

Sid Valley Help Policies and procedures

The policies, procedures and documents listed below were approved by the Trustees on 24 October 2023.

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
- Health and Safety Policy
- Financial governance
- Data Privacy Notice
- Risk Management Policy
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Whistle Blowing Policy
- Volunteer welcome letter
- Volunteer Policy
- Lone Working Policy
- Volunteer application form
- Volunteer interview form
- Request for DBS check letter
- Referral and befriending initial assessment
- Volunteer Agreement
- Boundaries guidance for friendship volunteers
- Keeping safe while volunteering
- Making a referral to our befriending service
- About the SVH face to face befriending service
- Volunteer expenses claim form

All policies and procedures will be reviewed every three years.

The name and email address of Trustees responsible for specific issues (such as Safeguarding) are listed on the Sid Valley Help website under 'Contact us'.



Di Fuller, Chair

Sid Valley Help is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation
Registered in England no. 1181458

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EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Statement of policy

Sid Valley HELP recognises that we live in a society where discrimination still operates to the disadvantage of many groups in society. We believe that all persons should have equal rights to recognition of their human dignity, and to have equal opportunities to be educated, to work, receive services and to participate in society. Sid Valley HELP is committed to the promotion of equal opportunities within the Sid Valley through the way we manage the organisation and provide services to the community.

The objective of this policy is that no person should suffer or experience less favourable treatment, discrimination or lack of opportunities on the grounds of protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010 (including gender, race, colour, nationality, ethnicity, religious or philosophical beliefs, health status, disability, age, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, political beliefs), class, responsibility for dependents, ex-offender status as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, lack of formal qualifications where such qualifications are not formally required, or any other grounds which cannot be shown to be justifiable within the context of this policy.

This policy will influence and affect every aspect of activities carried out at Sid Valley HELP i.e. promotional work, services offered and other functions, as determined by the Trustees. Sid Valley HELP is committed to promoting equal opportunities for everyone whether they are seeking or using our services, applying for a position, or are a volunteer or employee.

Implementation

The Chair of Trustees has specific responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy but all trustees, members of the management committee, volunteers and employees are expected to abide by the policy and help create an equality environment, which is its objective.

In order to implement this policy we shall:

- Communicate the policy to volunteers and relevant others.
- Incorporate specific and appropriate duties in respect of implementing the equal opportunities policy into job descriptions and work objectives of all volunteers and employees.
- Ensure that those who are involved in assessing candidates for recruitment as volunteers or employees apply non-discriminatory selection techniques.

All volunteers are expected to conduct themselves in a professional and considerate manner at all times. Sid Valley HELP will not tolerate discriminatory behaviour of any kind. Equally, discriminatory behaviour by clients towards volunteers or employees will not be tolerated.

Sid Valley HELP will treat seriously all complaints of unlawful discrimination on any forbidden grounds made by trustees, volunteers, employees clients or other third parties and will take action where appropriate. All complaints will be investigated in accordance with the organisation's complaints procedure, as appropriate and the complainant will be informed of the outcome in line with these procedures. We will also monitor the number and outcomes of complaints of discrimination made by volunteers, employees, clients and other third parties.

Recruitment and selection

The recruitment and selection process is crucially important to the equal opportunities policy. We will endeavour to ensure that those making recruitment decisions about volunteers and employees will not discriminate, whether consciously or unconsciously, in making these decisions.

Job or role descriptions, where used, will be revised to ensure that they are in line with our equal opportunities policy. Job requirements will be reflected accurately in any personnel specifications.

We will adopt a consistent, non-discriminatory approach to the advertising of vacancies. All applicants who apply for jobs or to volunteer with us will receive fair treatment and will be considered solely on their ability to do their job.

Monitoring

We will maintain and review the employment records of all volunteers and employees in order to monitor the progress of this policy.

The results of the monitoring procedure will be reviewed annually to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of this policy. Consideration will be given, if necessary, to adjusting this policy to afford greater equality of opportunities to all applicants, volunteers and employees.

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COMPLAINTS POLICY

Sid Valley HELP aims to provide its volunteers and service users with the best possible service. However, from time to time there may be occasions when users of our support services feel that the quality falls short of what they could reasonably expect. Your continued goodwill is greatly valued by us and we would expect to resolve any day-to-day difficulties or complaints informally and as quickly as possible. In the first instance we would expect you to raise any complaint directly with the volunteer or Trustee concerned.

The more formal procedure outlined below is intended for use by users of our services, where informal communication has not resolved the problem.

This is what you should do:

If your complaint to the volunteer has not resolved the matter, please write to the Chair of Trustees who will acknowledge, in writing within **ten working days**, the receipt of any complaint. If the complaint is about the Chair the complaint should be addressed to the Vice-Chair of the Trustees (marked '*confidential*') at the address below.

This is what Sid Valley HELP will do:

The Chair will investigate the circumstances leading to the complaint and will communicate the results of the investigation to the complainant normally within 20 working days of the complaint being received. If the complaint is found to be justified, the Chair will agree any necessary further action with the complainant.

The complainant will have the right if dissatisfied with the results of the enquiry to put their case in writing to the Trustees as a group. If the appeal is found to be justified, the Chair of the Trustees will agree any necessary further action with the complainant. The decision of the appeal is final and no further appeal is possible.

The Chair will keep the Trustees informed of the number and nature of complaints, and the outcomes. S/he will report to the Trustees on this at least annually.

If you have a complaint:

Contact the Chair of Trustees, Sid Valley HELP, c/o Woodpeckers, Knowle Drive, Sidmouth. EX10 8HW or the Vice-Chair, Salcombe Close House, Sid Lane, Sidmouth EX10 9AW.

Alternatively contact Citizens Advice for advice on how to proceed, or the Charities Commission see <https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-charity>

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SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Introduction

Sid Valley Help provides services requiring direct contact with vulnerable adults and as part of their roles employees and volunteers of Sid Valley HELP will be in contact with clients who are vulnerable or at risk.

Sid Valley Help is committed to safeguarding practices that help ensure the safety of adults at risk whilst taking part in our activities. This policy helps everyone involved in our organisation to:

- be aware of our legal responsibilities
- understand the safeguarding risks in any activities
- know what to do if they have a concern about the wellbeing or welfare of any adult at risk that comes into contact with our organisation.

The safeguarding policy and associated procedures apply to all individuals involved in Sid Valley Help activities. The policy applies to all concerns about the safety of adults at risk while taking part in the activities we run. We have a duty to alert the relevant authorities if any client using our services is at risk of significant harm or abuse.

Legislation

This policy, and the practices within it, is based on the relevant legislation and guidance seeking to protect adults at risk, including:

- The Care Act 2014; and
- The Mental Capacity Act 2005 (which protects people's right to make their own decisions in any situation where they are able to do so).

We base our practices on the principles laid out in the Care Act 2014 i.e.

- Empowerment – People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and give informed consent.
- Prevention – It is better to take action before harm occurs.
- Proportionality – The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
- Protection – Support and representation for those in greatest need.
- Partnership – Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.
- Accountability – Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

Definitions

A vulnerable person is any adult who:

- may be in need of community care services by reason of age, illness or disability whether physical or mental
- is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect
- may be unable to take care of him/herself or unable to protect him/herself against significant harm or exploitation

or is any person under the age of 18.

Risk refers to situations or behaviours which present a real or potential threat of harm to a person's health, development, safety or well-being. Vulnerable people can be at risk because of the actions or behaviour of others or they can be at risk because of self-neglect, their behaviour and lifestyle.



Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights. It can be physical, psychological, financial, sexual, neglect or emotional or organisational or discriminatory abuse and can take place in any setting.

Neglect can be deliberate or unintentional, amounting to abuse by a carer (formal or informal) or self-neglect by the vulnerable person.

Policy

Sid Valley HELP is committed to ensuring that people who use our services are not exploited or abused and that our working practices minimise the risk of abuse. To that end we aim to:

- respond sensitively to reported incidents of neglect and abuse
- respect the rights and wishes of vulnerable people, however if abuse is suspected then it is the duty of the safeguarding trustee to report the abuse, even if the client has requested that it is not reported.
- offer services to the highest standards of good practice.

Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) checks are required on all new trustees, employees and volunteers and will be renewed for existing volunteers at least once every three years, monitored by the safeguarding trustee.

We will provide information to the DBS on any volunteer who may have posed a risk to vulnerable people, whilst working for us.

It is a requirement for all Trustees, employees and volunteers to have a current Level 2 Safeguarding qualification. SVH will provide free training and certification which must be completed within 3 months of engagement and updated every three years.

We have a whistle-blower policy where unacceptable conduct of volunteers can be reported to the Chair of Trustees without recrimination.

Confidentiality

Although volunteers sign a confidentiality agreement, it must be stressed that where abuse to a person is alleged, suspected, reported or concerns are raised then the Trustees must be notified.

Volunteers should be aware that the Trustees cannot ignore issues around abuse and that steps will be taken to deal with it in as sensitive a manner as possible.

Procedure if abuse or neglect is reported or suspected

If abuse is reported to Sid Valley Help, or volunteers recognise abuse or neglect, the following procedure outlines what steps should be taken.

- a. If there are general concerns about a vulnerable person because of signs and symptoms that have been noticed:
 - Express concern; ask how they are; discretely try to understand the situation
 - Discuss concerns with the Volunteer Manager or a Trustee
 - If the cause of concern relates to deterioration of health or self-neglect, the matter will be referred to the Community Health and Social Care team for further action.
 - If the matter is urgent due to the severity of the symptoms contact the Chair of Trustees immediately. Record all the information carefully, including dates and times where relevant and as much information as possible.

The Chair of Trustees will contact Devon Safeguarding Partnership.

b. If abuse is disclosed or suspected:

- Listen carefully to what the person is saying.
- Give the person time to say what he or she wants to.
- Make a clear record using the person's own words.
- Remain calm and reassure the person.
- Ensure that the person knows how to contact the police to report the incident if he or she wishes to do so.
- Do not investigate yourself.
- The volunteer must report it to a Trustee

The Chair of Trustees will contact Devon Safeguarding Partnership.

If the person asks you not to take any action

You must explain to the person that you must inform the SVH Trustee and that SVH have a duty to report all Safeguarding issues

Support to Staff and Volunteers

It is recognised that dealing with allegations of abuse can be stressful. Sid Valley HELP will offer staff as much support during the process as resources permit. If allegations are made against a volunteer of Sid Valley Help the Chair will refer them to the Disciplinary Procedure and report the issue to Devon Safeguarding Partnership.

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HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

Introduction

The Sid Valley HELP Trustees have overall responsibility for health and safety in the organisation, and for ensuring that it fulfils all its legal responsibilities. It is the duty of Trustees, employees and volunteers to uphold this policy and for the Sid Valley HELP Management Committee to provide the necessary funds and resources to put it into practice.

The Trustees are committed to ensuring that all its activities are safe and they will do whatever it can to provide for the health, safety and welfare of all employees, volunteers, members and visitors ensuring that risks to them are minimised at all times.

Sid Valley HELP Management Committee will observe the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and all relevant regulations and codes of practice made under it.

The Sid Valley Help Responsibilities

A designated Trustee is responsible for the implementation and monitoring of health and safety policies and recommending changes where necessary. The Health & Safety (H&S) Trustee is listed on the SVH website under 'Contact us'.

All accidents or unsafe incidents will be investigated by the H&S Trustee on behalf of the Committee as soon as possible and then to be reported to the Trustees at the next Committee meeting.

The H&S Trustee is responsible for:

- Assessing the risk to the health and safety of employees, volunteers, members and visitors and identifying what measures are needed to comply with its health and safety obligations
- Ensuring that all volunteers are aware of the SVH Risk Management policy and that a Risk Assessment is performed before any activity occurs. Refer to SVH Risk Management Policy and SVH Risk Assessment documents
- Ensuring that equipment is safe and well maintained
- Encouraging employees, volunteers and members to co-operate in ensuring safe and healthy conditions and systems by effective joint consultation
- Establishing emergency procedures as required.

Volunteer Responsibilities

All Sid Valley Help Volunteers will ensure that they:

- are aware of the contents of this safety policy
- comply with this policy
- take care of themselves and others who may be affected by their actions or omissions
- will report all accidents, or unsafe situations, and any near misses (things which could have led to an accident), to the H&S Trustee and email the details to sidvalleyhelp@gmail.com
- are aware of fire procedures for the area in which they are working



Training

To comply with legislation and to promote the health, safety and welfare of employees and volunteers, health and safety training will be provided as follows:

- at inductions
- on the introduction of new technology
- when changes are made to venues
- when training needs are identified during risk assessments.

Resolving health and safety problems

Any employee or volunteer with a health and safety concern must first tell the H&S Trustee.

If, after investigation, the problem is not corrected in a reasonable time, or the H&S Trustee decides that no action is required but the volunteer is not satisfied with this, the employee or volunteer may then refer the matter to the SVH Chair. This must be in writing.

Public Health measures

The H&S Trustee will ensure that all volunteers are aware of any current government regulations (for example due to a pandemic) and ensure that they are followed and where necessary have the required protection, face mask, hand sanitiser etc.

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FINANCIAL GOVERNANCE

1. The Trustees will appoint the Treasurer who should have the unanimous support of all Trustees and members of the Management Committee.
2. The Trustees have the right to terminate the Treasurer's appointment at any time and without notice.
3. The Treasurer should maintain up-to-date accounts for Sid Valley HELP and should circulate detailed accounts each quarter to the Trustees and Management Committee Members. The accounts should include an income and expenditure account, a statement of assets and a bank reconciliation.
4. The Treasurer should prepare Annual Accounts and submit them to the Trustees and Management Committee members within 3 months of the end of the financial year for their approval and for review by an Independent Examiner. The Annual Accounts should clearly differentiate between restricted and non-restricted income and funds.
5. The Annual Accounts should be approved by CIO members at the AGM
6. Sid Valley Help will maintain an account with a major bank.
7. All banking transactions will require the approval of two authorised signatories.
8. Bank statements should be sent to the Chair of the Trustees for onward transmission to the Treasurer. Where statements are only available online then the Chair or a designated Trustee will check the online statements at least quarterly.
9. If required, Sid Valley Help will maintain Petty Cash to be managed by a person appointed by the Trustees on an impressed basis. The level of the petty cash will be approved by the Management Committee from time to time and will initially be set at £50. The person managing the Petty Cash will provide the petty cash accounts at the end of each quarter to be approved by the Chair.
10. All payments with the exception of petty cash payments should be approved by the Chair. In the event that this is not possible due to the absence of the Chair, they should be approved by another Trustee/ Management Committee member before payment, and then countersigned by the Chair on their return
11. Authorised signatories should preferably not sign cheques or initiate online transfers in favour of themselves
12. The Treasurer should brief the Trustees and Management Committee members at regular intervals regarding future cash flow requirements.

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DATA PRIVACY NOTICE

1. Your personal data – what is it?

Personal data relates to a living individual who can be identified from that data. Identification can be by the information alone or in conjunction with any other information in the data controller's possession or likely to come into such possession. The processing of personal data is governed by the General Data Protection Regulation (the "GDPR") and the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018)

2. Who are we?

The Management Committee of SVH is the data controller (contact details below). This means it decides how your personal data is processed and for what purposes.

Sid Valley HELP
Woodpeckers
Knowle Drive
Sidmouth
EX10 8HW
01395 892011

To enquire about any aspect of this document or your associated data protection rights please contact the Management Committee/ Trustees at the above address or via email: sidvalleyhelp@gmail.com.

3. How do we process your personal data?

SVH complies with its obligations under the DPA 2018 and the GDPR by keeping personal data up to date; by storing and destroying it securely; by not collecting or retaining excessive amounts of data; by protecting personal data from loss, misuse, unauthorised access and disclosure and by ensuring that appropriate technical measures are in place to protect personal data.

We use your personal data for the following purposes:

- To enable us to provide a voluntary service for the benefit of the public in a particular geographical area as specified in our constitution
- To administer records of members or officers of organisations
- To fundraise and promote the interests of the charity
- To manage our volunteers
- To maintain our own accounts and records (including the processing of gift aid applications)
- To inform members of SVH and organisations of news, events and activities.

4. What is the legal basis for processing your personal data?

- Explicit consent of the data subject so that we can keep you informed about news, events, and activities.
- Processing is necessary for carrying out legal obligations in relation to Gift Aid or social protection law, or a collective agreement.
- There is no disclosure to a third party without consent



5. Sharing your personal data

Your personal data will be treated as strictly confidential and will only be shared with other members of SVH for purposes connected with SVH. We will only share your data with third parties outside of SVH with your consent.

6. How long do we keep your personal data?

SVH will hold all personal data for a period of up to 2 years following the completion of an event or activity unless this is superseded by the requirement to retain records for insurance or accounting purposes in which case the data will be held for 6 years. We retain gift aid declarations and associated paperwork for up to 6 years after the calendar year to which they relate.

7. Your rights and your personal data

Unless subject to an exemption under the GDPR and DPA 2018, you have the following rights with respect to your personal data:

- The right to request a copy of your personal data which SVH holds about you
- The right to request that SVH corrects any personal data if it is found to be inaccurate or out of date
- The right to request your personal data is erased where it is no longer necessary for SVH to retain such data
- The right to withdraw your consent to the processing at any time
- The right to request that the data controller provide the data subject with his/her personal data and where possible, to transmit that data directly to another data controller, (known as the right to data portability)
- The right, where there is a dispute in relation to the accuracy or processing of your personal data, to request a restriction is placed on further processing
- The right to object to the processing of personal data
- The right to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioners Office.

8. Further processing

If we wish to use your personal data for a new purpose, not covered by this Data Protection Notice, then we will provide you with a new notice explaining this new use prior to commencing the processing and setting out the relevant purposes and processing conditions. Where and whenever necessary, we will seek your prior consent to the new processing.

9. Contact Details

To exercise all relevant rights, queries or complaints please in the first instance contact SVH at the address in Section 2.

You can contact the Information Commissioners Office on 0303 123 1113 or via email www.ico.org.uk/global/contact-us/email or at the Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire. SK9 5AF.

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RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY

Risk management is important to keep our volunteers and clients safe and to manage the charity's funds and assets.

Sid Valley Help Trustees manage risk to ensure that:

- significant risks are known and monitored, enabling Trustees to make timely and informed decisions
- the charity makes the most of opportunities and develops them fully aware of the risks involved
- forward and strategic planning are improved
- reporting risk management in the annual report helps to demonstrate accountability to members of the CIO, stakeholders, donors and the general public

The Sid Valley Help trustees have ultimate responsibility for risk. They regularly review and assess the risks faced by SVH and plan the management of those risks. The Trustees recognise the legal requirement for a risk management statement in their annual report.

While the responsibility for risk management is held by the Trustees, everyone involved in the charity's activities has a part to play in risk management. To ensure this is co-ordinated effectively and that we follow an agreed risk management framework, the process is overseen by the Chair who ensures that the policy and process is followed across the organisation.

Each area of Sid Valley Help's activity is led by a trustee, who will be responsible for and carry out the risk assessment process on a regular basis. The process includes identifying, assessing, recording, managing, reviewing and reporting on risks in their area of work. A standard template for recording SVA risks will be used and a consistent RAG rating used for reporting. All red scored risks will be reported to the Chair of Trustees at each Trustees meeting.

The policy and process will be reviewed regularly. All trustees receive guidance on use of the risk management process.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

Why we have a Policy

Trustees have a legal obligation to act in the best interests of Sid Valley HELP and to act in accordance with the charity's constitution and to avoid situations where there may be an actual or potential conflict of interest.

Conflicts of interests, whether financial or otherwise, may arise where an individual's personal or family interests and/or loyalties conflict with those of Sid Valley HELP.

Such conflicts may create problems; they can discourage free discussion and result in decisions or actions that are not in the interests of Sid Valley HELP and risk the impression that Sid Valley HELP has acted improperly.

The aim of this policy is to protect both the charity and the individuals involved from any appearance of impropriety.

The Declaration of Interests

We ask trustees to declare their interests, and any gifts or hospitality received in connection with their role in Sid Valley HELP. A declaration of interest form is provided for this purpose (see appendix A). In addition a Trustee should declare any relevant interest before discussion at a Trustee meeting.

The declaration of interests needs to be reviewed at least annually and also updated when any changes occur.

The following types of interest should be declared:

- Any personal/family relationships with paid staff and volunteers or possible recruitment of any personal or family member.
- Any gifts or hospitality received
- A trustee renting property or lending money to the charity
- Any relationships with other groups that will affect your role as trustee – if you are a member of another organisation this needs to be declared as there may be a conflict particularly if both organisations work in the same geographical area or have the same client / user groups.
- If you are a councillor, employee or board member of an organisation that Sid Valley HELP may approach for funding or who is currently providing funding for Sid Valley HELP.
- If a Trustee learns of an opportunity at a board meeting which the charity may or may not wish to exploit but which he / she wishes to take advantage of themselves or on behalf of another group.

Data Protection

The information provided will be processed in accordance with data protection principles as set out in the Data Protection Act 2018. Data will be processed only to ensure that trustees act in the best interests of Sid Valley HELP. The information provided will not be used for any other purpose.

What to do if you face a Conflict of Interest

If there is a situation which you consider will be a long term conflict this should be discussed with other trustees (in particular the Chair) at the earliest opportunity and a decision made on how to proceed.

At the beginning of all meetings you should declare immediately if there is an item on the agenda where they may be a conflict of interest.

Example: If you are a user of Sid Valley HELP services, or the carer of someone who uses Sid Valley HELP services, you should not be involved in decisions that directly affect the service that you, or the person you care for, receive. You should declare your interest at the earliest opportunity and withdraw from any subsequent discussion. You may, however, participate in discussions from which you may indirectly benefit, for example where the benefits are universal to all users, or where your benefit is minimal.

Disclosure in Accounts

Any income or benefits a trustee receives from Sid Valley HELP in the course of an accounting year must be disclosed.

Where a member of Sid Valley HELP Management Committee is connected to a party involved in the supply of a service or product to the charity, this information will also be fully disclosed in the annual report and accounts.

Decisions taken where a Trustee or Member of Staff has an Interest

In the event of the Management Committee having to decide upon a question in which a trustee or member of staff has an interest, all decisions will be made by vote, in line with the charity's constitution.

Recording Disclosure of Interest

All decisions, including the declared conflict and the outcome should be reported in the minutes of the Trustees meetings.

Appendix A

Sid Valley HELP Declaration of Interest Form

I have set out below my interest in accordance with the Sid Valley Help Conflict of Interest Policy.

Category	Please give details of the interest and whether it applies to you or where appropriate a connected person.
Current employment and any previous employment in which the Trustee continues to have a financial interest	
Appointments (voluntary or otherwise) e.g.: trusteeships, directorships, local authority, membership, tribunals etc	
Membership of any professional bodies, special interest groups or mutual support organisations	
Investment in companies, partnerships and other forms of business major shareholdings, beneficial interest where these are felt to constitute a potential conflict of interests.	
Any contractual relationship with (<i>insert name of org</i>)	
Ownership of any property that could create a conflict of interest	
Gifts or hospitality offered by external bodies and whether this was declined or accepted in the last twelve months	
Any other conflicts that are not covered above where there could be perceived to be conflicts of interest	
Any other people, organisations, companies or institutions with whom you are connected whom you have not already referred to on this form	

To the best of my knowledge, the above information is complete & correct. I undertake to update on an annual basis. I give my consent for it to be used for the purposes described in the conflicts of interest policy and for no other purpose.

Name: _____

Signed: _____ Date : _____

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WHISTLE BLOWING POLICY

Policy

Sid Valley Help is committed to conducting its operations to the highest standards of openness, probity and accountability. All volunteers and employees are encouraged to be aware of the situation in which they work and the actions of other volunteers and third parties around them. They should report any contraventions of Sid Valley Help's Equal Opportunities Policy, Health and Safety Policy, any reasonable suspicions of fraud or other information in accordance with the procedure set out in this policy.

Volunteers and employees can make reports anonymously and without fear of reprisal or detriment, even where the accusations involve a volunteer's line management.

Other stakeholders and other interested third parties are encouraged to report their reasonable suspicions under this policy.

This policy applies to all aspects of Sid Valley Help's work.

Procedure

Any person can make a report:

- call the Sid Valley Help phone line 01395 892011 or 07378 964521 (an answering machine service is available out of office hours).
- email sidvalleyhelp@gmail.com or use the contact form on www.sidvalleyhelp.org.uk.
- Write to Chair of Trustees, Sid Valley Help, Woodpeckers, Knowle Drive. EX10 8HW

All reports will be passed directly to the Chair of Trustees for investigation. Whether the whistleblower chooses to identify themselves or not, Sid Valley Help undertakes to investigate all reports received.

This policy is intended to assist individuals seeking to report suspected malpractice, illegal acts or impropriety. It is not intended as a method for raising concerns regarding charity direction or financial decisions or for making general service complaints. It should not be used for personal grievances other than confidential reporting of harassment, bullying or discrimination. Unless confidentiality is required, all personal grievances should follow the process laid out in the complaints policy.

All allegations and suspicions should be reported in good faith and will be investigated. Where appropriate, Sid Valley Help commits to informing the informant of the progress and outcome of any investigation.

Anonymity

In order to increase the chances of a successful conviction following a fraud investigation, whistleblowers will be encouraged to provide their name and contact details and may be called as witnesses. However, we recognise that people will in certain cases, prefer to report their suspicions anonymously and they should do this in the knowledge that a full investigation will be carried out.



Sid Valley Help acknowledges its obligation under The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 to take reasonable steps to ensure that any individual reporting concerns will be protected from suffering detriment or reprisals as a result.

The legislation gives legal protection to persons providing information relating to the committing of (or the potential to commit) the following:

- Criminal offences;
- Failure to comply with legal obligations;
- Miscarriages of justice;
- Failure to comply with Health and Safety legislation;
- Environmental damage;
- The deliberate concealment of the above

The Trustees of Sid Valley Help will monitor the effectiveness of this Policy and will review it annually.

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VOLUNTEER WELCOME LETTER

Dear [Volunteer] – Welcome!

Thank you for wanting to help us with whatever time you have to offer. In turn we will help you. We will make sure you feel confident to start volunteering and we will match you with someone that we feel best suits what you have said you would like to do.

We will give you plenty of support both before and during your volunteering time. We will ask you to come to induction and training sessions, and may even be able to offer things that would help lead to employment if that is what you need, such as First Aid or Safeguarding Vulnerable adults.

When you are ready you will enter into an agreement with us that you wish to volunteer your time and services.

Thank you for your interest in volunteering with us. We hope that you enjoy it.

Di Fuller
Chair of Trustees, Sid Valley Help

VOLUNTEER POLICY

1 Introduction

Our mission is to mobilise the goodwill of our community to support all local residents of the Sid Valley in times of loneliness, difficulty or life changing circumstances. Our aim is to provide an information and signposting service about health and wellbeing related services available and to offer a service of companionship including home visits, help with socialising, accompaniment to shopping and appointments, and carer support.

Sid Valley Help is a charity governed by volunteer Trustees in accordance with our constitution which is available on the website. The achievement of the goals is best served by the active participation of people from the community therefore we encourage the involvement of volunteers at all levels in the organisation and within all activities.

Purpose of the volunteer policy

The purpose of the policy is to provide overall guidance and direction to staff and volunteers involved in activities related to Sid Valley Help. Matters not specifically covered by the policy shall be decided by the Trustees.

Definitions

A 'volunteer' is anyone who without compensation or expectation of compensation beyond reimbursement of expenses incurred in the course of his or her voluntary duties performs a task at the direction of and on behalf of the organisation. A 'volunteer' must be officially accepted and enrolled by the organisation prior to performance of the task.

A 'supervisor' is someone who directs and supports the volunteer in carrying out tasks. The supervisor may be a Trustee or a volunteer who we have asked to undertake a management role, or the Volunteer Manager.

Volunteer rights and responsibilities

Volunteers are a valuable resource and are entitled to the right to be given meaningful assignments, the right to be treated as equal co-workers, the right to effective supervision, the right to full involvement and participation, and the right for recognition for work done. In return, volunteers should agree to actively perform their duties to the best of their abilities and to remain loyal to the values, goals and procedures of Sid Valley Help

2 Volunteer Management Procedures

Maintenance of records

Sid Valley Help will maintain records on each volunteer, including dates of service, and duties performed. Volunteer personnel records will be kept confidential.

Representation of the organisation

Prior to any action or statement which might significantly affect or obligate Sid Valley Help, volunteers must seek prior consultation and approval from a Trustee. These actions may include, but are not limited to, public statements to the press or other publication, lobbying efforts with other organisations, collaborations or joint initiatives, or any agreements involving contractual or other financial obligations.



Confidentiality

Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all propriety or privileged information to which they have access while serving as a volunteer.

3 Volunteer Recruitment

Recruitment

Volunteers shall be recruited without regard to the protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010 which include age, disability, race, sex and sexual orientation. The sole qualification for recruitment shall be suitability to perform a task on behalf of the organisation. Volunteers may be recruited either through an interest in specific functions or through a general interest in volunteering which will be later matched with a specific function.

Application

All applicants have to complete the Sid Valley Help Volunteer Application Form prior to being invited to attend an interview.

Interview

All volunteers will be interviewed to ascertain their suitability for a position. The interview should determine the motivations of the volunteer, commitment to fulfil the requirements of the position, and should answer questions that the volunteer might have about the position. Interviews will usually be conducted by two Trustees or a Trustee and Volunteer Manager.

References and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check

If the interview is successful two character references will be taken up and, as volunteers may be in contact with vulnerable persons, a DBS check will be made. Volunteers who decline to give permission for these checks will not be accepted for placement with clients.

4 Volunteer Training

Safeguarding training

All Trustees, volunteers and staff must successfully complete a safeguarding training course, provided and paid for by Sid Valley Help before starting volunteering work and then every three years. This requirement may be waived in the first instance if the volunteer has successfully completed accredited training within the last three years.

Induction Training

Induction training will be delivered by Sid Valley Help and will include:

- Background to the organisation and its work
- The role of the volunteer
- Instruction on all relevant policies including this Volunteer Policy, Health and Safety, Equal Opportunities and Diversity, Working with Vulnerable Adults and Complaints Procedure.
- Recommended procedures
- Expectations
- Other information as appropriate

Additional Training

Volunteers will be offered additional training when necessary and appropriate.



5 Management of Volunteers

Structure

The Trustees are responsible for the management and control of the charity and its activities. All major decisions must be made by the Trustees and all major incidents must be reported to the Chair or another Trustee immediately.

In Sid Valley Help each major service or activity is usually allocated to a named Trustee who manages it on behalf of the Trustees as a group. The Volunteer Manager will allocate volunteers as appropriate and as agreed by the nominated Trustee.

The Volunteer Manager will be responsible for day-to-day management and guidance of the work of the volunteers.

Organisation, supervision and support

The Trustee or Volunteer Manager will provide ongoing support and organise the work of the volunteer, in negotiation with the volunteer, to meet the changing demands of the service or clients.

The Trustee and Volunteer Manager will monitor the work of the volunteer to provide guidance and support and to ensure policies and procedures are being followed.

The named Trustee will be available to the Volunteer Manager and any volunteer for consultation on any issue, or if s/he is not available, the volunteer should contact the Chair.

Communication

Volunteers are entitled to all necessary information pertinent to the performance of their work assignments.

Reviews

A volunteer can ask for a review of their work with a Trustee or Volunteer Manager at any time otherwise regular reviews will be scheduled depending upon the nature of the volunteering but at least once every 6 months. In some cases it may be appropriate to include the requirement for a review after specific periods of time in the agreement with the client; for example if it is thought the client might become too dependent on the volunteer.

6 Taking a referral

Sid Valley Help gets referrals from a variety of sources including the GPs, the Community Health and Social Care Team, relations and friends of residents and we take self-referrals. The document 'making a Referral' is included in this pack and gives information on what services we offer.

7 Initial client assessment

For self referral for friendship services a visit is made to the potential client's house and an initial assessment is made using the form included in the pack 'Befriending Initial Assessment' This measures wellbeing, determines which services are appropriate to offer the client and makes an initial risk assessment. The risk assessment is particularly important if visits to the client's home are to be made by a volunteer.

If the referral is made by a clinician then they should complete the Initial Client Assessment form at the referral stage.

8 Transport

It is the charity's policy that volunteers should not normally transport clients in their own vehicles as part of a voluntary service provided by Sid Valley Help. However, in exceptional circumstances the Trustees may authorise named volunteers to transport clients to and from specified destinations, for example where transport aids social inclusion.

9 Volunteer Support

Reimbursement of expenses

Volunteers are eligible for reimbursement of reasonable expenses, e.g. mileage, parking, telephone calls, incurred while undertaking tasks for Sid Valley Help. Prior approval must be sought for any major expenditure.

Insurance

Liability and accident insurance is provided and covers all volunteers engaged in the work of Sid Valley Help, but does not cover use of the volunteers' private vehicle. If a volunteer will be using their own vehicle to transport a client under clause 8 above, the volunteer must inform their insurer accordingly.

Abuse

Sid Valley Help Trustees will not tolerate any verbal or physical abuse of their volunteers and staff.

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LONE WORKING POLICY

This is a practical guide to remind you how to protect yourself when you are working or volunteering in the community on behalf of Sid Valley Help. Incidents are rare but it is everyone's responsibility to protect themselves while lone working and you should be aware of any risks and take steps to reduce them.

1 Policy Statement and Scope

We, the Trustees of Sid Valley Help, take the health and safety of its volunteers and staff seriously. We have a legal duty to ensure the health and safety of trustees, staff and volunteers working for Sid Valley Help. We recognise that sometimes volunteers may be working alone, whether that is attending meetings or unaccompanied making home visits. Our approach is to ensure that there are robust systems in place for the health, safety and welfare of all staff and volunteers

We have a responsibility to assess the risks to lone workers and to take steps to avoid or control the risks where necessary. Volunteers also have responsibility to take reasonable care of themselves. Lone working is not inherently unsafe and proper precautions can reduce the risks associated with working alone.

This policy is designed to raise awareness of the risks presented, to identify the responsibilities each person has in this situation and to give guidance on how to manage such risks. This policy applies to all trustees, staff and volunteers who may find themselves working alone at any time whilst undertaking duties for Sid Valley Help.

2 Definition

A lone worker is defined as anyone (a trustee, volunteer or member of staff) who works on their own, essentially when out of earshot of a colleague.

3 Policy principles

The following principles underpin this policy:

- No one associated with Sid Valley Help should be in a situation where they feel at risk while working for Sid Valley Help
- Everyone is responsible for avoiding and managing any risks that arise from lone working. This is essential as we cannot envisage every situation and everyone is expected to demonstrate common sense and to also take responsibility for their own actions and safety.
- We will involve volunteers in identifying risks that arise from lone working and consider ways to manage them.
- Lone working risks should be identified and where possible should be limited and managed.
- Volunteers will be provided with support, guidance and where applicable, training to assist them to stay safe
- Precautions should take into account both normal working conditions and foreseeable emergency situations e.g. fire, equipment failure, illness and accidents
- A failure to follow agreed safety procedures increases risk and is a decision taken by individuals for which they are personally accountable.

4 Responsibilities of you, the volunteers or staff

Volunteers and staff must report any concerns or lone working incidents to their supervising Trustee or Volunteer Manager who will keep a record of all lone working incidents reported to them and they are responsible for completing the Incident Log. All incidents will be reported to the Chair immediately.

In an emergency situation phone 999.

5 Lone Working risk assessment

Before any lone working, such as a home visit, takes place, the Volunteer Manager or the clinical team referrer will have carried out a risk assessment of the property, environment and the client. This will be discussed with you and you will have sufficient information to make an informed decision on whether or not the volunteering should go ahead.

The following general risk areas may arise from lone working:

- Home visits
- Meetings in empty or unfamiliar venues
- Lone activities e.g. parking vehicles at night
- Travel by car

Safe working arrangements are based on the following process:

- An assessment of the likeliness and seriousness of the risk
- The limiting of the risk
- Control or management of the risk.

6 Keeping your trusted contact informed

When you joined Sid Valley Help, we asked for details of someone we could contact in case of emergency - this could be a partner, family member or friend.

To keep yourself safe, you should tell your trusted contact:

- Who you are visiting and their contact details (we will have the permission of the individual to share their details with your contact.)
- The time you are going out
- When you expect to be back
- If your plans change
- When you have left the visit with the client.

----- " -----



VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM

Personal details

Surname: Forename/s:
Title: Mr/Mrs/Ms/other Date of Birth:
Address: Tel Home:
Mobile:
Postcode: Email:

We ask that you provide contact details for a Contact Person who we can get in touch with if we cannot reach you or in case of an emergency.

Contact Person Name:
Address:

Postcode:
Telephone Number(s):

Please confirm that the Contact Person has agreed that Sid Valley Help can store their contact information: YES / NO

Reasons for applying

How did you hear about Sid Valley Help?

Please briefly state your reasons for applying to be a Sid Valley Help Volunteer and outline any skills or past experience that is relevant:

References

Because of the sensitive nature of the work that we do, we consider it necessary to ask volunteers to supply references. Please give the names and addresses of two independent people who have known you for at least two years (but not close family members) who would be willing to provide you with a reference. Please supply email addresses if possible.



Referee 1 Name:

Referee 2 Name:

Address:

Address:

Postcode

Postcode

Tel No:

Tel No:

Email Address:

Email Address:

Occupation:

Occupation:

Consents

I agree that I am giving Sid Valley Help consent to share my information with the above referees YES / NO

I agree that this form and any information relating to my application will be stored in a locked file accessed only by Trustees and Volunteer Supervisors for the duration of my time with Sid Valley Help YES / NO

I require a work permit to take up paid or unpaid work, including volunteering, or are you otherwise subject to immigration control. YES / NO

I agree to a DBS check being carried out and to undertake safeguarding and other necessary training as required. YES / NO

I agree to respect confidentiality and agree that any client information is not to be discussed or shared with anyone outside the Sid Valley Help charity. YES / NO

I give my consent to be contacted via phone and email with regards to my application and interest in volunteering. YES / NO

I would like to receive details on Sid Valley Help's forthcoming events via email YES / NO

I confirm that the information given on this application is true and accurate.

Signature.....Date.....

Please email your application to sidvalehelp@gmail.com or post it to Sid Valley Help, Woodpeckers, Knowle Drive, EX10 8HW. Please call 01395 892 011 if you have any questions.

We follow the Data Protection Act at all times when asking for or handling your information.



VOLUNTEER INTERVIEW FORM

Potential volunteer's name:	
Contact phone number:	
E-mail address:	
Interviewer's name(s):	
Date of interview	

- 1) How did you hear about us?

- 2) Have you done any volunteering before?

- 3) What area/s of volunteering are you interested in?

- 4) Is there anything you don't enjoy doing?

- 5) What interests you about volunteering for Sid Valley Help?

- 6) What would you like to gain from your volunteering?

- 7) Other than volunteering, what else do you do at the moment with your time?

- 8) Is there anything which might make it difficult for you to undertake your volunteering role?

- 9) Why do you think you would be a good volunteer?

10) Additional questions specific to volunteering role:

-
-
-
-
-

FOR THE INTERVIEWER
Please write observations and any issues from the interview here and on additional pages as necessary



REQUEST FOR DBS CHECK LETTER

Dear Volunteer

Many thanks for agreeing to volunteer with Sid Valley Help. As all of our volunteering activities involve work supporting adults who may be vulnerable we require all our Trustees and volunteers to have a DBS check.

You have been registered with Devon County Council's Disclosure and Barring service and will have received an email from DCC with a link to a form on their website. Please complete the form. You will be asked to show the documents to one of our Trustees.

You must provide three documents with at least one document from Group 1. One of the three documents must verify your current address. If you are unable to provide a document from Group 1 please let us know.

Group 1 documents:

- Any current and valid passport
- Current UK photo card driving licence
- Birth certificate issued within 12 months of birth; full or short form acceptable
- Adoption certificate
- Biometric residence permit UK

Group 2 documents:

- Current UK photo card driving licence
- Current UK driving licence old style paper version if issued before 1998
- Birth certificate (issued after 12 months from birth)
- Marriage/civil partnership certificate
- HM Forces ID card
- Mortgage statement (issued within past 12 months)
- Bank/building society statement (issued within past 3 months)
- Credit card statement (issued within past 3 months)
- Financial statement eg. pension, endowment, ISA (issued within past 12 months)
- P45/P60 statement (issued within past 12 months)
- Council tax statement (issued within past 12 months)
- Utility bill (not mobile telephone) (issued within past 3 months)
- Benefit statement, eg. child allowance, pension
- EU national ID card

DBS Update Service

The DBS Update Service allows applicants to keep their DBS certificates up to date and employers to check a DBS certificate. It provides a free annual renewal of the DBS check but the volunteer must subscribe to the Update Service within 28 days of getting the first DBS check completed. See <https://www.gov.uk/dbs-update-service>.



REFERRAL AND BEFRIENDING INITIAL ASSESSMENT

Name of Applicant	
Date:	Age:
What would you like from the Friendship service?	

