

# Volunteer Policy



## Introduction

Volunteers are needed at Kennington Memory Club (KMC) in order for our members to have the best possible experience.

This volunteer policy sets out the principles and practice by which KMC involves volunteers. It is relevant to staff, volunteers and trustees within the organisation. It aims to create a common understanding and to clarify roles and responsibilities to ensure the highest standards are maintained in relation to the management of volunteers.

## Our commitments

KMC recognises volunteers are an integral part of the organisation. Their contribution supports our mission and strategic aims, and complements the role of paid staff. We aim to encourage and support volunteer involvement to ensure that volunteering benefits the organisation, its clients and the volunteers themselves.

We aim to ensure that paid staff are clear about the role of volunteers, and to foster good working relationships between paid staff and volunteers. Volunteers will not be used to replace staff.

We are committed to encouraging a diversity of people to volunteer with us, including those from under-represented groups such as youth, people with a disability, older people and people from black and minority ethnic communities.

We recognise that there are costs associated with volunteer involvement and will seek to ensure adequate financial and staffing resources are available for the development and support of volunteering. We recognise that people have a right to participate in the life of their communities through volunteering and can contribute in many ways. We recognise our responsibility to organise volunteering efficiently and sensitively so that the valuable gift of the volunteer's time is best used to the mutual advantage of all concerned.

## Who is a volunteer?

Volunteers are individuals who undertake activity of public/community benefit, unpaid and of their own free choice. Trustees are volunteers with responsibility for governance.

At KMC, volunteers may be involved on a one – off, short term or on a longer term, regular basis.

They may be involved:

- in the direct delivery of our services to members
- as trustees in managing KMC
- in community engagement to raise awareness of our work
- in one off events and promotional activities

Volunteers are valued for:

- bringing additional skills and new perspectives to KMC
- enabling KMC to be more responsive and flexible in our approach
- championing our cause within the wider community
- enhancing the quality of our work and of members' experience
- promoting the wellbeing of users of our services, staff, local communities and themselves.

## Roles and responsibilities

The organiser has responsibility for the volunteers working directly with members at KMC. This includes offering guidance, support and supervision.

The volunteer role is based on trust and mutual understanding. There is no enforceable obligation, contractual or otherwise, for the volunteer to attend or to undertake particular tasks or for KMC to provide continuing opportunities for voluntary involvement, provision of training or benefits.

However, there is a presumption of mutual support and reliability. Reciprocal expectations are acknowledged – both of what the KMC expects of volunteers and what volunteers expect of KMC.

KMC expects volunteers:

- to be reliable and honest. Please always let us know if you are unable to fulfil an agreed commitment.
- to uphold our values and comply with our policies
- to make the most of opportunities given, eg for training
- to contribute positively to our aims and avoid bringing the organisation into disrepute
- to carry out tasks within agreed guidelines.

Volunteers can expect:

- to have clear information about what is and is not expected of them
- to receive adequate support and training
- to be insured and to volunteer in a safe environment
- to be treated with respect and in a non-discriminatory manner
- to receive out of pocket expenses as agreed
- to have opportunities for personal development
- to be recognised and appreciated
- to be able to say 'no' to anything which they consider to be unrealistic or unreasonable
- to know what to do if something goes wrong

## Recruitment and selection

Equal opportunities principles will be adhered to in recruiting volunteers. Opportunities will be widely promoted, so as to attract interest from different sectors of the community.

Information will be made available to those enquiring about volunteering.

Recruitment will usually involve an informal interview, application form and the taking of references; the process will be defined and consistent for any given role - for example the recruitment process for trustees, regular volunteers and for volunteers for one off events will be tailored in each case and may differ from one another.

Where applicants are not able to be placed in their preferred role, they will be provided with feedback and given the opportunity to discuss alternative volunteering roles, or signposted to the local volunteer centre. Volunteers working directly with members at KMC will be required to have a full DBS disclosure check which will be arranged by the organisation. DBS disclosures are dealt with in the strictest confidence. A criminal record is not necessarily a bar to volunteering.

### Induction and training

Volunteers will be given induction and training appropriate to the specific tasks to be undertaken.

### Support and supervision

Volunteers will be offered support and supervision as appropriate and this is discussed during induction. Arrangements vary according to the volunteer and the role undertaken, and may include telephone support, group meetings or one to one reviews.

### Recognition

Volunteers will be given the opportunity, where relevant, to share their views and opinions with the organisation's wider staff, at staff meetings etc.

Formal recognition of the contribution of volunteers is expressed through annual reports, website articles, social media.

### Dealing with problems

KMC aims to treat all volunteers fairly, objectively and consistently. It seeks to ensure that volunteers' views are heard, noted and acted upon promptly.

We will attempt to deal with any problems or complaints involving volunteers informally and at the earliest opportunity. Volunteers should speak to the organiser in the first instance in the case of any difficulty. Where informal resolution is not possible, KMC's 'Comments, Complaints and Suggestions Policy' will be adhered to.

### Expenses

Volunteers will be given clear information about what expenses can be claimed and how to make a claim.

### Moving on

Volunteers who have remained with the organisation for at least 3 months will have the right to request a reference.

### Other relevant documents

Volunteers will be made aware of the following KMC policies relevant to volunteers:

- Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults
- Equality and Diversity and Inclusion
- Comments, Complaints and Suggestions
- Confidentiality Statement
- Health and Safety and Risk Assessments

Signed:

Date:

Name:

Position held:

Date for Review: