



Dorset Reclaim Volunteer Policy

What is Dorset Reclaim?

Dorset Reclaim is a registered charity formed in 1998 that has three main aims:-

- To provide good quality furniture, electrical and household items to those on a low income
- To provide enjoyable volunteering and training opportunities
- To prevent items going to landfill and involve the local community in re-use and recycling.

We have depots in Bournemouth, Poole and Dorchester, with an engineering depot in Christchurch and work with a variety of agencies to help the residents of Dorset and eastern Hampshire.

Our Values

Dorset Reclaim is committed to ensuring that:-

- volunteers are integrated and treated equally as part of the team of people working at our depots.
- there is recognition of the individual skills each person brings to the organisation.
- volunteers feel supported and valued in their role
- volunteers are encouraged to develop and build on existing skills and knowledge through sharing good practice and training.
- all volunteers are treated with respect

Recruitment

- Dorset Reclaim seeks to recruit volunteers from a diverse range of backgrounds that reflects the makeup of the local community, through the volunteer bureau, partner agencies or direct recruitment.
- Each potential volunteer will be invited to look around one of our depots, see the day to day roles and meet other volunteers, have a meeting with the Depot Manager and be given an application form.



Each person who volunteers for Dorset Reclaim may be asked for two references and may be subject to more detailed background checks (e.g. Criminal Records Bureau).

- If you have a criminal record, please don't be put off from applying to become a volunteer. This will not necessarily stop you from volunteering for the project. We aim to be as inclusive as possible without putting either those that work with us or our clients at risk. For full details, see our Working with Ex-Offenders Policy or talk to the Project Manager.
- If we find a potential volunteer not suitable for any reason, this will be handled sensitively and with due respect for the volunteer involved

Induction and Training

- Each volunteer will receive information and training about health and safety and essential in house procedures.
- Each volunteer will receive basic information about Dorset Reclaim and our policies and ethos.
- We will discuss with the volunteer any other training needs that may be initially apparent or arise over time.
- Each volunteer will be with us on a trial basis for the first two weeks. This will help both the volunteer and Dorset Reclaim ensure there is



enough time to discover whether they are suited to each other, or if there needs to be a change of role.

Support

- Volunteers can talk to the Depot Manager, or any other preferred member of staff, whenever they wish to discuss any aspect of their volunteering. As every day can be very busy, this is best arranged in advance if possible to give sufficient quiet time for a full discussion.
- Volunteers will be invited to regular lunchtime meetings to get together, hear updates about the project and the way we work and to raise any item they wish for discussion.
- We have an advisor available to any of our volunteers who can help in a variety of matters. All discussions are confidential.
- Volunteers will be offered a variety of training to meet their individual needs and those of Dorset Reclaim.



Expenses

- All volunteers will have their travel expenses reimbursed on production of the necessary bus or train tickets, or paid the set rate per mile if using their own vehicle.



- Other relevant expenses incurred as a result of working at Dorset Reclaim will be paid with the prior agreement of the Project or Depot Manager.

Insurance

- All volunteers are covered by Dorset Reclaim's insurance policy whilst they are engaged in agreed work as a volunteer, whether that is working in our warehouse or offices, a client's home or as part of our van teams.



- It is the responsibility of the individual volunteer to inform their motor insurance company that they are using their car in the act of volunteering.

Protection of volunteers

- Dorset Reclaim will ensure its volunteers are not placed in vulnerable situations where they may be at risk, this means we will not reveal personal contact details, or request or allow volunteers to carry out tasks for clients outside their normal supervised hours.
- The safety of the work site and our procedures will always be such to ensure minimum risk to volunteers.

Health and Safety

- Each volunteer will be offered and undertake basic health and safety training relevant to their role.
- Volunteers will be aware of general health and safety and personal safety.
- Volunteers will know how to report an accident or incident that they or a fellow team member may have.
- Volunteers will have some knowledge of risk assessment.



Diversity

- Volunteers will be expected to have an understanding and commitment to equal opportunities and diversity.
- Dorset Reclaim will not allow intolerance or prejudices to be part of the workplace.

Problem-solving and complaints

- Dorset Reclaim will try to solve any problems at the earliest possible stage.



- Volunteers are able to complain about paid staff, other volunteers or any aspect of the service.
- All problems will be resolved as informally and as quickly as possible and will be dealt with as confidentially as the matter allows (see complaints policy for more details).
- Volunteers should discuss any issues in the first instance with their depot manager or the project manager if they prefer.

Confidentiality

- Volunteers are bound by the same requirements for confidentiality as paid staff (see confidentiality policy).
- Dorset Reclaim receives personal information regarding individuals that should not be generally disclosed and recognise that they will often be working in situations which require tact and sensitivity.
- Volunteers will be trained in the requirements of confidentiality to ensure that both Dorset Reclaim and they are comfortable with the principles and application of the policy.



Participation in decision making

- There is a volunteer representative on the Management Committee which meets every two months.
- Volunteers are welcome to make suggestions on any aspect of the way we work. This can be at group meetings, at one to one supervisions, informally to a manager during the working day or by anonymously putting ideas into the suggestion boxes.
- Dorset Reclaim will always involve and consult any volunteer concerning their volunteering activities.

Recognition

- It is important that all volunteers feel valued and their efforts are recognised.
- Volunteers will be treated with respect and courtesy.
- Dorset Reclaim will use social events as an important way of saying thank you and to help team building.



- References will be given on request and certificates of recognition issued as appropriate.

Job Descriptions

- All volunteers will be given a clear task description by the Depot Manager or their immediate supervisor.
- Volunteers will not be put under pressure to extend the terms of their role, which will be mutually agreed at the outset.
- All volunteers will be allowed flexibility to undertake different roles if they should wish and should circumstances allow, with the prior agreement of the Depot Manager.

Leaving

- Volunteers are asked to give as much notice as possible regarding when they would like to leave their volunteering role, although we recognise their right to withdraw at any time.
- All volunteers will be offered an exit interview when they leave Dorset Reclaim.
- References will be provided for any volunteer if appropriate, after they have left the project.



For more information on anything mentioned in this policy, please speak to the Project Manager or Depot Manager.

Signed by
the Chairman

Date: