

# Volunteering

## A Guide to Good Practice for Prisons





Cover photo: Volunteer at Hanbury Hall, reproduced by kind permission of CSV and HMP Guys Marsh

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2005 is the Year of the Volunteer in which the Government, working in partnership with two well established volunteering organisations, aims to increase the number of volunteers; open up more volunteering opportunities in the public and voluntary sector; raise the profile of the work volunteers are doing nationwide; and thank volunteers everywhere for their time and commitment. This, combined with the National Offender Management Service's intention to increase the involvement of voluntary and community groups in the delivery of service to offenders, means that it is timely to look again at the role of volunteers in prisons.

Volunteers have become an integral part of the provision of services to prisoners and, in so doing, they support prison staff in varied areas of their work. Volunteers in prisons include those from the community and faith groups; prisoners who offer peer support, which not only improves their life skills, but also boosts their self esteem; and prison staff who willingly give up some of their leisure time to help offenders and their families, and to work towards reducing re-offending. Whatever their background, volunteers bring enthusiasm, new skills and an ability to build trust and confidence with both prisoners and staff.

This guide offers the framework for a volunteering policy that can be adapted for local use and to take account of different volunteering opportunities and levels of involvement. It sets out examples of volunteering opportunities in different prisons and makes "good practice" recommendations to prison staff for engagement with volunteers. Moreover it highlights the importance of valuing all volunteers.

Volunteering in prisons requires a special commitment on the part of the volunteer, and I believe this guide provides the necessary tools for individual prisons to make a corresponding commitment to its volunteers, and I hope it will also encourage the continued development of opportunities for volunteering with, and by, prisoners.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Baroness Scotland".

**Baroness Scotland of Asthal QC**

Minister of State for Criminal Justice and Offender Management  
Home Office



This good practice guide to volunteering in prisons emphasises our commitment to working with volunteers and those in the voluntary and community sector.

Volunteers bring additional skills and expertise to our work, and demonstrably provide a valuable link to the community. This guide also highlights the importance of peer support in providing prisoners with newly acquired skills and expertise, and the confidence to use them, which will encourage them to lead law abiding lives as they return to the community.

I entirely share the Government's commitment to increase the role of volunteers and our task is to ensure that we attract volunteers by offering rewarding opportunities in a safe environment. Volunteering is a two way process, and volunteers should also benefit from working with us. Proper targeting, planning and recognition of volunteer involvement is crucial.

This guide offers examples of good practice and makes recommendations for the development of appropriate policies and procedures. The "toolkit" includes guidance on how to prepare a volunteering policy; details the essential components including recruitment, selection, induction, training and supervision; and encourages the use of consultation, networking and valuing volunteers.

I am grateful to those who have contributed to this guide. I know it will prove useful, both to those who already have volunteering systems and to those whose work is not so well advanced.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Phil Wheatley' followed by a large checkmark.

**Phil Wheatley**

Director General HM Prison Service



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This Guide provides the tools to strengthen and encourage the Prison Service's commitment to working with volunteers and is intended for use by senior managers, and by those staff working at an operational level who are actively involved with volunteers. It complements the Good Practice Guide "Getting it right together"<sup>1</sup> which provides guidance on developing protocols for improving the management of services provided by external voluntary and community sector organisations working within prisons.

## The guide

- provides background information about volunteering in prisons
- offers examples of good practice in the deployment of volunteers and suggests practice that should be followed to ensure that volunteers are able to engage constructively with prisons and prisoners
- looks at the information, support and training volunteers need to ensure they can volunteer safely and in an environment where the contribution they make is valued and appreciated
- outlines volunteering being undertaken by organisations providing support or services to prisoners, and also volunteering by individuals, prison staff and prisoners themselves

The National Offender Management Service, introduced following the recommendations in the Carter Review for Correctional Services<sup>2</sup>, and the Government's Response<sup>3</sup>, will put greater emphasis in the years to come on working with the voluntary and community sector, and this will include working with volunteers.

The Government's Compact on volunteering<sup>4</sup> defines volunteering as:

*"an activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment or someone (individuals or groups) other than, or in addition to, close relatives."*

Volunteering has also been described as *"an important expression of citizenship and essential to democracy. It is the commitment of time and energy for the benefit of society and the community, and can take many forms. It is undertaken freely and by choice, without concern for financial gain"*.

1 HM Prison Service/Clinks, 2001, Getting it right together

2 Patrick Carter, 2003, The Carter Report: Managing Offenders - Reducing Crime

3 Home Office, 2004, The Government Response to the Carter Report: Reducing Crime – Changing Lives

4 Government Compact, 2001, Volunteering: a Code of Good Practice

The key principles identified in the Compact on volunteering are:

### **Key principles**

Government departments including Executive Agencies and other decision makers, including Voluntary and Community Sector organisations, need to consider the possible impact of their decisions on volunteers. When doing this they should support these four principles of volunteering:

- Volunteering must be the result of a free choice by the volunteer
- Volunteering must be open to everyone
- Volunteers must receive some benefits to make their contribution worthwhile
- Volunteers must be publicly recognised

### **The Government undertakes to**

- Check all proposed legislation and regulations for potential impacts on volunteering
- Work to eliminate current barriers, including funding barriers to volunteering
- Increase awareness of the value of volunteering and promote opportunities to volunteer
- Encourage better practice in recruiting and managing volunteers
- Gather better data on volunteering

### **The sector undertakes to**

- Improve the management and recruitment of volunteers
- Give better training and support to volunteers
- Help volunteers find appropriate roles
- Give thanks and recognition to their volunteers
- Promote the benefits of volunteering

The most recent Citizenship Survey, published in 2003<sup>5</sup>, found that:

- 42% of the adult population volunteers at least once over a year, giving on average 2 hours a week;
- 28% of the adult population volunteers at least once a month; and
- 62% of the adult population volunteers informally over the course of a year

Most volunteering is undertaken in the voluntary and community sector with 84% of volunteers involved with voluntary and community groups, and 24% involved with public sector organisations e.g. hospitals, day care centres, special constables, meals on wheels, schools, youth activities and in prisons.

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5 Home Office Research, 2004, 2003 Home Office Citizenship Survey – People, Families and Communities (HORS 289)

In 1998, the Institute of Volunteering Research<sup>6</sup> identified key trends in the organisation of volunteering. The main findings that the Prison Service needs to consider are:

- The increased number of organisations that have a written volunteer policy or practice and procedures handbook
- That almost all organisations have systems in place for supporting, supervising and disciplining volunteers
- The majority have procedures for evaluating volunteers' work and managing staff/volunteer relationships
- Most provide training on the job and through courses, and almost half offer their volunteers some form of accreditation or certification for work or training accomplished
- Almost a third of organisations use a method or formula to value the contribution of their volunteers in terms of time and money
- Almost all organisations pay for or refund travelling expenses to and from the place of work
- Just over a half believe they have volunteers who represent a good cross-section of their local community

Prison Service Order 4190<sup>7</sup>, "Strategy for Working with the Voluntary and Community Sector" sets out mandatory requirements and gives guidance on good practice in working with the voluntary and community sector. It calls for effective arrangements between the Prison Service and the voluntary and community sector to ensure that services are focussed, relevant and support regime objectives. It aims to develop an approach that will strengthen the relationship between the Prison Service and voluntary and community sector organisations and volunteers at headquarters, area and establishment level. Further, it requires action to ensure that voluntary organisations and volunteers form an integral part of the delivery of constructive work in establishments and the community.

Individual prisons should develop a volunteer policy, especially where volunteers are recruited directly, as part of good practice.

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6 Institute of Volunteering Research, 1998, Issues in Volunteer Management

7 HM Prison Service, 2002, PSO 4190: Strategy for Working with the Voluntary and Community Sector

Sections 1 - 5

There are many reasons why prisons and the organisations that work with them might want to involve volunteers:

- The use of volunteers enables the prison to undertake a wider range of work
- Volunteers perform valuable and complementary tasks to those undertaken by prison staff bringing a fresh focussed approach and offering a range of invaluable skills and experience
- They bring a community perspective and can extend access to additional contacts, organisations and businesses
- They can bring diversity in terms of age, race, social background, income, education, faith etc.
- For prisoners the fact that a volunteer chooses to give time in a prison and is not there as a paid professional can give added value and this can be particularly important where the volunteer acts as a befriender or mentor.

Volunteers may be motivated by a commitment to the client group, or see volunteering as an opportunity to learn new skills or use existing skills, enhance career development opportunities, or may wish to keep occupied when unemployed or in retirement.

Examples of ways in which prisons use volunteers are set out in Section 5.

Volunteers perform essential, supportive and complementary tasks to those undertaken by employees. Volunteering is a two way process. The Prison Service should value volunteering because everyone - the prisoners and their families, staff and volunteers – benefits. The volunteer is giving freely of his or her time and should get something back from the work they do – a sense of satisfaction, new skills, the chance to meet people, training and possibly qualifications, and enhanced work opportunities. It is equally important that they feel valued and appreciated.

Although a “thank you” goes a long way, commitment is needed, from the top down, to ensure the best use is made of volunteers. Unfortunately volunteers can experience negative attitudes from some staff and a feeling that they are unwanted “do-gooders” with a misplaced interest in wanting to help prisoners. They may also sense that they are simply being tolerated and that their work would be better undertaken by “real” prison staff should a larger budget be available. Volunteers offer much more than this - they can be creative and innovative in service delivery, but their full potential can only be realised if all prison staff understand the benefits of their work and are committed to their role in the prison. Allowing prisoners to act as volunteers not only boosts their sense of self-esteem and confidence, but can also add the “feel good” factor for other prisoners which improves the prison atmosphere.

Volunteers feel more comfortable and respond positively in a positive working environment so they need to be given clear guidelines about their volunteering role; how it complements the work of the prison; their responsibilities; safety measures; and support structures. They should also be encouraged to understand and recognise the contribution of other volunteers and voluntary sector organisations working within the prison.

