
27. Volunteer Policy



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1. VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT

- 1.1 Volunteers are recruited directly through Action 21 and through the Re-Useful Centre. Volunteers are also recruited via other organisations and bodies.
- 1.2 Volunteering opportunities are advertised widely, in a way that is accessible to all members of the community. The publicity indicates what volunteers can gain from being involved as well as what they'll be required to do.

2. REGISTRATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

- 2.1 A comprehensive selection process ensures that all prospective volunteers complete a registration form and are invited for an informal chat with the General Manager. It is important that all prospective volunteers are given the opportunity to explore whether their time availability and skills match the requirements of Action 21.
- 2.2 Provided that the General Manager considers the prospective volunteer to have the necessary skills for the area of work they are interested in and the volunteer wishes to work with Action 21, a volunteer role will be agreed with them.
- 2.3 Prospective volunteers will be asked to provide the name of two referees to assist with the selection process. Ideally, a referee will be someone who has known the prospective volunteer for a reasonable period of time (usually at least one year), knows them well and is not close family. Whenever possible both references must be received before the prospective volunteer can begin volunteering with Action 21.

- 2.4 If it is considered that we cannot offer a volunteer a suitable role at Action 21, the prospective volunteer will be informed and, if appropriate, it will be suggested that they contact Warwickshire Community and Voluntary Action, where they may be able to explore alternative opportunities.
- 2.5 **Criminal Record Bureau Disclosures** - As volunteering with Action 21 may involve working with vulnerable people all regular volunteers are asked during the registration process to disclose any criminal convictions including those which are spent (as defined under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974). Having a criminal conviction will not automatically preclude anyone from volunteering with Action 21.
- 2.6 The nature of any disclosed convictions will be discussed with the General Manager and will form the basis of a risk assessment to determine whether it is appropriate to take on the volunteer. Risk assessment outcomes will not normally be discussed with other staff.
- 2.7 Certain volunteer roles may be subject to DBS check (formerly CRB disclosure), such as those working with children. All of our staff are DBS checked.
- 2.8 **Community Payback** – via the Probation Service men and women on a community order undertake hours of unpaid work for the benefit of local communities. Supervised and unsupervised community payback volunteers participate on a number of our projects. All policies, with the exception of volunteer expenses apply to those on a Community Payback placement. There may also be additional policies to ensure adequate support and monitoring of placements.

3. VOLUNTEER INDUCTION

- 3.1 All new volunteers will receive an induction programme to familiarise themselves with:
- The activities of Action 21
 - The people involved in Action 21
 - The workplace
 - Health and Safety
 - Action 21's Volunteers Policies
 - Any area specific volunteer agreements
 - Any area specific health and safety risk assessments
 - The volunteer handbook will form part of the induction process.

4. TASTER PERIOD

- 4.1 There will usually be a probation period of around six working sessions to ascertain whether the volunteer is suitable to work within the team. This will be established by the volunteer's work area supervisor, through working with and supporting the volunteer and in consultation with the General Manager.
- 4.2 Initially a new volunteer will only be taken on for one session a week in order for us to ascertain if the placement is correct.
- 4.3 Different probation periods may apply to volunteers on placement through "back to work" schemes.

