



BEYOND LIMITS

Beyond the limits of conventional support

VOLUNTEER POLICY

This policy aims to provide clarity on the use of
volunteers by Beyond Limits.

March 2024

Review: March 2025



INTRODUCTION

Due to the model of care and support provided by Beyond Limits, opportunities for volunteers to work with individuals and colleagues are limited. We provide tailored care and support to adults living in the community. The emphasis is upon forging positive relationships with people who have moved on from institutional care, such as hospitals, group residential care and special educational establishments, as well as individuals said to have challenged conventional services.

Colleagues supporting individuals are carefully selected to “match” the interests and hobbies of those supported. There is a comprehensive period of induction and training that seeks to ensure they have the knowledge and skills to meet the individual needs and requirements of individuals we support. Therefore, opportunities for volunteers to work directly with individuals are limited by the need to promote consistency of support to individuals. This is particularly important because many of our individuals do not wish to be subject to unfamiliar people coming in and out of their lives.

Accepting the above, Beyond Limits fully recognise that the use of volunteers can have value both to our organisation and the volunteer(s) themselves. In fact, in the right circumstances volunteers can make a valuable contribution to our aims and services. For example, it may be that a volunteer/volunteers could provide a regular group activity for a time-bound period (such as art and craft activities or environmental projects that could benefit the community for example).

In all circumstances Beyond Limits are clear that volunteer involvement does not replace or devalue the role of paid staff.

PRINCIPLES

The involvement of volunteers will be guided by the following principles:

- Volunteers will be subject to strict safe recruitment procedures, including an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service Check.
- Volunteers will be clear that Beyond Limits is a non-partisan, secular organisation. This is important because individuals accessing our support and care are vulnerable and must not be subject to inappropriate influences, ideologies, and religious or spiritual bias.
- The tasks to be performed by volunteers will be clearly defined, so that all everyone is sure of their respective roles and responsibilities.
- Compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018.
- Volunteering opportunities will never replace the work of paid colleagues.
- Volunteers will be provided with regular opportunities to share ideas/concerns with a named senior colleague.
- All existing and future policies will be checked as to how they affect volunteers.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Highlight and acknowledge the potential value of contributions made by volunteers.
- Confirm the purpose, values, standards, and strategies of Beyond Limits in our approach to involving volunteers.
- Set clear conditions of practice relating to volunteers, with a clear emphasis upon the rights, views, feelings, and choices of individuals accessing out support and care, which remains a primary factor.
- Recognise the respective roles and responsibilities of volunteers.
- Confirm Beyond Limits' commitment to involving volunteers in its work where it is appropriate and there are clear benefits to the individuals we support.
- Establish clear principles for the involvement of volunteers.
- Ensure the ongoing quality of any volunteering opportunities on offer and the work carried out by our volunteers.

It should be noted that Beyond Limits remain open to ideas and innovations involving volunteers. In all cases, there will be full consultation with individuals potentially involved to ensure they are willing, able, and comfortable with all volunteering proposals.

VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES

As confirmed above, there are limited opportunities for volunteering due to the model of care and support provided by Beyond Limits. However, we do recognise that volunteers can make a positive and beneficial contribution to the experiences of individuals receiving care and support. This, in turn, can have a positive impact upon their welfare and well-being.

Beyond Limits have identified the following opportunities for volunteers, where practicable and appropriate:

- Art and crafting activities provided for groups of individuals, with support from colleagues.
- Befriending initiatives, on a case-by-case basis and in full consultation with the individual(s) concerned.
- Reading and film clubs provided for groups of individuals, with support from colleagues.
- Charitable fundraising activities and initiatives to support community cohesion and engagement.
- Environmental initiatives, such as co-ordinated litter drives and work on community gardens for example.

Beyond Limits will not use volunteers for any work that would ordinarily be provided by paid colleagues.

SAFE RECRUITMENT

All volunteers must be fully vetted to ensure that they are suitable to work with vulnerable people. This is important because we have an unequivocal duty to ensure that individuals accessing our care and support are protected from harm and abuse.

Good practice and equality of opportunity are integral to Beyond Limits' recruitment and selection processes, regardless of whether we are employing paid staff or volunteers.

Recruitment and selection is approached in a fair, consistent, equitable, transparent, and effective manner, with due regard for Equal Opportunities legislation, including the Equality Act 2010 (See Page 4).

