



Volunteer Handbook

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"Acts 4 Sharing" is a registered Charitable Incorporated Organisation with the Charity Commission in England.
No. 1158033.

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WHAT IS Acts 4 Sharing?

Acts 4 Sharing is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation; it was registered with the Charity Commission in England on 28th July 2014

- It is a Christian organisation & helps anyone **regardless** of background, belief or outlook. Its main aim is to show the love of Christ in practical ways.
- We aim to prevent & relieve poverty in our local area, surrounding counties & overseas by providing: grants, items & services to individuals in need.
- We aim to relieve hardship through recycling & provision of furniture, clothes & other household items.
- We aim to provide or help in the provision of facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreation or other leisure time occupation of individuals with the object of improving their conditions of life.
- We aim to advance education for persons of any age by providing or assisting in the development of their mental, physical & moral capabilities through leisure time activities & by supporting other charities in England, the UK or abroad.
- It is managed by voluntary Trustees who have overall responsibility.
- All paid staff & volunteers are equally valued regardless of their role.

VALUING OUR VOLUNTEERS & THE SUPPORT THEY PROVIDE

Welcome to Acts 4 Sharing

We are delighted that you are considering sharing some of your time & skills with us & hope this will be the beginning of an enjoyable & worthwhile experience for you.

Volunteers are an essential & highly valued part of the organisation; without their support & contributions Acts 4 Sharing would be unable to run efficiently.

Volunteers are involved at every level of the organisation in roles which complement, but do not substitute, the work of paid staff.

This handbook outlines most of what you need to know about volunteering with us. If you have any queries about anything in here or anything else relating to volunteering, please ask Sue Wall.

Principles

This volunteer policy / handbook is underpinned by the following principles:

- Volunteers will be properly integrated into the organisation
- volunteers will not generally be used to replace paid staff
- there is an expectation that all staff will work positively with volunteers towards a mutually beneficial & constructive experience

What's in it for you?

- Have an opportunity to learn new skills
- Help to give something back to your local community.
- Meet new people.
- Be able to update your CV - we may be able to supply a work reference.
- Have the option of attending/accessing any training offered

Recognition & thanks

All the management & staff of Acts 4 Sharing are in agreement that it is very important that each volunteer feels valued & that their efforts are recognised. We ensure that volunteers are all treated with respect & courtesy.

- Social events, e.g. barbeques, are organised for both volunteers & staff; this is an important way of saying thank you & helping to build good relationships.
- References will be given if they are requested
- Certificates of training undertaken are given to volunteers

ARK

Responds to referrals seeking to provide **Acts of Responsive Kindness** to people in need through: community projects, DIY, gardening, crisis re-housing, provision of second-hand furniture, white goods & household items.

Volunteers are required to assist with any of these projects. This may also give you the chance to learn new skills as you work alongside your supervisor.

Inclusive Community

We seek to help people often rejected by society to find value, self worth and potential employment by giving them

opportunities to serve on projects; education and training in life skills; practical help for rehabilitation into society; practical help and support with additional needs.

Volunteers are needed to help to teach life skills and offer practical help to encourage and mentor.

DORCAS

Provides **bedding and curtains** for families and individuals who face poverty and disadvantage. Families and individuals are referred to us through professional agencies.

(Acts 9:36)

Volunteers are needed to sort & measure items whilst also ensuring that it is of good quality; any items not fit for purpose are washed, mended or recycled.

All clients & participants of any **Acts 4 Sharing** project are considered by referral or application.

Deliveries are usually within a 25 mile radius of Ringwood, Hants

We aim to build 'Koinonia' (community) and encourage all people to serve and share together.

We work towards the reduction of CO2 emissions, landfill and business waste.

For further information please visit www.acts4sharing.org

To contact us call 07810005763 or email office@acts4sharing.org

RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS

REGULAR VOLUNTEERS

If you decide you would like to be a regular volunteer for Acts 4 Sharing we ask that you contact us to express your interest either by phone, in person or by email.

- If, after this initial contact, you are still interested we will arrange to meet you for an informal interview. This is to make sure that you have a realistic picture of what you will be doing & what will be expected of you. It is also to discuss how you will benefit from volunteering & to ensure you are suitable for the particular role you are interested in.
- You will be asked to fill out a form providing some personal information & to give the name of someone who can give you a reference. We can help you decide who to ask & there are suggestions on the form. A DBS check will be carried out if required.
- You will take part in a 'taster session' to give you the opportunity to 'have a go' before you make a commitment & so both you & Acts 4 Sharing can see if the role is right for you.

After that, if you think it is right for you.....

- You will be given an induction by a member of staff- this involves shadowing them or an experienced volunteer to see how the project runs
- You will be given relevant information on basic health & safety matters & other essential in-house procedures. This is so that you are aware of general health & safety & personal safety, know how to report an accident or incident & have some knowledge of risk assessment
- You will receive information about Acts 4 Sharing & our policies.
You will have a trial period giving both you & Acts 4 Sharing time to find out whether we are suited to each other, or if there needs to be any changes.
- Day to day support will be provided by your project manager.
- We will discuss with you any TRAINING NEEDS that you have identified or staff feel would benefit you.
- Team meetings will be held from time to time to discuss issues that affect volunteers as a group.

AD HOC VOLUNTEERS

From time to time we need to rely on a whole host of 'short term' well known volunteers – for instance to load the lorry. For everyone's safety we will expect you to:

- Sign a volunteer agreement
- Take part in a general briefing including health & safety and manual handling.
- Comply with the Ethos of Acts 4 Sharing & its policies (available on request)

WHAT EVERY VOLUNTEER NEEDS TO KNOW

Your role:

Each volunteer is given written information describing the tasks they will be undertaking.

Attendance/Absence & Punctuality:

We rely on you to help us deliver our services. We need volunteers to be reliable & punctual. If you can't attend your volunteer session, or you will be arriving late, please contact your project manager ASAP. If you know you are going to be away in advance please tell us so we have as much time as possible.

Personal property & belongings:

You are responsible for your own belongings at all times. Acts 4 Sharing cannot be held responsible for any loss or damage. We recommend that no valuables are carried with you whilst volunteering.

Insurance:

Remember you will usually not be asked to use your vehicle for your voluntary work, but if you do, it is your responsibility to inform your insurance company

Benefits:

If you are currently in receipt of benefits you may wish to speak to your Job centre Advisor to inform them about your volunteering and to ensure that your benefit will not be affected. Remember that the amount of volunteering you do may affect some benefits.

Conduct Standards:

Volunteers are expected to follow Acts 4 Sharing's guidelines on general conduct. This means being aware of expectations relating to behaviour, attendance, the use of Acts 4 Sharing facilities, relations with the public, other Acts 4 Sharing volunteers, staff & clients. During your induction training this will be discussed in more detail.

Sorting out problems:

If you have concerns, worries or complaints in regard to your volunteering, other individuals or Acts 4 Sharing please speak to Sue Wall. She will do her best to solve the problem as quickly as possible. If any issue concerns Sue please speak to the Chair of Trustees. Minor problems will be dealt with on the spot; however major problems may take longer sort out as more information may need to be gathered to solve the situation. In a serious situation a volunteer may be asked to leave. Examples of why this may happen include: Theft, breach of policy, not fulfilling the requirements of your volunteer role description, bringing the organisation into disrepute either during or outside your volunteering activity.

VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

As a volunteer assisting *Acts 4 Sharing*, you will be asked to sign a Volunteer Agreement. This is not intended to be a legally binding contract but expresses a voluntary two-way commitment which will hopefully result in a rewarding experience for all involved.

Health & Safety

It is important that you are not put at risk whilst volunteering.

Acts 4 Sharing takes all reasonable steps to ensure your health, safety & welfare however you must also take responsibility for yourself and others. This means being aware of your surroundings and following all *instructions*, notices & information provided, especially those relating to your specific tasks. Please report any concerns to your project manager & also only undertake tasks that you feel safe about.

Acts 4 Sharing will ensure you are not placed in circumstances where you may be at risk; not knowingly place you in difficult situations without staff support; not give out your personal information or contact details without permission; not request or allow volunteers to undertake tasks for clients outside their normal agreed hours; & only ask you to undertake tasks that you are happy to do & feel confident about.

Volunteers are covered by Acts 4 Sharing's insurance policy whilst they are carrying out their agreed volunteering'

Smoking, alcohol & drugs

Acts 4 Sharing operates in a tobacco, drug & alcohol free environment. If you wish to smoke tobacco during a break there are designated outside areas for the purpose.

As with paid staff, the illegal use, sale or consumption of alcohol, illegal drugs or controlled substances immediately before or while volunteering constitutes grounds for immediate dismissal.

Volunteers who show signs of having consumed alcohol & or drugs will not be permitted to enter Acts 4 Sharing premises for their own safety.

PPE

You must use any protective clothing & equipment you are issued with when involved in heavy lifting, roadside and warehouse environments.

Lifting & Moving

Please take care when handling any goods & follow your Manual Handling training advice. If you need to move anything especially heavy please discuss this with your manager **BEFORE** you attempt to move it.

Accidents

All accidents & even 'near misses' & including accidents involving vehicles must be reported to the project manager & recorded in the accident book. If you fail to report an accident you could be putting someone else at risk.

OUTLINE OF Acts 4 Sharing POLICIES

Banking Policy: Gives clear instructions for safe handling of cheques, cash & online banking

Complaints Policy: Gives clear guidelines that will enable fair and consistent treatment of staff, volunteers & Trustees if/when a complaint is lodged against **Acts 4 Sharing**, a staff member, volunteer or Trustee & to ensure adequate & consistent dealings with any complaints received.

Confidentiality Policy: This policy applies to information held about clients, donors, staff, & volunteers. It explains the responsibility expected of staff & volunteers in dealing securely & privately with information used during the work of the charity.

Data Protection and Privacy Policies: These policies ensure that all information (whether paper or computer records) held by **Acts 4 Sharing** is handled fairly & lawfully with due regard to confidentiality & in accordance with the principles of the General Data Protection Regulations 2018.

Disciplinary Policy & Procedure: This outlines the necessary legal procedures that we will follow in the event of misconduct. It is intended to be positive rather than punitive but takes awareness of the fact that sanctions may have to be applied in some circumstances.

Equal Opportunities Policy: We believe that no one should be discriminated against, either directly or in-directly and seeks to ensure that no job applicant, employee, volunteer or client receive less favourable treatment or service.

Ethos Statement: This explains our roots and how we became established. All future developments and new areas of operation will be based upon this ethos. We expect it to be respected and owned by all senior members of staff and for this to form a standard for other staff members and volunteers to follow.

Health and Safety/Manual Handling Policies: Outline how we manage our projects to ensure that we maintain high standards of health & safety for the prevention of injury & ill health to staff & volunteers at work & members of the public with whom staff & volunteers come into contact whilst undertaking their duties. Gives guidance for safe manual handling.

Induction and Training Policy: The purpose of this document is to ensure that all new team members receive full information about the organisation, & are given the opportunity to participate in training & development.

Pay policy: Outlines how pay will be fairly allocated by the Trustees.

Safeguarding Policy: This shows how we are fully committed to safeguarding children, young people & vulnerable adults that they come into contact with. We recognise our responsibility to take all reasonable steps to promote safe practice and to protect children, young people & vulnerable adults from harm, abuse and exploitation.

Security Policy: Outlines how we intend to safely take care of our premises, keys, mobile 'phones & other equipment; how DBS checks will be carried out; how cash will be handled and how personal information will be stored.

Volunteer Policy: The purpose of this document is to provide brief details regarding volunteering within the organisation. It includes a general overview and details regarding induction, training and expenses

For further information:

www.acts4sharing.org

Contact Details:

office@acts4sharing.org

07810005763 – Sue Wall

(CEO/ Administrator) Generally available 9am-4pm weekdays (2pm Thursdays)