



MCFB
multi-cultural
family base



**Pilmey
Development
Project**

Volunteer Handbook

A guide to Volunteering with our Organisations



Who are we?

Minority Ethnic Carers of Older People Project

www.mecopp.org.uk

MECOPP provides a range of services to Minority Ethnic carers including casework support, advice and information, education, training and learning opportunities, healthy living activities and practical support through the domiciliary care at home service.



Care for Carers

www.care4carers.org.uk

Care for Carers aims to improve carers' emotional and physical health and wellbeing; to reduce their isolation and to increase their opportunity to take up short breaks and respite.



Pilmeny Development project

www.pilmenydevelopmentproject.co.uk

PDP aims to support local residents and groups and to encourage appropriate self- help initiatives towards the identification and resolution of their problems.



Multi Cultural Family Base

www.mcfb.org.uk

MCFB aims to enhance the lives of vulnerable and disadvantaged children, young people and their families directly and through the education of students.



This volunteer cluster programme is funded by the Scottish Government. The grant is administered by the Voluntary Action Fund.



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Welcome

Welcome to our organisations and thank you for expressing an interest in volunteering with us. We hope that you enjoy and benefit from your experience with us.

We value the contribution that volunteers make to our work and the experiences and knowledge that they bring.

We hope that you have a meaningful and satisfying experience volunteering with us.

Our aim is to ensure that we provide the necessary guidance and support to help you to carry out your tasks and to develop your potential and interests.

The contents of this handbook cover all the necessary policies and procedures as well as hopefully answering any questions that you may have about what is expected and provided from your work with us.

If there is something that you are unsure about or if you have any other questions please ask the volunteer co-ordinator.

Getting Involved

- ▶ Once you have registered an interest we will contact you within 2 weeks to arrange an initial appointment.
- ▶ The first meeting will be an opportunity for us to get to know you and for you to visit the organisation and tell us what you would like to do. We can also use this time to fill in an application form.
- ▶ References will then be taken up and provided these are satisfactory, you may then be asked to complete a disclosure form. Disclosures are only necessary for those people in direct contact with children or vulnerable adults.
- ▶ A decision will be made at this stage to see whether the opportunities that we have are suitable for you. If we feel that it would not be appropriate or suitable for you to volunteer with us, we will tell you why. Where and if possible we will try and refer you to another volunteering opportunity.
- ▶ At this stage we will finalise arrangements to discuss your availability and the work that you will be doing. You will also get the opportunity to meet with other members of the staff team and be given a copy of this handbook for further reference.
- ▶ An induction session will be organised before you start volunteering.
- ▶ After a trial period of one month we will meet with you to see how you are getting on and to discuss any issues or concerns. We can also use this time to look at future opportunities and training requirements.
- ▶ Volunteers are reminded that they can refuse any demands or requests that they do not want to or feel able to carry out, at any stage in their volunteering.



Disability Access/Additional Support Needs

Not all the organisations have disability access. We will try to match you to a suitable opportunity within an organisation that best suits your needs.

Dyspraxia or Dyslexia: Please let us know if this is an issue for you and we will try to ensure that this need not be a barrier to you volunteering with us.

Insurance/Security

All volunteers are covered by our individual insurance policies whilst they are on the premises or engaged in any work on behalf of the organisation.

Expenses

Refreshments/meals

Coffee and tea are available free whilst you are volunteering with us.

Volunteers are provided with a subsistence allowance to cover lunch expenses up to £5.00 if you volunteer for 4 hours or more. You will be encouraged to keep a record of your hours and this will be verified by a staff member or the Volunteer Coordinator.

This can be paid in cash, on the day where possible, or as a cheque at a later date if preferred.

Travel

Bus fares are reimbursed for the days that you volunteer. This would normally be the cost of a day saver ticket. We ask that you keep the ticket so that we can make a photocopy of it for our records.

Childcare/carers expenses

We are charitable organisations with limited funds.