The following provides step-by-step guidance on our mandatory conditions of recruitment. It is essential that every aspect of required diligence is met in terms of recruiting volunteers.

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDANCE

All personnel, including volunteers:

- Must complete an application form before they are formally offered any position within the organisation. This should be completed prior to interview, to ensure that any areas requiring further scrutiny (e.g., gaps in employment history) are addressed.
- Must provide no less than THREE references. One of those references must be from a most recent employer. Additionally, if the candidate has experience of working within a social care environment, a reference should be provided from that employer. This is essential if the person has been employed within a social care setting within the last five years.
- Will be subject to follow-up telephone reference verification by management within the service or setting, or a senior operational professional.
- Are required to declare any previous instances of dismissal or proven/substantiated allegations of misconduct. If a person has been historically subject to dismissal or allegations of misconduct, they must be able to demonstrate their suitability to work with vulnerable people. All discussion and assurances must be recorded. If any explanation is not satisfactory, any offer of employment or a volunteering position will be withdrawn
- Will be subject to an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. DBS outcomes with a positive trace will evoke an assessment of the individual's suitability. All discussion and assurances must be recorded. If any explanation is not satisfactory, any offer of employment will be withdrawn.
- Must bring/provide evidence of relevant qualifications, training, and experience, which will be copied and retained to personnel files if the candidate is offered employment.
- Must confirm that they have the right to work in the United Kingdom (UK) and there will be further checks for those who have lived outside the UK.
- Must provide evidence of proof of identity, such as (for example) original copies of their:
 - i. Driving Licence
 - ii. Car Insurance and MOT Certificates for copying
 - iii. Passport
 - iv. Birth Certificate
- May be required to present a fitness to work certificate/letter from a General Practitioner (GP).

Under no circumstances should the above process be compromised. Beyond Limits must place the safety and welfare of individuals above all other considerations. Safer recruitment is an important part of protecting individuals from harm and abuse.

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

PROMOTING DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Beyond Limits are committed to promoting diversity and inclusion in all we do. We are proud of being an inclusive employer and welcome people of all backgrounds.

Beyond Limits will ensure that colleagues are equally valued and respected and that our organisation is representative of all members of society. We will actively promote anti-discriminatory, anti-racist and anti-oppressive practices and policies.



SUPPORT & SUPERVISION

Once placed, we will expect that volunteers will comply with existing policies and procedures. All volunteers are covered under our Public Liability Insurance.

All volunteers will have an induction to their volunteering which will involve an overview of the relevant policies and procedures. Following induction, volunteers will have regular support and supervision meetings with a named contact to identify areas for development, or to discuss any issues. A record of these discussions will be held as part of the individual volunteer's records. Volunteers can have access to their records at any time.

Volunteers will be able to claim reasonable expenses for their volunteering in line with our policy. Volunteers should discuss any planned expenditure prior to incurring expenses to ensure that it will be covered by the organisation.

Where volunteers have holidays or other commitments which mean that they cannot attend their normal volunteering, they should advise their named contact to ensure that we can arrange alternative cover. If volunteers require a longer break from their volunteering, they should discuss this with their named contact. Beyond Limits will endeavour to be as flexible as possible to accommodate the needs of volunteers.

Volunteers can access learning and development opportunities which are relevant to their volunteering role throughout their time with Beyond Limits. Opportunities for learning and development will form part of the discussions at support and supervision sessions.

PROBLEM SOLVING

Where a concern (grievance, disciplinary etc.) is highlighted – either by a volunteer or about a volunteer, this will be dealt with using the relevant Beyond Limits' Policy.

RESPONSIBILITY

Overall responsibility for the implementations, monitoring and review of the policy and procedures lies with the Board of Directors. Implementation and adherence to this policy is the responsibility of all staff and volunteers within the organisation.

RIGHTS OF VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers will not have a contract of employment, and do not have the same rights as an employee or worker.

Beyond Limits will provide volunteers with a formal agreement that explains:

- The level of supervision and support they'll get.
- What training they will receive.
- Insurance arrangements.
- Safeguarding procedures and policies.
- Health and safety issues.
- Any expenses we will cover.

The volunteer agreement is not compulsory but sets out what volunteers can expect from the Beyond Limits. It does not form a contract between Beyond Limits and the volunteer(s).

The National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) has information on [volunteers' legal status](#).

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis unless changes in legislation dictate otherwise.

Beyond Limits (Plymouth) Limited
Registered in England and Wales under
Company Number: 07998863



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