Peebles CAN is committed to providing a quality and enjoyable volunteering experience which is fun and empowering for those involved. This document is our Volunteer Policy and Code of Conduct to outline guidelines for volunteering.

**Introduction**

Peebles CAN is a non-profit community organisation. Our mission is to help people discover new ways to create a self-sustaining and inclusive community.

Our values are

* Ecological Integrity
* Sustainable Development
* Social Inclusion
* Empowering people to be the best they can be
* Discovery Learning
* Promoting a healthy lifestyle
* Creating an inclusive, friendly community group where everyone can feel at home

Our strategy is to widen our network of connections to identify local needs and to provide state-of-the-art learning and development services to achieve identified goals. Empowering local people through providing volunteering opportunities is central to our strategy.

Volunteers make a vital contribution to our aims and are extremely highly valued.

**Purpose of this Policy**

This policy aims to:

* Reflect the mission, values and strategy of Peebles CAN in the approach to volunteers.
* Acknowledge the valuable contribution made by volunteers and empower volunteers to be the best they can be
* Outline a general framework for volunteering, the support provided, and the rights and responsibilities for volunteers.

**Recruitment**

Peebles CAN is committed to adhering to an equalities and diversity policy; to be inclusive and open to anyone wishing to volunteer and opposing all forms of discrimination. Some specific roles may be subject to PVG checks to enable a volunteer to work with vulnerable people.

Recruitment is ongoing and through various methods, such as volunteer centres, social media, posters, CAN events and word of mouth.

New volunteers are signposted to roles by the Volunteer Coordinator and receive an induction. When individuals cannot be placed within Peebles CAN they will be referred to another agency to support them to find other volunteering opportunities.

Peebles CAN do not have a formal procedure of interviews and references before volunteering. This is to make participation as simple as possible.

Volunteers complete a single information form prior to volunteering which gives contact details, emergency contact and request for photo consent. Volunteers are asked for an expression of preference regarding tasks, including duties to be avoided due to health and wellbeing. Volunteer records will be kept securely and in compliance with GDPR, and Privacy Policy outlined on the website.

Volunteers are welcomed and inducted to their role by the Volunteer Coordinator with a tour of the community garden and an outline of typical activities they can expect to be involved with. The Volunteer Policy and Privacy Statement is available to volunteers from the website or by email request.

**Support and Supervision**

Peebles CAN will ensure volunteers are matched to suitable roles in line with their expression of interests, and have appropriate support, supervision and training.

Volunteers have regular support and supervision by the Volunteer Coordinator. Volunteers will be provided with opportunities to share ideas and concerns, and to discuss their experiences, including meetings and volunteer reviews.

All volunteer policies will be checked by the Peebles CAN Board as to how they affect volunteers.

Commitments

Volunteers are not required to pledge a time commitment. Volunteering responsibilities are taken on freely and are not to be viewed as obligations.

Volunteers chose how long they volunteer for, what tasks they are involved in and how frequently they join in.

Role descriptions

Volunteering at Peebles CAN takes place at the Peebles CAN community garden located on Kingsmeadows Road. Activities vary seasonally, and include ground preparation, plant care, composting and basic woodwork. Volunteers will receive training before undertaking work with garden machinery.

Volunteers do not receive payment for their work, however all volunteers are encouraged to take a harvest of vegetables in return for their efforts.

Peebles CAN offers opportunities for role development. Volunteers can be supported to buddy up with other volunteers and are supported by staff to lead sessions to share their knowledge and skills. Volunteers are invited to work with Peebles CAN staff on other ongoing projects, and at the Saturday Market.

Photograph Consent

As part of the Privacy Policy, all volunteers have the right to give, and withdraw at any time, photo consent. Pictures taken during volunteering will be used for the promotion of Peebles CAN activities. Volunteers are explicitly asked for their views on photo consent as they complete the initial volunteering information form.

PPE

Volunteers are advised to dress in weather appropriate clothing. Peebles CAN provides hi-vis waterproofs, gloves, protective footwear, and branded t-shirts. Peebles CAN will provide PPE for reasonable requests such as gloves and requests for tools and materials.

Health and Safety

Peebles CAN has a duty of care to all volunteers and conducts risk assessment and regularly reviews health and safety aspects. All volunteers are covered under Peebles CAN Public Liability Insurance.

If a medical emergency should arise, unless you are a trained first-aider, the priority is to get assistance from someone who is trained. Even if you are a trained first-aider, ensure that professional medical help is obtained as a matter of urgency. If there is any immediate danger, get yourself and those near you away from the area as quickly as possible.

Peebles CAN will support volunteers with specific roles to become trained as a first aider.

Expenses

Volunteers may be able to claim expenses for activities. These should be discussed in advance to ensure they will be covered by the organisation.

Volunteers are encouraged to claim for expenses to ensure that those who wish or need to claim expenses do not feel disadvantaged or excluded.

Challenging Situations

In cases of challenging situations which cannot be resolved by the Volunteer Coordinator, the Projects Manager is available to help with any queries.

**Code of Conduct**

Peebles CAN is committed to providing a safe, inclusive and fun environment for all volunteers. All staff and volunteers will behave in a manner which reflects the CAN values, and is considerate of the health, safety and wellbeing of others.

All volunteers are highly valued. Volunteers are recognised through saying thank you, and invited to social events, such as Christmas lunch. Volunteers are invited to be part of the decision making process through monthly volunteer meetings and their feedback is taken seriously.

No volunteers will be unfairly disadvantaged or discriminated against.

Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities

Volunteers are entitled to the following rights and expected to adhere to the responsibilities.

PLEASE REMEMBER:

The guidelines below are in place to ensure your safety. They are not designed to be restrictive in any way.

Peebles CAN is committed to providing a professional service to volunteers but we also want you to have fun and enjoy your volunteering experience.

**Volunteers’ Rights**

• To be given a clear description of their role as a volunteer and responsibilities within the organisation.

• To have a named contact (Volunteer Coordinator) who will look after their interests whilst they volunteer, and who will offer them appropriate induction, training and support and regular supervision.

• To be assured that any information shared with the organisation is kept confidential and is in compliance with the data protection act.

• To be given the same protection under health and safety regulations and public liability as paid workers.

• To be offered opportunities for training and skills development, appropriate for their role and tasks as a volunteer.

• Not to be exploited – volunteers should not: Be used to replace paid workers, have unfair demands made on their time, be asked to do something which is against their principles or beliefs

• To be given the chance to play a part in decision making within the organisation.

• To be paid out-of-pocket expenses such as travel whilst doing voluntary work.

• To be able to take a break from or cease to volunteer.

**Volunteers’ Responsibilities**

• To accept the organisation’s aims and objectives and work within agreed policies and procedures.

• To do what is reasonably requested of them, to the best of their ability.

• To take care when lifting, handling and working with tools. To practice good housekeeping, keeping the area you are working in tidy and safe.

• To treat information obtained whilst volunteering in an appropriate confidential manner and adhere to the organisation’s confidentiality policies.

• To recognise that they represent the organisation and therefore need to act in an appropriate manner at all times.

• To honour any commitment made, to the best of their abilities, notifying the organisation in good time should they be unable to keep that commitment e.g. for holidays.

• To be willing to undertake appropriate training as necessary for the voluntary work undertaken.

• To recognise the right of the organisation to expect quality of service from its volunteers.

• To share suggestions for changes in working practices with the Volunteer Coordinator.

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