUNTEER GUIDANCE

This guidance document is designed to apply to all aspects of Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar's Community Education Service.

The guidance should be read as subordinate to the Western Isles Health Board and Comhairle nan Eilean Siar joint **Policy For Volunteering In The Western Isles** [www.cne-siar.gov.uk/cxdir/strategiespolicies/volunteering/](http://www.cne-siar.gov.uk/cxdir/strategiespolicies/volunteering/) . This policy defines volunteering as:

*“The commitment of time and energy for the benefit of society and the community, the environment or individuals outside one’s immediate family. It is undertaken freely and by choice without concern for financial gain.”*

### Introduction

The Community Education Service promotes and provides opportunities throughout the Western Isles for community based learning and development services to adults and young people where local people are included, participating, achieving and progressing.

Community Education Service volunteers are a major resource and make a vital contribution to our aim outlined above. We intend to encourage, develop and support volunteer involvement in our work in which volunteers are already important stakeholders. In doing so we recognise that the roles of volunteers will complement and not replace the roles of paid staff. Volunteers are not employees of Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and as such do not have a contract of employment and will not receive payment or any other consideration in return for volunteering.

The time, energy and skills offered by our volunteers benefits our work and helps us to achieve our aims. Experience has shown that volunteering also brings benefits to volunteers themselves and to those with whom they work.

The Community Education Service believes that our relationship with our volunteers is one of mutual responsibility and commitment. We hope that volunteers will enjoy their involvement and gain from it in terms of their own personal objectives.

### General

In involving volunteers we will be guided by the following principles of good practice:

- ☐ The tasks to be performed by volunteers will be clearly defined, so that all concerned with their activities are sure of their respective roles and responsibilities;
- ☐ Volunteering opportunities will complement rather than replace the work of paid staff;
- ☐ Opportunities will be given for volunteers to represent their views to the Community Education Service;
- ☐ Respect for human rights and equal opportunities; and

- ☞ Volunteers will only be asked to carry out tasks in accordance with Comhairle policies.

## **Recruitment and Selection**

- ☞ When recruiting and selecting volunteers each volunteer will be asked to complete a Comhairle application form and will be interviewed by appropriate staff. Following the interview successful volunteers will have references requested and enhanced disclosures completed;
- ☞ Written job descriptions/work outlines will provide an overview of the volunteer's duties;
- ☞ People who offer to volunteer will have their offers dealt with as quickly as possible; and
- ☞ Placements will match the volunteer's skills, talents and interests with the voluntary work to be carried out.

## **Support for Volunteers**

- ☞ We will invest personnel resources in the management of volunteers;
- ☞ We will provide an induction period for new volunteers;
- ☞ We will provide appropriate insurance cover for our volunteers;
- ☞ Volunteers will be given information on legislation and policies that may affect them e.g. Health and Safety, Data Protection, Human Rights and Equal Opportunities;
- ☞ Volunteers will be offered appropriate access to support and supervision on a regular basis, with a named support worker, and will be informed whom to contact in an emergency;
- ☞ Volunteers will be offered access to training relative to their volunteering role;
- ☞ Volunteers will be encouraged to provide each other with mutual support within the bounds of confidentiality;
- ☞ The organisation's complaints, grievance and disciplinary procedures will be explained to volunteers and they will be informed of who to contact if they have a grievance about any aspect of their work; and
- ☞ Volunteers will be entitled to subsistence expenses (in line with the Comhairle's existing scheme) when undertaking tasks on behalf of the Comhairle.

### **Volunteers Should:**

- ☐ Carry out their tasks in a way which corresponds to the aims and values of the Community Education Service;
- ☐ Volunteer within agreed guidelines and remits;
- ☐ Respect confidentiality;
- ☐ Respect other volunteers, service users and staff;
- ☐ Carry out their tasks with regard to the health and safety of others; and
- ☐ Attend training and support sessions where appropriate.

### **Relationship with Paid Staff**

- ☐ Steps will be taken to ensure that paid staff at all levels are clear about the role and rights of our volunteers, and that good working relationships are fostered between paid staff and volunteers;
- ☐ Appropriate training, support and resources will be provided for all those who work alongside volunteers and for those who have a managerial role in relation to volunteers; and
- ☐ Volunteers will not be engaged in times of industrial action to do the work of paid staff. They may continue with their regular work, but will not be asked to undertake additional duties.

### **Reviewing the Policy**

The Community Education Service will monitor and review this policy on an annual basis.

### **Responsibility**

Overall responsibility for the implementation, monitoring and review of this guidance lies with the Principal Officer.