



Bridgewater Housing Association Policy

Policy name	Volunteer Policy
Policy category	Corporate (HR)
Policy number	CS47
Date adopted	February 2015
Last review	
This review	November 2023
Next review	November 2026
Equalities impact assessment required	Yes
Links to other documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EVH Salaries and Allowances • EVH Statement of Terms and Conditions of Employment • Use of Vehicles Policy • Health & Safety Control Manual
Consultation	This policy has been circulated to all staff for comment.

1. INTRODUCTION

Bridgewater Housing Association recognises the benefits that volunteers bring to the organisation and the bridges they can build between the organisation and the local community. In return, Bridgewater hopes to give its volunteers an opportunity to exercise their skills in a different environment and to undertake new experiences.

It is Bridgewater's aim that everyone who volunteers is valued, treated with consideration and given opportunities for fulfilment or personal growth throughout their volunteering experience.

2. SHR STANDARDS OF GOVERNANCE AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

This policy is intended to provide additional assurance to the Board of Bridgewater Housing Association that it is complying with:

Standard 5

The RSL conducts its affairs with honesty and integrity.

Standard 6

The governing body and senior officers have the necessary skills and knowledge they need to be effective.

3. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:-

- Define the role of volunteers within Bridgewater.
- Establish the procedures for recruiting, selecting, and managing volunteers.
- Ensure that volunteers are aware of their responsibilities and rights.
- Maintain a safe and inclusive environment for volunteers.

4. DEFINITION

The National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) defines volunteering as 'when someone spends unpaid time doing something to benefit others.' Volunteers can be any age or from any background. They can be studying, working or retired.

Volunteers are not employees and are not covered by employment law. It is important to distinguish between paid staff and volunteers and it should always be clear that:-

- Volunteering is a free choice made by the person giving up their time
- Volunteer roles are not the same as staff roles
- Volunteers are not a replacement for paid staff

5. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

Volunteers can be recruited or identified through a variety of means e.g. advertising, voluntary organisations (SCVO, Volunteer Scotland, Engage Renfrewshire, Voluntary Action East Renfrewshire and Volunteer Inverclyde), recommendations by staff or Board members.

Once a volunteer has been identified, they will be required to complete a Volunteer Application form ([Appendix 1](#)). This form will assist in matching volunteers with appropriate roles within the Association. The applicant will be invited to an informal meeting with the manager to provide relevant information and explore their aspirations and the experience they can bring to the Association. It is important for all involved to appreciate that the interview is not a competitive process and the sole selection criteria is suitability for the role.

Written references will be taken up and depending on the role, a Disclosure Scotland Check may be required (the Association will reimburse the cost).

6. VOLUNTEER ROLES

Volunteer roles may include but are not limited to:

- **Community Engagement** - Assisting with community events, outreach programs, and tenant involvement initiatives.
- **Administrative Support** - Providing support in administrative tasks such as data entry, filing, and answering phones.
- **Training and Workshops** - Assisting in organizing and delivering training sessions or workshops for tenants.

7. AGREEMENT

All volunteers will be required to sign a Volunteer Agreement ([Appendix 2](#)), which outlines the terms and conditions of their engagement, including:-

- A description of the volunteer role.
- Expected time commitment.
- Confidentiality requirements.
- Code of conduct.
- Health and safety guidelines.

8. TRAINING

Volunteers should receive detailed information about their role and training directly related to the tasks they undertake, as well as any other training being offered by those people who they are working with and where this is sensible and appropriate to their function.

An induction process, including Health and Safety should be followed in every case to ensure volunteers understand the environment they are to work in. Training will help clarify how the volunteer is expected to carry out his or her tasks.

9. SUPPORT AND SUPERVISION

Every volunteer should have a named supervisor who they can go to with queries or problems. This is also important for feedback so volunteers know how they are performing. Should volunteers performance fall below the required level steps should be taken to remedy this. Standards need to be established and maintained regardless of the status of the individual.

Situations of misconduct need to be similarly managed. Being a volunteer does not excuse poor behaviour. Although volunteers are not bound by contractual obligations, the Association will act, in relation to performance and capability issues as if they were and will treat them like any other member of staff who either does not perform or has acted in a way that may involve disciplinary proceedings.