5. REVIEWS, TRAINING AND ONGOING SUPPORT

- 5.1 The Action 21 volunteer is a highly valued member of the team. We aim to ensure that all volunteers are adequately supported in their role and offered opportunities to develop their own skills and knowledge.
- 5.2 For support and guidance on training Action 21's General Manager, can be contacted Monday – Friday, within working hours in the office.
- 5.3 At Action 21 we:
- Provide volunteers with an induction and on the job training/learning
 - Provide regular opportunities for discussion of progress with each volunteer at supervision
 - meetings (see sections 5.5 and 5.6 below)
 - Enable volunteers, where possible, to develop their own role, in agreement with staff.
 - Help volunteers identify suitable training needs
 - Identify training opportunities for volunteers, in-house or externally provided, that meet their individual and organisational needs. Where possible we provide funding for training of volunteers.
- 5.4 A Work Area Supervisor is nominated for all volunteering roles. The supervisors are members of Action 21 staff or directors.
- 5.5 All volunteers should be offered equal access to ongoing support and supervision on a regular basis. This should provide volunteers with the opportunity to:
- Reflect on/share volunteer experiences
 - Share/discuss problems that have arisen
 - Evaluate what they are learning in terms of skills gained
 - Renegotiate any areas of work they wish to develop, expand or change
 - Discuss personal development and any potential training opportunities.
- 5.6 Following the taster period, the volunteer will meet on a 6 monthly basis with their Work Area Supervisor or the General Manager at a mutually agreed time to examine the volunteer's satisfaction and development. Written records of supervision meetings will be kept in the volunteer's file.
- 5.7 Although Action 21 staff cannot provide direct personal, financial or employment support we will endeavour to signpost volunteers to these services where appropriate.
- 5.8 Action 21 will ultimately make the decision on whether it is suitable and appropriate for a volunteer to attend a training course.

6. WHAT VOLUNTEERS CAN EXPECT FROM US

- 6.1 While they don't receive a wage for their service, volunteers do receive multiple benefits from working for our organisation including:
- A contribution of up to £2 towards travel expenses (20p per mile for petrol, 40p per mile for bicycle or public transport) to and from the site of volunteering for each volunteering shift (on presentation of receipt for public transport)
 - Lunch for a full day (7 hours) up to the value of £3 during the week and £4 on weekends for regular volunteers

- Lunch for volunteering three or more hours (based on the managers discretion) for one-off volunteers
- Tea, coffee or other beverages whilst engaging in volunteer work
- Relevant training
- References, if required for a job application or any other reason
- Support and supervision according to their role
- First refusal on goods sold at The Re-Useful Centre at the Shop Supervisors' discretion
- A discretionary volunteer discount on goods sold at The Re-Useful Centre.

6.2 **Volunteer discounts** – all active volunteers are entitled to a discretionary discount on goods purchased from The Re-Useful Centre. This discount is at the Manager's discretion and must always be transacted by the Manager. This discount is only applicable for goods meant for the volunteer who is purchasing them or as a present. Under no circumstances should a volunteer receive a discount when their intention is to sell the item on or receive money in return from a friend. If the volunteer is intending to sell a product on they must declare this and purchase the item at the same price as a regular customer.

7. VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

7.1 There is no intention for this to be a legally binding document, nor is there any intention to enter into a legally binding relationship. The sole purpose of the volunteer agreement is to clarify the agreement between Action 21 and our volunteers: the volunteer's duties and time arrangements. The volunteer agreement outlines the avenues of communication which should be followed in regards to absences and missed shifts.

8. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

8.1 At Action 21 we believe that volunteering should be accessible to all and that everybody has a right to volunteer. Action 21 intends to ensure that equality of opportunity is afforded to all volunteers.

8.2 Volunteers will not be discriminated against or disadvantaged in the recruiting and retaining process, training or in the provisions of services, on the grounds of age, gender, cultural or religious beliefs, different abilities, marital status, racial origins, sexual orientation, physical challenges, class, employment status or HIV status. We will endeavour to install and maintain a positive working environment where no volunteer feels under threat or intimidated. Breaches of the policy will lead to an investigation and possible disciplinary action.

8.3 **Anti-oppression** – Action 21 makes a strong commitment to create a safe and supportive environment for all who wish to work and volunteer at Action 21, ensuring that no-one's behaviour is oppressive to any other person. Oppressive language and behaviour is any that is discriminatory or offensive to any person or group of people.

8.4 People using oppressive language will be challenged positively with the intent of raising their awareness. The person being oppressive will be challenged regarding their behaviour by an appropriate member of staff.

8.5 What to do if you witness oppressive behaviour or are being oppressed by another's behaviour:

- If you feel able to, point out to the person that they are behaving oppressively and explain to them how and why this is not acceptable at Action 21

- Talk to a member of staff – tell them how you are feeling and what is happening – suggest how you think the situation can be resolved. They will take appropriate action
- Talk to the Manager and make a formal complaint
- Staff will keep a written record of any specific incidences of oppressive behaviour (regardless of whether a formal complaint is made).

8.6 People acting in an oppressive manner may be:

- Removed from any area of work temporarily or permanently.
- Reported to the police.

9. VULNERABLE VOLUNTEERS

9.1 There are two categories of vulnerable person:

- **Children and young people under the age of 18 or 16**
 - Children and young people who are “beneficiaries” or “service users” or “clients” or “recipients of services” are considered to be vulnerable when aged under 18
 - Children and young people who are in employment or volunteering are considered to be vulnerable when aged under 16.
- **Vulnerable adults aged 18 and over**

A vulnerable adult is described in the Police Act (1997) as a person aged 18 or over who has a condition of the following type:

 - A learning or physical disability
 - A physical or mental illness, chronic or otherwise, including an addiction to alcohol or drugs; or
 - A reduction in physical or mental capacity.

9.2 For the majority of cases a member of Action 21 staff will be in attendance at all times when vulnerable people or children (under 18yrs) volunteer. There may be instances however where a risk assessment determines that any risks of unsupervised volunteering are manageable (for instance where an adult is classed as vulnerable due to a physical disability which does not affect their volunteering activity in any way).

10. VOLUNTEERS UNDER 18

10.1 The minimum age of volunteering with Action 21 is 14 years old. Due to Health and Safety implications the majority of volunteering roles are suitable only for young people 16 years or older.

10.2 A risk assessment will be completed for every new volunteer under the age of 16 to ensure that any potential hazards of volunteering associated with their age have been identified and that any risks are reduced to an acceptable level.

10.3 We will endeavour to safeguard children who volunteer with us by taking the following approach:

- Young people under 18 will not be left unattended.
- Any potentially dangerous activity will have constant adult supervision (Action 21 staff supervisor is responsible for managing and monitoring this)
- Parental/guardian consent will be obtained for any volunteers under the age of 16
- Although parental/guardian consent will not be obtained for volunteers aged 16-18 Action 21 strongly encourage volunteers in this age group to discuss their activities with their parents/guardians.

10.4 We also advocate the following behaviour guidelines for staff and volunteers working with young people (as laid out in our Child Protection policy, section 8). The aim of these guidelines is to ensure the safety and well-being of all young people and to support the staff and volunteers in providing a safe, caring environment.

- Staff and volunteers should set examples of appropriate behaviour. As young people learn by example, volunteers should avoid using sarcasm or discrimination, direct criticism, labelling and unnecessary competition or comparison
- Good behaviour should be positively encouraged
- Staff and volunteers should not physically punish any young person
- Staff and volunteers should not deprive any young person of, or force any child to consume, food or drink
- Staff and volunteers should not humiliate or frighten any young person
- Staff and volunteers should avoid situations in which they risk putting themselves or the young person at risk. This includes being alone with a young person unnecessarily. Staff and volunteers are strongly encouraged to avoid situations where they will be alone in a room with a child with the door closed
- Staff and volunteers should offer respect to the young person at all times and strive to be sensitive to their feelings.

Further guidance can be found in Action 21 Child Protection policy.

11. COMPLAINTS & GRIEVANCES

11.1 While it is hoped that volunteers will be happy working in their placements, inevitably problems can arise.

11.2 The volunteers' grievance procedure enables Action 21 to ensure that any problems, complaints or concerns raised by its volunteers are dealt with in a fair, timely and consistent manner. If a volunteer has a grievance or complaint regarding their volunteering placement, working conditions, benefits, volunteering hours, or treatment by other volunteers or supervisors (including issues of harassment and bullying), or if they are concerned about their health and safety or a breach of their volunteering rights or any other issue affecting their volunteering, it should be raised in line with this procedure.

11.3 All complaints will be considered carefully and investigated fully. This policy clarifies the procedure concerning complaints and grievances.

11.4 **Informal Procedure** - Volunteers should, where possible, discuss the grievance or complaint with their immediate supervisor on an informal basis first. The supervisor will discuss any concerns with the volunteer and attempt to resolve the matter within a reasonable timescale. Where it is not possible for the volunteer to talk to their immediate supervisor, or if the grievance concerns him or her, the volunteer should instead talk to the next most senior person.

- Where the informal procedure is used, the volunteer is expected to make it clear to their supervisor if they would like a written record of the meeting including what was discussed and any proposed action.
- If the grievance has not been resolved or cannot be settled informally, the matter should be dealt with according to the formal grievance procedure.

11.5 Standard Formal Procedure

Stage 1 – Written Statement

The aggrieved volunteer must first send a written statement detailing the nature of the alleged grievance to the General Manager (the “Grievance”). Where it is the **General Manager who is the subject of the Grievance, the volunteer should instead send the written statement to one of the Trustees of Action 21.**

Stage 2 – Investigation and Decision

Upon receiving the written statement the **General Manager** will send a written acknowledgement of the Grievance and invite the volunteer to a meeting in order to discuss the issue as soon as is reasonably practicable (the “Initial Meeting”), usually no longer than **10** working days after receipt of the Grievance. The Initial Meeting shall be scheduled at a reasonable time and place, usually during normal work hours.

A written note of the Initial Meeting, and if relevant the Post-Investigation Meeting, must be made by the **General Manager** and, where possible, should be signed by both parties.

The volunteer has the right to be accompanied at any meeting concerning the grievance by another volunteer or a supervisor. The **General Manager has the right to be accompanied at any meeting by another volunteer.**

After the Initial Meeting the **General Manager** will conduct a full investigation into the Grievance in order to establish the facts surrounding it.

Following the investigation, and within a reasonable time (usually no longer than 10 working days) the **General Manager** shall:

- where it is deemed necessary, convene a further meeting with the volunteer in order to discuss the outcome of the investigation and any action that is to be taken (the “Post-Investigation Meeting”);
- send a full written response of the Grievance to the volunteer and his or her representative detailing the outcome of the investigation and any action that is to be taken; and
- **inform the volunteer in writing of their right to appeal if the decision goes against them.**

Stage 3 - Appeal

If the volunteer feels that their grievance has not been satisfactorily resolved, they have the right to raise an appeal. The request for an appeal should be submitted to the **General Manager** in writing within 10 working days of the volunteer receiving written confirmation of the outcome of the formal grievance procedure.

The General Manager will arrange a meeting to discuss the appeal within a reasonable time of receiving the request for an appeal (usually no longer than 10 working days).

Where possible, the appeal meeting will be chaired by a Trustee. However, where this is not practicable, the General Manager may handle the different stages and he/she will act as impartially as possible.

The volunteer has the right to be accompanied at any meeting concerning the grievance by another volunteer.

The outcome of the appeal meeting shall be communicated to the volunteer in writing within 10 working days, and a copy shall be sent to their representative where applicable. Decisions made at this point are final and the grievance procedure is concluded.

11.6 **Modified Formal Procedure**

- The two stage modified procedure will apply where:
- the aggrieved volunteer is no longer actively volunteering with the Company;
- both the ex-volunteer and the Company agree that it should apply; and
- the Company was unaware of the grievance or the formal procedure was either not started or started but not finished at the time that the ex-volunteer ceased volunteering with the Company.
- The modified procedure may also apply where it is not reasonably practicable for one of the parties to adhere to the standard procedure and it is agreed to writing.

Stage 1 – Written Statement

The ex-volunteer must send a written statement detailing the grievance and the basis for it to the Company, marked for the attention of **the General Manager**.

Stage 2 – Written Response

The Company will respond in writing to the ex-volunteer, addressing all points raised in the grievance letter.

- 11.7 **Confidentiality** - Grievances will be handled with as high a degree of confidentiality as is practicable. Confidential records of the grievance will be kept in the volunteer's personnel file in accordance with Data Protection legislation. Copies of meeting notes will be provided to the volunteer, although the Company reserves the right to withhold certain information (e.g. to protect a witness).

12. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

- 12.1 Action 21 requires good standards of behaviour from its volunteers, together with satisfactory standards of work. The purpose of the disciplinary procedure is to ensure that any concerns over volunteers' conduct or performance are handled in a fair, consistent and timely manner with the intention of bringing about an improvement, and to protect the proper operation of the Company's business and the health and safety of its volunteers and staff.

- 12.2 **Rules and Application** - The following are some examples of types of conduct that will normally be addressed through implementation of the Company's disciplinary procedure:

- Unsatisfactory volunteering performance;
- Breaches of company policies and procedures;
- Inappropriate behaviour (e.g. fighting, drunkenness, intoxication etc.);
- Bullying, harassment, verbal abuse or victimisation;
- Discrimination on any of the grounds listed in the Company's Equality and Diversity: e.g. race, sex, sexual orientation, religion, disability, age, gender reassignment, marital status or ethnic origin;
- Persistent lateness or poor timekeeping;
- Unacceptable levels of absence, especially when unauthorised;
- Serious or repeated failure to follow reasonable requests or instructions;
- Abuse, misuse or neglect of company property or facilities.

- 12.3 The disciplinary procedure does not apply to:-

- termination of volunteering during or at the end of a new volunteer's taster period; or
 - termination of volunteering by mutual consent.
- 12.4 Where time limits are referred to in this procedure, they may be shortened or extended by mutual consent.
- 12.5 Disciplinary matters will be handled with as high a degree of confidentiality as is practicable, particularly when the issue is of a sensitive nature.
- 12.6 Confidential records of disciplinary matters will be kept in the volunteer's personnel file in accordance with Data Protection legislation. Copies of meeting notes will be provided to the volunteer, although the Company reserves the right to withhold certain information (e.g. to protect a witness).
- 12.7 The Company reserves the right to suspend a volunteer, normally for no more than 10 working days, while a disciplinary offence is investigated. Volunteers will be advised if the suspension is likely to last longer than five working days. Suspension is not regarded by the Company as disciplinary action.
- 12.8 The Company reserves the right to monitor volunteers' activities including telephone calls, email messages and internet use at any time, whether as part of a disciplinary investigation or otherwise. Volunteers should therefore not consider such activities and methods of communication to be confidential when conducted at work.
- 12.9 Minor disciplinary offences and general issues of poor performance will be handled informally in the first instance, through discussion/counselling and informal warning(s). Where an informal approach fails to bring about the desired improvement, or where the offence is more serious, the formal disciplinary procedure will be followed.
- 12.10 **Formal Disciplinary Procedure** - There will be a careful investigation of any alleged offence before disciplinary action is taken against a volunteer. If the Company concludes that there are reasonable grounds to believe that the volunteer may have committed an act of misconduct, he/she will be asked to attend a disciplinary hearing. In the event of poor performance by a volunteer, disciplinary hearings will usually be undertaken only where informal approaches have failed to produce a satisfactory improvement.
- 12.11 In the event of a disciplinary hearing, the Company will:-
- Make it clear that the meeting is being held under the Company's formal disciplinary procedure and detail the alleged misconduct;
 - remind the volunteer of their right to be accompanied at the meeting by another volunteer or supervisor;
 - give the volunteer, at the meeting, a full explanation of the case against them;
 - give the volunteer, at the meeting, every opportunity to challenge allegations against them, state their case and put forward an explanation of their conduct and any mitigating factors;
 - take all relevant factors into account before reaching decisions about any disciplinary action;
 - confirm the outcome of the disciplinary hearing in writing within 10 working days, specifying the reason for any disciplinary action, the standards of conduct or work performance expected, details of any objectives and timescales agreed, the consequence of failing to achieve acceptable improvements, and the period after which any warning will be disregarded for disciplinary purposes;
 - remind the volunteer of their right to appeal against any disciplinary action;

- maintain appropriate records on the volunteer's personal file.

12.12 The stages of the formal disciplinary procedure shall be as follows:

Stage 1 – formal verbal warning

This will set out the performance problem, the improvement that is required, the timescale and will also include details of any help that may be given following discussion with the volunteer. The volunteer will be advised that this constitutes the first stage of the formal procedure. A record of the warning will remain live for 12 months, subject to satisfactory performance.

Stage 2 – first written warning

If the volunteer's conduct or performance does not meet acceptable standards they will normally be given a written warning. This will set out the nature of the misconduct and the standard of conduct or performance expected. The written warning will confirm that a final written warning may be considered appropriate if there is no sustained satisfactory improvement. A record of the warning will be kept on file, and will be disregarded for disciplinary purposes after a specified period of 12 months depending upon satisfactory performance.

Stage 3 – final written warning

If the offence is sufficiently serious, or there is a failure to improve during the currency of a prior warning for the same type of offence, a final written warning may be given. This will give details of the complaint, the improvement required and the time-scale. It will also warn that failure to improve may lead to action under Stage 4 (below) and will refer to the right of appeal. A copy of this written warning will be kept on file and will be disregarded for disciplinary purposes after 12 months subject to satisfactory conduct/performance.

Stage 4 – termination of volunteering (or other penalty)

If there is still a failure to improve, or where the conduct or performance is sufficiently serious, the final step in the procedure may be termination of the volunteering placement or some other action short of dismissal such as demotion or disciplinary suspension or transfer. The volunteer will be provided, as soon as is reasonably practicable, with written reasons for the termination, the date on which the volunteering will terminate, as well of their right of appeal. The decision to terminate will be confirmed in writing. In cases of gross misconduct, the volunteer placement will normally be terminated without notice. In exceptional circumstances, or if there are any genuine mitigating circumstances, alternative disciplinary action may be taken.

12.13 If a warning does not bring about the desired level of improvement in the volunteer's conduct or performance, or for repeated minor offences, then the volunteer will normally progress to the next stage of the formal procedure. The Company reserves the right to implement the procedure at any stage, taking into account the nature and severity of the disciplinary offence. For example, where conduct is sufficiently serious to justify only a single written warning but insufficiently serious to justify dismissal, a volunteer may be given a final written warning for a first offence. Volunteers will not be terminated for a first disciplinary offence (except for gross misconduct).

Decisions to terminate or impose disciplinary penalties must be approved by the Volunteer Officer before being communicated to the volunteer.

12.14 **Gross Misconduct** - In the event that a volunteer commits an act of gross misconduct, the Company is entitled to summarily terminate the volunteer's placement without notice.

12.15 In circumstances where a volunteer faces termination the minimum statutory procedure will be followed, which consists of three steps:

- Step 1 consists of a written note to the volunteer setting out the allegation and the basis for it.
- Step 2 consists of a meeting to consider and discuss the allegation, following which a decision is taken.
- Step 3 involves the volunteer submitting a letter of appeal (including the reasons and basis for the appeal and documentation relied upon in support) followed by an appeal meeting. The volunteer will be reminded of their right to be accompanied prior to any meeting which is convened.

12.16 The following non-exhaustive list gives examples of offences that the Company will normally regard as gross misconduct:-

- Theft, fraud, dishonesty and/or deliberate falsification of records;
- Fighting, assault and/or other violent behaviour;
- Deliberate damage to, and/or misuse of, company property;
- Deliberate use of internet and/or email to access or distribute material of a pornographic, offensive, obscene or inappropriate nature;
- Intoxication and/or incapability whilst volunteering due to the effect of alcohol or recreational drugs;
- Possession, custody and/or control of illegal drugs on company premises;
- Serious breach of the Company's rules, policies and procedures;
- Serious negligence which causes loss, damage or injury;
- Conviction of a criminal offence that is relevant to the volunteer's placement with the Company and renders them unsuitable for their work;
- Conduct likely to bring the Company's name into disrepute;
- Bullying, harassment, victimisation, verbal abuse and/or discrimination;
- Serious acts of insubordination.

12.17 In cases of gross misconduct volunteers will normally be prevented from volunteering on any Action 21 projects in the future.

