



Turtle Dove Cambridge Community Interest Company

Volunteer Policy

Reviewed: May 2025

Review due: May 2026



Introduction

Turtle Dove Cambridge (TDC) welcomes all new volunteers, minimum age of sixteen, to contribute to the support service we provide for young women within the Cambridge area.

We acknowledge that volunteers can contribute in many ways, that their contribution is unique, and that it should benefit the young women using the service, staff, local communities and the volunteers themselves.

Aim and Objectives

TDC is a social enterprise, established in May 2013 to work with identified NEET and potential NEET young women in Cambridge, aged 15 to 22 years. It offers work experience opportunities to raise self-esteem, promotes further connection with the community and improves mental health.

Representation

TDC acts as a platform for young women in the Cambridge area, supporting the young women to be active participants within the community and in sharing their opinions, experience and skills within the services that we provide.

Networks

TDC works in partnership with various organisations within the community, to support the local community. Through our intergenerational events we promote and collaborate with the younger and older generations of the local community.

Volunteer Policy

TDC supports all staff and volunteers to meet and develop their personal potential. We value the contribution made by volunteers, and are therefore committed to working in ways that are encouraging, supportive, ensure fairness, consistency and legal compliance in the management of volunteering within the service

We aim to involve volunteers as follows:

- contributing to the design, marketing and delivery of our services;
- monitoring and evaluation of our support services;
- being responsive to the needs of our users;
- providing different skills and perspectives;
- offering opportunities for participation by people who might otherwise be excluded.

This volunteer policy sets out the principles and practice by which TDC involves volunteers.

Principles

TDC recognises that voluntary work brings benefits to volunteers themselves, to service users and to paid staff. TDC will ensure that:

- volunteers are properly integrated into the organisational structure and that mechanisms are in place for them to contribute to the organisation's work;
- volunteers will not be introduced to replace paid staff;
- staff at all levels will work positively with volunteers and, where appropriate, will actively seek to involve them in their work;
- the organisation continues to recognise that volunteers require satisfying work and personal development and will seek to help volunteers meet these needs by listening to feedback by providing regular support and opportunities to tell us about how you find your volunteering role and how we could improve this for you;
- the organisation will identify and cover the costs of involving volunteers;
- the management of volunteers requires designated responsibilities within specific posts;
- volunteers are involved from a wide range of backgrounds and abilities and ensure our volunteering opportunities are as accessible as possible.

Rights and Responsibilities

TDC recognises the rights of volunteers to:

- know what is (and what is not) expected of them;
- have adequate support in their volunteering;
- receive appreciation;
- volunteer in a safe and healthy working environment;
- be insured;
- know their rights and responsibilities if something goes wrong;
- receive relevant out-of-pocket expenses;
- receive appropriate training;
- be free from discrimination;
- be offered the opportunity for personal development.

TDC expects volunteers to:

- be reliable;
- be honest;
- keep confidentiality;
- make the most of training and support opportunities and attend all mandatory training to enable volunteers to be successful in their voluntary role
- carry out tasks in a way that reflects the aims and values of the organisation;
- carry out tasks within agreed guidelines;
- respect the work of the organisation and not bring it into disrepute;

- comply with the organisation's policies.
- To provide feedback to TDC on my role.
- To advise TDC as soon as I know if I am no longer able to volunteer.
- To follow all TDC's rules, policies and procedures, including health and safety, equal opportunities and confidentiality.

Recruitment

Recruitment of volunteers will generally be from all sections of the community, and will be in line with the TDC's Equal Opportunities Policy.

People interested in becoming volunteers with TDC will be asked to complete a simple registration form appropriate to the role that they are applying for and to supply two references. Those applicants who meet the stated role criteria will be invited for an informal talk with the appropriate contact person. If the volunteer is placed in a role they will be given an induction including general information about the organisation and specific information on the volunteer post in which they are interested. Volunteer Board Members will be given a role specific induction.

Where applicants are not successful, they will be provided with feedback.

There may be other safer recruitment procedures carried out including asking a volunteer to undergo an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) check and seeking references. More detailed information will be made available specific to legislative requirements and to the particular volunteer position.

Ex-offenders

We undertake not to discriminate unfairly against anyone. We will ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences that might be relevant to the role. We will ask potential volunteers to declare any unspent convictions. We will only ask an individual about their full criminal record history where a DBS certificate at enhanced level (also including a DBS Barred list check if the work is regulated activity) can legally be requested. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could result in the volunteer being asked to leave the organisation. Any information disclosed will be treated in accordance with TDC's Data and GDPR Policy.

Volunteer Agreements and Voluntary Work Outlines

Volunteers will receive a role description and volunteer agreement on induction.

Induction and Training

Volunteers will be given induction and training appropriate to the specific tasks to be undertaken.

All volunteers will be made aware of and have access to all the organisation's relevant policies, including those relating to Volunteering, Health & Safety, Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups, Expenses and Equal Opportunities.

We are committed to the development of training and support to equip volunteers with the necessary information and skills to carry out their tasks. It is the responsibility of the volunteer to identify any additional training and report to TDC staff.

Support, Supervision and Recognition

Volunteers will have a named person to whom they can take their volunteering concerns and seek guidance and support.

Volunteers will have access to regular support and supervision. This will enable both the volunteer and the supervisor to identify, monitor and evaluate the volunteer's involvement, recognise achievements and identify individual training needs, including that relevant to their particular volunteering role and to their wider personal development. The frequency, duration and format of these sessions will be negotiated between the volunteer and the named person referred to above.

Volunteers will be given the opportunity, where relevant, to share their views and opinions with the organisation's wider staff, at staff meetings etc.

Expenses

TDC recognises that the reimbursement of expenses incurred in travelling to and from the place of volunteering or in the course of volunteering is important from an equal opportunities point of view. This is necessary to ensure that all individuals have access to voluntary opportunities.

The organisation's volunteers are able to claim reasonable out of pocket expenses, subject to the production of receipts as evidence of the expenditure. What can be reclaimed from the organisation and the calculation of expenses will be explained to the volunteer before they start any activity likely to give rise to expenses.

The organisation has a consistent approach to the reimbursement of expenses which are the same for volunteers, staff, etc. and are as approved by the Inland Revenue.

Insurance

The organisation's liability insurance policies will cover volunteers while carrying out agreed duties.

The organisation does not insure the volunteer's personal possessions against loss or damage.

Confidentiality

TDC will advise the volunteer on its confidentiality policies and procedures, where relevant. This would include those relating to personal information held by the organisation relating to the volunteer.

Personal data

Minimum details will be kept on volunteers. This will include the registration form, references, placement details, emergency contact, correspondence and any other relevant information in accordance with the Data Protection and GDPR policy.

Copyright

Any copyright and all other rights of a like nature conferred under the laws of England and Wales in materials created by the volunteer in the course of performing his/her volunteer activities, or exclusively for the purpose of performing the volunteer activities, shall become the property of TDC.

Health and Safety

TDC will take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure the volunteers' health, safety and welfare while at work in accordance with our Health and Safety policy.

Lone Working

TDC has a duty of care towards volunteers. All volunteers are responsible for reading and practically applying the Lone Working policy.

Equal Opportunities

Volunteers and staff will work in accordance with our Equal Opportunities policy and will prevent discrimination on any grounds.



Problems

TDC has a problem-solving policy to help deal with problems that volunteers may have that can't be resolved informally. The same policy covers how TDC will handle any problems with a volunteer.

Endings

When volunteers move on from their role they will be asked to provide feedback on the volunteering experience. They will also be given the opportunity to discuss their volunteering experience more fully with a supervisor, if desired.

On the basis of their voluntary work, volunteers will have the right to request a reference although TDC may decline to provide a reference if the volunteer declines to adhere to TDC's stated policies and procedures.

This Policy reflects the hopes and intentions of the volunteer and TDC and is not contractually binding in any way.