



## **Volunteering Policy (Headway Branches)**

### **1. Aim of the Policy**

This policy has been created to show our volunteers that we have spent time and care in planning how volunteers are welcomed at Headway. It also outlines that all Headway branch volunteers will be treated in a fair and consistent way. It should also help our volunteers understand what support is available to them and what they can expect from us.

### **2. Our vision for volunteering**

Volunteering is a great way to share your enthusiasm, skills, experience and ideas. By volunteering for a Headway branch, you will be making a positive contribution to your community.

Headway branches are entirely run by volunteers. Without your time and effort we would not be able to support brain injury survivors and their families.

Headway believes that voluntary work plays a crucial part in society, bringing benefits to volunteers themselves and to service users.

We aim to invest in and support our volunteers by:

- Ensuring that volunteers are properly integrated into the organisational structure and that mechanisms are in place for them to contribute to the work of the branch and Headway UK
- Supporting Headway branch committees and Headway UK staff to work positively with volunteers and, where appropriate, will actively seek to involve them in their work.
- Recognising that volunteers require satisfying work and personal development. We will seek to help volunteers meet these needs, as well as providing the training for them to do their work effectively.
- Endeavouring to involve volunteers from a wide range of backgrounds and abilities and ensure our volunteering opportunities are as accessible as possible.

### **3. Recruitment**

It is important that our volunteer recruitment process is as straightforward as possible, while ensuring the safety of our service users and current volunteers. Potential new volunteers will be asked to visit the branch and have an informal discussion/interview with a committee member. They will then receive a volunteer



pack with relevant information about Headway, the role of the volunteer and an application form.

We require new volunteers to have completed a volunteer application form, have 2 satisfactory references and return a signed volunteer agreement before they can become an active volunteer.

#### **4. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

Our organisation is firmly committed to diversity in all areas of work. We believe that we have much to learn and profit from diverse cultures and perspectives, and diversity will make our organisation more effective in meeting the needs of all our stakeholders. We are committed to developing and maintaining an organisation in which differing ideas, abilities, backgrounds and needs are fostered and valued, and where those with diverse backgrounds and experiences are able to participate and contribute. We will regularly evaluate and monitor our progress towards diversity.

#### **5. Confidentiality**

We expect all volunteers to adhere to confidentiality guidelines which will be explained to you before you begin volunteering with us. This also includes use of social media and contact with any press.

#### **6. Induction and Training**

There will be an induction prepared and delivered by one of the committee members or a Headway UK staff member. This will include:

- Introduction to other volunteers and clients.
- Forms to be completed such as confidentiality, volunteer agreement, contact sheets etc.
- Copies of all the relevant policies including this volunteer policy and other relevant information on Health and Safety, Expenses and Equality and Diversity.
- Information about learning opportunities

There will be a trial period of three months to give Headway and you time to discover if we are suited to each other. A review will be made midway through the trial period and also at the end. This is not an assessment, it is just so that we can be sure that you benefit the most from the volunteering experience and maximise the time you are giving freely.



## **7. Support**

You will be given a named branch contact and the contact details for your local Headway UK Network Support Coordinator. They will remain your key contacts throughout your volunteering with us. This will include regular meetings with you to discuss how you are getting on, discuss any training needs and deal with any issues arising. This will also ensure that we are doing all we can to make your volunteering experience an enjoyable and meaningful one.

## **8. The Volunteer's Voice**

Volunteers are encouraged to express their views about matters concerning Headway and its work. This can be done through your branch contact or through your local Network Support Coordinator.

## **9. Records**

Minimum details will be kept on volunteers by Headway UK. All details will be held under the Data Protection Act 2018 which works within a framework of rights and duties designed to safeguard personal data. This will include the application form, references and contact details. Volunteers have a right to access their personal information, please could request this in writing to your Network Support Coordinator.

## **10. Expenses**

Headway values its volunteers, and we want to ensure that there are no barriers to volunteer involvement. All reasonable out-of-pocket expenses incurred in the course of a volunteer's role, will be reimbursed.

In order to claim expenses, an expenses form must be completed and handed to the treasurer or committee member of the Headway branch. Please see the Volunteer Expense Policy for more details.

## **11. Insurance, health and Safety, accidents and risk assessments**

Each Headway branch has a valid insurance policy so that volunteers are covered by public liability insurance. We will remind you of our Health and Safety Policy and aim to ensure you are kept safe in all activities whilst volunteering for Headway. We have clear procedures for accidents and emergencies and will always have a risk assessment for any off site trips/activities.



## **12. Resolving Problems**

We hope that you have an enjoyable experience volunteering with us. However, if your role as a volunteer does not meet with your expectations or with the commitments we have made to you, we want you to feel comfortable about informing us. Firstly, speak to your branch contact who should be able to sort this out with you. If you do not feel this has been resolved, you can then speak to the Network Support Coordinator at Headway UK who should be able to resolve your problem or concern.

## **13. Endings**

When volunteers move on from their role at Headway 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 with a member of the committee. On the basis of their voluntary work, volunteers will have the right to request a reference.