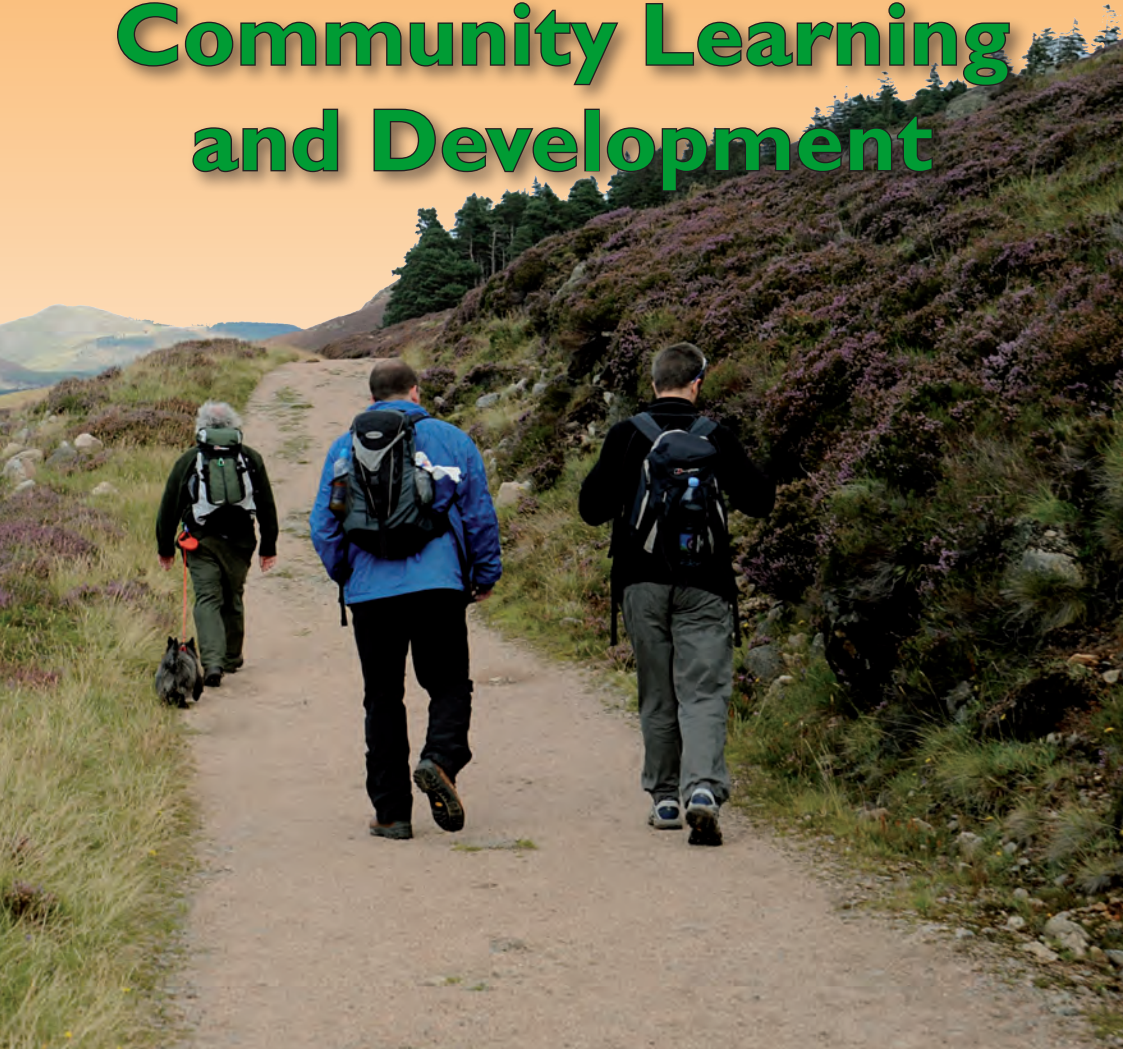


Volunteering with Community Learning and Development





Volunteer Handbook

- The Volunteering Pack
- Introduction to Volunteering
- You as a Volunteer
- What Next ?
- Volunteer Agreement and Volunteer Plan
- Volunteer Log
- Expenses, Entitlements and Welfare Benefits
- Local Information



The Volunteering Pack

This handbook is part of a pack which has been created to help you find out more about volunteering and to explore any volunteering opportunities which interest you. It has information that is required if you want to volunteer within Aberdeenshire Council's Community Learning and Development Service. It also contains information on how you can gain qualifications which recognise your volunteering efforts.

In Aberdeenshire's Community Learning and Development Service there are many different ways that people can volunteer and become involved in projects, such as volunteering at youth groups, crèches, peer mentoring and education, supporting adults in groups or on a one to one basis, or becoming involved in organising and running a local community event.

