



Dunstable Good Neighbours

Help Line: 07491 455777

VOLUNTEER WELCOME PACK



WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR

I would personally like to welcome you to Dunstable Good Neighbours (DGN). Thank you for deciding to join us to help people in need in the Dunstable community.

Please read your Welcome Pack carefully and keep it where you can readily refer to it. Please return the documents marked * below to the DGN Secretary.

This pack should contain:

1. Basic Information for Volunteers
2. Volunteer Declaration Form *
3. Volunteer Guidelines
 - 3.1. General
 - 3.2. Home visits
 - 3.3. Working outside
 - 3.4. Reporting job complete
4. Data Protection Notice

Please read through the Risk Assessment on the DGN website, this is for your guidance. You must follow the advice given when dealing with service users to mitigate any risk.

Many thanks,

Andrew Harland (Chair)

If any items are **missing** or you have any **questions**, please do not hesitate to get in touch with the DGN Help Line on **07491 455777** or email dunstablegoodneighbours@yahoo.com

1 BASIC INFORMATION FOR VOLUNTEERS

Dunstable Good Neighbours (DGN) comprise volunteers from the area in and around Dunstable.

DGN will do their best to provide help and support for residents of Dunstable (service users) unable to help themselves and can also on request visit residents on a regular basis to provide company. Any request will be considered but it may not be possible to help in all cases if DGN do not have the necessary volunteer competencies available.

There is a Steering Group of volunteers who provide leadership for the volunteers

The Steering Group have appointed a Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Minute Secretary and Treasurer to provide structure for the Group and to lead on any issues requiring attention. The group welcomes contact from volunteers and service users and would encourage all volunteers to attend the Annual General Meeting to meet colleagues and exchange ideas.

HELP LINE: 07491 455777 dunstablegoodneighbours@yahoo.com

Contact with the Steering Group for both volunteers and service users is via the Help Line. This is operated by the current phone holder from 9 to 5 Monday to Friday. Outside those hours messages are taken and responded to the next working day, where possible. The phone holder will allocate tasks to volunteers following requests from service users.

The Help Line will contact volunteers via email or phone to try and allocate service user requests. Volunteers respond if they can help or not. The Help Line will then tell the service user which volunteer will be attending and confirm contact details with the volunteer. If we cannot help the Help Line will inform the service user accordingly. **The volunteer informs the Help Line after every visit stating the type of help provided as detailed in 3.5.**

DGN treat all volunteers and service users equally in accordance with equality legislation and will respect individual's privacy and treat people with dignity and respect.

If DGN volunteers come across any situations where they have concerns about the safety or possible abuse of any of the service users, they will report this immediately to the Steering Group via the help line for referral to the Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Team.

Any allegations of abuse against volunteers is taken very seriously and should be reported immediately to the help line. There will be no further contact with the service user involved until a full investigation has been carried out and if considered appropriate the matter will be referred to the appropriate enforcing authority.

Volunteering is a great thing to do and DGN is an opportunity for us to help those less fortunate than ourselves in our community. If volunteers are aware of people who could do with our help please let the Help Line know and make every effort to publicise DGN to increase local knowledge – small publicity posters are available on request from the Help Line. More detailed information is included under Volunteer Guidelines later in this pack.

2 VOLUNTEER DECLARATION FORM *

Name: _____

Address _____

Email _____

- I agree to read the information in the Volunteer Welcome Pack and to follow the recommendations and best practice specified.
- I agree to maintain service user confidentiality and to respect their privacy and dignity. I will not discuss service user details in any public place except during volunteering on their behalf. Should I have any concerns about a service user's health or welfare or that a service user's behaviour or circumstances might endanger themselves or scheme volunteers, I will alert the Help Line
- I confirm I have read DGN's Equality and Diversity Policy, Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy and Complaints Policy available on the DGN web site and during my volunteering work for DGN, I will comply with them. Copies will be provided to volunteers without access to the internet.
- I will attend a free Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults course either on-line or classroom based, when offered .
- I confirm that I am happy for the Steering Group and Help Line to hold my contact information for the purposes of DGN and, if deemed necessary, to share this with Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC).
- I will let the Steering Group know if my details change.
- If I have any questions about any aspect of volunteering, I will contact the Help Line or email to dunstablegoodneighbours@yahoo.com

Signed: _____ Date _____

Please return this form to the Secretary of DGN

3 VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES

Any of the roles mentioned below may involve occasional unsupervised contact with service users who may be vulnerable adults (for example the frail elderly, people with dementia or adults with mental health/learning/physical disabilities). Therefore, volunteers must be willing to undertake a DBS disclosure to an enhanced level. This will be done free of charge for any volunteer and in the strictest confidence.

3.1 GENERAL

Volunteers must always maintain confidentiality so do not discuss your service user with anyone except the Help Line and do not discuss any information about other service users or volunteers with the service users. Respect for service user privacy is paramount.

You must not use DGN to promote your personal, political or religious views.

Your volunteering is flexible: you decide what you do and when. What matters is to be reliable. Please tell the Help Line (and the service user if appropriate) if you are delayed or are unable to carry out any previously agreed jobs.

When you accept a task, make sure you have all the details about the service user and the task from the Help Line. You need to be clear what the service user expects of you and to be confident that you can do this.

Where possible, contact numbers should be checked and stored on your mobile phone. Please make sure you have all relevant contact numbers to hand.

Take your identity card and show it when visiting the service user.

Do not give out your address or telephone number to service users however well you get on with them. Always ask service users to access the service through DGN Help Line.

You are only expected to carry out the job that you have agreed with the Help Line.

When agreeing to a task please be realistic about your abilities and experience.

If the service user asks for additional jobs to be done while you are there, you do not have to do these. If you can do them and have the time, then inform the Help Line afterwards. If you are unable to do the jobs, ask the service user to contact the Help Line to book a future time for a volunteer to undertake these.

If you are willing to undertake these additional jobs yourself on a future occasion, you may agree details and time directly with the service user to save them making a second phone call. It is important to let the Help Line know that you have done this and to pass on full details of the job/s you have agreed to do.

Do not accept inappropriate behaviour (such as inappropriate comments or physical contact). Report any incidents to your scheme Help Line or a member of the Steering Group.

You must not accept personal gifts from a service user. If a service user would like to donate to DGN, keep a record of the amount and give the service user a receipt confirming the amount. Take the donation to a member of the Steering Group as soon as possible. However, a voluntary contribution from a service user, sufficient to cover essential expenses such as petrol and parking, may be accepted by the volunteer without passing on or reporting to the Steering Group.

If you are concerned about a service user's wellbeing or health, inform the Help Line or a member of the Steering Group. It may be that the service user has a level of need where professional expertise and resources are appropriate.

If a service user has a fall and is unable to get up, **do not attempt to lift or move them**. Make the service user as comfortable as possible and phone 999, giving the service user reassurance and keeping them informed at all times of your actions. Paramedics are trained to check for injuries and to lift people correctly – you are not.

Remember you are not covered by insurance if you injure yourself or the service user while attempting to move or lift them.

Remember that it is unlikely that you will encounter any serious problem while volunteering. However, be alert to any potential risks or issues that could cause harm or make volunteering a less enjoyable experience. Your DGN Steering Group is here to support you so please get in touch if you have any concerns or suggestions for improvement.

3.2 HOME VISITS

Always show your identity card when home visiting a service user. The Help Line will have given the service user the name of the volunteer due to visit.

On your first visit you may wish to be accompanied by another volunteer to help you build confidence in your role. If so, please ask the Help Line volunteer to arrange this.

If collecting prescriptions for a service user, please ensure that the dispensed items bear the correct name and address before delivery to the individual.

Leave if you feel uncomfortable or unsafe with a service user.

