

STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

HOUSING COMMITTEE

2 NOVEMBER 2021

Report Title	VOLUNTEERING POLICY (INDEPENDENT LIVING)			
Purpose of Report	To inform Committee of a new Volunteering Policy for Independent Living to provide a structure for our Volunteers to work within.			
Decision(s)	The Committee RESOLVES to adopt the Volunteering Policy for Independent Living			
Consultation and Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Involved tenants and Officers.Feedback invited by email to lynne.mansell@stroud.gov.uk			
Report Author	Lynne Mansell Service Delivery Manager (Independent Living) Tel: 01453 754173 Email: lynne.mansell@stroud.gov.uk			
Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To introduce a new Policy for Volunteers will give clear guidance of roles and responsibilities in promoting wellbeing of tenants and residents in the Stroud District.To continue without a Policy will lead to lack of clarity around the roles, rights and responsibilities of our Volunteers.			
Appendices	Appendix A – Volunteering Policy Appendix B – Older People's Housing Strategy (HRA) Appendix C – Equality Impact Assessment			
Implications (further details at the end of the report)	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	No	No	No	No

1.0 INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In 2019, Stroud District Council (SDC) adopted the Older People's Housing Strategy (OPHS) Appendix B which sets out the vision along with the strategy for our older people's accommodation for the next 5 years. Following the Task and Finish groups findings (which can be found in the OPHS) and being presented to Housing Committee in February 2019, the recommendations were approved which enabled initiation of Independent Living HUBS in 2020 across the Stroud district. The aim of the HUBS is to promote the wellbeing of all older people in the Stroud district and help make later life enjoyable and more fulfilling.

2.0 MAIN POINTS

- 2.1 There are currently four Independent Living HUBS across the Stroud district sited in Nailsworth, Stonehouse, Cam and Minchinhampton. They are the centre of the Independent living communities for the area. Social activities such as health and wellbeing and recreational events are organised and held within the HUBS. These are also extended to tenants and residents in the wider community.

- 2.2 Tenants at Independent Living sites across the district are invited to join in any group activities in the HUB sites, however they are also able to benefit from communal spaces within their own living environment, allowing the ability to socialise, building neighbourly relations and a support network.
- 2.3 Residents of suitable outlying properties in the surrounding areas of the HUBS and Independent Living sites are also given the opportunity to attend activities. This gives the opportunity to extend community networks and reduce social isolation and loneliness.
- 2.4 Volunteers are an extremely valuable resource within our HUBS and Independent Living sites, using and sharing their skills, knowledge and experience and bringing a different perspective to that of professional staff which adds additional value to the HUBS. Their time and skills are given without financial remuneration.
- 2.5 The Volunteering Policy sets out roles, rights and responsibilities of volunteers. The policy also acknowledges the value of volunteers whilst providing support and good practice. The policy will ensure fairness and consistency in managing volunteers; it also helps volunteers know where they stand and how they can expect to be treated. The policy will help to involve a range of diverse volunteers because it defines the roles clearly. Everyone has a right to take part in volunteering and to have a fulfilling and productive experience.
- 2.6 As Safeguarding is at the heart of all we do, a programme will be initiated to ensure all volunteers undertake a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. This will make certain we are making safer decisions about who we are recruiting as volunteers. The Volunteer Coordinator will work with prospective volunteers to complete this which comes without a fee.

3.0 CONCLUSION

- 3.1 Volunteers are an essential part of providing opportunities to tenants and residents within our Independent Living sites. Through the involvement of volunteers, we can build sustainable and vibrant communities.
- 3.2 By introducing volunteers, we can offer opportunities for involvement, learning and development for larger groups, especially where paid resources are not readily available or sustainable.
- 3.3 The Policy will provide volunteers with clarity around roles, rights and responsibilities as well as principles of good practice.
- 3.4 Recruitment and Selection is explained in the Policy along with knowledge of support and development opportunities available.
- 3.5 There is clear guidance on relationships with paid staff and relationships with other group and organisations that may be involved in the HUBS.

4.0 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial Implications

There are no significant financial implication arising directly from this report.

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4.2 Legal Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

One Legal

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4.3 Equality Implications

An EqlA has been carried out by Officers in relation to the decision made in this report and no equality implications arise.

4.5 Environmental Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.