If you choose to volunteer within CLD you will have an introductory interview to consider opportunities and to see if we have any suitable opportunities which match your skills and interests. All Volunteers will complete a Volunteer Agreement, such as the example which is provided in the handbook. Satisfactory references will be taken up as a matter of course. Volunteers over 16yrs of age are likely to require a Disclosure Scotland check before commencing their role. This is designed to find out if anyone has any convictions which might not make them appropriate to work with particular groups. However, please do not be put off volunteering if you have had some minor scrapes with the law in the past - we are only interested in those who have convictions which would impact on the safety of those we have a duty to care to.

The pack is split into different sections to work through over an agreed period with your local Support Worker. By the end of the pack you should have a clear understanding of volunteering, Aberdeenshire Council Priorities and your role as a volunteer. After completion of the pack and a satisfactory interview you will be ready to begin.

You may want to take up opportunities with other volunteer agencies such as the Volunteer Centre. If you do decide to do this we will still be available to support you to access the appropriate information.

Volunteering is a worthwhile and rewarding experience - ENJOY IT!



Introduction to Volunteering

What is a Volunteer?

To put it simply a volunteer is someone who gives up some of their time and effort without payment to support other people. We follow good practice guidelines and ensure that volunteers are reimbursed for reasonable out of pocket expenses incurred as a result of their voluntary activity. Some people may choose not to claim any expenses, but we feel it is important that volunteers are not prevented from taking up a volunteering opportunity because they can't afford to. If you have ever helped out at a youth or sports club, or taken part in a sponsored walk, then you have been a volunteer.

Who can volunteer?

Anybody and everybody has something to offer others!

What's in it for me?

Volunteering means you:

- Feel good about yourself
- Support other people
- Can find a cause to believe in
- Make a vital contribution to your local community
- Learn new skills and valuable experience
- Have fun
- Make friends
- Enhance employability

Volunteering is a great way of meeting lots of people from different backgrounds and areas, and making new friends. It is also a way of trying out new things and for young people it may give you an idea of what you'd like to do as a job when you are older.

Recognising Volunteers

If you are looking for a challenge in your life and you have a few hours to spare we are committed to support you to fulfil your goal. Perhaps you are making a decision about what to do or perhaps looking for some work experience. Maybe your children have left home or you are recently retired or just want to put something back into your community. Aberdeenshire Council values the hard work and commitment from their volunteers and supports ways that you can be rewarded for your effort and gain accreditation. This can give you a goal to work towards and can also be evidence of experience, which can be particularly useful when compiling a CV for further education or future employment. All the work is recorded on a Volunteer Log to provide evidence of the work undertaken. An example of the log is provided in the Handbook.



You As A Volunteer

What is Expected of You?

- Show Commitment and Enthusiasm in your volunteer role
- Communicate ideas and information in a clear and relaxed way
- Be fair and treat everyone equally
- Ensure that the people you are working with feel safe
- Be supportive of staff members
- Use your initiative
- Develop Team Work Skills (these will develop throughout your role)
- Attend any training that can increase your knowledge and skills
- Discuss any problems you face with your Support Worker
- Turn up as and when you agreed with the Support Worker
- If you are unable to attend let us know as soon as possible
- Ask how you can get involved if you are unsure
- Health and Safety is everybody's responsibility

What you can expect from Community Learning and Development

- Support and guidance provided by a named support worker
- Free access to the resources needed for the volunteer role
- Out of pocket expenses
- Training to be able to undertake the role
- Insurance to cover the tasks required of you as a volunteer

Relationships and Boundaries

Becoming a volunteer may change the relationships you have with others – including your peer group. This may have an impact on how others see you, but we will support you to adjust to this and support you to become a valued part of our team and a positive role model and a representative of Aberdeenshire Council.

By engaging in Aberdeenshire Council's Volunteer opportunities, there is an expectation that you maintain an acceptable standard of behaviour.

It is important to reiterate here the significance of confidentiality and all that it entails. You may find it difficult, because it is difficult, to differentiate between being someone's friend and your role as a volunteer. If you are unclear, talk to your local Support Worker/Mentor if you are having problems. Remember that the confidentiality guidelines are available to protect you. We would advise you to be very careful when dealing with sensitive information. Remember you can't know everything – and it's ok to say so!

Disclosing personal information to an unauthorised person is a serious breach of your Volunteer Agreement and would result in immediate termination of your role as a volunteer. Please bear in mind that this type of breach can cause severe distress to the parties involved.

Remember if you are unsure about any aspect of your volunteer work, Community Learning and Development Staff will always be willing to speak to you and will endeavour to make time to meet with you and offer support. The staff will want to ensure that you get the greatest benefit from your work.

Volunteer Agreement & Plan

This volunteer agreement is a description of the arrangement between Community Learning and Development *Ellon* and you *Joe Brown* in relation to the voluntary work to be carried out. The intention of this agreement is to assure you of our appreciation of your volunteering with us and commits us to do the best we can to make your experience with us a positive and rewarding one.

