

BRIDGEND COMPACT

VOLUNTEERING

DRAFT CODE OF PRACTICE

Introduction

The Bridgend Compact is a partnership agreement which supports strategic working relations between the third sector and the public sector in Bridgend County.

It is written in a spirit of mutual respect and understanding and provides a framework for developing shared aims and objectives to improve the quality of life of people in the local community and to provide them with effective support.

The Compact Implementation Plan (to be developed following adoption of codes of practice) will set out the objectives that support continuous improvement and development relating to the Compact themes. This is one of the Codes of Practice that has been produced by the Bridgend Compact Liaison Group.

The Code of Practice:

The Code of Practice aims to raise the profile of volunteering and the value of volunteers in the delivery of service provision across the Bridgend County. It provides a practical guide for public and third sector organisations that wish to recruit, train, manage and support their volunteers effectively.

It sets out principles of good practice and undertakings for both sectors on how to work together to promote volunteering and support voluntary action by removing unnecessary barriers to volunteering, involving more volunteers in their activities and encouraging people, including employees, to volunteer.

Definition of Volunteering

Volunteers commit time and energy for the benefit of others in the community and for themselves through personal choice and without financial reward. It is rewarding and is an important expression of citizenship as well as an important component of democracy. A volunteer can be defined as “a person who is freely engaged in any activity which involves spending time, unpaid (except for travelling and other approved out-of-pocket expenses), doing something which aims to benefit some third party other than or in addition to a close relative”.

The role of the volunteer is complementary to that of paid staff. Volunteering may be viewed as either formal or informal:

Formal Volunteering refers to activities undertaken through an organisation, be it a small community group consisting partly or entirely of volunteers or through major organisations such as Health Boards or national organisations e.g. fundraising, befriending, administrative work.

Informal Volunteering may be defined as a wide range of different kinds of mutual help and co-operation between individuals within communities, for example babysitting for a friend or checking on an elderly neighbour.

Aims of the Volunteer Code of Practice

- To develop volunteer opportunities that will benefit people living in and working in Bridgend County to promote and share good practice.
- To develop a consistent and transparent approach to the provision of volunteering, including monitoring, support, implementation, delivery, and evaluation.
- Arrangements for volunteers to be given the opportunity, where relevant, to share their ideas, views and opinions.
- Develop a greater understanding and respect to build on the capacity in relation to the development and provision of volunteering.

Joint Undertakings

The partners in the Bridgend Compact make a commitment to support the Principles of Good Practice set out in this Code

All partners will:

- Ensure that opportunities to volunteer are available and open to everyone regardless of race, age, language, material wealth, disability, gender, sexual orientation or religion; be flexible enough to take a specific approach to a specific need;
- Develop volunteer opportunities that will benefit people living and working in Bridgend County and share best practice examples across all agencies;
- Ensure that appropriate policies and conditions are in place to underpin and support volunteering;

- Recognise that recruiting and managing volunteers effectively is an important role which requires appropriate resources and support;
- In addition, sufficient resources should be budgeted and allocated in order that volunteers are properly trained, managed and supported in accordance with the Code of Good Practice such as training, CRB checks, payment of out of pocket expenses;
- Take positive steps to identify perceived barriers to volunteering and, wherever practicable, put in place measures to tackle these obstacles;
- Ensure that, wherever possible, volunteers reflect the wider community of Bridgend by working together to attract volunteers from groups who maybe under-represented;
- Work together to promote volunteering in Bridgend County, using internal and external communication channels (such as websites, intranet, annual reports and other publications) to recognise the extent and the value of volunteers' contributions and to make information about volunteering easily accessible;
- Given full consideration to the use of volunteers in the design and commissioning of services;
- Encourage and enable employees to volunteer through recognition and support;
- Ensure that the principles and the undertakings set out in the Code are reflected in all service provision agreements between the partners such as contracts, protocols and service level agreements where volunteering is an integral part of the agreement;
- Ensure that volunteers receive recognition and are valued, receive expenses and are offered opportunities to enhance and develop their skills.

Implementation and Monitoring

This Code of Practice will be circulated to all partnerships in Bridgend.

The Local Service Board will promote the Code and make reference to it as appropriate.

This of one of the Codes of Practice that has been produced by Bridgend's Compact Liaison Group.

Its implementation will be monitored and reviewed as part of the Compact Implementation Plan. Any issues arising from the Code that are considered

through the Compact Mediation and Disputes Process will also be monitored by the Compact.

Supporting Documents

- The Bridgend Compact 2011
- Code of Practice on Commissioning
- Code of Practice on Training
- Code of Practice on Partnership Working
- Mediation and Disputes Resolution Process

Further Information

Your local Volunteer Centre is available for information and support, whether you are looking to involve volunteers in your organisation, need help with putting together policies or are thinking of volunteering yourself.

Their role is to promote volunteering and to work with groups and organisations to increase the number of volunteering opportunities available and to work in partnership with other organisations to overcome barriers to ensure that those people who are willing and able to volunteer can do so.

Bridgend Association of Voluntary Organisations, 112-113 Commercial Street, Maesteg CF34 9DL

Tel: 01656 810400

Website: www.bavo.org.uk

Volunteering Wales website: www.volunteering-wales.net