Scoring assessment

		Notes
1 In an average week, how often do you leave the house? Never (3) Once or twice (2) Three or more times (1)		
2 If you are able to leave the house, how often do you take part in social activities? Never (3) Once or twice (2) Three or more times (1)		
3 How many times in the past week have you spoken to or seen family and friends? Never (3) Once or twice (2) Three or more times (1) As much as I want (0)	*	
4 How much contact do you have with people you enjoy spending time with? Little contact and feel socially isolated (3) Some contact with people but not enough (2) Adequate contact (1) As much contact as I like (0)	*	
5 Over the last four weeks have you felt positive about yourself? None of the time (3) Some of the time (2) Most of the time (1) All of the time (0)	*	
6 How often do you feel lonely? All of the time (3) Often (2) Some of the time (1) Hardly ever (0)	*	
7 Have you experienced any of the following over the last 6 months?: bereavement, hospital admission, illness? Yes (3) No (1)		
Total		

Total Score 10 or above to continue assessment

Risk assessment

1 Do you have any physical or mental health issues which are useful to know about when providing you with a visit? For example a wheelchair or mobility may mean delay to answer door or someone with dementia may forget appointment.	
1a If response is Dementia or mental health condition ask if this is something discussed with the GP	
1b If Dementia or Alzheimer's ask if they will be able to remember if they have arranged a visit.	
2 Do you have any problems with using alcohol or non prescription drugs?	
2a If yes has this been discussed with GP?	
3 Is there anything about your home or where you live that is useful for a visitor to know about? Parking, stairs etc	
4 Are there other people other than you in the house during the day? Examples if needed.	
5 Do you have any pets?	
6 Do you smoke?	
7 Is there anything else we might need to know if a volunteer is visiting regularly?	
8 Availability for visits	

Any red flags identified: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggressive manner • Multiple people in the property • Evidence of substance or alcohol use • Challenging environment 	
---	--

Questions marked * to be repeated after 3 months to measure 'loneliness' scale



Recommendations

Action



VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

Introduction

This Volunteer Agreement describes the arrangement between Sid Valley Help and you.

We wish to assure you of our appreciation of your volunteering with us and will do the best we can to make your volunteer experience with us enjoyable and rewarding.

Your role as a volunteer is to provide information, signposting and support to people in need, who contact Sid Valley Help, whether on line, by phone or face to face in regular sessions or in other venues and as invited by groups. The role may also include:

- Receiving and making phone calls to clients
- Making contact with link organisations to make or receive client referrals or to attend meetings to inform about the Sid Valley Help charity
- Providing information and support to clients at other Sid Valley Help activities
- Carrying out administrative tasks

Befriending volunteers only: Your role as a volunteer is to provide support and friendship to people in need, who are vulnerable, lonely or isolated through an agreed programme of regular visits or telephone calls to fulfil specific needs, although these may change over time.

This role commences on

What you can expect from Sid Valley Help

Induction and training

We will provide thorough induction on the work of Sid Valley Help, its Trustees and staff, your volunteering role and the induction and training you need to meet the responsibilities of this role.

Supervision and support

We will:

- explain the standards we expect for our services and to encourage and support you to achieve and maintain them
- give you regular help, guidance and support with regular reviews of the voluntary work being carried out
- keep strictly confidential all information supplied by the Volunteer during his/her selection process.

Expenses

We will refund all out-of-pocket expenses, including travel to and from home to the agreed place of work and during your work.

Health and safety

We will provide adequate training and feedback in support of our health and safety policy.

Insurance

We will provide adequate insurance cover for volunteers whilst undertaking voluntary work approved and authorised by us.



If volunteers use their car for volunteering duties such as transporting clients for social engagement) they should contact their motor insurance company and ask for an endorsement on their policy to cover this activity.

Equal opportunities

We will ensure that all volunteers are dealt with in accordance with our equal opportunities policy.

Problems

We will try to resolve fairly any problems, grievances and difficulties you may have while you volunteer with us. In the event of an unresolved problem, we will offer you an opportunity to discuss the issues in accordance with the complaints procedures.

What we expect from The Volunteer

- To support Sid Valley Help in carrying out its mission
- To perform your volunteering role to the best of your ability
- To follow Sid Valley Help procedures and standards, including safeguarding, health and safety and equal opportunities
- To maintain the confidentiality of information related to Sid Valley Help and its clients
- To meet time commitments and standards agreed to, and to give reasonable notice so other arrangements can be made when this is not possible
- To attend any review meetings and undertake training as required
- To bring any problems or issues with the voluntary work to the notice of your manager as they arise, and during review meetings
- To provide referees who may be contacted, to agree to a DBS check being carried out, and to undertake safeguarding training in line with our policy.

This agreement is binding in honour only, is not intended to be a legally binding contract between us and may be cancelled at any time at the discretion of either party. Neither of us intends any employment relationship to be created either now or at any time in the future.

Signed

Date.....

Volunteer

Print Name.....

Signed

Date.....

On behalf of Sid Valley Help

Name/role.....

BOUNDARIES GUIDANCE FOR FRIENDSHIP VOLUNTEERS

These are the volunteering role boundaries we have put in place based on our own and the experience of other organisations of what works well to develop a happy and fulfilling volunteering relationship. The boundaries provide a framework for everyone to understand what is and what is not included in the volunteering role and it should help to avoid the volunteer from being asked to do something outside their role.

The volunteering role can include:

- Spending time with the client listening and chatting
- Keeping in regular face to face or telephone contact
- Where appropriate, encouraging the client to access information and opportunities to enable them to improve control of their lives and make informed choices, sometimes by acting as an advocate
- Helping the client find out about social activities and networks in their local area
- Meeting externally in a public place, such as a café or library, if the person is able to get there unaided
- Having fun and enjoying each other's company!

The volunteer:

- Gives their time to listen to the client
- Builds a friendship relationship that helps them feel less lonely and more connected
- Helps with empowering, improving their wellbeing and help to build their self-esteem.

The volunteer should not:

- Give the client their contact details until the volunteer is comfortable to do so
- Share any personal details of anyone connected to SVH without prior permission
- Provide health care e.g. dispense medication or healthcare information, or offer counselling or therapy
- Provide personal care e.g. help with eating/drinking or help with washing
- Provide assistance in the conduct of a person's legal, financial (apart from shopping) or healthcare affairs e.g. by having power of attorney
- Provide manual assistance in manoeuvring a person in and out of a car or public transport or give assistance to wheelchair users to get out and about unless the volunteer has been specifically trained in safe manual handling. This is to prevent potential injury to a client and potential injury to the volunteer
- Accept personal gifts from the client they support
- Try to solve problems which may arise other than to refer them to other support services such as our Helpline or local advice services
- Promise to keep secrets – you may have to pass on any concerns to your SVH contact and may not need permission to do this
- Engage in actions, including physical contact, language or opinions that are inappropriate or offensive
- Provide regular transport to the client for example by driving the client to shops or medical appointments.



Unless specifically agreed with the supervisor the volunteer should not:

- Hold, retain and use any keys of the client's home unless specifically agreed with your supervisor
- Manage and handle money and cash for the client unless specifically agreed with your supervisor
- Provide assistance with general household matters e.g. carrying out housework, gardening or minor household repairs unless specifically agreed with your supervisor.

I have read and understood the 'Boundaries Guidance' above.

Volunteer signature _____

Name _____ Date _____

KEEPING SAFE WHEN VOLUNTEERING

This is a practical guide to remind you how to protect yourself when you are volunteering in the community on behalf of Sid Valley Help.

Incidents are rare but it is everyone's responsibility to protect themselves while lone working and you should be aware of any risks and take steps to reduce them.

Why could you be at risk?

You could be at risk if your volunteering role includes:

- Having contact with the general public
- Visiting unfamiliar places
- Volunteering alone
- Volunteering in the evenings or at weekends

Keeping safe is a shared responsibility. Sid Valley Help responsibilities

- To provide a safe place of work
- To provide a safe work environment
- To identify and assess risks
- To evaluate the risks and create control measures
- To provide training and guidance to volunteers
- Record, monitor and review any lone working incidents.

A volunteer's responsibilities

- To plan for and take reasonable care of your own safety and that of others
- To follow Sid Valley Help's Lone Working policy and procedures
- **To stop any activity if you consider you might be at risk**
- To follow government guidance on covid-19
- To report any incidents, accidents or concerns to their Manager.

Risk Assessment

Before any home visit takes place, the Volunteer Manager or the clinical team referrer will have carried out a risk assessment of the property, environment and the client. This will be discussed with you and you will have sufficient information to make an informed decision on whether or not the volunteering should go ahead.

Keeping your trusted contact informed

When you joined Sid Valley Help we asked for details of someone to contact in case of emergency - this could be a partner, family member or friend. Unless we have been told otherwise, we assume that is the person you will inform about your volunteering activity.

To keep yourself safe, you should tell them:

- Who you are visiting and their contact details (we will have the permission of the individual to share their details with your contact.)
- The time you are going out
- When you expect to be back
- If your plans change
- When you have left the visit with the client



Uncomfortable situations

A volunteer should always leave an uncomfortable situation as quickly as possible and sometimes if a visit goes on too long. These phrases may help:

- *This doesn't seem to be a good time, I will come back another day*
- *As you have someone else here, I will come back another time*
- *Would you please put the dog in another room, I don't feel comfortable with it here, otherwise I will have to leave*
- *I would prefer it if you didn't smoke, if you continue, I will have to leave*
- *I am sorry, I have another appointment to have to get to*
- *I am expecting a call from xxx, so I need to be available to take it otherwise they will worry*
- *I think we are finished for today, so I'll be back next xxx*

Verbal or physical abuse

We do not tolerate any verbal or physical abuse by volunteers, clients or clients' friends and relatives. If any abuse occurs then the volunteer must leave the situation immediately and report the abuse to their manager.

Remember the eight key personal safety guidelines:

1. Tell your trusted contact where you are going.
2. PLAN – Prepare, Look Confident, Avoid Risk and Never Assume
3. Familiarise yourself with the area you will be visiting
4. Keep your own personal information personal
5. Be aware of cultural context
6. Record and report any incidents that cause you concern
7. Keep your mobile charged and accessible at all times
8. Carry your ID badge with you

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MAKING A REFERRAL TO OUR BEFRIENDING SERVICE

Sid Valley Help offers a befriending service for people who for whatever reason are housebound or feeling isolated. This flier is to help you decide if the individual you support would benefit from this service.

Face to Face Befriending service

The aim of this Service is to reduce feelings of loneliness and isolation and, where possible, encourage the individual to join in local social activities. What we offer is a regular weekly or fortnightly friendly social chat, over the phone or face to face. We may also be able to provide a sitting service for carer respite. The Service is delivered by dedicated volunteers who receive training in understanding loneliness, communication and safeguarding. The Service does not provide any form of personal care, household chores or transport services.

Is this service right for the client?

We will talk to everyone who applies or is referred to see what they want from the service and if it is right for them. For some isolated people, their health conditions may mean they struggle to access or use the service. Conditions such as significant mental health illness or substance abuse, for example, can sometimes mean an individual struggles to build a friendship with the volunteer and may even find this distressing. Please discuss with us if you have any doubts.

The questions below are to help you decide if our service will suit the person you are referring:

- Is the individual lonely or have a health condition that prevents them leading a full life?
- Do they have a health condition which could prevent them fully participating in and enjoying a friendship visit or call?
- Will they be able to remember when a visit or call will take place?
- Are they comfortable about receiving a regular call or visit from a volunteer?
- Do they know you are making this referral? Are they happy for Sid Valley Help to contact them?

How do I contact Sid Valley Help?

Having considered the above information, if you wish to refer someone to our service or have further questions, please call our helpline on 01395 892 011 or email: info@sidvalleyhelp.org.uk. Please ensure you have permission from the individual to make a referral and let them know a referral has been made to us and that we will make contact with them.



ABOUT SID VALLEY HELP FACE TO FACE FRIENDSHIP SERVICES

Our volunteer visitors will provide you with regular, friendly social chats. They are trained by Sid Valley Help and have had the training and checks that you would expect. A volunteer will visit you for six months in the first instance.

To help you get the best from your Friendship Volunteer, please look at the guidance below. This is based on our own experience and what other organisations tell us works well to develop the best visiting relationship. It describes what you can expect from your volunteer and also what they are unable to do for you.

What your volunteer can do for you:

- Visit at a mutually agreed time each week or fortnight for a friendly chat
- Offer a listening ear and encourage you to talk about your life and interests
- Treat you with respect and dignity at all times
- Let you know in advance if they are unable to call or visit
- Encourage you to use other services and activities that might help you
- Provide a respite break for a carer

What our volunteer is unable to do without the specific agreement of a Trustee:

- Give out their phone number or address. If you need to get in touch with your volunteer call us on 01395 892 011.
- Hold, retain and use any keys of your home
- Solve any problems that arise or offer specific advice other than refer you to other organisations
- Assist with filling out forms, e.g. for benefit claims, but we will refer you to organisations that can help
- Manage and handle money and cash for you apart from some shopping
- Provide any form of physical assistance, for example helping transfer a wheelchair user to a chair. This is important to avoid injury to the client and to the volunteer as manual handling of people is hazardous without training.

What our volunteer is never able to do:

- Offer counselling or therapy
- Carry out any health care or personal care
- Carry out regular household chores or repairs
- Act as an attorney in a Power of Attorney or as executor of your will
- Accept any money or gifts from you
- Give you a lift anywhere or take you out on trips
- Promise to keep a secret – if your volunteer feels that you may be at risk of harm, or may harm others, they would need to share their concerns with their Sid Valley Help contact, even if you do not give your permission.

Please be aware that Sid Valley Help does not charge for services. If a volunteer does ask for money please contact us immediately.

I understand what the Friendship Service offers.

Signed.....Date.....

VOLUNTEER EXPENSES CLAIM FORM

Name:

Please provide your bank account details for BACS transfer (first time only)

Name on account:

Bank:

Account number:

Bank Sort Code

Travel Claim

Date	Client's surname	Travel from	Travel to	Mileage
Total Mileage x 45 pence per mile =				Total travel claim £0

Other Expenses - please attach receipts

Date	Supplier	Description	Amount £
Total other expenses			

Total Expenses claimed

Travel claim	
Other expenses	
Total claim	

Signed

Date

Approved

Date