However, we will try, wherever possible, to ensure that any expenses that you incur whilst volunteering will be reimbursed. These would include any childcare or carers expenses. Proof of payment, such as an invoice or receipt from a registered person or provider will be required in order for the payment to be made.

Claiming Benefits

You can volunteer for as many hours as you wish, provided that you are not earning anything from the work.

Expenses for lunch and travel do not count as earnings.

The Department of Work and Pensions stipulates that volunteers need to be available for work and may need to leave volunteering to take up work with a week's notice. We will ensure that you are supported to do this and review your volunteering role as needed.

Induction

All volunteers will receive a basic induction about the work of the organisation and our aims and objectives. This will give you the opportunity to find out more about us and what we do and to ask any questions that you might have.

Special consideration is given to anyone who has not worked or volunteered before and also to anyone who might have any additional needs or language difficulties, resources permitting.

We will aim to do this as soon as possible. Induction programmes will take place regularly, and in most cases within a group setting with other volunteers. In other cases the volunteer coordinator may decide to carry out individual induction training. This is to ensure that individuals are not kept waiting for too long a period before they start.

This initial training will be reviewed at 6 monthly periods, in order to identify where further training is still required. An opportunity to discuss issues and concerns is available through support and supervision sessions as well as regular contact with the volunteer coordinator.

Arrival

- ▶ Welcome
- ▶ Housekeeping (bathroom and kitchen facilities)
- ▶ Information and history of the organisation (leaflets/annual reports where appropriate)
- ▶ Mission and vision statement
- ▶ Description of programmes, activities and services offered by the organisation
- ▶ Introduction to staff team and roles including an organisational chart where available

Training and Development

Core Training on the following will be provided as appropriate to each specific role:

- ▶ Confidentiality and Boundaries
- ▶ Equal Opportunities and Diversity
- ▶ Health and Safety, including wheelchair handling where appropriate
- ▶ Lone Working
- ▶ Listening Skills

Other training opportunities may be provided resources permitting.

We can also be flexible and try and accommodate your particular skills and interests where possible and appropriate.

Support

We generally review your volunteering at 3 month intervals. The Volunteer Co-ordinator will meet with you (and your Support or Social Worker if appropriate). We will sit down at a designated time and talk about how you are getting on in your volunteer role.

This review is to highlight the areas you are enjoying and any challenges you may have. We will also look at any training needs, or discuss finding another volunteer role either within the Project or elsewhere if you feel this would be more appropriate.

You are encouraged to give us regular feedback through informal chats, group discussions, evaluation forms and the suggestion box.



Volunteer Agreement

Organisational Responsibilities:

- ▶ To provide appropriate induction and training
- ▶ To provide a named person to provide support to the Volunteer
- ▶ To pay out of pocket expenses and details of what expenses will be paid and when
- ▶ To provide appropriate insurance
- ▶ To ensure a safe working environment
- ▶ To deal with any problems or concerns fairly and as quickly as possible

Volunteer Responsibilities:

- ▶ To participate in induction sessions
- ▶ To comply with existing policies and procedures
- ▶ To undertake voluntary work at agreed times
- ▶ To inform relevant staff if they are unable to attend
- ▶ To give warning if they are unable to continue with their volunteering commitments
- ▶ To raise any concerns relating to their voluntary work with the contact person



Hours of Volunteering

This can be from two hours per week. Ideally, all volunteers will work set day(s) and hours each week. However, there will be opportunities for one off pieces of work such as helping out at events, research and consultation meetings. There is room for flexibility to allow for particular needs, family or medical appointments, or any other commitments you may have. You must notify the Volunteer Co-ordinator of any change in your volunteering hours as soon as you can. The Volunteer Co-ordinator may request that you change your hours or days to fit with the Organisation's requirements.

From time to time there may be opportunities to get involved in another area or for a specific event. This will be discussed with the Volunteer Co-ordinator in advance. There is no obligation to do this.

Equal Opportunities

We operate an Equal Opportunities Policy which applies to all staff and volunteers. We welcome a diverse group of volunteers who make the organisation more representative of the communities it serves. We involve people from different backgrounds, ages, cultures, genders and outlooks. We strive to treat everyone fairly on an individual basis.

Confidentiality

Volunteers are bound by the same requirements as staff. Volunteers must respect the confidentiality of other volunteers, staff members and service users. Volunteers' personal information is held securely in our Main Office, with only the relevant members of staff having access to it. We protect volunteer's information very seriously. If you have any concerns or questions, please do not hesitate to discuss with the Volunteer Co-ordinator or the Manager of the organisation.



Problem Solving/Grievance Procedures

Sometimes difficulties or problems may arise which can be resolved through day to day channels of communication. Where this is not possible, the volunteer or organisation may choose to use the organisation's grievance procedure.

Discipline and grievance procedures may sound rather formal but they are intended to promote fairness in the treatment of volunteers and ensure that as far as possible volunteers have the same rights as paid staff.

Moving On

Volunteers are supported throughout the moving on process, whether this is to another volunteering opportunity or paid work. The Volunteer Co-ordinator will help and support you with this if required.

The Volunteer Co-ordinator will provide a reference when one is required and after a sufficient period of volunteering. Please ask the organisation to contact the Volunteer Co-ordinator direct by email or post.



If Volunteering is Not Working Out

If the Project feels that you do something inappropriate or your behaviour is inappropriate in any way, a meeting will be arranged between you, the Volunteer Co-ordinator, and the Line Manager. A decision will be made as to whether or not your volunteering will continue. This will be put in writing with new terms and conditions specified or reasons for dismissal given.

Please note that, depending on the nature of the misconduct, you may be asked to stop volunteering immediately.

○ **Inappropriate behaviour and actions where we would request a meeting may include:**

Persistent poor time-keeping or unauthorised absence.

Persistent violation of the Health and Safety conditions.

Breaches of confidentiality/disclosure of confidential information or documents.

Behaviour we would take very seriously can include:

○ Bullying, harassment or discrimination (whether direct or indirect). Victimisation of any person on the grounds of sex, ethnic background, disability, gender reassignment, sexual orientation (whether actual or perceived), religion, belief, or age.

The use of alcohol or drugs which affect your ability to carry out your agreed volunteering role.

Use of violence, or abusive, threatening behaviour to other volunteers, staff, or members of the public.

Inappropriate behaviour to other volunteers or staff which can include physical contact, over familiarity, or any other behaviour that would be viewed as harassment.

Theft including food, stationery and money.

Failure to tell us about any criminal conviction information through our Self Disclosure Policy, or providing inaccurate information regarding our Self Declaration Form and Self Disclosure process.

Previous Convictions: Self Disclosure Form

Previous convictions must be disclosed to the Volunteer Co-ordinator. Please note that your privacy is fully respected with regard to this. If we are concerned about the nature of your conviction, this may result in a restriction of the role, extra supervision, or (in very rare cases) you being declined as a volunteer. Please note this would be decided in consultation with the organisation's Manager and Management Committee or Board of Directors. A written response would be provided.

If the organisation's Management Committee or Board of Directors decide that you can no longer volunteer this decision is final. You may re-apply to volunteer at a later date, where your past history and circumstances will all be considered.

Right to Appeal

The volunteer has the right to appeal if the decision is taken to terminate their volunteering with the organisation. Any appeal must be received in writing within seven working days. At this point an appeal meeting will be scheduled where a more senior manager will also be present. The volunteer has the right to bring someone else with them to advocate on their behalf. It must be noted however, that this person cannot be a current employee of the project that you are volunteering with. The volunteer will be informed of the appeal decision as soon after the appeal meeting as reasonably possible.



Sign Off Sheet

I confirm that I have received a copy of the Volunteer Handbook and have read the information contained in it (or someone has read it to me). I have had an opportunity to raise anything I am unclear about with the Volunteer Co-ordinator.

Signed:.....

Name:.....

Date:.....

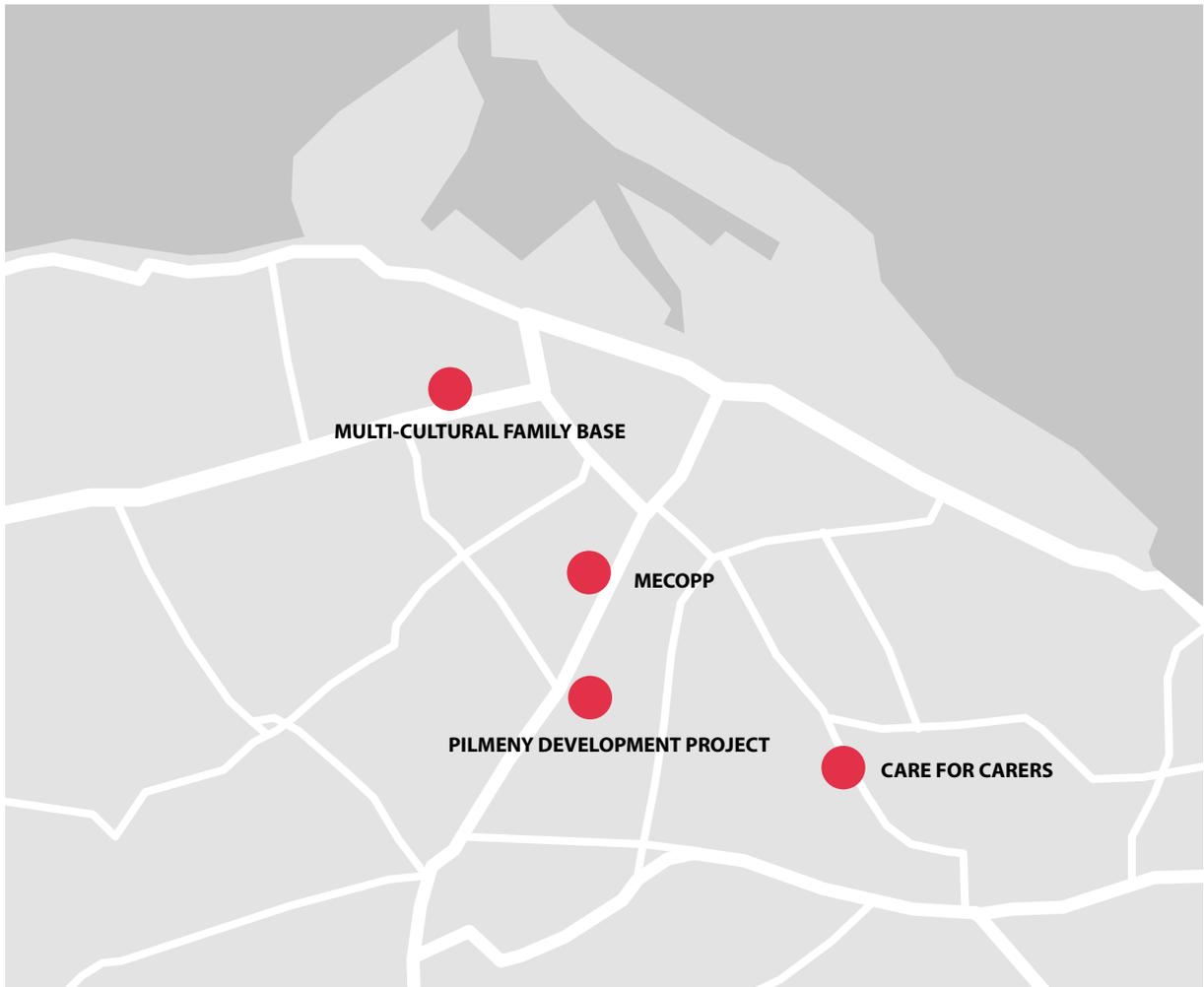
Signature of Volunteer Coordinator/Key Staff Member:

Signed:.....

Position:

Date:.....





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