

# The **Dacorum Compact**

## **Volunteering Code of Good Practice**



**October 2003**

# contents

	Page
<b>1.0 Introduction</b>	2
<b>2.0 The Volunteering Code of Good Practice</b>	3
2.1 Key Points	3
2.2 Definitions	3
2.3 Fundamental principles of volunteering	4
2.4 Dacorum Volunteer Bureau	4
2.5 Statutory Sector undertakings	4
2.6 Voluntary and Community Sector undertakings	5
2.7 Mutual undertakings and agreed principles	5
<b>3.0 The Volunteers Charter</b>	6
<b>4.0 Lead Officer Contact Details</b>	7
<b>Annex A - List of Signatories</b>	7



Produced in  
partnership

## 1

# Introduction

The Volunteering Code of Good Practice is to be viewed in conjunction with the Dacorum Compact, which was signed by around 50 voluntary/community groups and the main local statutory agencies, including Dacorum Borough Council, Dacorum Primary Care Trust, Hertfordshire County Council Adult Care Services and Hertfordshire Constabulary.

This is the first of the Codes of Good Practice, which will add more detail to the principles laid out in the Compact document. (The initial signatories to this code are in Annex A).

Development of the Volunteering Code of Good Practice has involved an extensive consultation process co-ordinated by the Dacorum Borough Council Voluntary Sector Task and Finish Group, following input from a variety of voluntary/community groups and statutory agencies.

# The Volunteering Code of Good Practice

The Volunteering Code sets out a series of undertakings on good practice in volunteering for the voluntary / community and statutory sectors in Dacorum. The aim is to enable more people to become involved in a variety of voluntary activities and to offer them the necessary support.

## 2.1 Key points

- There is an agreed recognition that volunteering makes a major contribution to all aspects of life in the local community - particularly in health, social welfare, education and the environment.
- Actions and decisions taken in the community/voluntary and statutory sectors can affect community and voluntary activity, and this code highlights the need for a consistent and appropriate approach from all agencies, which have an impact on volunteering.
- The voluntary/community and statutory sectors are committed to maintaining best practice in the promotion, development and celebration of volunteering.
- All signatories to this Code respect volunteers' independence and free choice.

## 2.2 Definitions

**Volunteering** is the commitment of time and energy for the benefit of society and the community, and can take many forms. It is undertaken freely and by choice, without concern for financial gain. It does not include help given to close relatives.

**Community organisations** are those entirely or almost entirely made up of volunteers.

**Voluntary organisations** may involve and manage volunteers, and may provide infrastructure support or funding to volunteers and volunteering groups.

## 2.3 There are four principles fundamental to volunteering

- **Choice:** Volunteering must be a choice freely made by each individual. Any encouragement to become involved in volunteering should not result in any form of coercion or compulsion. Freedom to volunteer implies freedom not to become involved.
- **Diversity:** The people in the Borough of Dacorum bring varying qualities and experience to the voluntary and community sector. Diversity is recognised, respected and valued. Volunteering should be open to all, no matter what their background, age, race, sexual orientation, faith, etc. It is recognised that social exclusion barriers can be overcome by skills, experience, confidence and contacts gained while helping others.
- **Reciprocity:** Giving voluntary time and skills must be recognised as establishing a reciprocal relationship in which the volunteer also receives. Volunteers gain a sense of worthwhile achievement, useful skills, experience and contacts, sociability and fun, and inclusion in the life of the organisation and the wider community.
- **Recognition:** The value of what volunteers contribute to the organisation, to the community, to the social economy and to wider social objectives, is fundamental to the relationship between volunteers, organisations and statutory policy and practice.



## 2.4 Dacorum Volunteer Bureau

Within the Borough it is recognised that the Dacorum Volunteer Bureau operates as the local volunteering development agency. It has the following strategic objectives, which are common to volunteer bureaux throughout the country: -

- To develop volunteering, identifying needs and planning new ways to meet those needs in partnership with other organisations
- To promote volunteering to all sections of the community using a variety of advertising methods
- To offer a brokerage service, providing information and guidance on a wide range of voluntary opportunities to potential volunteers
- To enable participation in volunteering, challenging discrimination and breaking down barriers which exclude some people from becoming involved in the local community
- To provide information, training & research into volunteering, especially in promoting good practice in volunteer management
- To comment and campaign on volunteering issues and maintain an awareness of local, regional and national developments which affect volunteering

The Dacorum Volunteer Organisers Forum (set up by Dacorum Volunteer Bureau) was instrumental in drafting the Voluntary and Community Sector Undertakings (2.6 below).

