

I have a
Heart for
horley

POLICY:

Volunteer and Worker Policy

Implemented:

Date of last review:

Date of next review:

December 2024

This Policy applies to all activity undertaken by Heart for Chorley in pursuing its purpose as a Registered Charity serving its beneficiaries, partners and the community.

Purpose

This Volunteers and Workers Policy is established to provide guidance and standards for individuals, including volunteers and employees, engaged in activities with Heart for Chorley Supported Housing Charity. The policy aims to ensure the welfare and safety of vulnerable adults facing homelessness, addiction, and criminal risks in the community and during home visits.

Scope

This policy applies to all individuals associated with Heart for Chorley, including employees, volunteers, and contractors, engaged in activities related to supporting vulnerable adults.

Lone Workers

- Lone working may be necessary in certain situations, such as home visits. Lone workers must adhere to the Lone Worker Policy, which includes risk assessments, check-in procedures, and emergency protocols.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks

- Those requiring Enhanced DBS checks:
 - All Heart for Chorley volunteers and workers who may:
 - come into contact with vulnerable adults in any Heart for Chorley controlled premises.
 - provide any one-to-one support to any Heart for Chorley beneficiaries.
 - accompany Heart for Chorley beneficiaries to any confidential environments such as doctors or hospital.
 - be a lone worker with Heart for Chorley beneficiaries (See Lone Worker policy).
 - Any person that engages with Heart for Chorley beneficiaries as part of an official referral from another organisation but will not be identified as volunteers or workers of Heart for Chorley. DBS checks will be conducted by the referring organisation and Heart for Chorley will ensure the organisation has a policy to maintain a record of DBS checks and regularly review their status.
- Those not requiring DBS checks:
 - Any person not officially referred by any organisation and engaging in a befriending manner with Heart for Chorley beneficiaries, or those whose role within Heart for Chorley is to engage only in public settings and will not be dealing in confidential activities.
 - Any person whose relationship with Heart for Chorley beneficiaries is unofficial or deemed as being a friendship.

Induction and Training

- All volunteers and workers will undergo a comprehensive induction process, including an introduction to the charity's mission, policies, and procedures.
- Induction will cover relevant training on working with vulnerable adults, confidentiality, data protection, and emergency procedures.
- Induction training will be revisited periodically.

Risk Assessment

- Prior to engaging with vulnerable adults, a risk assessment will be conducted to identify and mitigate potential risks associated with homelessness, addiction, and criminal history/ potential.
- Ongoing risk assessments will be conducted to adapt to changing circumstances.
- Friendships that beneficiaries engage with will be subject to risk assessment also, although Heart for Chorley will not dictate a beneficiaries friendship choices but will empower them to make healthy decisions by conducting their own assessment of risk.

Reporting Hazards and risks

- Every employee, volunteer or other worker will report any and every identified risk to a colleague, manager or trustee, depending the level of risk identified.
- No person will carry the knowledge or responsibility of a hazard or risk alone even if the risk is resolved. Every identified hazard or risk should be shared so that lessons can be learned about the causes and future hazards avoided before a risk is possible.

Confidentiality

- Volunteers and workers must adhere to strict confidentiality and data protection guidelines regarding all information related to service users, colleagues, and the charity and should not allow the identification of risks to diminish the importance of confidentiality and/ or data protection.
- Information sharing will only occur on a need-to-know basis, following data protection regulations.

Data Protection

- Heart for Chorley is committed to complying with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and other relevant data protection legislation.
- Volunteers and workers will receive training on data protection principles and practices.

Safeguarding

- All volunteers and workers will be trained in recognising signs of abuse and neglect and will follow established safeguarding procedures (see Safeguarding policy).
- Reporting mechanisms for safeguarding concerns will be clearly communicated.

Legal Compliance

- Heart for Chorley will regularly review and update this policy to ensure compliance with UK laws and regulations, including but not limited to the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, Data Protection Act 2018, and GDPR.

Heart for Chorley Supported Housing Charity will ensure that all individuals associated with the charity are made aware of and understand this policy.