12.18 **Appeal** - Volunteers have the right to appeal against any formal disciplinary action. An appeal should be made in writing within 10 working days of the disciplinary decision. An appeal meeting will be arranged and the outcome confirmed in writing within 10 working days of the meeting. Where possible, the appeal will be handled by a Trustee. However, where this is not practicable, the General Manager may handle both the disciplinary and the appeal meetings and he/she will act as impartially as possible. Decisions made at this stage will be final. There is no further right of internal appeal.

13. HEALTH & SAFETY

This is a summary of the Health and Safety Policy. You may ask your supervisor for a copy of the full policy and risk assessments carried out for your site.

13.1 Action 21 seeks to provide a safe and healthy environment for all staff and volunteers and requires their active support in achieving these ends.

- 13.2 All volunteers have the responsibility of co-operating to achieve a healthy and safe work and activity place and to take reasonable care of themselves and others and to co-operate with the Management in matters of safety.
- 13.3 It is the policy of Action 21 to provide all staff and volunteers with the information, training, instructions and supervision that they need to work safely.
- 13.4 If ever a volunteer notices an actual or potential health and safety hazard that they are not able to put right, they must immediately tell the manager on duty or their work area supervisor.
- 13.5 All volunteers will:
- Be aware of and learn the fire safety procedure and precautions
 - Be aware of and look out for hazards such as loose flooring, electric flex or faulty equipment and notify staff about such things
 - Be aware of the location of first aid boxes and first aiders
 - Report any accidents to the Manager on duty
 - Not attempt any potentially dangerous tasks without the correct equipment or when alone.
 - Not be alone at the Re-Useful Centre under any circumstances
 - Learn and adhere to manual handling best practice.
- 13.6 We encourage all our volunteers to suggest ways and means of improving standards to their Work Area Supervisor or the Manager.
- 13.7 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) – we will endeavour to provide PPE to all volunteers to protect them against one or more risks to health and safety when these risks cannot be adequately controlled in other ways. We will also endeavour to:
- Properly assess PPE before use to ensure it is suitable
 - Maintained and store PPE properly
 - Provide instructions on how to use it safely; and
 - Ensure it is used correctly by employees
- 13.8 PPE disclaimer – Under the Health & Safety at Work Act (1974), Action 21 cannot be held liable if a volunteer is provided with PPE relevant to their role, chooses not to wear it and is injured as a result. Any volunteer refusing to wear the provided PPE relevant to their role will be asked to sign a disclaimer stating that Action 21 is not liable in the event of an injury caused or worsened by their refusal to wear the supplied PPE.

14. ENVIRONMENTAL APPROACH

In line with Action 21's mission statement, it is essential that we set a good example of environmentally sensitive behaviour. Action 21 staff, volunteers and directors will conduct all our work in a way which minimises the impact on the environment. At the Re-Useful Centre, however, Action 21 is using space provided in kind by another organisation. In this position it is difficult to influence environmental standards such as the energy efficiency the building

- 14.1 It is the responsibility of all Action 21 staff and volunteers to promote a strong environmental culture within the organisation and lead by example.
- 14.2 Volunteers are strongly encouraged to take the following measures regarding protection of the environment:

Energy

- Turn off computers, monitors, lights, photocopiers and printers when not in use.
- Open windows rather than use air conditioning
- Wear appropriate clothing to avoid excessive heating

Travel

- Use sustainable methods of travel to and from volunteering and on volunteering business (i.e. walking, cycling, public transport and car-sharing)

Waste & Recycling

- Re-use envelopes whenever possible
- Keep and re-use paper printed on one side only
- Only print where necessary
- Use e-mail where possible rather than paper communications
- Recycle unusable paper and envelopes
- Recycle other small amounts of waste produced in the office and kitchen e.g. plastic bottles, compost, cans and glass.
- Re-use plastic bags

Food

- Where refreshments are provided at Action 21 events we will ensure that food and drinks are locally produced and organic where possible and free of genetically modified ingredients.

14.3 The following organisational measures will also promote a culture of environmental sustainability:

- All staff and volunteers may claim reimbursement for work-related travel of 40p per mile for travelling by bicycle, 20p per mile for travelling by car
- Home working will be supported where appropriate to minimise unnecessary travel
- Action 21 will buy recycled materials such as stationary wherever possible.

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