# Resourcing and

## Volunteering Charter

# Talent

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### Introduction

* 1. This charter sets out the County Fire and Rescue Service’s approach to the recruitment of volunteers and our commitment to both them and the professional staff within the service.
  2. This charter also sets out the expectations of the Service in terms of the role of volunteers to supplement and complement the delivery of the service, how they will be supported and the responsibilities of all parties.

### Benefits of Volunteering

* 1. The Service has a long established practice of working with volunteers, both as individuals and also community groups. It is the service’s experience that this activity provides mutual benefit to volunteers and to the service.

Our volunteers have told us that:

* They learn new skills and gain confidence in their abilities
* Volunteering has helped people gain employment or access to higher education opportunities
* They enjoy being part of a stimulating work and social atmosphere
* They gain a sense of purpose and satisfaction from achieving goals by being able to enhance services for the community or deliver something additional
* Volunteering has helped people regain strength and confidence after a period of ill health
  1. For Community Services, volunteers bring a different perspective as they are able to contribute new ideas and try out new ways to reach service users, supplementing the professionally delivered services.
  2. Volunteering is a commitment for the individual volunteer, the organisation and the staff who lead volunteering projects and so it is important that the responsibilities of all involved are defined clearly.

### CFRS Responsibilities to Volunteers

* We will endeavour to match skills to the service area
* An induction to the work of the service will be provided
* A clearly defined outline of the tasks we would like volunteers to undertake will be provided
* Effective supervisory structures will be put in place to support and develop volunteers and the activities they undertake
* Volunteers will have access to appropriate training and development to be able to carry out their activities
* Volunteers, like professional staff, can expect to carry out their activities in safe, secure and healthy environments that are free from harassment, intimidation, bullying, violence and discrimination
* Volunteers will have access to a complaints/dissatisfaction procedure and will have a clear process for the resolution of any problems
* While volunteers should not normally receive or expect financial rewards for their activities, they should receive reasonable out-of-pocket expenses
* We will comply with the Data Protection Act’s rules on the processing of volunteers personal data

### Our Responsibilities to Professional Staff in relation to Volunteers

* The involvement of volunteers will complement and supplement the work of professional staff, and will not be used to displace staff or undercut their pay and conditions of service
* Volunteers will not be used to undertake the work of professional staff during industrial disputes
* Volunteers will not be used to cover the work of professional staff during sickness absence
* Professional staff will not be expected to engage in volunteer activities within the service area as a form of unpaid overtime
* Any proposed new volunteer roles will be introduced in consultation with trade union representatives

### Responsibilities of Volunteers

* 1. We will expect that our volunteers will:
* Complete an application to enable us to match skills to opportunities
* Undergo a DBS check where the service requires
* Attend an induction session and training
* Work within the defined volunteer task profile
* Recognise and contribute to the Service’s aims and objectives
* Be reliable and committed to the Service
* Follow the Service’s Core Code of Ethics
* Raise any issues or problems immediately with the volunteer supervisor
* Notify the service of any medical conditions that may affect their ability to perform certain volunteer activities
* Abide by the Service’s Health & Safety, Code of Conduct, and Confidentiality policies
* Respect the supervisors and other volunteers and strive to develop effective working relationships
* Provide reasonable notice of their intention to stop volunteering with us

### Agreeing Terms

* 1. When considering the use of volunteers to supplement or complement the service, the following further points need to be considered and incorporated into the terms of the volunteering opportunity:
* Establish a process to resolve any disputes between professional staff and volunteers
* During any contracting out process, bidders will be required to quantify any intended use of volunteers and the selection process will take account of the bidder’s position on whether they intend to utilise volunteers for roles currently delivered by paid staff.
* In relation to the above, an Equality Impact Assessment will be conducted to ensure that the protected groups within society are not disadvantaged through the use of volunteers.
* Volunteers will be subject to DBS checks.
* Termination of a volunteer opportunity and the notice period required

### Volunteer Agreement Document

* 1. It is important that a Volunteer Agreement is drafted and signed by both parties, as this clarifies the commitments both the volunteer and the Service can expect from each other. It is not intended to be a legally binding document but should be used as guidelines for both parties.

### Example Volunteer Agreement Document

**[Dept/Service Area] - Volunteer Agreement**

Volunteers are an important and valued part of the work of Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service. We hope that you enjoy volunteering with us and feel a valued part of our team.

This agreement, in conjunction with the Volunteer Charter, tells you what you can expect from us and what we can expect from you.

We, [Dept./Service Area], will:

* Endeavour to match your skills to an appropriate service area
* Introduce you to how the organisation works and provide an induction to the activity you will be undertaking
* Provide you with a task profile and work with you to determine the days/times when you will be available to volunteer
* Explain the supervisory structures in place to support you and provide a named person you will liaise with
* Provide you with access to appropriate training and development to be able to carry out your activities
* Provide a safe environment, ensuring you are subject to the Service’s insurance cover while volunteering
* Have access to the Service’s Workplace Complaint procedure and will have a clear process for the resolution of any problems.
* Meet any out-of-pocket expenses incurred while volunteering (not including substituting salary payments)
* Comply with the General Data Protection Regulations 2016 on the processing of your personal data

All volunteers working within [Dept./Service Area], are encouraged to work to high standards and contribute to the delivery of the Service’s aims and objectives.

Volunteers are required to be aware of and adopt the Service’s policies in relation to:

* Health and Safety
* Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
* Code of Conduct
* Confidentiality

I, ……………………………………………………, agree to adhere to the above policies at all times. I accept the responsibilities and the expectations required of me. I understand that this Volunteer Agreement is not a contract of employment and may be terminated by either party should any of the above not be satisfactorily met.

Signed:………………………………………………

Date:………………………………………………..