A volunteer policy is the foundation on which to develop and clarify volunteering procedures and practices, and these help to involve volunteers more effectively. The policy, which should be developed by senior management after planning and consultation, announces the prison's commitment towards good practice in engaging with volunteers. It demonstrates that care and thought has gone into the use of volunteers in helping prison staff deliver programmes and services, and should ensure that they work with volunteers in a consistent way. With a written policy in place, volunteers feel reassured that they will be treated equally and fairly, and they know the procedures to follow should things go wrong, and are reassured that their position within the prison is endorsed by senior prison staff. There are several issues to consider in developing a policy:

### Checklist for good practice in planning volunteer involvement

- Allocate responsibility for volunteer work within the prison
- Understand “volunteers and the law”
- Consultation
- Identify the need and potential areas of work
- Events and publicity
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Valuing volunteers

Recommended items for inclusion in the actual policy are set out in Section 4.

### 3.1 Allocate responsibility for volunteer work

Some organisations take on volunteers to ‘help out’ without considering issues such as what they will be doing, who will support and supervise them, what training will be needed, and the costs in terms of resources. Time spent thinking about and planning for volunteers impacts positively on the value of the services that volunteers contribute. It is essential that one person within the prison has clear responsibility for the co-ordination of all voluntary work whether undertaken by individual volunteers, those attached to voluntary sector organisations, prisoner or staff volunteers.

A member of the Senior Management Team can provide the strategic view, and is in a position to resource agreed procedures and policies. This should include developing a clear understanding of roles and expectations, dealing with problems of access and communication, and the co-ordination and, if appropriate, the management of volunteers. It may be necessary for certain volunteers, such as prisoner and Chaplaincy volunteers, to be managed under separate arrangements, but a member of the Senior Management Team should retain responsibility for co-ordinating all volunteer work within the prison to ensure that identified needs are met and duplication is avoided.

Prison Service Order 4190 already makes clear that Governors, Area Managers and Heads of Groups must give responsibility to a member of their Senior Management Team for oversight of voluntary and community groups and that this role should be written into their job description.

It may be helpful if the two roles are combined so that one person assumes overall responsibility for voluntary and community groups and volunteers. In addition, the prison's voluntary sector co-ordinator and the area co-ordinator can also support work with volunteers. Their contact details can be obtained from the NOMS Voluntary Sector and Assisted Prison Visits Unit.

### **3.2 Understanding Volunteers and the Law**

Before developing a volunteer policy it is important to have an appreciation of the legal aspects of using volunteers in the workplace.

#### **The Legal Position**

There is no legal definition of a volunteer, nor any legislation specifically concerning volunteers. In a typical volunteer situation, under the current state of the law, a volunteer will not have a contract and will not therefore be regarded as either an employee or a worker. This means that s/he is not included in the equal opportunities legislation, does not have protection from unfair dismissal, and will have no right to bring a claim before an employment tribunal. Whilst prisons need to support and respect volunteers, they must ensure they do not unwittingly create contracts, which could give their volunteers employment status and entitlement to some or all employment rights.

To avoid creating a contract, prisons should not provide benefits in kind or in cash. This is to prevent "consideration" which is the exchange of something of value as part of a contractual agreement. Reimbursement of actual expenses is acceptable and desirable but things such as additional training, which is not work related, might be regarded as a benefit. Prisons must also avoid creating mutual obligations such as a commitment to work a minimum number of hours; work for a set period of time; or fulfil a specific piece of work within a set period. It should be made clear that volunteers are free to come and go.

The potential to inadvertently create contracts has meant that some organisations shy away from written documents confirming volunteering arrangements, but a contract can exist without a written document – it can simply be a description of a relationship. Regardless of this, it is still good practice to have policies and procedures in place, as long as they are not setting out contractual obligations or using language that suggests an "employment" situation exists.

The normal data protection rules apply.

#### **Volunteers and the National Minimum Wage**

Volunteers are not affected by the National Minimum Wage Act providing they are only being paid out of pocket expenses and do not have any contractual obligation towards the prison. As mentioned above, the key is whether the volunteer receives a "consideration", i.e. something of value in return for their volunteering work. Section 4.9 on expenses will explain this in more detail.

## Volunteers and benefits

Generally volunteers can receive reimbursement of reasonable out-of-pocket expenses without their benefits being affected. However, volunteers should always check their individual circumstances prior to commencing work.

### 3.3 Consultation and planning

It is important to consult as widely as possible when drawing up a volunteer policy because the greater the input, the more workable the policy will be. Similarly the greater the involvement of staff, voluntary sector organisations and volunteers (including prisoner volunteers), the more enthusiastic they will be to ensure its success. Prison staff may not have learned about volunteer involvement in their training, nor have any personal experience of working with volunteers, so their involvement in the planning process will help clarify the role of volunteers and ensure they do not perceive volunteers as a threat to their jobs.

There are many different methods of consultation that could be used, for example, the use of a questionnaire to staff and existing volunteers; participatory workshops; instigating an advisory group. The consultation should cover such issues as:

- Potential volunteering roles within the prison and how these relate to sentence plans
- Security issues
- Health and safety issues
- Staff concerns
- Prison resources in terms of staff time in managing, supporting and training volunteers; provision of visiting or office space; expenses
- The situation over insurance
- Access to equipment such as telephones, photocopying
- Ensuring diversity
- The values and expectations of volunteers and how these interact with those of the Prison Service
- The benefits and added value that volunteers bring
- Monitoring and evaluation

### 3.4 Identifying need and potential work areas

Volunteering work, whether arranged through a voluntary sector organisation or not, must always be relevant, structured and based on identified needs within the prison. Suitable volunteering opportunities should therefore be identified in advance rather than simply accepting offers from willing volunteers. In this way recruitment can match the volunteer to the need rather than the need being adapted to the volunteer. There may be many existing volunteering activities within the prison offering a wide variety of services and support to meet prisoners' needs, but there could be other as yet unidentified areas that could be filled. Proper analysis also provides an opportunity to consider boundaries and limitations.

The following approaches to identify volunteering opportunities may help to stimulate discussion

during consultation:

- Recognising the needs of prisoners e.g. personal support, counselling, befriending, developmental and humanistic
- The use of OASYS (Offender Assessment System) and sentence plans
- The National Reducing Re-offending Action Plan and the identified key pathways:
  - Accommodation
  - Education, Training and Employment
  - Mental Health and Physical Health
  - Drugs and Alcohol
  - Finance, Benefit and Debt
  - Children and Families
  - Attitudes, Thinking and Behaviour
- Regional Reducing Re-offending Action Plans
- Other specific needs identified by prisoners, prison staff, volunteers or Voluntary Sector Co-ordinators

It is important that staff time involved in managing volunteers is used effectively and if a particular area of volunteering does not meet specific needs or priorities, or is duplicated, sensitive handling of the situation will be required.

### **3.5 Events and publicity**

Having created the policy, the prison should promote it ensuring all staff, volunteers and prisoners are aware of it, and understand its purpose and importance. This could be achieved through publishing details in a staff or voluntary sector newsletter, using staff notice boards, or holding a meeting. Prisoners should be made aware of the opportunities open to them both as potential volunteers and as recipients of the services.

Copies of the policy should be given to all volunteers and staff, regardless of whether or not they will be actively involved with volunteers. The volunteer policy should become an integral part of the prison's induction package and this will guarantee that new staff and volunteers will all be aware of the policy.

Annual events could be held to demonstrate how volunteers are used in the prison and this could be tied into a recruitment drive by inviting members of community groups, local businesses, the public and the press.

### **3.6 Monitoring and evaluation**

Senior managers should consider what outcomes they want volunteers to achieve and how their success will be evaluated. This will help to ensure a high quality of service and support for prisoners and volunteers.

If volunteers are providing services that are relevant to sentence plans, then it is advisable to set some key milestones and expectations in service delivery, against which their service can be

evaluated. However, it is important to remember that volunteers, who may not have the same values or desire the same outcomes, are providing the services freely.

If agreement has been reached on this during consultation, then monitoring and evaluation will be possible. This should involve volunteers, staff and the service users - prisoners. Monitoring and evaluation should focus on both the quantitative and qualitative outcomes covering areas such as the elements of the prisoner's needs that were met, and how the prisoner's circumstances or behaviour has changed as a result. Monitoring on the use of the service by different ethnic groups will also be required to ensure that all potential users are accessing the service.

If agreement has not been reached then at the least, it should be possible to monitor hard evidence such as number of sessions covered, attendance by the prisoner etc. This may involve the volunteer keeping records of sessions and activities.

The senior staff member with responsibility for volunteers should establish monitoring and evaluation systems, and decisions will need to be made about the information to be collected, how frequently, and how it will be presented and circulated. It is also necessary to determine how it will inform future developments of the volunteer policy.

### 3.7 Valuing volunteers

The Institute for Volunteering Research found that volunteers identified simply being thanked as the most important form of recognition. Valuing volunteers should therefore flow through the volunteer policy and prisons will need to plan how this will be demonstrated. Recognition could range from:

- A simple thank-you
- Providing support and respect
- Asking for and acknowledging reports on volunteer activities
- Providing access to training for a recognised qualification or personal development, providing this is work related
- Asking for feedback and views on prison services
- A mention in a report or publication
- Inclusion at meetings or social functions
- Acknowledging prison staff who work especially well with volunteers
- Acknowledging volunteer work by taking photos or producing a video
- Presenting certificates
- An annual celebratory event for example in Volunteers Week
- Providing volunteer prisoners with a letter or reference confirming the value of their volunteering work when they are released or move to another prison

### Examples of valuing volunteers

When HMP Lancaster Castle Volunteers achieve 100 hours volunteering, their names are added to the Volunteer Roll of Honour Board in the Visits Hall and after 200 hours their names are put on another Roll of Honour Board and they are given a certificate.

HMP Springhill helped arrange a Year of the Volunteer event to encourage members of the public to volunteer. Prisoner volunteers were also involved, since they had proved very supportive of the volunteers' work. The Governing Governor gave the welcoming speech to thank all the volunteers for their valuable contribution.

HMP & YOI Doncaster has rewarded its volunteers for their hard work and dedication by helping to create two Outreach Worker positions for the Bridge Project's Prisoner and Family Support Centre based in the visitors reception centre. Both volunteers and the resettlement team decide if the candidate has the ability, empathy and attitude demanded to work with the client group.

It is preferable to produce a short policy document outlining the main commitments and make references to any underpinning policies for more detail, e.g. the Health and Safety policy.

