



Volunteer Policy

1.0 Introduction to Blythswood

1.1 Blythswood is a volunteer-based organisation, with a team of staff and volunteers from all walks of life, combining the Christian message with practical help for those in need at home and abroad, regardless of their political or religious beliefs or ethnic origins. It is a registered charity aiming to transform lives through Christian care. The role of the volunteer is fundamental to the work we are involved in and Blythswood's aim in relation to volunteers is to:

- Promote voluntary work in a range of ways
- Help choose the volunteering activity most appropriate to the volunteers interests and skills
- Promote good practice in volunteering
- Encourage and provide training for volunteers in appropriate skills

1.2 In Blythswood, volunteers are a major resource and make a vital contribution to our aims outlined above. We recognise that the roles of volunteers will complement and not replace the roles of paid staff.

1.3 The time, energy and skills offered by our volunteers benefits our work and helps us to achieve our aims. Experience has shown that volunteering also brings benefits to volunteers themselves and to those with whom they work.

1.4 In Blythswood a volunteer is understood to be a person who does voluntary work on our behalf. It is undertaken by choice and is unpaid. The volunteer should be sympathetic to the Christian ethos of the organisation.

1.5 In Blythswood volunteers help with the delivery of our service, and are active in the support groups and projects in which we are involved.

1.6 Blythswood believes that our relationship with our volunteers is one of mutual responsibility and commitment, within which Blythswood and our volunteers both have rights and responsibilities. We hope that volunteers will enjoy their involvement and gain from it in terms of their own personal objectives.

2.0 Purpose and Advantages of Policy on Volunteers

2.1 Blythswood's purpose in adopting this policy is to:

- Highlight and acknowledge the value of the contribution made by volunteers
- Reflect the purpose, values, standards and strategies of Blythswood in its involvement of volunteers
- Make clear Blythswood's commitment to organising volunteering opportunities effectively
- Recognise the roles, rights and responsibilities of volunteers and Blythswood
- Confirm Blythswood's commitment to involving volunteers in its work
- Establish clear principles for the involvement of volunteers
- Clarify the roles of volunteers and address the relation between volunteers, those who engage them and those who receive their services
- Help to ensure the ongoing quality of both the volunteering opportunities on offer and the work carried out by our volunteers
- Acknowledge the current areas of volunteer involvement



3.0 Purpose and Advantages of Procedures on Volunteers

3.1 Our Principles of good practice

- The tasks to be performed by volunteers will be clearly defined, so that all concerned with their activities are sure of their respective roles and responsibilities
- Volunteering opportunities will complement rather than replace the work of paid staff
- Opportunities will be given for volunteers to represent their views to Blythswood
- The policy and procedures on volunteers will be regularly monitored and reviewed

3.2 Recruitment and selection

- To ensure that all volunteering opportunities are widely accessible they will be promoted appropriately
- Volunteers will be required to complete a volunteer's application form including references
- People who offer to volunteer will have their applications dealt with as quickly as possible
- Placements will match the volunteer's skills, talents and interests with the voluntary work to be carried out
- Once placed, we will expect volunteers to comply with existing policies and procedures

3.3 Support for volunteers

- Where appropriate, we will provide an induction period and a review session for volunteers to assess the progress of their placements and to resolve any problems at any stage
- Blythswood has written procedures for the insurance of its volunteers
- Volunteers will be given information on other legislation or policies that may affect them, e.g. Health & Safety and Equal Opportunities. In these respects volunteers will be treated in the same way as paid staff for liability purposes
- All volunteers will be offered appropriate access to support and supervision on a regular basis, with a named support worker, and will be informed who to contact in an emergency
- All volunteers will be offered access to appropriate training to enable them to develop their capabilities and personal competence appropriate to Blythswood's needs
- Volunteers will be encouraged to provide each other with mutual support
- Volunteers will be made aware of Blythswood's complaints procedure and of who to contact if they have a complaint about any aspect of their work
- A designated person will be assigned responsibility for dealing with complaints about a volunteer's conduct

3.4 Rights and responsibilities of volunteers

3.4.1 In engaging volunteers, we recognise the rights of volunteers to:

- Know what is expected and be given clear information and induction
- Have clearly specified lines of support and supervision



- Be shown appreciation
- Have safe working conditions
- Be insured
- Know what their rights and responsibilities are if something goes wrong
- Be trained and receive ongoing opportunities for development
- Be treated with dignity and respect
- Experience personal development through their participation as volunteers
- Be consulted on decisions that will affect what they do
- Withdraw from voluntary work

3.4.2 We expect that volunteers will:

- Carry out their tasks in a way that corresponds to the aims and values of Blythswood
- Work within agreed guidelines and remits
- Be reliable
- Respect confidentiality
- Attend training and support sessions

4.0 Bringing a Voluntary Role to an End

4.1 Blythswood recognises that there may be circumstances where either the organisation or the volunteer may wish to bring the volunteer's volunteering to an end, including:

- The volunteer no longer being free to volunteer
- The requirements of Blythswood for the volunteer to undertake voluntary work change or cease
- Blythswood believes that the volunteer's conduct or capability is such that it is not in the best interests of the organisation to allow the volunteer to continue

4.2 While no formal notice is required and no formal procedure must be followed to bring a volunteering agreement to an end, Blythswood would expect:

- A volunteer to give as much notice as possible if no longer available to volunteer
- To discuss any queries or concerns which the volunteer or Blythswood may have before a decision is made regarding whether or not to bring the volunteer's period of volunteering to an end

5.0 Responsibility

Overall responsibility for the implementation, monitoring and review of the policy and procedure lies with the Chief Executive and, on a day-to-day basis, with the senior paid staff.