Description of Voluntary Work

Your role as a volunteer will be *to give climbing instruction to Youth Groups in Ellon.*

This work benefits Community Learning and Development by *supporting young people to develop a new skills and confidence to overcome their fears.*

The work will benefit the volunteer by *providing opportunity for Joe to gain experience of working with young people in a climbing setting.*

Start date: *1st September 2008* _____

Finish date if known: *31st March 2009* _____

Days if known: *To be arranged* _____

Times if known: *To be arranged* _____

Location if known: *Climbing Wall* _____

Review arrangements: *Annually unless circumstances require more frequent meetings* _____

Community Learning and Development

Community Learning and Development will provide a support worker who will guide you through your induction to becoming a volunteer and will continue to support you during your voluntary work. The support worker will be able to explain what has to be carried out and how. He/she will be able to answer any of your questions and support you so you can get the best out of your experience.

Community Learning and Development will give you free access to the resources needed to carry out your tasks. e.g. phone, computer, paper, pens, etc.

Community Learning and Development will provide you with any out of pocket

expenses required to carry out your role as a volunteer.
Community Learning and Development will provide any necessary training required to carry out your duties.

All volunteers are covered by the council's insurance policy whilst they are involved in any work on behalf of the council.

You as the Volunteer

It is expected that you will carry out your duties as described above.

It is expected that you will carry out your duties following the aims and values of Community Learning and Development as described by your support worker.

It is expected that you will uphold confidentiality related to learners and or the Council during and after the placement.

It is expected that you will discuss with your support worker any expectations or concerns you may have.

If things go wrong

Difficulties do arise when there are differences between a volunteer's expectations and Community Learning and Development expectations. If the behaviour of the volunteer is the issue all attempts to resolve the differences will be made by the support worker. In most cases such difficulties are overcome through discussion.

If however the differences cannot be resolved Community Learning and Development may dispense with the services of a volunteer. If this is the case the volunteer will be called to a meeting to explain the reasons for the decision and given an opportunity to present his/her case.

Changes to the agreement

Changes to the agreement, including cancellation, can be made at review meetings. Changes will be agreed between the worker and the support worker.

We agree to the above terms and conditions.

Name of Support Worker Bob Leonard

Signed Bob Leonard Date 20/08/09
For Community Learning and Development

Volunteer Joe Brown

Signed Joe Brown Date _____

Volunteer Background Information:

Joe is an active member of the Grampian Climbing Association and serves on the school board of Auchterellon Primary School.

Next Review Date: 01/09/2008

J Brown
Signatures: *B Leonard*

Volunteer Agreement & Plan Review:

Next Review Date:

Signatures:

Volunteer Agreement & Plan Review:

Next Review Date:

Signatures:

Volunteer Log

Date	Achievements	Comments	Initialled Volunteer/Staff
11/01/08	Djing at FNL Disco	Great Evening. 200 young people attended. Felt nervous only did one hour!	CA/VS
18/01/08		Practice evening, 6 new people attended.	CA/VS
25/01/08	Djing at School Burns Night	Disaster – only 50 people turned up but that was out with my control and the people who attended had a good time.	CA/VS
01/02/08	Designed Posters to advertise group	First time using Microsoft Publisher, learnt something new. Now got fab funky posters to attract new members.	CA/VS
08/02/08		Practice evening, 2 new people now have a core group of 10:-) Posters must be working	CA/VS
15/02/08		I supported one of the new members to do a 15 minute set. 180 people turned up not nearly so nervous this time, great buzz!!	CA/VS

EXPENSES

- You are entitled to travel and out of pocket expenses.
- You must keep records of mileage, tickets and all receipts in order to claim the money back
- Necessary Forms will need to be completed
- Mileage will be paid at the rate set by the council. You will be required to fill out a travelling and subsistence claim form. Your claim will then be paid direct to your bank account.
- Any expenses towards Child Care costs, please speak to your Support Worker.



OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Holidays

All volunteers must feel free to take holidays; we would ask you to inform your support worker as soon as you can.

Illness/Absence

If you are ill or just unable to meet with volunteering commitments we would ask you to contact your support worker and let them know as soon as possible.



VOLUNTEERING AND WELFARE BENEFITS

Notifying the benefits office

Potential volunteers should notify the benefits office where they make their claim before they start voluntary work. The benefits office can stop benefits if they find that a volunteer has started volunteering without sending them the proper notification.

Note: If you are claiming Incapacity Benefit/Disability Living Allowance this should NOT trigger an extraordinary fitness for work test. The benefits office should not require a doctor's letter about volunteering.

Duties of claimant

- Volunteers must tell the office at which they make their claim that they are about to start voluntary work.
- Volunteers claiming Job Seekers Allowance should be actively seeking work.
- Volunteers claiming Job Seekers Allowance should be available to work within one week.

Volunteering may enhance your employability and could create opportunities to follow a new career path.

Local Information

In addition to this handbook your support worker will provide you with information about:-

- Community Learning and Development
- Your Local Community Centre and Staff
- Your Volunteering tasks and how to complete tasks
- Expenses
- Any policies or guidelines





