



FAN – Friends and Neighbours

## The FAN Charity – Policies

### Volunteer Policy

#### Introduction

This volunteer policy sets out the principles and practice by which we involve volunteers and is relevant to staff, volunteers and trustees within the FAN Charity. It aims to create a common understanding and to clarify roles and responsibilities to ensure the highest standards are maintained in relation to the management of volunteers. The volunteer policy and related documents give further details about the support and procedures in place for volunteers.

#### Our commitments

We recognise volunteers as an integral part of the FAN Charity. Their contribution supports our mission and strategic aims, and complements the role of paid staff. We aim to encourage and support volunteer involvement to ensure that volunteering benefits the FAN Charity, its participants and the volunteers themselves. Appropriate steps will be taken to ensure that paid staff are clear about the role of volunteers, and to foster good working relationships between paid staff and volunteers. When there is sufficient funding in place volunteers will not be used to replace paid staff. We are committed to offering a flexible range of opportunities and to encouraging people from diverse communities to volunteer with us, including those from under-represented groups such as youth, people with a disability, older people, asylum seekers, refugees and people from black and minority ethnic communities.

We recognise that there are costs associated with volunteer involvement and will seek to ensure adequate financial and staffing resources are available for the development and support of volunteering. We support the idea that people have a right to participate in the life of their communities through volunteering and can contribute in many ways. We take seriously our responsibility to organise volunteering efficiently and sensitively so that the valuable gift of the volunteer's time is best used to the mutual advantage of all concerned.

**Who is a volunteer?** Volunteers are individuals who undertake activity on behalf of our organisation, unpaid and of their own free choice.

The Welsh Government Volunteering Policy (2015) defines volunteering as

- activity which is undertaken freely, by choice

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- is undertaken to be of public/community benefit
- is not undertaken for financial gain

Within FAN some volunteers have specific roles.

Trustees are volunteers with responsibility for governance of the FAN Charity.

Facilitators are volunteers who facilitate FAN Groups

FAN Ambassadors take FAN out into their communities and help welcome new people into FAN Groups.

In addition to their specific roles, they may be involved:

- in community engagement to raise awareness of our work
- in one off events and promotional activities

Volunteers are valued for:

- bringing additional skills and new perspectives to the FAN Charity
- enabling us to be more responsive and flexible in our approach
- championing our cause within the wider community
- enhancing the quality of our work and of participant experience
- promoting the wellbeing of users of services, local communities and themselves.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

A designated staff member, The FAN Manager has responsibility for the development and co-ordination of voluntary activity within the FAN Charity, including volunteering policies and procedures and the welfare of volunteers.

All volunteers will have a designated FAN contact (staff or volunteer) for guidance, support and supervision. Staff responsibilities for volunteers will be explicitly referred to in their job/role description.

The volunteer role is based on trust and mutual understanding. There is no enforceable obligation, contractual or otherwise, for the volunteer to attend or to undertake particular tasks or for the FAN Charity to provide continuing opportunities for voluntary involvement, provision of training or benefits. However, there is a presumption of mutual support and reliability. Reciprocal expectations are acknowledged – both of what the FAN Charity expects of volunteers and what volunteers expect of the FAN Charity.

### **The FAN Charity expects volunteers:**

- to be reliable and honest

- to carry out tasks within agreed guidelines
- to uphold the FAN Charity's values and comply with organisational policies
- to make the most of opportunities given, eg training
  - to contribute positively to the aims of the FAN Charity and avoid bringing the FAN Charity into disrepute

**Volunteers can expect:**

- to have clear information about what is and is not expected of them
- to receive adequate support and training
- to be insured and to volunteer in a safe environment
- to be treated with respect and in a non-discriminatory manner
- to have opportunities for personal development
- to be recognised and appreciated
- to be able to say 'no' to anything which they consider to be unrealistic or unreasonable
- to know who to contact within the organisation

**Recruitment and selection**

Equal opportunities principles will be adhered to in recruiting volunteers. Opportunities will be widely promoted, to attract interest from different sectors of the community. Positive action to target recruitment may be used where appropriate. Information will be made available to those enquiring about volunteering, including written role descriptions which set out the nature and purpose of the volunteering role, key tasks, skills required and benefits. A risk assessment will be undertaken on all volunteer roles. Recruitment will usually involve an application form, informal interview and the taking up of references and a DBS check where appropriate. Where applicants are not able to be placed in their preferred role, they will be provided with feedback and given the opportunity to discuss alternative volunteering roles or signposted to the local volunteer centre or the [www.volunteering-wales.net](http://www.volunteering-wales.net) website.

**Induction and training.**

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

- For Facilitators, the training and induction route is as follows:
  - The trainee Facilitator applies to be a FAN volunteer
  - They attend at least one FAN meeting.
  - They complete the FAN Facilitator training session
  - They complete Safeguarding Training

- They are supported to find FAN groups to practice with alongside an experienced facilitator and when FAN and the Facilitator are confident, they facilitate a group themselves.
- They receive a certificate (see note above)
- They receive ongoing support as appropriate from FAN staff and other volunteers.

## **Support and supervision**

Volunteers will be offered support and guidance as appropriate, and this is discussed during induction. Arrangements vary according to the volunteer and the role undertaken, and may include telephone or online support, meetings in person or at group meetings.

## **Recognition**

Volunteers will be given the opportunity, to share their views and opinions with the FAN Charity's wider staff and trustees at Facilitator Get-Togethers, will be asked for their feedback in questionnaires and offered an annual 1:1 supervision session.

Formal recognition of the contribution of volunteers is expressed in a range of ways including annual reports, website articles, social media, award celebrations and certificates.

## **Dealing with problems**

The FAN Charity aims to treat all volunteers fairly, objectively and consistently. It seeks to ensure that volunteers' views are heard, noted and acted upon promptly. We will attempt to deal with any problems informally and at the earliest opportunity. All volunteers will have a named person to whom they can turn in the case of any difficulty. Volunteers will be made aware of the FAN Charity's Settling Differences, Dealing with Complaints Policy and how to use it. Where informal resolution is not possible, this will be adhered to.

## **Expenses**

Volunteers will be given clear information about what expenses can be claimed and how to make a claim.

## **Moving on**

When volunteers move on from volunteering with us they will be asked to provide feedback on the volunteering experience by way of an exit questionnaire. They will also be given the opportunity to discuss their responses to the questionnaire more fully. Volunteers who have remained with the FAN Charity for at least 3 months will have the right to request a reference. Volunteers will be supported to move on to other options.

Signed:



Ian Thomson

Role: Chairman

Date April 2024

### **Volunteering Policy Related Documents**

Application Form

Role Description (Trustee, Facilitator, Ambassador)

Flow chart illustrating the volunteering experience

Settling Differences, Dealing with Complaints

Exit Questionnaire