10. EXPENSES

Bridgewater values its volunteers and their work and wants to ensure there are no financial barriers to volunteer involvement. If travelling on authorised Bridgewater business the following are covered:-

- Fares for public transport. We will refund rail travel at second class rates. Taxis should not normally be used unless necessary and cheaper.
- Car mileage – reimbursed as per EVH salaries and allowances. The vehicle must be comprehensively insured for business as well as private purposes. Volunteers will be required to disclose their driving licence and insurance documents to the Finance Officer and expenses for journeys cannot be claimed unless this has been done. License, MOT and insurance details must be resubmitted every year.
- Subsistence – as per EVH salaries and allowances

- Other travel related costs – parking costs (excluding parking fines) and train meals. We may reimburse the actual cost of the meal (including VAT but not alcoholic beverages).

Payment of expenses will be avoided by:-

- Direct invoicing from approved transport providers
- Provision of refreshments at meetings/event

An Expenses Form must be submitted when making a claim. The Volunteer's supervisor will be responsible for signing to authorise payment of expenses or in their absence a member of the Finance Department will arrange this with another manager.

Expenses will be paid monthly by BACS directly to the Volunteer's bank account (where bank details and permission have been provided). Other payment arrangements can be made where necessary e.g. from petty cash.

Fraudulent expenses claims will be considered as theft. In the event that a fraudulent claim is made, Bridgewater Housing Association will follow Disciplinary Procedures and may report the fraud to the Police if appropriate.

11. LIABILITY

For any Association activity undertaken by a volunteer, the Association's public liability insurance will apply. Volunteers should be aware that this insurance does not cover them for loss of earnings should they sustain an injury.

12. HEALTH & SAFETY

Any necessary protective clothing and equipment will be provided to permit the volunteer to carry out the role safely.

13. GDPR

This information will be handled in line with our obligations under the current data protection regulations and our own Privacy Policy. Information regarding how your data will be used and the basis for processing your data is provided in Bridgewater Housing Association's Employee Fair Processing Notice.

14. POLICY AVAILABILITY

This document can also be provided in large print, braille, audio or other non-written format and in a variety of languages, on request.

15. MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed every three years, unless amendment is prompted by a change in legislation, operational requirements or staff feedback.

**BRIDGEWATER HOUSING ASSOCIATION
VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM**

PERSONAL INFORMATION	
Title	
First Name	
Surname	
Address	
Postcode	
Contact Number	
Email Address	
Emergency Contact	
Phone Number	

SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE
Relevant Skills
Previous Volunteer Experience
Reason/Motivation for Volunteering
Personal Goals/Expectations for Volunteering

ROLE AND AVAILABILITY	
Days and hours available	
Preferred Volunteer Role	

Signature		Date	
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I declare that the information provided in this application is true and accurate.

Please return the completed form to:

Bridgewater Housing Association, India of Inchinnan, Greenock Road, Inchinnan PA4 9LH

BRIDGEWATER HOUSING ASSOCIATION VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

This document serves as the agreement between Bridgewater Housing Association and the volunteer. By signing below, the volunteer agrees to abide by the policies and procedures outlined in the Volunteer Policy.

1. Volunteer Role

Specify the volunteer role and responsibilities.

2. Time Commitment

Specify the expected time commitment, including days and hours.

3. Supervisor

The volunteer's supervisor will be **insert name** who will be the day to day contact with whom all queries and problems should be discussed.

4. Confidentiality

The volunteer agrees to maintain the confidentiality of any sensitive information obtained during their volunteer service. This includes but is not limited to tenant information, organizational strategies, and internal communications.

5. Code of Conduct

The volunteer agrees to adhere to the Bridgewater's code of conduct, treating all individuals with respect and promoting a positive environment.

6. Health and Safety

The volunteer acknowledges and agrees to follow all health and safety guidelines provided to ensure their well-being and the well-being of others.

7. Termination

The Volunteer acknowledges that their service is voluntary and may be terminated at any time, by either party, with or without cause and with or without notice.

By signing below, the Volunteer acknowledges that they have read and understood the terms and conditions of this Agreement and agree to abide by them.

Signature:

Volunteer's Name

Date: