



Volunteer Handbook

Version 4, October 2018





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Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to
enquiries@healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk



Support and contact details

Volunteers for Connected Together CIC (CTCIC), including Healthwatch Northamptonshire (HWN) and Healthwatch Rutland (HWR) are supported by the volunteer lead - Becky Calcraft based in the HWN office, with some tasks for HWR fulfilled by Tracey Allan-Jones. The volunteer lead's role is to:

- Find, select and engage volunteers
- Source and deliver volunteer training
- Support and monitor volunteers and their involvement
- Ensure all legislative regulations concerning volunteers are adhered to
- Maintain links and communicate with all volunteers
- Maintain volunteer records
- Report regularly on volunteering matters to the relevant boards

Contact details

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Websites: www.connectedtogether.co.uk
www.healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk
www.healthwatchrutland.co.uk

Welcome

Dear Volunteer

Thank you for becoming part of the Connected Together volunteer community. We are delighted to welcome you as a consumer champion for health and social care.

We want to use our influence to improve health and social care services for local people, to make sure that the views of local people are **really** listened to in decision making. Healthwatch Northamptonshire (HWN) and Healthwatch Rutland (HWR) were established to be that voice.

Volunteers are right at the heart of our organisation. We want to grow our volunteer community to ensure more people get involved and also to ensure our volunteers reflect the diversity of the local population.

There are many different roles for people to get involved and these are described in more detail within this Handbook.

Welcome: your contribution to our work will be extremely valuable and I look forward to meeting you soon.

Yours faithfully



Kate Holt
CEO, Connected Together





How to use this handbook

This handbook has been produced to help to introduce you to the work of Connected Together CIC (CTCIC) and the organisations it manages, including Healthwatch Northamptonshire (HWN) and Healthwatch Rutland (HWR). We want to ensure your volunteering experience with us is an enjoyable and rewarding one. The aim of the handbook is to act as a handy reference and information tool so please take time to read it. It is a lengthy document but one that we believe will be useful in different ways throughout your volunteering time with us.

Section One

This section provides background to how the Healthwatch network was established. The organisational structure of Connected Together and the organisations it manages is explained.

Section Two

This section sets out how we recruit and train our volunteers. It outlines the roles and responsibilities of our volunteers.

Section Three

This section provides the policies and procedures we have in place to support and protect you as a volunteer.

Volunteer input to the handbook

No handbook can answer all the questions you might have about volunteering with us. If you have suggestions for improvements or if you need more information we will be delighted to hear from you.



Section One - Healthwatch and Connected Together CIC

1.1 Background to Healthwatch

The UK currently spends over £140 billion a year on public provision of health and over £20 billion on social care¹. The pressures on the NHS and social care services are intense and the demand for health and social care is increasing at a time when budgets are being squeezed and health inequalities are increasing.

Local Healthwatch organisations were established under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to act as a local consumer voice for people using health and social care services. There is a local Healthwatch in every area in England. Healthwatch Northamptonshire and Healthwatch Rutland were established in April 2013. Healthwatch England is a national body which provides leadership, guidance and support to local Healthwatch and campaigns on national issues.

1.2 Connected Together CIC Organisational Structure

Connected Together Community Interest Company (CTCIC) is a social enterprise and a partnership between the University of Northampton and Voluntary Impact Northamptonshire. CTCIC is commissioned by Northamptonshire County Council to deliver the role and functions of Healthwatch in Northamptonshire and by Rutland County Council to deliver the role and functions of Healthwatch in Rutland.

The CTCIC is the responsible body with legal, financial and contractual responsibility for the organisations, including its volunteers.



For a diagram showing the governance and staffing structure of Connected Together CIC, Healthwatch Northamptonshire and Healthwatch Rutland, please see our website:

www.healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk/sites/default/files/connected_together_cic_and_healthwatch_northamptonshire_governance_structure_1202118.pdf

¹ The Health Foundation (2017) *Health and Social Care Funding Explained*
<http://www.health.org.uk/Health-and-social-care-funding-explained>



1.3 Healthwatch Northamptonshire Values and Strategy

Our vision

Healthwatch Northamptonshire will be a strong, resolute and independent community champion. We will give local people a voice and work in partnership to influence the design and quality of health and social care provision so that all local people have an opportunity for an improved quality of life.

Our values

- We will be accessible and visible
- We will be independent and objective
- We will be open, honest and transparent in all that we do
- We will be inclusive and embrace diversity and equality, reflecting the diverse needs of local people
- We will listen to and understand the views and needs of local people
- We will speak up for local people and enable people to speak for themselves
- We will be fair and credible
- We will seek out and use evidence, including from the public, to inform our work
- We will strive to make a positive difference and campaign for the best possible health and social care for local people

Our strategic priorities (2018-2020)

1. To deliver our statutory functions
2. To champion the views of all people who live in or use health, social or wellbeing services in Northamptonshire
3. To recruit and develop staff and volunteers in Northamptonshire to continue to build the capacity of Healthwatch Northamptonshire as an independent consumer champion of health and social care
4. To work for improved health and social care outcomes for adults, including vulnerable adults, carers and those with mental health issues
5. To work for improved health and social care outcomes for children, young people and families and those with mental health issues



1.4 Healthwatch Rutland Values and Strategy

Our vision

Healthwatch Rutland will be a strong, resolute and independent community champion. We will ensure that the views and experiences of Rutland residents are known by service providers and commissioners and work in partnership to influence the design and quality of health and social care provision.

Our values

- We will be accessible and visible
- We will be independent and objective
- We will be open, honest and transparent in all that we do
- We will be inclusive and embrace diversity and equality, reflecting the diverse needs of local people
- We will listen to and understand the views and needs of local people
- We will speak up for local people and enable people to speak for themselves
- We will be fair and credible
- We will seek out and use evidence, including from the public, to inform our work
- We will strive to make a positive difference to health and social care for local people

Our strategic priorities (2018-2021)

1. To deliver our statutory functions
2. To champion the views of all people who live in or use health, social or wellbeing services in Rutland including under-represented and 'hard to reach' groups
3. To work for improved health and social care outcomes for adults and children
4. To work closely with other local Healthwatch to identify opportunities for joint engagement, information sharing and representation
5. To recruit and develop staff and volunteers in Rutland to continue to build the capacity of Healthwatch Rutland as an independent consumer champion of health and social care



Section Two - Connected Together Volunteer Strategy

2.1 Introduction

1. Definition

‘Volunteering is the commitment of time and energy, for the benefit of society and the community, the environment, or individuals outside (or in addition to) one’s immediate family. It is unpaid and undertaken freely and by choice’².

2. Purpose of the Volunteer Strategy

Volunteering is widely recognised in society as being very important to the voluntary, community, public and private sector and to the volunteers themselves. CTCIC volunteers, including HWN and HWR volunteers, are recognised as a valued resource, key to our ability to deliver the organisational strategy and one that requires a structured approach to sustain and develop it.

3. CTCIC vision for volunteering

To build a diverse volunteer community of people who have the opportunity to have a meaningful, enjoyable volunteering experience.

Our volunteers will be well-trained, supported, valued and recognised for the vital contribution they make to our organisation and its strategic objectives

4. CTCIC core values for volunteering

CTCIC is committed to:

- Growing our volunteer community to enable us to accept the numerous opportunities to deliver public and patient involvement across health and social care services
- Embracing diversity - campaigning and networking to encourage volunteers from all the diverse communities which we serve

² Volunteer Development Agency (2007) *It’s All About Time: Volunteering in Northern Ireland*



-
- Promoting inclusion - we will provide fair and open access to volunteer opportunities and support
 - The promotion of best practice in managing, supporting and working with our volunteers
 - Adequate resourcing of volunteering that is stringently monitored to ensure best value at a time of financial challenge
 - Promotion of a culture where volunteers are welcomed, valued and thanked for their contribution
 - Being impact focused - we believe that success is measured by outcomes and will seek to deliver results that benefit individuals, community and our organisation
 - Being forward looking - we will recognise the need for continual review and improvement in our volunteer strategy

5. Benefits of volunteer involvement

For CTCIC and the organisations it manages, including HWN and HWR:

- ✓ Volunteers bring a variety of skills, expertise and a fresh perspective, for example cultural understanding and personal experience
- ✓ Volunteers can offer time and passion to a particular project, adding value to our work and supporting our sustainability
- ✓ Volunteers have knowledge of their local communities; by involving volunteers we are able to build stronger links with those local communities, including those who are hardest to reach
- ✓ Volunteers act as ambassadors, promoting CTCIC's activities and services. This is a unique role and does not replace the role of paid workers
- ✓ Volunteers increase our capacity so that we can achieve more

For volunteers:

- ✓ An opportunity to give back
- ✓ Offers the chance to be part of your community
- ✓ Provides new challenges and a chance to develop or learn new skills
- ✓ Motivation and a sense of achievement
- ✓ Can be a stepping stone into employment or training opportunities
- ✓ Provides an opportunity to be involved with something interesting, absorbing and worthwhile
- ✓ Meet a diverse range of people
- ✓ Can improve health and wellbeing



6. Strategic Aims

The overarching aim of the volunteer strategy is to develop and promote good practice in the involvement and support of volunteers within CTCIC that will in turn contribute to effective delivery of our organisational strategy.

Connected Together CIC ensures it meets the ‘Investing in Volunteers’ quality standards in the development and implementation of its volunteer strategy supporting policies and procedures. CTCIC was awarded ‘Investing in Volunteers’ status in April 2018. For full details see www.investinginvolunteers.org.uk

2.2 Young Healthwatch

Young Healthwatch Northamptonshire is a group of 11-24 year old volunteers who ensure children and young people’s views on health and social care services are listened to by those who commission, provide and design services.

Since its launch in February 2015, Young Healthwatch Northamptonshire has been making sure that young people’s voices are being heard in the county. In early 2018 Young Healthwatch received the ‘Investing in Children’ award, which recognises and celebrates good practice in including children and young people.

A Young Healthwatch has also been set up in Rutland under the care of Healthwatch Rutland.

Young Healthwatch volunteers have their own handbook to support them in their volunteering role.

For more information on Young Healthwatch visit:

www.healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk/young-healthwatch-1

www.facebook.com/Young-Healthwatch-Rutland-304719143607667/





2.3 Recruiting volunteers

Connected Together CIC and the organisations it manages, including HWN and HWR, recruits volunteers via a range of channels including:

- Advertising via our websites and social media accounts
- Word of mouth
- Newsletters
- Public engagement events
- Contact with voluntary and community sector organisations

We also undertake recruitment campaigns around particular issues. For example, if a particular service is being redesigned such as cardiology or respiratory services, we will want to recruit people who have experience of that service and their families or carers.

Campaigns also occur where we do not have sufficient representation from particular communities reflecting the diversity of the local population.



Applying to become a volunteer

- When a potential volunteer makes contact with CTCIC, HWN or HWR they will be asked to complete a short ‘expression of interest’ form.
- If anyone requires assistance with completing the form, help will be provided and/or the form can be completed by a member of staff over the phone.
- Once completed the ‘expression of interest’ form should be completed online or returned by email to enquiries@healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk or info@healthwatchrutland.co.uk



Informal interview

- All applicants will be offered an informal interview with the volunteer lead - either face to face or by telephone. This conversation enables potential volunteers to find out more about the organisation and the range of volunteer roles on offer.
- In the rare event, unsuccessful applicants will be notified within two working days. A member of our volunteer team will discuss this with the applicant and may be able to suggest other contacts for volunteering opportunities.
- Successful applicants will be also notified with two working days.

Next stage of the application process

- The successful applicant will be asked to complete a full application form, including details of two referees and an emergency contact.

References

- References will be taken up for all successful applicants.
- If we do not receive a reference within 10 working days we will make a second request to the referee.
- If after 10 more working days we still have not received the reference then the volunteer lead will contact the applicant and ask them to supply another referee.
- **Please note: We cannot accept a volunteer without two satisfactory references.**

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks

For some volunteer roles (e.g. Authorised Representative with HWN and HWR), volunteers will be required to have a standard check with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). This is important to ensure that we are compliant with regulations for Enter and View visits and our safeguarding procedures for children and vulnerable adults.

The DBS certificate, once issued by the Disclosure and Barring Service, will be sent solely to the volunteer. It is therefore the responsibility of the volunteer to bring the certificate into the CTCIC office or to a show it to a staff member at a relevant meeting. The volunteer lead or another staff member will check the certificate and add the DBS certificate number to the





volunteer database as evidence of the DBS check having been successfully completed.

If there are any issues noted from the DBS check these will be discussed with the volunteer by the CEO or volunteer lead. We will, wherever possible, try to find alternative roles for people who are unable to provide a clear DBS check.

If volunteer applicants make a false statement about convictions during the recruitment process this will be considered gross misconduct and could justify termination of the volunteering relationship.

It is the responsibility of the volunteer to inform the volunteer lead if, at any time during their period of volunteering with CTCIC or the organisations it manages, they are subject to any criminal record, cautions, warnings or bind overs, or any changes to their existing DBS or clearance status, including any police investigations which may make the continuation of their present volunteering role unsuitable.

The full CTCIC DBS Policy is available on our websites or can be viewed in the policies folder kept in the CTCIC offices.

Next stage of the application process

Once satisfactory references have been received, and a satisfactory DBS check (if applicable) has been carried out:

- The volunteer's details will be added to our secure volunteer database
- The volunteer is provided with this volunteer handbook in their preferred format
- The volunteer will be introduced to the relevant staff and attend the next group or board meeting as appropriate
- Induction training will be arranged for the next available training session, usually within 3 months
- The volunteer will be asked to confirm acceptance of the CTCIC Code of Conduct, Confidentiality Policy and will also be asked to complete a Declaration of Interests form, in line with our Declaration of Interests Policy. See below for more details of these policies.



2.4 Information, mentoring and support

- Our staff team are always here to provide support for volunteers
- The volunteer lead will arrange a follow up telephone call, email or meeting with the volunteer within six weeks of their appointment to review and discuss any support or other needs and to get the volunteer's feedback
- The volunteer will receive regular newsletters by email with details of key events and information
- We also notify volunteers by email of opportunities to take part in events or projects as they occur

2.5 Core values for volunteering

- Volunteers will be valued, made welcome and thanked for their contribution
- Volunteers will receive support and supervision, usually in a group setting but one to one sessions are available on request
- Volunteers will have regular access to a named person who ensures they have adequate support and someone they can contact if they have concerns about their role
- Volunteers should have a clear idea of their tasks and responsibilities
- All volunteers will be offered training. This includes induction training to introduce them to the organisation, its history, aims and objectives, and to the place where they volunteer. Volunteers will be offered specific training for their role and ongoing training
- Volunteers will have proper health and safety provision
- Volunteers will be properly insured against any risks involved in volunteering
- Volunteers should receive all reasonable out-of-pocket expenses in line with our Volunteer Travel and Expenses Policy
- Volunteers should be provided with the appropriate equipment/tools/materials to enable them to carry out their tasks
- Paid workers and volunteers should experience a complementary and mutually beneficial relationship
- Volunteers are not contractually employed, but offer their time free of charge and they choose when they are available to help



2.6 Code of conduct

This code of conduct refers to any person acting on behalf of Connected Together Community Interest Company (CTCIC) and all its organisations and contracts, such as Healthwatch Northamptonshire (HWN) and Healthwatch Rutland (HWR).

The reputation of CTCIC as an open, fair and professional body with high standards of integrity and commitment to its aims and objectives is dependent on the CTCIC community of paid staff, board members and volunteers. This also applies to individuals and organisations who we commission to do work on behalf of Connected Together. For the purpose of this policy any person acting in any of these capacities will be referred to as “representatives”.

CTCIC representatives are expected to uphold principles of selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership, as defined by the Nolan Principles set out below.

CTCIC representatives are required to complete the Code of Conduct Declaration Form.

General Standards

Connected Together representatives:

- are required to treat everyone with courtesy and respect at all times and to respect the privacy, dignity and rights to confidentiality of members of the public, patients, consumers and carers we work with
- will strive to establish and maintain effective professional relationships with CTCIC and within the CTCIC organisation(s) in which they are based, respecting colleagues and developing a spirit of teamwork
- may have to deal with behaviour that challenges them in the course of their roles. High standards of professionalism and fairness should be shown at all times and training and support will be provided to our representatives
- will embrace equality and diversity. Racist, sexist or homophobic behaviour which discriminates against or demeans others because of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation, political, cultural or other beliefs is not acceptable
- reported breaches of the code of conduct could result in action being taken to protect the reputation and integrity of CTCIC and to uphold this code of conduct. This could result in representatives being asked to leave CTCIC with the first steps being an informal conversation to seek to resolve issues



- representatives who require support in relation to this code of conduct should speak to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), a board member, volunteer lead, or their project lead, as directed at induction
- representatives are expected to present a professional image appropriate for the role being performed.

The Nolan Principles

The seven principles of public life, known as the 'Nolan Principles', guide the way in which Connected Together delivers the agreed strategy and supporting plans. These are:

Selflessness: CTCIC representatives should take decisions about health and social care issues in terms of the public interest. They should not do so to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.

Integrity: CTCIC representatives should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisation that might influence them in performance of Connected Together duties.

Objectivity: In carrying out public business, CTCIC representatives should ensure decision making is informed by the available evidence.

Accountability: Participants in CTCIC are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate.

Openness: CTCIC representatives should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands. **There will be occasions when information is restricted due to clear requirements of confidentiality (e.g. personal sensitive information).**

Honesty: CTCIC representatives have requirements to declare any private interests relating to their participation and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest and the reputation of CTCIC. Where there is an actual conflict of interest or a perceived conflict, this should be made clear by the CTCIC representative with the conflict at the start of any discussion, and the representatives should refrain from taking part in those discussions, unless asked for their views by the Chair of the meeting.

Leadership: Connected Together will promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

The seven principles of public life

Source: Committee on Standards in Public Life, 2008





2.7 Volunteer records and additional support

Data Protection and Privacy

All personal information about volunteers will be held in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). It will be held securely in an electronic format and will only be used in relation to your role as a volunteer. If you want to look at your file please speak to a member of staff.



The full CTCIC Data Protection Policy is available on our websites or can be viewed in the policies folder kept in the CTCIC, HWN and HWR offices.

The CTCIC Privacy Statement can be found here:

www.healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk/privacy

www.healthwatchrutland.co.uk/privacy-policy/

Additional support

CTCIC actively welcomes people with disabilities, physical or mental health conditions, and carers. Please outline your abilities or requirements and we will endeavour to provide any required extra support or adjustments to make your volunteering role accessible. If you have not already discussed your needs with us, contact the volunteer lead to discuss what we can do to help.

Volunteering while receiving benefits

Volunteers who are receiving working age benefits should inform the Department for Work and Pensions and/or Job Centre about their commitment to volunteering. CTCIC can provide you with a letter outlining the details of what you do as a volunteer.

References to prospective employers

If you require a reference from us for employment or other purposes, please contact us to discuss this.

Please note: We can only supply a reference in respect of your volunteering role.



2.8 Volunteer induction and training

Introduction

Connected Together CIC is committed to the induction, training and development of our volunteers. Ensuring that volunteers have the correct training for their particular role is essential for the success of our volunteer programme.

We aim to provide new volunteers, or ones facing a new task, with the information required to ensure that they are able to maximise their contribution. This will be done via induction training followed by regular support. All volunteers will have the opportunity to participate in ongoing training and will be briefed on opportunities relating to their role.



Equal opportunities consideration

Connected Together CIC will:

- Strive to prioritise training opportunities for volunteers who have traditionally missed out on such opportunities
- Seek to facilitate attendance at conferences and training events by volunteers with children or other caring responsibilities. This will be achieved by approving expense claims for childcare, crèche provision, and carers and in other ways as necessary, in line with our Volunteer Travel and Expenses Policy
- Continue to promote training that furthers equality of opportunity or helps individuals and voluntary groups challenge oppression and oppressive behaviour
- Where required, supply training materials in other formats or to provide additional support or assistance

Induction

Induction is an important opportunity to introduce volunteers to the organisation, communicate relevant policies and procedures and set out both what is expected of them and what they can expect in their new role.



Induction is usually delivered in a group setting as this encourages wide-ranging discussions and can also enable volunteers to start to build relationships and support systems.

Individual induction may also be arranged where required, for example to fit in better with the volunteer's other commitments and where there is a need for the training to be adapted for volunteers who require particular support.

Volunteer training

Some training is provided in-house by CTCIC staff and some is delivered by external organisations. Online training and webinars may be offered as well as face-to-face training.

We ask that all volunteers commit to attend training to keep their knowledge and skills up to date. All HWN and HWR volunteers are required to undertake training in safeguarding. This is mandatory for Authorised Representatives who are going to conduct 'enter and view' visits to health and social care services and/or to speak to people in their own homes.

Identification of volunteer training needs

CTCIC will provide other training courses as required, specific to particular roles, projects and organisational needs.

Volunteers are often in the best position to put forward suggestions for training courses to the volunteer lead.

If you are unable to attend a training session

CTCIC incurs costs in delivering the training, e.g. room hire and refreshments. If you cannot attend training that you have registered for please let us know as soon as possible. We can then reduce catering numbers or move to a smaller room.





Training courses for CTCIC Healthwatch volunteers

The table below sets out the core training offered to volunteers with HWN and HWR. Training is open to all volunteers but Authorised Representatives are required to attend the training which is marked * before carrying out their role.

Core training for Healthwatch volunteers
Induction for new volunteers (minimum of four people)
Enter and View*
Safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults*
Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS)*
Other training offered - as required, or on a rolling basis
Equality and Diversity
Introduction to the NHS/social care
The role of the Care Quality Commission (CQC)
Domestic abuse
Deaf awareness
Autism awareness
Disability awareness
Dementia awareness
Drugs and alcohol awareness
Health literacy

At the end of every training session we ask trainees to complete an evaluation form. This helps us to improve delivery content and arrangements for future training sessions.

Some training should be refreshed every 3 years to keep knowledge and skills up to date.

Volunteer training is logged on your volunteer record, so please tell us if you have done training elsewhere that is relevant to your role.



2.9 Ending your volunteer involvement

Feedback process

Volunteers will wish to cease their volunteering role for many reasons. It is helpful if you could notify the staff team that you will no longer be volunteering for CTCIC or any of the organisation it manages (including HWN and HWR). This means we can remove your details from our volunteer register and prevent you receiving further communications from us if you so wish.

We also like to take the opportunity to thank you for the volunteer work you have carried out for us. It is also useful to understand why you are leaving, would you have stayed if things had been different and what thoughts do you have on how to improve the volunteering experience for others?

Volunteer exit forms

All volunteers who cease volunteering will be offered the opportunity to fill in a short Volunteer Exit Form. Your input is very valuable and we welcome any information, suggestions and recommendations you are prepared to share about any aspect of their volunteering experience. CTCIC uses an exit form to enable us to compare feedback from other departing volunteers and to note any emerging patterns.

Exit interview

We would appreciate it if you are able to attend a brief exit interview, either on the phone or face-to-face, so that we can discuss your feedback with you in more depth.

Where issues come to light

If your completed exit interview form and/or face-to-face interview brings up issues that need addressing we will endeavour to do something about it. If this involves others it is important that we have your signed permission on the exit interview form to act upon your comments and suggestions without identifying the volunteer.



2.10 Volunteer roles within HWN and HWR

Volunteers play a key role in telling us about your own experiences of health and social care services and collecting and sharing feedback about services from your community and networks with us.

There are also opportunities for volunteers to be involved as members of the board, planning groups, task and finish groups, as authorised representatives, as community engagement volunteers and as office support.

The role descriptions for each of these volunteer roles are provided below. Should you require these in a different format please contact the volunteer lead.



Time commitment: on the following pages you will see the estimated time commitment for each of the volunteer roles. We advise that as part of your decision making about the roles you would like to volunteer for you also consider the time implications.

If you would like to try out a role first, or would like to discuss shorter term or flexible volunteering opportunities (sometimes known as ‘microvolunteering’), then please contact the volunteer lead.





HWN and HWR Board Member

Purpose of the role

The Healthwatch Northamptonshire and Healthwatch Rutland Boards are the public faces of HWN and HWR. The Boards take decisions about how HWN and HWR should work to improve the health and social care outcomes of each county's population. The length of term for HWN and HWR Board members is 3 years, before seeking re-election or retiring from the Board.

Main tasks and responsibilities

- Help determine the strategic direction for HWN and HWR and, through the CEO, ensure efficient allocation and administration of resources to develop a work plan that will enable it to perform its functions effectively
- Ensure that HWN and HWR's operations are transparent and accountable
- Ensure that HWN and HWR seek out and engage with members of the public, consumers and carers including 'seldom heard' groups, to gain their views on health and social care issues and problems in the relevant county.
- Ensure attendance at meetings with a variety of health and social care commissioners to represent public views as gathered through outreach work
- Assess a range of projects, research and reports that will help HWN and HWR fulfil its role
- Ensure that there is representation by staff and volunteers at forums, committees and sub-committees with a variety of stakeholders (including user groups and partners) whether these will help HWN and HWR to deliver on its aims

Skills and experience needed

To fulfil the role of an HWN or HWR Board Member, individuals will need a range of skills and expertise as well as the right experience and characteristics:

- Members need to be good communicators and be capable of playing an active role at board meetings and contribute to the discussion, information and policy decisions
- Members will be communicating with a range of different individuals from commissioners to members of the public, and must be willing to engage with all of them
- Members should have good analytical skills and awareness, and understanding of research and research costs, in order to identify gaps in public feedback and the provision and quality of local health and social care services



-
- Members should have an awareness of health and social care issues and an understanding of the importance of public involvement in these issues
 - Members should have some experience of health and/or social care services. This should come from personal experience or a previous paid role
 - Members will also need strategic awareness to give advice in the best interests of HWN or HWR in exercising its functions
 - Members are public representatives so they should understand what is expected from a position of civic responsibility
 - It is desirable, but not essential, for members to have had some experience or knowledge of public representation, particularly in health and social care. This may be as a representative of a service user group or acting as an advocate
 - Members will be responsible for overseeing work on reports and shaping the projects, so some experience of project management will be useful
 - Members will need to be, or want to be, active in their communities, so a track record of previous community activity is desirable
 - Members should have proven communication and people skills and be able to demonstrate this with their experience
 - Members are tasked with acting in the public interest, and should therefore be public spirited and committed to the principle of championing the public's interests in health and social care
 - Members need to be open-minded and inclusive, as Healthwatch Northamptonshire will be tasked with engaging and representing the entire spectrum of the local population
 - Members need to have an active interest in how public involvement can shape health and social care services and have the desire to promote it
 - Members need to have the will and desire to communicate effectively with all stakeholders and partners in fulfilling HWN and HWR's role

Eligibility

Anyone who is over the age of 16 and lives within Northamptonshire or Rutland, or anyone who regularly uses health or social care services within Northamptonshire or Rutland may apply to be a Board member. However, the following exceptions apply:

- People who are the subject of an undischarged bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order
- Anyone who has been dismissed from paid employment within the last 2 years due to misconduct (without being re-instated) where that dismissal has not been the subject of a finding of unfair dismissal by a tribunal or court



- Anyone who is under a disqualification order under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986
- Anyone who has been removed from trusteeship of a charity within the last 5 years or is not currently eligible to be a trustee of a charity
- Anyone who fails to comply with the Code of Conduct and Declaration of Interests Policy
- All County, Borough or District councillors who hold an executive position in their council

In addition to this role description, members are required to sign the **Code of Conduct**, the **Confidentiality Agreement** and complete a **Declaration of Interests**



Time commitment for Board Members:

Read Board papers and attend Board meetings every 3 months (approximately 5-6 hours).

Respond to emails and attend other meetings and events on behalf of HWN or HWR as required (average 2-4 hours per event).





Planning Group Member (HWN)/Operations and Planning Group Member (HWR)

Purpose of the role

The Planning Group (HWN) and Operations and Planning Group (HWR) work closely to the Strategic and Operational Plans of HWN and HWR respectively. Membership of the (Operations and) Planning Group is open to any interested individuals living and/or working in Northamptonshire, and to representatives of local voluntary and community sector organisations. Meetings are held in public; members of the public are welcome to comment, contribute to discussions occurring and to put forward issues for attention. Items for discussion may be forwarded to the HWN office for the attention of the chairs prior to the meeting. There are opportunities for (Operations and) Planning Group members to represent HWN or HWR and to undertake more detailed work.

Main tasks and responsibilities

- Attend and participate in (Operations and) Planning Group meetings
- Undertake other agreed actions as required and report back at future meetings
- Some (Operations and) Planning Group members attend committees, focus groups or workshops on behalf of HWN and provide written feedback on meetings attended

Skills and experience needed

- Interest in health and social care issues
- Good listening and communication skills
- Ability to discuss issues and reach a consensus which may not be your view
- Ability to relate easily to all sorts of people in an empathetic and non-judgmental way
- Ability to work effectively as a member of a team
- Confidence in communicating with a wide range of people and organisations
- Willingness to report back on meetings attended and to follow up action plan priorities identified by the group
- Willingness to undertake training and develop knowledge/understanding as required



- Understand and respect the need for confidentiality
- Ability to access and respond to emails on a regular basis



Time commitment for (Operations and) Planning Group Members:

Read agenda and papers and attend meetings as far as is possible (approximately 2-4 hours per meeting).

Respond to emails and attend other meetings and events on behalf of HWN/HWR, depending on availability (2-4 hours per meeting).





Task and Finish Group Member

Purpose of the role

Planning Group Members are invited to join Task and Finish Groups where they have a particular interest. Task and Finish Group members work together in small groups, often with staff members, on time-limited pieces of work to evaluate and assess specific issues. They produce reports, which include recommendations for change where necessary, to commissioners and providers.

Main tasks and responsibilities

- Scope projects and develop a project plan, in consultation with HWN/HWR staff
- Identify stakeholders to involve in a piece of work
- Collect and collate information from individuals, groups and organisations
- Analyse data, write draft reports and make recommendations
- Provide regular updates/reports to the (Operations and) Planning Group

Skills and experience needed

- Interest in health and social care issues
- Ability to work as part of a small team
- Ability to be objective
- Good interpersonal and communication skills
- Basic IT skills
- Demonstrate a commitment to and understanding of equality and diversity
- Willingness to undertake training and develop knowledge/understanding as required
- Understand and respect the need for confidentiality



Time commitment for Task and Finish Group Members:

Each meeting will last approximately 2 hours. The number and frequency of meetings will depend on the size and complexity of the project. Additional time may be involved to collect and analyse data and write reports



Authorised Representative

Purpose of the role

An Authorised Representative is a trained volunteer who participates in the 'Enter and View' activities of HWN and HWR alongside other volunteers and staff, to make observations and gather the experiences and views of patients, consumers, carers and the wider public. The 'Enter and View' function applies to health services for adults and children and social care for adults.

Main tasks and responsibilities

- Visit health services to assess the quality of care from the perspectives of patients and the public. This will include talking to patients, visitors and staff to gather views and experiences
- Visit care homes and other care services to observe care and facilities provided and talk to service users, carers, staff and other visitors
- Assist in the preparation of reports that detail the findings of visits and make recommendations for improvements
- Liaise with health and social care staff and managers to make arrangements for visits and to discuss initial findings

Skills and experience needed

- Interest in health and social care issues
- Good observation and listening skills
- Ability to talk to people from diverse backgrounds
- Ability to be objective
- Willingness to undertake training and develop knowledge/understanding as required
- After training, ability to identify good and poor practice in care
- Ability to present information in a clear straightforward way
- Understand and respect the need for confidentiality



Additional requirements

Authorised Representatives are also required:

- To be over the age of 18 years
- To supply two references
- To have a satisfactory DBS check
- To complete training in 'Enter and View' and Safeguarding



Time commitment for Authorised Representatives:

Once trained it is at the discretion of the individual how much time they wish to commit. On average an 'enter and view' visit will last 3 hours allowing for briefing and debriefing. Writing the visit report will take 1-1½ hours. Attendance at other events and meetings is usually between 2 and 4 hours.





Community Engagement Volunteer

Purpose

The role of community engagement representative focuses on public and patient engagement, enabling HWN and HWR to listen to individual experiences of health and social care services and helping us to collate evidence directly from service users. The role also involves publicising HWN and HWR and what we do within local groups and communities.

Main tasks and responsibilities

- Help HWN/HWR to engage with the public at a variety of events, gathering views via comment cards and where applicable inviting participation in surveys and other methods of engagement, such as focus groups
- Promote understanding of the purpose and function of HWN/HWR, raising our profile and highlighting our achievements and activities
- Deliver presentations to a variety of small groups, e.g. at coffee mornings, community groups, community events to provide information about HWN/HWR
- Listen to and record individual experiences and views of health and social care services
- Support HWN/HWR in gathering views from local communities, particularly from those who are currently seldom heard by decision-makers

Skills and experience needed

- Interest in health and social care issues
- Understanding of the role of Healthwatch in the local health and social care environment
- Enthusiasm for networking with community groups
- Willingness to encourage others to feed their views into HWN
- Good listening skills
- Good presentation skills, using a prepared script
- Use of own transport is desirable, travel expenses will be refunded
- Understand and respect the need for confidentiality, especially when sharing information with others



Time commitment for Community Engagement Volunteer:

Once trained it is at the discretion of the individual how much time they wish to commit. Average 1 - 4 hours per meeting or event.





Office Volunteer

Purpose of the role

Office volunteers provide invaluable support to the staff team by carrying out general administrative tasks. Where a volunteer has appropriate or specialist skills, other tasks may be available, e.g. communications and media work, data entry or helping with event preparation.

Main tasks and responsibilities

An office volunteer may undertake some of the following:

- General office duties including scanning documents, filing, shredding and photocopying
- Answering and transferring telephone calls
- Administration for organising events and conferences
- Preparation of leaflets and other publicity materials
- Monitoring and assessing media coverage of health and social care issues
- Data entry
- Identifying information and signposting opportunities

Skills and experience needed

- Ability to work as part of a small team
- Good interpersonal and communication skills
- Basic IT skills
- Willingness to undertake relevant training
- Understand and respect the need for confidentiality



Time commitment for Office Volunteer:

Office volunteers can do a regular weekly session or come in on an ad hoc basis as work requires, usually for 2-3 hours at a time.

Office volunteer opportunities are dependent on the resources available in the office, including desk space and staff support.



Section Three - Policies and Procedures for CTCIC Volunteers

3.1 Introduction

Volunteer policies and procedures ensure we maintain the highest standards in meeting our legal responsibilities to volunteers and those who receive our services. In this section we summarise and provide some essential information from the key policies that are relevant for volunteers.

As a volunteer you are required to read the full policy documents which are available on our websites and in our offices in Northampton and Rutland. Copies can also be requested in other formats.

These policies are updated periodically. We will notify you of any updates, but it is your responsibility to ensure that you are reading the latest version.

CTCIC policies relevant to volunteers

Code of conduct

Complaints

Confidentiality

Data protection

Declaration of interests

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

Enter and View

Environmental

Equality and diversity

Harassment and dignity

Health and safety

ICT acceptable use

Media

Problem solving

Safeguarding of children and young people

Safeguarding of vulnerable adults

Travel and expenses

Whistleblowing



Financial Governance

3.2 Travel and Expenses Policy for Volunteers

In carrying out CTCIC approved business and activities volunteers may incur expenses. We want to be sure that everyone has an equal opportunity to take part in volunteer activity and recognise that no-one should lose out through incurring costs associated with their volunteering. The CTCIC Travel and Expenses Policy details which costs can be reimbursed, to what level and how to make a claim.

What expenses will be paid?

Volunteers will be reimbursed for reasonable travel and associated expenses incurred solely and exclusively in the performance of their duties for CTCIC. Expenditure should be kept to the minimum consistent with the effective performance of work on behalf of CTCIC. The CEO may refuse any claim that appears to be excessive.

Expenses will not be reimbursed for attending open public meetings, launch events or other meetings which are open to everyone (e.g., public meetings, governing body meetings, AGMs) or other meetings without specific invitations to assist in CTCIC business.

If you have any special requirements, or are unsure whether you can make a claim this should be discussed with the volunteer lead. It is requested that you discuss this before spending money.

Reimbursement of expenses

- Claims for reimbursement should be made on a Volunteers' Monthly Expenses Claim Form. You can request an email version or a printed copy from the office.
- Claims must always be supported by **original receipts** or other supporting documentation. Photocopies are not acceptable. All receipts should be attached to the claim for reimbursement.
- Claims for reimbursement should be submitted to the office to reach us by the **8th day** of each month and **not later than three months after they were incurred**.
- The mode of travel should be the most cost-effective consistent with the business needs of CTCIC.



- Claimants using their private vehicles (car, van, motorcycle or pedal cycle) for business travel should claim reimbursement at the mileage rates laid down in travel rates in the table below:

Type of vehicle	First 10,000 miles	Above 10,000 miles
Cars and vans	45p	25p
Motorcycles	24p	24p
Cycles	20p	20p

- When board members or volunteers are away from their normal place of work on Connected Together business for longer periods they may claim reasonable subsistence to cover the cost of food and beverages within the rules and limits as follows (to be accompanied by original receipts):

Meal Type	Reimbursement allowed
Breakfast on day of travel if journey commences before 7am	Maximum of £8
Breakfast in conjunction with an overnight stay (where not included in tariff)	Maximum of £12
Lunch if your absence from Connected Together is continuous between 10am and 3pm	Maximum of £8
Dinner if journey cannot be completed before 7.30pm	Maximum of £12
Dinner in conjunction with an overnight stay	Maximum of £25

Car parking

- CTCIC will reimburse all expenses for car parking costs incurred whilst travelling on approved volunteer business. Claims should be made on the volunteers monthly expenses claim form, and must be supported by **original receipts**. Where a parking meter is used and no receipt is available, a note to that effect should be included with the claim.

Public transport and taxis

- Local bus travel must be supported by **original receipts** (e.g. used tickets).
- Rail travel should be booked in advance to take advantage of reduced fares.
- Any board member or volunteer who wishes to use a taxi to transport them to CTCIC meetings or events should first contact the volunteer or project lead, or



CEO for approval of this expense prior to booking of a taxi. Once authorised the volunteer or project lead can book the taxi via the CTCIC approved taxi firm. In instances where an individual is authorised to book the taxi themselves reimbursement will be made on production of an **original receipt** from the taxi company.

Non-reimbursable expenditure

The following items will not be reimbursed as part of the travel and expenses claim:

- Professional subscriptions
- Speeding, parking or wheel clamp fines
- Unauthorised or excessive travel and subsistence costs
- Any expenditure not supported by detailed, original receipts
- Loss of earnings
- Alcoholic drinks

Equipment and consumables

Board members and volunteers may claim reimbursement for stationery and printer ink used in CTCIC activities. Claims should be made on the Volunteers Monthly Expenses claim form and be supported by **original receipts**.

The full CTCIC Travel and Expenses (Volunteers) Policy will be provided to each volunteer at induction. It is also available on our websites or can be viewed in the policies folder kept in the CTCIC offices.

3.3 Declaration of Interests Policy

To support a culture of openness, honesty, transparency and accountability, all volunteers of Connected Together CIC and the organisations it manages are required to register any financial, personal, professional or family interests that are relevant to the business of CTCIC. Please read the Declaration of Interests Policy in full and complete the Declaration of Interests form, returning it to the volunteer lead.

Any changes to the information provided should be notified to the volunteer lead so that the Register of Interests can be kept up to date.

The full CTCIC Declaration of Interests Policy will be provided to each volunteer at induction. It is also available on our websites or can be viewed in the policies folder kept in the CTCIC offices.

Information Governance



3.4 ICT Acceptable Use Policy

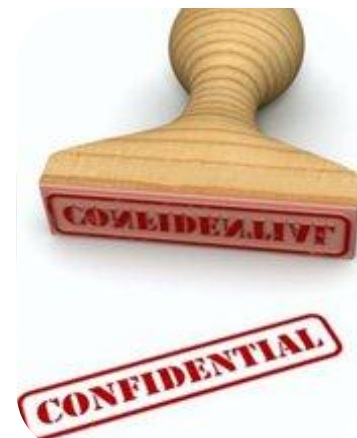
The use of electronic and online media is crucial to Connected Together CIC conducting its business in an efficient way and for supporting its values. Volunteers have an obligation to comply with current legislation and reduce risks to security and reputation by using resources sensibly and appropriately. Email should be treated in the same way as any other form of written communication; care should be taken with regard to the content and presentation of emails. Social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc.) play an important part in engaging with the public online. Bearing in mind the Code of Conduct, CTCIC volunteers need to pay care and attention to their use of social media and avoid defamatory or offensive remarks.

The full CTCIC ICT Acceptable Use Policy is available on our websites or can be viewed in the policies folder kept in the CTCIC offices.

3.5 Confidentiality Policy

During the course of your role as a CTCIC volunteer, you will probably have access to, or have sight of, documents and other information that is of a confidential nature. At all times information gained during your period of volunteering must be dealt with in a sensitive and confidential manner.

Under no circumstance should information to which volunteers have access to, or become aware of, as a result of their volunteering activities, be disclosed to persons outside the organisation without properly authority to do so. This authority should normally be granted by either the chair or CEO of the organisation.



Safe handling of confidential information

It is the responsibility of all CTCIC volunteers to ensure that they handle any information they receive in the course of their volunteer activity in a sensitive and safe way, to ensure the security of that information.



Breaches of confidentiality

Any CTCIC volunteer accessing unauthorised files or breaching confidentiality may be deemed to have committed an act of gross misconduct and may be subject to disciplinary action and ultimately removal from volunteering.

The full CTCIC Confidentiality Policy is available on our websites or can be viewed in the policies folder kept in the CTCIC offices.

3.6 Media Policy

Connected Together CIC and the organisations it manages (including HWN and HWR) strives to have a high and positive media profile. It is vital that our media releases and statements are factually correct and responsible. The Media Policy explains the process for handling media enquiries, which should all go through the CTCIC office. Volunteers who have expertise on particular issues (and after media training, if necessary) may be offered the opportunity to be interviewed.

Volunteers may on occasion be directly asked by the media to comment on issues they are involved with. If this is the case and you make a comment, it is important to stress that this is your personal opinion and not that of the organisation you volunteer for.

The full CTCIC Media Policy is available on our websites or can be viewed in the policies folder kept in the CTCIC offices.





People Governance

3.7 Equality and Diversity Policy

Connected Together CIC is committed to encouraging equality and diversity among our employees and volunteers, and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

The aim is for our employees and volunteers to be truly representative of all sections of society and our customers, and for each colleague to feel respected and able to give their best.

The full CTCIC Equality and Diversity Policy will be provided to each volunteer at induction. It is also available on our websites or can be viewed in the policies folder kept in the CTCIC offices.

3.8 Harassment and Dignity Policy for Volunteers

This policy is intended to provide help and support to Connected Together volunteers who feel that they have been denied the right to be treated with dignity and respect and have suffered a detriment in relation to their right to lead their lives free from harassment, bullying, intimidation, victimisation and unlawful/unfair discrimination.

The full CTCIC Harassment and Dignity Policy will be provided to each volunteer at induction. It is also available on our websites or can be viewed in the policies folder kept in the CTCIC offices.

3.9 Enter and View Policy

Each local Healthwatch has the statutory power to enter health services for adults and children and social care for adults to make observations and gather the experiences and views of patients, consumers, carers and the wider public.



Only HWN and HWR Authorised Representatives can conduct 'Enter and View' activity and do so in a planned, co-ordinated way (i.e. not acting alone).

The full Enter and View Policy for HWN can be viewed here:
www.healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk/resources/our-policies

The full Enter and View Policy for HWR can be viewed here:
<http://healthwatchrutland.co.uk/hwr-policies-procedures>



3.10 Safeguarding of Children and Young People Policy

The word ‘child’ generally refers to young people up to 18 years of age. The policy applies to all staff and volunteers. Those who work directly with children and young people (CYP) are subject to stringent selection and management procedures whilst those who might occasionally be asked to engage with CYP on behalf of CTCIC will be expected to have a thorough knowledge of and adhere to the safeguarding policy and code of conduct for working with children and young people.

The full CTCIC Safeguarding of Children and Young People Policy will be provided to each volunteer at induction. It is also available on our websites or can be viewed in the policies folder kept in the CTCIC offices.

3.11 Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults Policy

Safeguarding is about keeping vulnerable adults safe from harm. The word ‘adult’ generally refers to people aged 18 and over. The policy applies to all Connected Together CIC staff and volunteers. Volunteers should be alert at all times and all complaints and allegations of abuse should be reported without delay to a member of staff at CTCIC or the organisations it manages, including HWN and HWR.

The simple steps are: listen, reassure, report and record.

The full CTCIC Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults Policy will be provided to each volunteer at induction. It is also available on our websites or can be viewed in the policies folder kept in the CTCIC offices.

3.12 Complaints Policy

Individuals and organisations have the right to express their views about the performance of Connected Together CIC and the contracts it manages (including HWN and HWR). Anyone who is dissatisfied with any aspects of the service received from CTCIC, HWN or HWR can make a complaint under this policy. A complaint does not have to be written, it may be made in person, over the phone or by e-mail. We will treat both concerns and complaints in the same way.

In the course of your volunteering role you should not be expected to deal with either informal or formal complaints. If a consumer (an individual or a group) speaks to you as a volunteer with a comment or complaint about the service received or the activities of CTCIC you should direct them to the staff team.

Please acknowledge the complaint or concern and take it seriously, but recognise that responsibility for dealing with complaints lies with members of staff.

The full CTCIC Complaints Policy is available on our websites or can be viewed in the policies folder kept in the CTCIC offices.



3.13 Problem Solving Policy for Volunteers

The entire policy is included here in full:

Scope

Occasionally issues can arise when someone is volunteering. It is important to have procedures in place to help deal with any issues before they become bigger problems.

Volunteers, although valued by CTCIC, are not employees and have no contractual obligation to the organisation. CTCIC will try to resolve fairly any problems that people who volunteer with CTCIC may experience. The aim is to offer the opportunity to discuss any issues and facilitate a solution. This may lead to agreements about changes in behaviour or expectations, which will be monitored and reviewed.



Process

- Volunteers should raise any problems in a timely manner usually within 30 days of the incident occurring. This is in order to ensure organisational memory of the incident is not lost
- Where possible the problem should be raised with the person concerned (see below)
- All complaints will be treated confidentially, and should only be discussed amongst those who are directly involved in trying to resolve the issue
- Full written records will be kept of the problem, interviews and meetings and will be kept in sealed files with the CTCIC CEO. Copies will be provided for the complainant within 10 working days after first being checked for factual accuracy and agreed by the CTCIC CEO
- Meetings will be held confidentially and adequate time allowed
- Complainants will be kept informed at every step of the procedure
- Volunteers have the right to be accompanied by a colleague, friend or representative in any meetings that form part of the problem solving process



Stage 1: Informal Resolution

If possible, volunteers should in the first instance raise issues calmly and directly with the person concerned. However, if volunteers do not feel this is possible or this first approach has not resolved the concerns then the concerns should be raised with the volunteer lead (or if the matter involves the volunteer lead with CEO). The CEO or volunteer lead will talk through the issues and agree a course of action and timescales. If necessary a follow up meeting will be arranged. Notes will be taken of conversations, including the nature of the problem and any actions taken.

Possible ways forward

If the difficulty relates to another Connected Together CIC volunteer, this might include setting up a meeting between both parties and the volunteer lead or for the volunteer lead to speak to that person and for written recommendations being copied to both parties.

Volunteers have the option of taking the matter to stage two of the problem solving procedure if they wish or if they are not satisfied with informal resolution. In certain circumstances where informal resolution is not appropriate the volunteer lead will refer the problem straight to stage 2.

Volunteers should try to address issues regarding any CTCIC staff member with the person concerned if they feel able. However, if the volunteer does not want to do this, the process can start at stage 2.

Stage 2: Formal Resolution

Those issues which cannot be resolved informally, will move to stage two: the formal resolution stage of the process:

- A meeting will be arranged between the volunteer, the chair of CTCIC and the CEO.
- Written notes of the meeting will be taken of:
 - issues raised
 - areas of agreement/disagreement about the issues raised or any actions taken to resolve issues to date
- If appropriate the chairperson will also talk to/meet with any other parties involved in the problem with a view to facilitating a resolution to the issue. The volunteer will be informed about progress/the outcome within 10 working days



Stage 3: Appeal Process

Volunteers who are not happy with the outcome from stages 1 and 2 can use the appeals process. For this, a special meeting comprising at least three members of the CTCIC board nominated by the chairperson, will be called to consider the problem.

The volunteer will be asked to this meeting, which will take place within two weeks of the volunteer notifying CTCIC that they wish to use the appeals process.

The decision of this group is to be considered final and will be produced in writing within 10 working days of the meeting.

Stage 4: Exit Procedure

If an issue is identified that CTCIC and the volunteer cannot resolve in partnership it is important that both parties feel able to withdraw from the problem. In these circumstances the volunteer can choose, or will be asked to leave. If a serious issue (for example theft, violence or a safeguarding concern) arises, the volunteer may be asked to leave immediately. This is because they are no longer supporting the aims and core values of the organisation, and will have breached the CTCIC Code of Conduct and supporting policies and procedures.

Conducting the exit interview:

- The meeting will take place in a confidential setting
- The meeting will be followed up with a letter to re-iterate the decision for dismissal as well as outlining the reasons why
- Staff and other volunteers will be notified of the outcome but no details given of the reasons for the dismissal

CTCIC Problem Solving Policy (Volunteers), last updated October 2018





3.14 Whistleblowing Policy

The entire policy is included here in full:

Whistleblowing is a disclosure of information by individuals that relates to danger, fraud, illegal or unethical conduct of the employer, an employee, board member or volunteer. It need not be a matter of financial governance. For a disclosure to be protected it must be a qualifying disclosure.

Qualifying disclosure

A qualifying disclosure is a disclosure that is made in good faith as the honest belief of this individual making the disclosure and will tend to show that one or more of the following has occurred:

- A criminal offence has been committed, is being committed or likely to be committed
- A person has failed, is failing or likely to fail to comply with a legal obligation that they are subject to
- A miscarriage of justice has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur
- The health and safety of any individual has been, is being or likely to be endangered,
- The environment has been, is being or likely to be damaged, or
- The information would tend to show that the matter in any preceding paragraph has been, is being or likely to be deliberately concealed

Making a disclosure

Individuals wishing to make a disclosure are encouraged to do so internally in the first instance (i.e. to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or independent member of the CTCIC board) before involving an external agency. Where an individual feels unable to make an internal disclosure they must follow the external disclosure procedure outlined within this policy and procedure.

Investigating a disclosure

- All disclosures made under this policy and procedure will be thoroughly investigated and appropriate action will be taken
- All disclosures will be handled in a sensitive and confidential manner. Where reasonably practicable the identity of the individual making the disclosure will be kept confidential unless to do so would hinder or frustrate the investigation



-
- Individuals making a disclosure should be aware that the investigation may reveal the source of the disclosure and that they may be required to provide a statement as part of the investigation process
 - Where a disclosure reveals evidence of criminal activity CTCIC reserves the right to report to the police as appropriate

Internal disclosure

- Individuals make an internal disclosure ideally to the CEO or Chair of CTCIC
- Following receipt of a disclosure the Independent Director of the CIC board will be appointed or will appoint a manager/director/independent other to investigate the disclosure, as the Investigator/Investigating Manager.
- Board members, employees and volunteers are expected to fully cooperate with investigations undertaken within this procedure, and requests to attend investigation meetings should be considered a reasonable management instruction
- Due to the nature of investigations it is often necessary to hold such meetings at short notice i.e. notice of a meeting may be given on the same day as the meeting. This may be necessary, for example, to protect others or preserve evidence
- The Investigator will determine the nature and type of investigation required which may include reviewing documents, emails or interviewing employees, board members or volunteers whom allegations have been made against or interviewing potential witnesses, for example. The nature of any further investigation, including the determination of relevance of evidence and selection of witnesses, is entirely at the discretion of the Investigating Manager
- If during the investigation, evidence is uncovered which indicates gross misconduct, CTCIC reserves the right to suspend the board member, employee or volunteer concerned
- Following the conclusion of an investigation the Investigating Manager will prepare an investigation report and must make one of the following recommendations:
 - the disclosure is not substantiated and therefore no further action will be taken where the disclosure was made in good faith
 - the disclosure is substantiated and appropriate action will be taken



External disclosure

External disclosures may be made when the director, board member, employee or volunteer feels unable to follow the internal disclosure procedure for one or more of the following reasons:

- They remain dissatisfied following the outcome of an internal investigation into a disclosure
- They have reasonable belief CTCIC will disregard or conceal a disclosure, or
- They have reasonable belief they would be treated unfairly or victimised if they made a disclosure
- Where a director, board member, employee or volunteer wishes to make an external disclosure they should do so only to a prescribed person or body. As a guiding principle prescribed persons/bodies are typically Ministers of the Crown or Regulatory Bodies, however a full list of prescribed persons/bodies is available at www.gov.uk/whistleblowing

Action after substantiated disclosures

- Where, after a thorough investigation, a disclosure is substantiated then CTCIC will address the issue in accordance with relevant policies
- If a disclosure made in good faith is found to have no substance following a thorough investigation, no disciplinary action will be taken against the individual making the disclosure
- Any director, board member, employee or volunteer found to be victimising someone who has made a disclosure may be subject to action under CTCIC's Disciplinary Policy
- CTCIC may consider further action if an individual makes a disclosure that is within any of the following circumstances;
 - shown to be malicious, vexatious and/or frivolous,
 - the allegations are clearly untrue, and/or the individual making the disclosure acted for personal gain

CTCIC Whistleblowing Policy, last updated August 2018



Health, Safety and the Environment

3.15 Health and Safety Policy

Connected Together CIC has a duty, as far as reasonably possible, to ensure that the health and safety of volunteers are not put at risk. Our aim is to provide a safe environment for all.

Volunteer responsibilities

As a volunteer we ask that you:

- Take reasonable care for your own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by what you do or do not do
- Cooperate, as far as necessary, to enable CTCIC to meet its responsibility for the health and safety and wellbeing of all
- Report to a CTCIC staff member any hazards you encounter or observe
- Use correctly any equipment supplied by CTCIC, in accordance with any training or instructions you receive to enable you to use the items safely
- Identify any special health and safety requirements you have to the volunteer lead who will undertake an individual risk assessment with you and where possible put measures in place to address these

Insurance

Volunteers are covered under CTCIC's employer's liability insurance. This provides insurance against liability for injury and disease experienced by volunteers or staff as a direct result of their activities for CTCIC. As a registered volunteer you are also covered by our public liability insurance when carrying out your volunteer duties on our behalf.

Lone working

If you do undertake volunteering tasks alone it is advisable to have arrangements in place where someone is aware of where you are and the time that you expect to return home. An arranged contact call to that person enables them to know that you have arrived back safely or to make further enquiries if they do not hear from you at the agreed time.



The full CTCIC Health and Safety Policy is available on our websites or can be viewed in the policies folder kept in the CTCIC offices.

3.16 Environmental Policy

Connected Together CIC recognises the many and increasing threats to the environment and wishes to play its part in developing a sustainable society. We recognise that our activities have an impact on the environment in terms of the use of raw materials, emissions to air and water and waste generation, and seek to minimise this as far as is reasonably practicable.

All employees and volunteers are encouraged to:

- Make efficient use of natural resources by conserving energy and water, minimising waste where possible
- Safely dispose of waste or recycle where possible
- Use recycled materials wherever these can be commercially justified
- Share cars or use public transport to attend meetings and events

The full CTCIC Environmental Policy is available on our websites or can be viewed in the policies folder kept in the CTCIC offices.



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- The staff team who provided information about the organisation, technical support and expertise and proof reading
- Volunteers who provided feedback and proof reading skills

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