

Quick Guide to..... Volunteer Friendly

What Is Volunteer Friendly?

Created by the Volunteer Centre Dundee, Volunteer Friendly is a simple user-friendly quality standard designed to support, recognise and reward groups who are good at involving volunteers in their organisation.

What Are the Benefits?

- ◆ Over 30% of the Scottish population are involved in volunteering, contributing around 2.5 billion to the Scottish economy annually. In the current challenging economic climate, this contribution helps to enhance essential services across the country, meaning that it is extremely important for organisations and groups to be in a position to demonstrate commitment in managing their volunteers.
- ◆ Working through the Volunteer Friendly Award allows groups to improve volunteer management practices and procedures. Nowadays most funders look for evidence of good practice in managing volunteers. Having a Volunteer Friendly Award is certifiable proof to funders that your practices have been examined and found to be of a high standard. Possessing the award could be the final push funders need to invest in your group.

What Does It Involve?

Volunteer Friendly will provide each group with a checklist of best practice approaches for the group to work through with the help of their local volunteer centre. When completed, this will form the group's action plan. This will then be used to develop evidence that can be used to demonstrate the quality of an organisation's work with volunteers.

Evidence can be compiled from policies or examples of forms or even photos. There is also a toolkit available to help groups who wish to improve what they do or to help fill in any gaps. When the folder of evidence is complete and has been assessed by the local Volunteer Centre, the group will receive their Volunteer Friendly Award.

The scheme is divided into five main strands as follows:

- ♦ Commitment to Involving volunteers (Understanding why your group uses volunteers)
- ♦ Making volunteering happen (Money, management, staff time and materials)
- ♦ Fair and Equal Volunteering (Diversity, equal opportunities, fair recruitments and reference checks for volunteers)
- ♦ Volunteering tasks and getting them done (Developing task descriptions, training and the support needs of the individuals)
- ♦ Celebrating volunteers contributions

The Volunteer Friendly Award is a product of Volunteer Centre Dundee, a charity started in 1997 as part of the Scottish Executive's investment program which created a complete network of volunteer centers across Scotland's 32 local authority areas. An example of the four stage process can be found below.

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Stage 1

Receive VF checklist and complete to form your action plan

Stage 2

Receive access to online version of Guidance, Examples and Templates (GET). Use GET to fill any of your gaps in practice

Stage 3

Present your portfolio of evidence to your Volunteer Friendly Provider

Stage 4

Receive your Volunteer Friendly Award

☞ For help or advice about Volunteer Friendly, or to order this guide in another format contact Engage Renfrewshire

10 Falcon Crescent, Paisley, PA3 1NS ☎ 0141 887 7707 ✉ info@engagerenfrewshire.com 🌐 www.engagerenfrewshire.com