If you feel uncomfortable, ask your Help Line volunteer not to send you there again and explain why.

3.3 WORKING OUTSIDE/DOING ODD JOBS

If you feel unsure about your suitability to carry out a job for a service user, explain that you are unable to do it and advise them to seek a professional tradesperson.

Make sure you know how to operate any equipment/machinery you may be using correctly.

Do not use any equipment that appears dangerous; report it to the service user and to your Help Line or member of your Steering Group.

Make sure you wear appropriate clothing such as safety goggles, sturdy footwear and strong gloves.

Be careful when lifting; only lift or carry things you can easily manage. Make use of trolleys and wheelbarrows. Leave it if it is too heavy.

Be careful when using a step ladder. Make sure you know how to put it up correctly. Make sure it is placed so it does not slip. If in doubt, explain to the service user that it is too risky.

Be careful when handling solvents, bleach or cleaning liquids. Wear protective gloves and always wash your hands afterwards.

If you have an **accident** while volunteering, then inform your Help Line immediately and a member of the Steering Group in writing (letter or email) as soon as you can. Ask your doctor to provide an independent record of any injury.

Providing any injury is not caused through your own negligence, you may be able to claim through the DGN's insurance policy. However, if you are not happy with the response from your DGN Steering Group, you can contact the Health and Safety Executive Help Line on 0541 545 500.

3.4 DRIVING

Inform your insurance company that you are doing volunteer driving.

Make sure your car is in roadworthy condition: it must be taxed, insured and if required, have a current MOT certificate.

If you have one, take your mobile phone with you on every driving job. Do not use your phone whilst driving unless you have a hands-free system.

Make sure you park your car in a designated parking space/zone; you are liable for any parking tickets/fines incurred. Wheelchair users must be accompanied by their own escort. Drive with care and consideration, both for other road users and for your passengers.

3.5 REPORTING JOB COMPLETE

Report back to the Help Line by phone or email indicating the type of job completed as we are required to produce a quarterly report to BRCC:

Collection/delivery - prescriptions or sick notes

Collection/delivery – of shopping, parcels, items for tidy tip, etc.

Indoor help in the home

Outdoor help at the home

Befriending

Letter-writing, form filling and admin

Advocacy

Signposting a client to other professionals, organisations or agencies

Direct help to Professionals or community groups

BRCC collates the information from all Good Neighbour groups and produces reports for the fund providers.

4 STATEMENT ON DATA PROTECTION

We, **Dunstable Good Neighbours**, comply with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 (the 'Act') in relation to how we handle any personal data which we obtain from you. Any personal information you give us is recorded securely. Personal information is accessed by the Help Line volunteers and shared with members of the Steering Group only in the context of your volunteering role/s. If you are a member of the Steering Group, your information may also be shared with BRCC in its role as coordinator of the network of good neighbour groups to which we belong.

Under the Act you, as a Good Neighbour Scheme volunteer, also have the following rights:

1 The right to access your information

You have the right to ask to be supplied with a copy of the personal data held about you. We are allowed to charge you for any photocopying, postage or other costs in relation to this.

2 The right of correction

We will correct any mistakes in the data held about you. Please let us know if your details change, e.g. if you move house or are no longer available on the days you originally specified.

3 The right to prevent distress

We will not keep or use any information about you that might cause you any distress. Please let us know if you have supplied any data to us that you no longer wish us to use.

4 The right to prevent direct marketing

Your data will never be used by us to try to sell you anything or for unsolicited mail or cold calling. We may from time to time send to you, by email or by post, other information connected with your volunteering role which may be of use to you. If, or when, you no longer wish such information to be sent, please let us know.

5 The right of complaint

If you have any concerns, you can request that these are investigated by BRCC as an independent third party.

6 The right to compensation

You are entitled to take legal action to obtain compensation for damage caused ("damages") if personal data about you is inaccurate, lost or disclosed without your consent.

This pack will be reviewed biannually

Chair's Signature_____

Print Name_____

Date_____