### Checklist: the components of a good Volunteer Policy

- Prison principles and aims
- Recruitment and selection
- Security
- Induction and Training
- Support, supervision and management
- Health and safety
- Equal opportunities and diversity
- Insurance
- Expenses
- Confidentiality issues
- Problem solving and complaints
- Volunteer agreements and work outlines
- The volunteer's handbook
- Ongoing consultation and review of the policy

The extent to which inclusion of all these components is appropriate will depend on the individual prison's approach. For example the "recruitment and selection" component may not be appropriate if all the volunteers are sourced through the voluntary and community sector. The prison should consider what its policy will be with regard to prisoners and staff as volunteers and further sections will be needed to cover these aspects.

Further detail on the above components is provided below, and a sample volunteer policy is included at Appendix 1, which has been adapted from a sample policy produced by Volunteering England.

### 4.1 Aims and Principles

The policy should start with a statement about why the prison wishes to engage with volunteers, followed by the Prison Service statement of purpose and the vision, aims and objectives. It should then move on to the practice guidelines for working with volunteers.

### 4.2 Recruitment and Selection

Having identified the volunteering opportunities in the prison, decisions must be taken about recruitment and selection to ensure that the process can identify not only suitable candidates but also those who may not be suitable because they display the wrong attitudes or have misconceptions about working with prisoners.

Much will depend on the work to be undertaken, and whether volunteers need specialist skills

e.g. for work in education, sports, mentoring, counselling, or for work with minority groups. It is helpful to prepare work outlines for volunteering posts identifying the tasks involved, and these can be revised by agreement as the work changes or develops. This will help provide a volunteer “specification” and highlight the skills and attributes needed as well as clarify the work expectations for the volunteer.

It is recommended that the policy should state that selection processes for prisoner volunteers will be determined separately for each aspect of volunteering.

Most external volunteers are recruited from the friends or relatives of existing staff or volunteers. This is fine if the prison wants to recruit “more of the same” but if it is looking to recruit a more diverse group of volunteers, or volunteers with particular skills or attributes, other methods should be used:

- Placing adverts with local volunteer development agencies; local employers wishing to encourage volunteering as part of staff development; the local press or radio
- Placing posters in community centres, places of worship, supermarkets, dentists’ and doctors’ surgeries, local shops, cafes, clubs, libraries, colleges, gyms
- Sending out leaflets
- Giving talks and presentations
- Ensuring the advertising is accessible to minority groups and the disabled – for example, think about translation into different languages and large text for the partially sighted

Some external volunteers may be carers, or in full or part time employment, and may only be available for a few working hours. If the prison can offer some flexibility in work times this will help attract a more diverse range of volunteers.

For some voluntary work, for example where a volunteer will always be supervised, selection can be informal. Generally the higher the level of responsibility to be assigned to the work, or the more vulnerable the prisoners they will be working with, the more detailed and in-depth the recruitment and selection process should be.

This might include:

- Application forms, which should specifically address their motivation in volunteering and their suitability for the particular role. The form should be short and make clear that the information given will be treated in confidence. The option of giving the same information verbally at interview should be available for those with literacy problems or disabilities
- Interviews, possibly in the form of an informal chat, to allow assessments on both sides to be made. A more formal interview should take place if the volunteer is to work with vulnerable prisoners
- Health checks, but only if relevant to the work they will undertake

It is recommended that the prison should take up a minimum of two references, preferably not close friends or relatives. Feedback should be given to unsuccessful volunteers if requested.

Whatever the process used, the prison must adhere to equal opportunities guidelines and aim for diversity of gender, age, race, etc. This can be achieved by identifying any under-represented

groups, directing recruitment advertising accordingly, having clear selection procedures, and providing staff, volunteers and prisoners with equal opportunities training.

### 4.3 Security

The prison will need to ensure that external volunteers are security cleared in line with Prison Service Order 8100 on Recruitment. The level of security clearance required will depend on the length of time they will be volunteering in the prison, the type of work they will be doing and the category of prison.

Volunteers working in juvenile establishments may also need to be checked by the Criminal Records Bureau and in line with child protection legislation. This is the case if the volunteer will have regular and unsupervised contact with children under 18 years of age. However where volunteers will have supervised but infrequent contacts, then a standard check is sufficient. Security checks should be regarded as a limited tool as potential offenders may not have a criminal record and risks will need to be minimised through good practice in selection procedures, supervision and support.

Prison Service Order 4190 states that the time taken to provide security checks must be kept to a minimum, and that staff and volunteers from voluntary and community groups must receive a security talk before working in a prison, even if they are not issued with keys. Despite this, volunteers will need to be made aware of the length of time it can take for a security check to be completed, particularly if a Counter Terrorism Check is required. This is something that is undertaken centrally and the prison will have no control over the time scale.

In addition volunteers should be made aware that:

- The prison has the right on security grounds to deny them access at any time
- They must carry ID when visiting the prison
- They may be subject to searches and lockdowns

### 4.4 Induction and Training

Many external volunteers will not have visited a prison before and so they should receive a welcoming and comprehensive induction, which clarifies working practices and routines within the prison to ensure they are able to work safely. The initial induction should cover:

- Security issues including searches and lock downs
- Risk assessments
- Information on working in the prison, including contact details for the members of staff having overall responsibility for volunteers as well as the individual having immediate responsibility for their supervision
- Health and safety, and safe systems of work
- The prison's policies on bullying and racism
- Understanding the basic do's and don'ts about working in a prison, e.g. use of mobile phones, laptops, personal possessions, and matters the volunteer needs to inform the prison about
- Confidentiality

- Support and supervision
- Training on the use of keys, if provided
- Their volunteering role and area of work, preferably covered in a written work outline

Volunteers should be given a copy of “An introduction to working with the Prison Service<sup>8</sup>” and the Volunteers Handbook if the prison has produced one. If there is no handbook, copies of all the policies referred to in the volunteer policy, the volunteer’s agreement and during induction, should be included as part of an induction pack. Policies and procedures should be discussed with the volunteers at induction to ensure they are fully understood.

Longer-term induction (i.e. in weeks one to three) should include:

- The prison’s volunteer policy
- Working in the prison and adherence to the principles of the staff code of discipline
- Training opportunities
- Expenses payments, where it has been agreed these will be paid by the prison
- Resolving problems and complaints
- Opportunities for consultation and review
- Prison service terminology and explanation of staff grades

Most prisons have a Voluntary and Community Sector Directory, which will help the volunteer understand the work undertaken by other voluntary groups and service providers. The Prison Service website will also prove a useful source of information. Volunteers could be asked to undertake a research task as part of their induction, which will help them understand their work and how it fits into the overall prison regime.

Prison staff could look for further induction information in the following Prison Service Orders:

- 1215 - Professional Standards
- 2300 - Resettlement
- 1000 - Security
- 3801 - Health and Safety
- 4190 - Strategy for working with the Voluntary Sector
- 8010 - Equal Opportunities
- 9020 - Freedom of Information

Induction for prisoner volunteers should be specific to the role they will be undertaking.

A standard induction checklist can be used to ensure that everything is covered in the correct order and then signed off by the supervising officer and volunteer. An example of a checklist is attached at Appendix 2.

Training can help external volunteers understand how prisons operate and will highlight the differences in approach from those previously experienced in working in the community.

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8 HM Prison Service, June 2002, “An introduction to working with the Prison Service – Guidelines for voluntary and community sector staff and volunteers”

The prison's training plan should therefore include provision for all volunteers, preferably allowing some training alongside prison staff. Clinks has produced a generic volunteer training programme<sup>9</sup> for delivery by prison staff who may be voluntary sector co-ordinators or chaplains, or by voluntary sector organisations which recruit volunteers to work in prisons. The course covers an introduction to volunteering in prison; how the prison service works; working together; volunteers and prisoners; examining attitudes to crime and justice; handling difficult situations; prisoner support services; and sharing good practice. Other national bodies such as Nacro and PACT have also produced volunteer training programmes, some of which offer accredited training, which can be attractive to volunteers.

In addition volunteers can be enrolled on the Prison Service's "Prison Awareness" training, which provides *"An introduction to elementary core skills that will assist newly joined non-unified staff to work effectively in a prison setting"*. The course lasts four or five days and will give volunteers confidence in the prison environment.

Volunteer training should be regularly reviewed and ongoing training should be encouraged as it can be a strong motivating force for volunteers, and can serve as a reminder or be used to update volunteers on working practices, such as security issues. The training must be work related and not seen as a "consideration" (see section 4.9 on Expenses).

Provision should also be made for staff awareness training about the role of volunteers in service delivery. Voluntary sector co-ordinators should also receive appropriate training,

#### 4.5 Support Supervision and Management

Volunteers have diverse backgrounds and different motivations and will therefore need to be managed flexibly and with understanding. They will need ongoing support and supervision from a named officer, which should include the opportunity to give and receive feedback in a one to one setting; highlight concerns; and discuss training needs. The level of support will depend on:

- The nature of the work involved
- The experience of the volunteer
- Whether the volunteer is directly recruited by the prison; sourced through a voluntary and community sector organisation; is a prisoner; or a member of staff

Management principles that work effectively with prison staff apply equally to volunteers, but it is worth remembering that they are giving their time freely, have no contract and, apart from prisoner volunteers, could leave if they feel they are being poorly or inappropriately managed. External volunteers should be informed that the prison has a staff care and welfare team, which can provide confidential support.

Where a voluntary and community sector organisation provides the prison with volunteers, the prison needs to ensure that the organisation has policies and practices in place for their management and support.

## 4.6 Health and Safety

Under Prison Service Order 4190, Governors must issue formal agreements between the prison and voluntary and community groups as part of the induction pack, making clear where the responsibility lies for health and safety issues, reporting procedures, insurance etc. It is possible that the procedure Governors have already put in place will suffice or can be adapted to cover volunteers.

While volunteers are not explicitly mentioned in health and safety legislation, organisations have a duty of care toward them, and section 3 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 places a duty on employers 'to ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, that persons not in their employment, who may be affected by their undertaking, are not exposed to risks to their health or safety', and 'to give to persons (not being their employees) who may be affected in a prescribed manner information as might affect their health or safety'.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 place a duty on employers to carry out risk assessments, looking at potential risks to their employees and others, which includes volunteers. If they have more than five employees these assessments should be in writing.

The Governor therefore has a duty of care to all those working in or visiting his/her prison including volunteers and, as a minimum, they should receive induction training so that they:

- Know which member of staff has responsibility for health and safety advice
- Understand health and safety rules including any emergency procedures that apply
- Have due regard and concern for their own health and safety at work and that of others so they do not do, or cause to be done, any act or omission which may endanger the health and safety of themselves or others
- Know how to report accidents and dangerous incidents to the duty governor where health and safety has been endangered including "near misses". This also includes problems identified with buildings, equipment or working practices.
- Are able to record all injuries, including minor ones, in the Accident Book and report to their supervising officer
- Know the location of fire alarms, extinguishers, fire exits and first aiders

They should also be allowed access to Prison Service Order 3801 on Health and Safety.

Escorting and supervision procedures must be clearly explained to volunteers during induction, and they must never knowingly be placed in a position of risk by the prison service. However the very nature of prisons means that there is always a possibility that dangerous situations might occur, and volunteers should be trained during induction on what action to take should this arise. They should be warned not to place themselves at risk by intervening and it should be made clear that they are expected to follow the guidelines given.

## 4.7 Equal Opportunities and Diversity

The Prison Service is bound by the Equal Opportunities Policy, which is detailed in Prison Service Order 8010. The principle of equality of opportunity covers employment practice as well as the

delivery of services. The Prison Service has strict guidelines and will not tolerate any form of discrimination and must therefore guard against discrimination or unfair treatment of staff, prisoners and volunteers, by promoting a positive action programme to include equal opportunities in all work areas, e.g. recruitment advertising, training and publicity. Since this is an integral part of the prison regime, the application of the policy to volunteers, although not specifically mentioned, should not present any problems.

Prison Service Order 4190 encourages and welcomes diversity and requires Governors to explore ways of building and developing contacts with under-represented groups; address attitudes in establishments through training and policy implementation; and take action against anyone who is found to discriminate unfairly against voluntary and community sector staff or volunteers working in establishments.

The volunteer policy should therefore emphasise a commitment to encouraging the involvement of people with diverse ideas, abilities, backgrounds and needs. If the Prison Service engages volunteers through a voluntary and community sector organisation, it must ensure that the organisation has an equal opportunities policy in place that underpins a commitment to promote diversity and equality of opportunity.

All volunteers should be made aware of the prison's policy at induction.

#### **4.8 Insurance**

The issue of insurance should be covered in the volunteer policy as it is likely to be raised by volunteers or potential volunteers. Most prisons do not carry employer's liability insurance, public liability insurance or professional indemnity insurance. To reduce the risk of claims, senior management must arrange for the careful selection of volunteers, assess and minimise risks, provide training and supervision, and ensure that buildings and equipment are safe and free from hazards. Volunteers should be informed at induction that in the event of any accident or injury, loss or claim the Secretary of State will consider settling claims on an individual basis.

If the volunteer is engaged through an external agency, then that agency should carry insurance cover for its volunteers.

#### **4.9 Expenses**

It is good practice for volunteers to be paid out of pocket expenses since they are giving their time freely. This helps the prison retain volunteers and promotes equality of opportunity allowing volunteers from all sectors of the community to engage.

Governors and the prison finance section should determine which of the following items could be paid as expenses:

- Travel costs to and from the prison, for work related training and travel undertaken in the course of volunteering
- Reimbursement for the cost of meals e.g. during external training (it is sensible to impose a

maximum)

- Any work related costs the volunteer incurs personally for copying, postage, telephone calls etc
- Care costs for children or dependents whilst volunteering in the prison (it is sensible to impose a maximum)
- The costs of any necessary equipment or materials

The issue of expenses and “considerations” was raised earlier. Providing the expenses paid are genuine there should not be a problem, i.e. if the volunteer spends £3 to travel to and from the prison, then that is the amount that should be paid, rather than say a flat rate of £4 per day where the extra £1 would be seen as a “consideration”, which may suggest a contractual arrangement exists. Training should not be seen as a consideration providing it is directly related to the volunteer’s work.

Reimbursement should be made at regular intervals on appropriate proof of expenditure. Use of a claim form is recommended as this provides proof that only actual expenses have been paid. A sample form is included at Appendix 3, but its use should be checked first with the Prison’s Finance section. Arrangements should be set out in the Volunteer Agreement and/or Handbook.

Reimbursement of actual expenses should not impact on a volunteer’s benefits, but additional payments may. The volunteer can obtain further details from the Department for Work and Pensions or Jobcentre Plus.

In general, there are no tax implications providing volunteers are only paid actual expenses. Additional payments would be regarded as income for income tax purposes, and the volunteer would be taxed on the whole sum, not just the amount over and above the actual expenses. There is a maximum level of motor mileage allowance that can be paid before tax becomes due<sup>10</sup>. It is extremely unlikely that volunteers will exceed this allowance, but if in doubt volunteers should check with their local Inland Revenue office.

#### 4.10 Confidentiality

All volunteers must be made aware of the prison’s rules on confidentiality and the procedures that must be followed, i.e. that all information obtained at the prison should be treated as confidential and must not be disclosed to a third party without the express consent of the Governor in writing. This should be made clear at induction, and a statement to that effect should be included in the volunteer agreement which the volunteer signs.

Problems could arise if volunteers are working under the confidentiality rules of a voluntary sector organisation, which may not be fully compatible with the prison’s policy. Most organisations would accept the requirement to disclose information about any activity that may compromise security, have child protection, victim protection or self harm implications, and also accept that the volunteer must report this without delay to their named contact in the prison. Organisations

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10 In 2005, the maximum is 40p per mile for the first 10,000 miles and 25p per mile thereafter, regardless of engine size

may demand however, that other information acquired in the course of their work should remain between the prisoner and the volunteer, unless the prisoner consents to the information being disclosed. A confidentiality agreement in such circumstances will be a matter of negotiation between the Governor or designated senior officer and the individual organisation.

Stringent confidentiality rules apply to Listeners and the Samaritans.

The Insider's compact allows disclosure to a member of staff if they are concerned that a prisoner is at risk or vulnerable; otherwise there is no need for an Insider to pass on to anyone the details of conversations with prisoners. New prisoners should be informed of this at induction.

Volunteers should have the right to see their own personal records including any application form, police checks, and supervision reports etc.

#### 4.11 Problem Solving and Complaints

Prison Service Order 2510 covers Prisoners Requests and Complaints but this does not relate to complaints against volunteers, only staff. Volunteers are not staff and the prison should therefore provide a separate formal problem solving and complaints procedure for working with volunteers, so that should any issues arise they can be dealt with appropriately. This should cover issues raised by volunteers or about volunteers, i.e. those recruited directly from the community, those working for a voluntary sector organisation, prisoner, and staff volunteers.

It is possible that the procedure Governors have already put in place for voluntary sector organisations under Prison Service Order 4190 will suffice or can be adapted for this purpose. This requires Governors to have a straightforward procedure for raising concerns and complaints and for the resolution of disputes, including the procedure for referring on to a higher authority at area or national level if the issue cannot be resolved locally.

If the volunteer is sourced through a voluntary and community sector organisation and the complaint is against the prison or a member of staff s/he should raise the concern initially with the senior manager of the voluntary sector organisation who will endeavour to reach agreement through consultation with the responsible senior member of prison staff. If that fails then the prison's volunteer complaints procedure should be invoked.

Prisons may have to deal with the problem of unsuitable volunteers. This is a difficult area, as prisons should not hold their work to the same standards as paid staff. In the first instance, this should be dealt with informally and the volunteer should be made aware that there is a problem with his or her work. This should not be personalised, and agreement on a way forward should be reached jointly.

Options to consider are:

- the need for retraining - some things may have been forgotten or poorly explained
- closer supervision – perhaps a more hands on approach is needed
- is the role suitable for the volunteer – consider changing some tasks or moving the volunteer to an entirely different role
- are outside factors affecting the volunteer's work
- is the volunteer bored or in need of new challenges

If the issue cannot be resolved, then the problem solving procedure should be invoked, with a more formal meeting to discuss the problem, giving the volunteer a chance to put their case, and a reasonable time agreed in which to see improvement. If there is no improvement then the volunteer can be asked to leave. This should be handled sensitively, and volunteers should be given suggestions for other volunteer opportunities, e.g. details of the local volunteer centre.

The key is to ensure that the policies for paid staff are separate to those for volunteers, so that there is no risk of viewing the arrangement as a contractual one.

#### **4.12 Volunteer Agreements**

Prison Service Order 4190 calls for Governors to support their relationships with the voluntary and community sector with formal written agreements. Where the volunteer works for a voluntary sector organisation, a Service Level Agreement should already be in place to cover their work. However other volunteers should also receive a volunteer agreement setting out expectations from both the prison and volunteer perspectives. It is good practice for all volunteers to receive an agreement but prisons will determine whether or not they are appropriate for use with prisoner volunteers.

As indicated earlier, it is important that such an agreement should not create a contract, as this would give the volunteer formal employment rights. The agreement should be framed in terms of hopes and intentions to reflect the voluntary nature of the agreement rather than in rights and obligations. It would be wise to include a statement such as

“This agreement is binding in honour only, is not intended to be a legally binding contract between us and may be cancelled at any time at the discretion of either party. Neither of us intends any employment relationship to be created either now or at any time in the future, and there is no provision in this agreement or elsewhere for paid holiday, sick pay, pension etc. There is no requirement on the prison to provide work, nor any requirement on the part of the volunteer to do it.”

The volunteer policy provides the framework for what to include in a volunteer agreement. As with the policy, it is good practice to keep the volunteer agreement brief and make references to underpinning policy documents that the volunteer should be given as part of his/her induction or in the volunteer handbook. If possible the agreement should have the volunteer's work outline attached.

### **Checklist: What to include in the Volunteer Agreement**

- Introduction, parties to agreement, nature of work
- Prison aims, objectives and principles
- What the volunteer can expect from the prison in terms of:
  - Induction and Training
  - Support, supervision and flexibility
  - Health and safety
  - Equal opportunities and diversity
  - The situation over insurance
  - Expenses
  - Problem solving and complaints
  - Confidentiality
- What the prison expects from the volunteer
- Voluntary work outline

Most of these components have been detailed above and a sample agreement and work outline can be found at appendices 4 and 5.

#### **4.13 The Volunteers Handbook**

The sample volunteer policy and agreement make reference to greater detail being found in the Volunteers Handbook. This should contain all the information that volunteers will need to know about working in the prison and copies of any written policies or agreed terms, such as the volunteer policy, health and safety policy, the problem solving and complaints procedure, and information about expense claims, etc. Having such a handbook is the ideal but if resources do not permit this, then paper copies of all the policies referred to should be given to the external volunteer at the induction stage.

#### **4.14 Ongoing consultation and review of the Policy**

All volunteers should be consulted regularly on matters that directly or indirectly affect them and their work. As their work develops, they may have innovative ideas for improvement, and so a procedure for them to put forward suggestions will be needed. Listening and responding to volunteers' views can encourage them to take an active part in the development of the prison's services to the mutual benefit of prisoners, staff and volunteers.

Using a yearly needs analysis or providing networking opportunities, such as a volunteers' forum or liaison group meeting, to involve staff and all volunteers working in different areas of the prison will encourage them to share good practice and provide an effective means of gaining information about new issues.

The policy should include provision for regular review (at least once a year) and modification after consultation with staff and volunteers in the light of changed working practices and developments. For example, following reassessment of the tasks volunteers undertake or changes in prison regime procedures. It is better to be proactive about this and arrange regular reviews to assess whether and how the volunteer programme is changing over time, rather than wait for a volunteer to raise the issue. At each review it is worth debating whether the desired outcomes are being achieved; whether there have been any problems in the relationship between staff, volunteers and prisoners; whether there are any security and visiting problems; and what future direction the volunteering programme should take.

This will ensure the policy remains a living document and reaffirms the importance with which the prison views its relationship with volunteers.

There are many different ways in which volunteers may come to be working in prisons:

- Volunteering through voluntary and community groups
- Directly recruited by the prison from the community, e.g. through the Chaplaincy, education or resettlement
- Prison Visitors
- Independent Monitoring Boards
- Student volunteers
- Prisoner volunteers
- Staff as volunteers

### 5.1 Volunteering Through the Community

Many people volunteering in prisons do so through the many voluntary and community groups offering a wide variety of support and services to prisoners. A survey was carried out in 2000 for the Active Community Unit and it showed there were volunteers supporting work areas such as:

- Education (reading support, English as a Second Language)
- Vocational education (mentoring and specific training)
- Counselling (bereavement, alcohol, drug and gambling addiction, personal relationships)
- Parenting courses
- Support for prisoners with disabilities (e.g. sensory impairment),
- Families (tea bars and play activities in visits halls)
- Faith groups (befriending, guidance, attending services, prayerful support, courses)
- Support for minority ethnic prisoners and foreign nationals (cultural and language support including interpretation and legal advice)
- Welfare benefits and housing advice
- Mentoring and befriending

The survey did not include volunteers involved in Visitor Centres as these are sited outside prisons. However a review of centres undertaken in 2001<sup>11</sup> estimated that over 300 volunteers support work in the 80 centres in England and Wales. The numbers of volunteers varies greatly from prison to prison: for example some prison-run centres have no volunteers at all while there is one example of two prisons sharing 130 volunteers between them. Some centres are staffed entirely by volunteers whose activities range from serving refreshments, providing childcare, facilitating children's visits, providing information and advice, and offering support to visitors. Some volunteers have more official responsibilities such as checking ID at reception, ensuring that information in the centre is up to date, opening up and locking the centre, liaising with the senior visits officer and taking bookings for visits.

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11 In 2005, the maximum is 40p per mile for the first 10,000 miles and 25p per mile thereafter, regardless of engine size

**HMP and YOI Holloway's** Visitors' Centre is managed by the Prison Advice and Care Trust and aims to meet the needs of adults and children visiting relatives or friends in prison. It offers a safe, pleasant environment where all visitors are met with dignity and respect, provided with the facilities they need and offered information, support and the opportunity to discuss the difficulties they may face in confidence. Volunteer staff liaise and network with prison staff and represent visitors' needs. They offer emotional support and guidance for families about various problems including those visiting prisoners with drug or alcohol problems, childcare, financial assistance with travel and low cost overnight accommodation. There is a staffed play area in the prison visiting hall and a coffee bar serving low cost refreshments.

The volunteers receive training to carry out this work.

The YMCA delivers a variety of programmes in Prisons across England. Much of the work is focussed on providing informal education to young offenders but the organisation also delivers Housing Advice under contract and guidance on Education and Training for the Prison Service. The aim is to work with prisoners during their sentence to rehabilitate them and then to utilise the YMCA's national network of support to help resettle them upon release.

The YMCA has worked at **HMYOI Wetherby** for several years and delivers accredited youth work programmes such as Youth Achievement Awards and Duke of Edinburgh Awards. In addition, evening activities, although educational, are made fun thereby creating a comfortable learning environment. The approach of the work is needs led and person centred so the programme changes and adapts to meet the individual needs and interests of the young person.

Volunteers, recruited from the community, colleges and universities, work initially alongside full time members of staff, either during the day or in the evening. Volunteers are provided with training relevant to their work and are also inducted into the prison regime and can eventually work on their own. The YMCA plays to the volunteer's individual strengths and encourages them to motivate trainees with their own personal interests. This has a big impact on creating a more 'natural' environment in the prison offering learning opportunities outside the formal prison's structure. The YMCA is networked into the CSV structure.

Trained Volunteers are currently running advice and information sessions and imparting wider key skills to the trainees, such as car maintenance. Volunteers with specific skills have been used to develop a range of activities such as DJ workshops, making videos about bullying, and making community links with schools.

**HMP Leeds** has a unique project, The Jigsaw Healthy Living Project, which operates through the Visitors Centre for the benefit of all visitors, prisoners' families and their dependents, prison staff, prisoners (both serving and newly released) and the local community. It is funded by the New Opportunities Fund and offers a wide range of free activities and services all of which promote health and well being and empower people to make informed choices about their lives and lifestyles:

Mental Health & Well Being

Physical Health

Financial Health

Access to Information

Family Health

Play / Youth Work

Volunteer Programme

Community Cafe

The volunteers ensure that families don't feel helpless, that they feel re-assured, listened to and supported (non judgementally), offered counselling if required, and referred on to relevant agencies inside and outside the prison.

## **5.2 Volunteers recruited directly by the prison**

By far the largest group of volunteers working in prisons are recruited directly by prison chaplains through local churches and other faith groups. Recent research reveals this involves over 464 organisations and over 6500 volunteers. In one prison, the volunteer hours managed by the Chaplain make up the equivalent of 9 full-time members of chaplaincy staff. The most common activities undertaken are prayers and worship; religious education; discussion groups; befriending; mentoring and personal pastoral support. Other areas of work include relationships, family support, suicide prevention, victim awareness, accommodation and support post release, culture and language, race relations, and drugs and alcohol work.

The Prison Service Chaplaincy and the National Offender Management Service are keen to encourage different faith communities and to increase the number of volunteers they have. Close links with the wider communities of faith are an essential part of what chaplaincies can offer prisoners and the prison community.

**HMP Camp Hill** has five volunteers delivering a Victim Awareness course, based on Restorative Justice principles, to 20 men over a 10-week period, with each session lasting two and a half hours. Working with the Chaplain, who describes their contribution as 'indispensable', they apply their knowledge and skills in ways which benefit prisoners, victims, and the community.

**HMP/YOI New Hall's Chaplain writes:**

*"Every month, one of our local churches sends a team of approximately 16 young women in their early twenties into the prison to offer our prisoners hand and nail care. We often target our large population of self-harmers for this because it enhances their self-esteem and engages them in dialogue. The prisoners receive individual attention and care - they are listened to by the volunteers, and interact with them, as well as having soft hands at the end of it! We also offer this service to the in-patients who are often quite seriously ill. We really value this, and the many other contributions that volunteers can make."*

The **HMP Blakenhurst** chaplaincy volunteers run the Visitors Centre, providing support for families, friends and children. The same prison also runs a spirituality group consisting of music, meditation, prayer and discussion. It involves those from different faith traditions, and none, and is run by volunteers.

**HMYOI Deerbolt** has used volunteers from the local and wider community for the last 23 years to help support the basic skills in literacy and numeracy of prisoners.

The Baliol Learning Centre has trained 120 volunteer supporters in the last 2 years, most of whom gain a City and Guilds Level 2 Certificate in supporting basic skills, with some going on to train as teachers. Prison staff and other learners are also trained to become supporters. The volunteers, ranging in age from 18 to 82, help to raise standards, improve basic skills, increase self-esteem, confidence and improve social skills in an intensive, one-to-one situation. The groups are happy and safe places to work where a real team spirit prevails and where everyone supports each other, making learning fun. This is considered to be important as many prisoners have had previous negative experiences of education.

### 5.3 Prison Visitors

Approximately 1400 volunteers come into prisons as "visitors" on a regular basis, and they offer friendship to prisoners irrespective of race and belief, usually to those with few relatives or friends. They provide regular contact with someone independent of the prison and with someone who represents the outside world. Prison visitors are responsible to the prison Governor and do not take on areas of work that are the responsibility of prison officers, probation officers or the chaplain.

Prison visitors play an important part in maintaining links with the community and much of this work is co-ordinated by the National Association of Official Prison Visitors through local branches. It is estimated that 60% of prison visitors are members of the association and visit in 114 prisons.

## 5.4 Independent Monitoring Boards

Every prison has an 'Independent Monitoring Board' made up of 10 to 20 lay volunteers appointed by the Home Secretary and drawn from all sections of the community. Any member of the Board has the right to enter their prison establishment at any time and to have free access to every part of it and every prisoner. The principle duties of Boards are to satisfy themselves as to the state of the prison premises, the administration of the prison and the treatment of prisoners. Each Board is required to submit an annual report to the Home Secretary. Around 1800 volunteers serve as Board members in England and Wales.

## 5.5 Students as volunteers

Students may seek volunteering opportunities in prison. Motivation may be a desire to help, understand more about criminal justice matters or to support their studying.

**Goldsmith's College Student Union** has run a scheme for nearly three years which is funded through the Higher Education Active Community Fund. The scheme trains students and staff from the college to provide a link to the outside world for people who are particularly isolated within the prison system. The scheme is currently running in 4 prisons; Brixton, High Down, Downview and Wormwood Scrubs. Training for the scheme is provided through UNLOCK over a weekend and is aimed at preparing volunteers for the environment they will enter and any problems that might occur. Volunteers also have to make an introductory visit to a prison before starting on the scheme.

It is hoped that the scheme introduces a younger and more varied group into prison visiting, and that they will continue to visit with the National Association of Official Prison Visitors after they leave university. It is also hoped that the student volunteers will contribute to a better informed debate about criminal justice in society as a whole.

Similar schemes involving students can be found in other prisons.

## 5.6 Prisoners as Volunteers

A Prison Reform Trust report<sup>13</sup>, based on a survey to which 117 prisons responded, showed that just over 3800 prisoners offered support to other prisoners in different ways and nearly 1700 were involved in helping the community from inside the prison.

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12 UNLOCK – the National Association of Ex-offenders  
13 Prison Reform Trust, 2002, Barred Citizens

### 5.6.1 Peer support

Prisoners provide support, advice and information services to each other either directly or with help from outside agencies.

HMP Prison Service Safer Custody Unit produced a guide<sup>14</sup> in 2001, which covers the main points to be considered when setting up a peer support scheme. There are a number of peer support schemes run specifically by prisoners for prisoners and some examples are given below.

#### Listeners

The largest and best established peer support scheme is the Listeners, which is run in partnership with Samaritans who select, train and support prisoners to help fellow prisoners in crisis. The aim is to help prevent suicide and self-harm by offering a confidential emotional support service, reducing anxiety levels and creating positive prisoner-prisoner and prisoner-staff relationships. There are a few similar schemes, 'Buddies' and 'Carers', which are run by prisons without involving Samaritans. These schemes offer similar support but are not completely confidential as the peer supporters are managed by prison staff.

There are currently 119 Listener schemes in England and Wales, (Ireland and Scotland also have schemes) involving about 1400 Listeners and another 50 or so peer supporters in the four Buddie /Carer schemes.

#### The key elements for a successful Listener scheme include:

- An Agreement to Provide Services between the supporting Samaritan branch and the prison
- Staff awareness and understanding about the role of Samaritans and Listeners
- Clarity about confidentiality and a Listener's lifelong commitment to it
- Consistent selection and training at regular intervals to ensure a 24 hour service is maintained
- Clear security criteria for Listener selection
- Agreement to 'hold' trained Listeners for 6 months
- Listener access to all areas of the prison, including healthcare and segregation units
- Regular (weekly in busy local prisons) Listener support meetings with Samaritans
- Listeners available on a rota
- Provision of a 'Listener support suite' with clear guidelines for use
- Listener awareness that support is always available to them by phone
- Samaritans providing regular on going training for Listeners
- Prominent and up to date publicity about Listeners in all areas of the prison

## Insiders

“Insiders” schemes, usually based in Reception and Induction, offer reassurance to new prisoners, providing them with key information to make their first days in custody easier to understand and cope with. Prisoners may volunteer or be encouraged to train as Insiders. This is separate to the work of Listeners but complements their work as it is designed to alleviate distress and the potential for suicidal thoughts.

A further guide produced by HMP Prison Service Safer Custody Unit<sup>15</sup> promotes good practice in Insider schemes.

**HMP Birmingham’s Insiders** scheme provides teams to cover the First Night Centre and the Vulnerable Prisoner Unit. Insiders offer immediate reassurance to newly sentenced or remand prisoners, often allaying fears and preconceived ideas about prison life, and providing them with practical information about daily life in prison such as how to obtain work in the prison, access medical assistance, use Pin Phones, have money sent in, attend religious services, seek help with substance misuse etc.

The service is not confidential, but Insiders are trained to seek consent from an individual prisoner before passing on information to an officer when they have concerns about a prisoner’s safety.

The scheme helps to alleviate prisoner anxiety, but also builds confidence and self esteem for those who train as Insiders, and a strong team spirit between them and staff.

## Substance Misuse

Drug treatment and support are provided in prisons through the CARATs programme. Although a significant percentage of prisoners may also have problems relating to alcohol misuse there are not yet equivalent services to address this problem, although Alcoholics Anonymous operate in almost all prisons. For those with drug or alcohol related problems peer support can often be very valuable. In the Prison Reform Trust survey, 38 prisons had alcohol peer support and 54 had drug misuse peer support.

**HMP Sudbury** is piloting the Drug and Alcohol Mentor Scheme, a confidential out of hours service provided by prisoners for those seeking advice and information on drug and alcohol related issues. Mentors are selected and receive two-days training and ongoing training as required. Once certificated, they are placed on a duty rota, and are provided with leaflets, CARAT Referral Forms, information on the opening times of the Drug Support Unit and Alcoholics Anonymous, and a statistics form for recording the numbers of individuals who access them. The mentors provide feedback to the supervising member of the Drug Support Unit the next day. The Scheme is under review, but initial feedback appears to be positive both for giving advice and for an increase in referrals to CARATs.

15 [www.hmprisonservice.gov.uk](http://www.hmprisonservice.gov.uk), Good Practice Guide for Insiders Peer Support Schemes (604 KB)

## Health Support

Peer support is provided in such areas as reducing anxiety levels, health awareness, and suicide prevention.

**HMP Lancaster Castle**, in partnership with the local Primary Care Trust, raises awareness about blood borne virus (BBV) prevention through a prisoner led Health promotion group. The volunteers are trained in issues around BBVs, as well as in training and group work techniques.

The prisoners deliver weekly induction training to all new inmates at the prison focussing on Hepatitis C awareness and management, and also offer a peer support group for those with a positive diagnosis, as well as one to one peer support for inmates who have been recently diagnosed. The group has produced a video designed specifically for a prison setting which is designed to raise awareness to prisoners. They have also been involved in educating staff at a prison health fair. The scheme has led to a change in practice throughout the prison, increased testing for BBVs and greater adherence to treatment regimes.

**HMP Hewell Grange and HMP Birmingham** found that the private custody and escort service from the local Courts had insufficient information to give prisoners about what to expect on arrival at prison. At this critical time, some prisoners were being delivered to the prisons in a highly distressed state with suicidal thoughts. The prisons are now running a joint pilot, supported by the private custodial service, whereby selected and risk assessed Insiders from Hewell Grange provide support to newly remanded and sentenced prisoners whilst awaiting transfer to prison. This is designed to allay fears, reduce the prisoner's apprehension, ease tensions and reduce the risk of suicide and self-harm. The Insiders have travel warrants, and are given mobile phones and pagers so Court Custody Officers can arrange for them to visit new prisoners in the court cells. The private custodial service has responsibility for the Insiders' health and safety whilst visiting the cells. The Insiders can feedback concerns about the emotional state of particular prisoners, and can provide them with the name of an Insider who they can meet when they arrive at Birmingham prison. Monthly liaison between Insiders at the two prisons allows them to share experiences and receive up to date information. A member of staff has been allocated to provide support in the event of the work proving stressful for the Insiders. In the long term, it is intended that the volunteers will not be directly supervised during this work. The scheme is yet to be fully evaluated but early results are promising.

## Resettlement support

Some prisoners are involved in providing resettlement support such as providing benefits and housing advice to other prisoners.

**HMP Winchester** has a "Resettlement Panel" where eight volunteer prisoners provide support and advice in benefits, employment, training and accommodation. They help prisoners complete resettlement applications, promote the work of the unit, advertise new projects and keep wing notice boards up to date. They wear T-shirts on the wing so they can be easily identified and there are posters, with photos, to advertise their service. Volunteers are selected through application and must have a certain standard of education. They receive training on the issues of housing, benefits, employment and training; attend monthly updating meetings to share experiences; and receive a nominal bonus in recognition of their contribution.

Both Nacro and Shelter have encouraged the development of peer support schemes to provide housing support, the level of which varies according to the needs of the prisoners and category of establishment.

### Housing Support

**Nacro** promotes peer support as part of a package of resettlement services and has assisted in developing good practice models. Nacro staff train prisoners, many of whom successfully achieve the City and Guilds accredited Nacro Resettlement Adviser's Award. Feedback shows that well supported prisoners can make highly effective Peer Housing Advisers. HMP Foston Hall, a women's prison in Lincolnshire, has a very successful multi-disciplinary resettlement team, which includes trained prisoners who deliver housing advice and advocacy services. The issue of prisoner confidentiality is overcome by the careful selection of peer advisers, effective support and supervision and a confidentiality policy that includes a procedure for consent to share information where necessary to achieve the housing outcomes required.

**Shelter**, as part of the South East Prisons and Shelter Housing Project, trains volunteer prisoners in basic housing matters. Depending on the category of prison, advisers may interview new inmates to determine if there are likely to be any housing problems for the family during the sentence and on the prisoner's release. They may also be the first port of call for any housing problems that arise during the course of the sentence. They can provide basic information and/or refer the prisoner on to Shelter for legal advice and advocacy. They may also take on a role in resettlement, for example liaising with housing providers, and assisting with completion of benefit forms. Peer schemes are currently running in the South East in HMP Stanford Hill, East Sutton Park, Maidstone and Cookham Wood and Shelter is planning to introduce "surgery" days to further support the prisoner volunteers.

Similar schemes to these can be found in many other prisons.

### Employment and Education

Peer support in employment and education may be linked to a sentence plan or to allow the volunteer prisoner to gain a qualification. Such schemes have proved very positive not only for those trying to learn but also in raising the confidence and self esteem of the helpers.

In **HMP Risley's Peer Tutor Scheme**, participants, who must be above Level 2 Basic Skills, may be recommended by staff or identified at induction. They are assessed for suitability and security cleared before being accepted, and then work towards a City and Guilds Certificate in Adult Learner Support, a 12-week course which includes a half-day tutorial class each week. The peer tutor is allocated a class based on their personal interests and experience, but they are also given experience in another area during the course.

Peer tutors currently work in most of the classes on education, on the residential units and in some of the workshops supporting integrated basic skills. They are paid a nominal bonus in recognition of their commitment and contribution.

**HMP Aylesbury** uses volunteer prisoners to teach other prisoners to read using the Toe by Toe Scheme. This multi sensory teaching method has proved very successful, and the prisoner teachers or mentors use a manual, which is structured and self-explanatory, to measure the mentee's progress. Each mentee has a 30-minute lesson at least five times a week on a one to one basis. (NB The Shannon Trust provides copies of Toe by Toe to prisons free of charge).

## Sport

Sports activities involving peer support are well established within prisons and are sometimes linked to the opportunity to gain a sports qualification.

**HMP Leyhill** uses peer mentors to help in the delivery of the Physical Education programme at the gymnasium, assisting with both vocational training and offending behaviour programmes. Mentors, who will have achieved the Community Sports Leaders Award, assist P.E. staff to prepare lesson plans, take lessons and generally help with the running of the course. The benefits are two fold as the successful students are using and developing skills learned on their course, and the extra responsibility increases their sense of self worth. New students to the course can see and hear testimony from the mentors, including how self-esteem and confidence will improve, and this encourages a sense of "if they can do it, so can I". HMP Leyhill recognises that not all their students are going to be employed in the sports industry, but they consider the skills gained through the course are transferable to any workplace.

### 5.6.2 Prisoners Helping the Community

The majority of prisons provide opportunities for prisoners to help the community from inside the prison. The Prison Reform Trust's survey (ibid) showed that 1676 prisoners were involved in these types of activities.

Examples include prisoners working for charities and voluntary sector organisations, e.g. running workshops in conjunction with organisations such as the Inside Out Trust, and sports and fundraising activities. In some cases the work undertaken has been linked to an opportunity to gain a qualification.

Some **Citizens Advice Bureaux** now offer volunteering opportunities for prisoners whom they train to provide advice to other prisoners in the prison and/or to members of the public in the community.

The Esmée Fairbairn Foundation<sup>16</sup> recently reported on the success of the partnership between Oxford Citizens Advice Bureau and HMP Springhill to train prisoners as advice workers. Prisoners must be assessed as suitable and interviewed by the CAB selection board, and the prison's Risk Assessment Board must approve their release on temporary licence. The volunteering work must relate to their sentence plan. They undergo the normal CAB training, leading to a Certificate in Generalist Advice Work. On completion of the training, they carry out three supervised interviews observed by an experienced adviser. Thereafter the volunteers give advice mostly by telephone, which, as with all advisers, is quality checked, for 5 days a week (which can include Saturdays) to members of the public. Since the prisoners are available on a full time basis, the training normally only takes 6-8 weeks. It is hoped that the prisoners will volunteer for a minimum period of six months as a return for this investment, and during this time it is estimated that each prisoner will give advice to 500 people. Some of those trained have moved on to take employment on release with Citizens Advice Bureaux in other parts of the country.

In 2004, researchers from Oxford and Cambridge Universities, funded by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, found survey respondents to be overwhelmingly positive with no detectable differences between the service offered by prisoner volunteers and other volunteers.

**HMP Kirklevington Grange** has involved prisoners for over 12 years in providing help in local centres for those with special needs and varying levels of disability. Prisoners have to complete 10 hours community work as part of their induction, which helps them develop social skills and an understanding that others may be worse off than they are. Every 6 months the prison holds the North of England Motor Activities Special Olympic Challenge where six centres from around the region compete not against each other but against their own disability from levels 1-3. Prisoners assist in various ways such as running the tea bar, being medal bearers, moving props. This helps raise their personal esteem and helps them give something back to the community. The event builds a special bond between all of those involved, be they able bodied or not, and be they prisoner or visitor.

## 5.7 Staff as Volunteers

Prison staff also volunteer to undertake activities during their own time and this can deliver benefits to the community as well as providing an excellent tool for training and developing staff, and increasing personal satisfaction. For example, the VSE Literacy Project at HMYOI & R/C Feltham trains prison officers in literacy and numeracy training.

### **Prison! Me! No! Way!**

Prison! Me! No! Way! uses serving volunteer prison staff to provide an innovative programme for young people throughout the British Isles which demonstrates the realities of prison life. Prison Officers have developed an education work pack, which includes case studies of prisoners, worksheets about prison life and other general information. In addition, videos, an interactive CD Rom and presentations by volunteer staff can be used. The Trust hopes to stimulate discussion, particularly among the young, about the issues involved in being in prison and aims to dissuade them from becoming involved in crime. The programme supports Pastoral and Social Education and Good Citizenship in schools.

Crime and Safety Awareness Days include high impact workshops, role-plays, and drama and are designed to encourage pupils to respect the value of their freedom whilst experiencing the restrictive regimes of a real day in the life of a prisoner first hand. The pupils are removed from their normal daily school cycle and become isolated from their friends for the day and are treated like prisoners.

The scheme now involves between 550 and 600 Prison Officer volunteers visiting over 2000 secondary schools and working with about 1800 Youth Offending Teams and youth groups, such as youth clubs, scouts etc.

In **HMP Everthorpe** the Education Guidance Worker volunteers to assist with Extended Family Visits days, working in a supervisory capacity and assisting with play activities, setting up and helping clear away at the end of the day. The aim of the day is for father and child to have the opportunity to play together and develop and maintain their relationship. Mums/carers leave the children in the care of prison staff; and volunteers play a vital part in the success of these visits.



# Appendices 1 - 5

## Contact List

### *Any Prison* Volunteer Policy

#### Introduction

Her Majesty's Prison Service serves the public by keeping in custody those committed by the courts. Our duty is to look after them with humanity and help them lead law-abiding and useful lives in custody and after release.

In carrying out our work we:

- Work in close partnership with others in the Criminal Justice System to achieve common objectives
- Obtain best value from the resources available using research to ensure effective correctional practice
- Value diversity, promote equality of opportunity and combat unlawful discrimination; and
- Ensure our staff have the right leadership, organisation, support and preparation to carry out their work effectively

In line with these objectives *Any Prison* seeks to involve volunteers to:

- Ensure we meet the needs of prisoners
- Provide access to new skills and perspectives
- Increase our contact with the local community

#### Principles

This volunteer policy is underpinned by the following principles:

- *Any Prison* does not aim to introduce volunteers to replace paid staff
- *Any Prison* expects that staff at all levels will work positively with volunteers and, where appropriate, actively seek to involve them in their work
- *Any Prison* recognises that volunteers require satisfying work and personal development and will help volunteers to meet these needs as well as providing training for them to do their work effectively

#### Practice Guidelines

The following guidelines deal with practical aspects of the involvement of volunteers.

#### Recruitment and Selection

All prospective volunteers will be interviewed to ascertain what they would like to do; their skills; their suitability; and how best their potential might be realised.

*Any Prison* adheres to equal opportunities guidelines in recruitment and aims to achieve diversity of gender, age, race etc.

Recruitment and selection processes for prisoner volunteers will be determined separately for each aspect of volunteering.

## **Security**

All external volunteers must be security cleared in line with National Standards, Prison Service Order 8100 on Recruitment, and those working in juvenile establishments may also need to be checked by the Criminal Records Bureau and in line with child protection legislation.

Full details are set out in *[Any Prison's – state documents and location]*

*[optional: The Volunteer Handbook provides full details].*

## **Induction and Training**

All external volunteers will receive an induction into working with *Any Prison* and their own area of work. Training for all volunteers will be provided as appropriate and, where possible, volunteers will be entitled to receive additional work related training alongside prison service staff.

A copy of “An introduction to working with the Prison Service: Guidelines for Voluntary and Community Sector Staff and Volunteers” with appropriate local information will be given to all new external volunteers.

Prison staff will receive staff awareness training about the role of volunteers in service delivery.

*[optional: The Volunteer Handbook provides full details].*

## **Support and Supervision**

All volunteers will have a named person as their main point of contact. They will be provided with regular supervision to give and receive feedback on progress, discuss future development and air any problems.

Where a voluntary and community sector organisation provides volunteers, the prison will ensure that the organisation has policies and practices in place for the management and support of volunteers coming into the prison.

## **Health and Safety**

Volunteers are covered by *Any Prison's* Health and Safety Policy and will receive appropriate induction and training so that they understand health and safety rules, have due regard for their

## Confidentiality issues

Confidentiality requirements applicable to prison staff will also apply to volunteers.

Where volunteers are working under the management of a voluntary sector organisation with its own confidentiality policy, the Governor will ensure that the policy meets the prison's requirements.

## Problem solving and complaints

*Any Prison* aims to identify and solve problems at the earliest possible stage. A procedure has been drawn up for dealing with concerns and complaints and for the resolution of disputes involving volunteers, which can be found at [\[state location\]](#). This covers the action the Prison should take should a volunteer prove to be unsuitable.

*[optional: The Volunteer Handbook provides full details].*

## Volunteer agreements and work outlines

A Volunteer Agreement between *Any Prison* and the volunteer will set out what each can expect from the other, and, if applicable, the term of the agreement, any renewal or review dates, or probationary periods. In addition volunteers will receive a written outline of the specific work they will be undertaking. *Any Prison* does not intend to create a contract with any volunteers. It will be made clear that there is no requirement on *Any Prison* to provide work, nor any requirement on the part of the volunteer to do it, and that both parties are free to cease the arrangement at any time. There will be no provision in the agreement or elsewhere for paid holiday, sick pay, pension etc.

*[optional: The Volunteer Handbook provides full details].*

*[ optional: **The Volunteer's Handbook***

*Any Prison provides volunteers with a handbook containing essential details relating to their volunteering role. This will be updated at least once a year.]*

## Regular review of the policy

*Any Prison* will review and, if appropriate, modify the Volunteer Policy every year following consultation with staff and volunteers.

## Any Prison Volunteer Induction Checklist

Task	Responsibility	Date
<b>Security:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ID</li> <li>• Searches</li> <li>• Lock downs</li> <li>• Keys(if appropriate)</li> </ul>		
<b>Information:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Prison regime</li> <li>• “Do’s and don’ts” of working in prisons</li> <li>• Domestics</li> <li>• Admin arrangements</li> <li>• Prison terminology/grades</li> <li>• PSOs (as appropriate)</li> </ul>		
<b>Volunteering:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact name/details</li> <li>• Volunteer policy</li> <li>• Volunteering role</li> <li>• Introduction to work area/staff</li> </ul>		
<b>Health &amp; Safety policy:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• H &amp; S contact details</li> <li>• Personal safety</li> <li>• Fire procedures - alarms, exits, extinguishers, assembly points</li> <li>• Accident reporting</li> <li>• First aid provision</li> <li>• Suicide &amp; self harm</li> <li>• IT equipment &amp; procedures</li> </ul>		
<b>Other prison policies:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equal opportunities</li> <li>• Racism</li> <li>• Bullying</li> </ul>		
<b>Confidentiality</b>		
<b>Support &amp; supervision</b>		
<b>Training:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Courses available</li> <li>• How to book</li> </ul>		
<b>Expenses:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What can be claimed</li> <li>• How to claim</li> </ul>		
<b>Problem solving &amp; complaints</b>		
<b>Consultation opportunities</b>		
<div> <div> <b>Signed</b> _____  Volunteer </div> <div> <b>Signed</b> _____  On behalf of <i>Any Prison</i> </div> </div> <div> <b>Date</b> _____ </div>		

## Any Prison Volunteer Expense Claim

<b>Name &amp; Address</b>		<b>Period covered by claim</b>
<b>Claim details</b>		<b>Amount</b>
Mileage claimed this period		
@ 40p per mile (first 10,000 miles)		£
@ 25 p per mile (over 10,000 miles)		£
Total mileage claimed this tax year		
Other Travel Costs (please give detail)		£
Other costs (please give detail)		£
<b>Total amount claimed</b>		<b>£</b>
<b>Authorised by</b>	Name	Signature
<b>Received by</b>	Name	Signature
<b>Date paid</b>		

### **Any Prison Volunteer Agreement**

This Volunteer Agreement describes the arrangement between [name of prison] and you, the volunteer. We wish to assure you of our appreciation of your volunteering with us and will do the best we can to make your volunteer experience with us enjoyable and rewarding.

#### **Part 1: Name of Any Prison**

We [name of prison] accept the voluntary service of [name of volunteer].

Your role as a volunteer is [describe nature of the work] and starts on [date]. This work is designed to support the prison in fulfilling its aims, visions and objectives. Your contact at the prison will be [name, job title, contact details]

#### **Aims, visions and objectives**

Her Majesty's Prison Service serves the public by keeping in custody those committed by the courts. Our duty is to look after them with humanity and help them lead law-abiding and useful lives in custody and after release. In carrying out our work we:

- Work in close partnership with others in the Criminal Justice System to achieve common objectives
- Obtain best value from the resources available using research to ensure effective correctional practice
- Value diversity, promote equality of opportunity and combat unlawful discrimination; and
- Ensure our staff have the right leadership, organisation, support and preparation to carry out their work effectively

In line with these objectives Any Prison seeks to involve volunteers to:

- Help to meet the needs of prisoners
- Provide access to new skills and perspectives [in relevant department]
- Increase our contact with the local community

[Prison name] agrees to the following:

#### **1. Induction and training**

- To provide thorough induction on the work and regime of [prison name], its staff, and your volunteering role. This will include information, training and assistance relevant to your volunteering role to enable you to work safely and effectively with the prisoners and staff.

[optional: The Volunteer Handbook provides full details].

## **2. Supervision, support and flexibility**

- **To explain the standards we expect for our services and to encourage and support you** to achieve and maintain them, and provide feedback;
- To provide a named person who will meet with you regularly to discuss your volunteering and any successes and problems;
- To do our best to help you develop your volunteering role with us;
- To be receptive to any comments from you on ways in which we might enhance working together for the mutual benefit of prisoners, staff and volunteers

## **3. Health and safety**

- To provide adequate training and feedback in support of our health and safety policy, full details of which are available in *[state location of documents]*

*[optional: The Volunteer Handbook provides full details].*

## **4. Equal opportunities**

- To ensure that all volunteers are dealt with in accordance with our equal opportunities policy, a copy of which is available in *[state location]*

*[optional: The Volunteer Handbook provides full details].*

## **5. In the event of accident, injury or loss**

- To ask the Secretary of State to consider settling claims on an individual basis in the event of any accident, injury, or loss

## **6. Expenses**

- To reimburse, on production of receipts, the following expenses incurred by you during the course of your voluntary work in accordance with our Volunteer Policy on a *[monthly/weekly]* basis

*- List in full*

*[optional: The Volunteer Handbook provides full details].*

## **7. Problem solving and complaints**

- To try to resolve fairly any problems, concerns and difficulties you may have while you volunteer with us

- In the event of an unresolved problem, to offer an opportunity to discuss the issues in accordance with the problem solving and complaints procedure which can be found at *[state location]*

*[optional: The Volunteer Handbook provides full details].*

## **8. [Optional: For Chaplaincy Volunteers]**

- *Chaplaincy volunteers agree to respect the multi-faith and inclusive approach of chaplaincy teams, and the respect due to the integrity of each faith tradition*
- *Faith based volunteers will not engage in proselytism (unwanted persuasion of a prisoner to change religious affiliation)*

## **Part 2: The Volunteer**

I, *[full name of volunteer in capitals]* agree:

- To help *[name of prison]* fulfil its aims, visions and objectives
- To perform my volunteering role to the best of my ability
- To follow the prison's rules, procedures and standards, including health and safety and equal opportunities, in relation to its staff, volunteers and prisoners
- To attend training sessions and support meetings as relevant to my role
- To maintain records as required
- To maintain the confidential information of the prison and of the prisoners
- To be reliable and to keep, as far as is possible, to the work times agreed, and to give reasonable notice so other arrangements can be made when this is not possible
- To provide referees as agreed who may be contacted, and to agree to the necessary security clearances being carried out

This agreement is binding in honour only, is not intended to be a legally binding contract between us and may be cancelled at any time at the discretion of either party. Neither of us intends any employment relationship to be created either now or at any time in the future, and there is no provision in this agreement or elsewhere for paid holiday, sick pay, pension etc. There is no requirement on Any Prison to provide work, nor any requirement on the part of the volunteer to do it.

Name: *[Volunteer name]* \_\_\_\_\_

Signed  
Volunteer \_\_\_\_\_

Date  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name: *[Prison staff name]* \_\_\_\_\_

Signed  
On behalf of *Any Prison* \_\_\_\_\_

## Any Prison Voluntary Work Outline

Volunteer role	
Responsible to	
Work times (may be variable and will be agreed individually to suit both parties)	
Department	
Objectives	
Tasks	
Preferred Competencies	
Support/training	
Expenses, Health and Safety as per Volunteer Policy	
Other information	





Voluntary Sector & Assisted Prison Visits Unit  
National Offender Management Service  
Home Office  
1st Floor Fry Building  
2 Marsham Street  
London SW1P 4DF

020 7035 0209

## Citizens Advice

Myddleton House  
115-123 Pentonville Road  
London N1 9LZ  
Tel: 020 7833 2181

## Clinks

25 Micklegate  
York YO1 6JH  
Tel: 01904 673970  
info@clinks.org

## Esmée Fairbairn Foundation

11 Park Place  
London SW1A 1LP  
Tel: 020 7297 4700  
info@esmeefairbairn.org.uk

## Goldsmith's College Students' Union

Community Action Co-ordinator  
Dixon Road  
London SE14 6NW  
Tel: 020 8692 1406

## HM Prison Service Safer Custody Group

NOMS, Fry Building  
2 Marsham Street  
London SW1P 4DF

## Independent Monitoring Board Secretariat

2nd Floor, Ashley House  
2 Monck Street, London, SW1P 2BQ  
Tel: 0870 267 814  
IMB@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

## Nacro

169 Clapham Road  
London SW9 0PU  
Tel: 020 7582 6500  
helpline@nacro.org.uk

## National Association of Official Prison Visitors

General Secretary  
32 Newnham Avenue  
Bedford, MK41 9PT  
Tel: 01234 359763  
info@naopv.com

## NOMS Voluntary Sector and Assisted Prison Visits Unit

National Voluntary Sector Co-ordinator  
Home Office  
3rd Floor Fry, 2 Marsham Street  
London SW1P 4DF

Tel: 020 7035 0210

neil.moore@hmpr.gsi.gov.uk  
and neil.moore10@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

## Prison Advice and Care Trust

Suite C5  
City Cloisters  
196 Old Street  
London EC1V 9FR  
Tel: 020 7490 3139  
info@pact.uk.net

## Prison Reform Trust

15 Northburgh Street  
London EC1V 0JR  
Tel: 020 7251 5070  
prt@prisonreformtrust.org.uk

## Samaritans

The Upper Mill  
Kingston Road  
Ewell, Surrey KT17 2AF  
Tel: 020 8394 8300  
admin@samaritans.org

## The Shannon Trust Toe by Toe Scheme

8 Green Road, Baildon  
Shipley, West Yorkshire BD17 5HL  
Tel: 01274 588278  
info@toe-by-toe.co.uk

## Shelter

88 Old Street  
London EC1V 9HU  
Tel: 020 7505 4699  
info@shelter.org.uk

## Unlock

35a High Street  
Snodland  
Kent ME6 5AG  
Tel: 01634 247350  
unlockprison@bt.comm

## Volunteering England

Regents Wharf  
8 All Saints Street  
London N1 9RL  
Tel: 0845 3056979  
information@volunteeringengland.org

## YMCA

prisons@england.ymca.co.uk  
www.ymca.org.uk

## Notes

own safety and that of others, and know how and to whom they must report accidents and dangerous incidents.

Full details of the policy are set out in *[Any Prison's – state documents and location]*

*[optional: The Volunteer Handbook provides full details].*

## **Equal opportunities and diversity**

*Any Prison* has an Equal Opportunities policy, which is detailed in Prison Service Order 8010, and will not tolerate harassment or unfair discrimination on the grounds of gender, marital status, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability, religion, sexual orientation, age or any other irrelevant factor.

This policy applies to all staff, prisoners and volunteers. Volunteers are expected to understand and show a commitment to this policy.

Where the Prison Service engages volunteers through a voluntary and community sector organisation, it should ensure that the organisation has an equal opportunities policy in place that underpins a commitment to promote diversity and equality of opportunity.

Full details of the policy are set out in *[Any Prison's state name of document and location]*.

*[optional: The Volunteer Handbook provides full details].*

## **Insurance**

*[N.B. Prisons should check the individual situation on the provision of insurance cover]*

*Any Prison* does not carry employer's liability insurance, public liability insurance or professional indemnity insurance. It must be made clear to the volunteer at induction that in the event of any accident or injury, loss or claim the Secretary of State will consider settling claims on an individual basis.

## **Expenses**

All external volunteers will have reasonable volunteer related expenses reimbursed as follows:

- *[ list expenses to be covered]*

*[optional: The Volunteer Handbook provides full details].*