## 2.5 Statutory Sector undertakings

In supporting this code, the Statutory Agencies undertake to:

- Recognise that volunteering is an exercise of the basic human right of freedom to assemble and associate, and fundamental to democracy.
- Seek to ensure that all new proposed policy and procedures are checked for their impact on voluntary / community activity and funding, before being adopted.
- Seek to limit the barriers to volunteering and community action presented by existing policies and practices.
- Assess the contribution made to local statutory policies and programme objectives by volunteering and community activities.
- Aim to adopt policies, which ensure that volunteering infrastructure bodies can rely on realistic sustainable long-term funding from appropriate statutory agencies.
- Recognise that volunteering infrastructure bodies are independent voluntary sector organisations, with voluntary management boards. Seek to work with those already active and organised, rather than setting up new structures.
- In partnership with the voluntary and community sectors, review the strengths and weaknesses of local volunteering information and infrastructure, and make recommendations based on best practice examples identified.
- Support media and communications strategies which ensure that volunteer contributions to raising the quality of life are promoted, and support activities which motivate more people to become involved.
- Support initiatives which provide accessible information about volunteering opportunities at a local level, and ensure distribution of this information throughout the agency and its partner/subsidiary organisations.
- Seek ways in which statutory agencies can work with community and voluntary sectors to address how detailed demographic information on volunteering and community activity can be collected for comparison with other surveys and research.

- In consultation with the voluntary and community sector, to seek to improve the measure of voluntary and community activity.
- Where the statutory agencies directly manage volunteers, they will act on relevant undertakings for the voluntary and community sector.

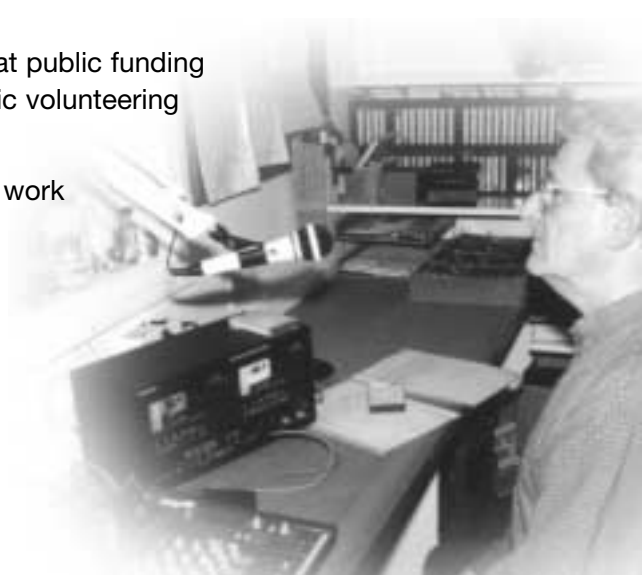
## 2.6 Voluntary and Community Sector undertakings

In supporting this code, the Voluntary and Community organisations undertake to:

- Recognise the importance of high standards and effective management of volunteers. Staff (both paid and unpaid) who recruit, induct, and manage volunteers will have this work recognised as part of their role and receive appropriate training and support.
- Assist potential volunteers to find volunteering opportunities that fit their needs, interests and abilities.
- Provide appropriate training/induction for volunteers to enable them to carry out their volunteering. Sufficient resources will be budgeted to support volunteers, including management and/or peer support, office space and equipment.
- Ensure that the nature and extent of volunteering is acknowledged in all annual reports.
- Encourage and enable accreditation of skills acquired through volunteering for recognised qualifications, where appropriate.
- Offer written references for volunteers who are actively seeking paid employment.
- Recognise that volunteers should be given recognition for their contribution. They should get appropriate treatment and support.
- Reimburse actual out-of-pocket expenses incurred by volunteers, including care costs - this to be a priority for funded voluntary organisations and statutory agencies.
- Give volunteers the same protection under health and safety and public liability as paid employees.
- Recognise the importance of trustees as a specific group of volunteers and ensure they receive appropriate training and support to enable them to carry out their tasks.
- Develop systems to ensure that no volunteer potential is lost once a volunteering relationship comes to an end. Organisations will, wherever appropriate, refer volunteers back to the Volunteer Bureau, so that they can discuss other options, which may be open to them.

## 2.7 Mutual undertakings and agreed principles

- Both sectors agree to work together to identify and dismantle barriers to volunteering and community involvement.
- Both the statutory and the voluntary/community sectors agree that public funding should be invested in creating and maintaining a modern, dynamic volunteering infrastructure.
- The statutory and voluntary/community agencies in Dacorum will work together to establish: -
  - practices that enable people from socially excluded groups to become involved.
  - a consistent approach towards the reimbursement of expenses where it is agreed that volunteers will be involved.



# The Volunteers Charter

Signatories of the Dacorum Compact - Volunteering Code of Good Practice have adopted this Charter, and will use it as a basis for developing good practice within their own organisations: -

## Volunteers' Rights

- To be given a clear idea of their tasks and responsibilities within the organisation.
- To be given the name of someone in the organisation who will look after their interests and who will offer them appropriate support and supervision on a regular basis.
- To be assured that any information shared with the organisation is kept confidential.
- To be given the same protection under health and safety regulations and public liability as paid employees.
- To be offered opportunities for training and skills development, appropriate for the voluntary tasks involved.
- To not be exploited - volunteers should not:-
  - be used to replace paid workers
  - have unfair demands made on their time
  - be asked to do something which is against their principles or beliefs
- To be given the chance to play a part in decision making within the organisation.
- To not be out of pocket through doing voluntary work. Travel and other expenses should be offered by all funded organisations.

## Volunteers' Responsibilities

- To accept the organisations aims and objectives.
- To do what is reasonably requested of them, to the best of their ability.
- To treat information obtained whilst volunteering in a confidential manner - this can be information about clients or other workers, paid and unpaid.
- To recognise the right of the organisation to expect quality of service from all its staff, paid and unpaid.
- To recognise that they represent the organisation and therefore need to act in an appropriate manner at all times.
  - To honour any commitment made to the best of their abilities, notifying the organisation in good time should they be unable to keep that commitment e.g. for holidays.
  - To be willing to undertake appropriate training with respect to Health and Safety issues, Insurance liability and general good practice as necessary for the voluntary work undertaken.
  - To share suggestions for changes in working practices with the Volunteer Organiser.



# Lead Officer details

4

## **Dacorum Borough Council**

Mike Kember, Voluntary Sector Support Manager

tel 01442 228640

## **Dacorum Volunteer Bureau**

Heather Allen, Manager

tel 01442 247209

## **Dacorum Council for Voluntary Service**

Mark Mitchell, Chief Executive

tel 01442 253935

## **Dacorum Primary Care Trust**

Gill Goodlad, Health Improvement Manager

tel 01442 840950

## **Hertfordshire County Council - Adult Care Services**

Ruth Woodward, Team Manager

tel 01442 386828/386816

## **Hertfordshire Constabulary**

Chief Inspector C Moulder, Partnerships

tel 01442 271084

## **Annex A**

### **Signatories to the Volunteering Code of Good Practice - Dacorum Compact**

- 418 Project
- Age Concern Dacorum
- Alzheimer's Disease Society (Dacorum Branch)
- Apsley Community Centre
- Berkhamsted Beavers Sports & Swimming Club
- Berkhamsted & Tring Day Centres
- British Red Cross
- Community Information Libraries
- Countryside Management Services
- D.I.R.E.C.T
- Dacorum Borough Council
- Dacorum Community Trust
- Dacorum Council for Voluntary Service
- Dacorum District Citizens Advice Bureau
- Dacorum Emergency Night Shelter
- Dacorum First Credit Union
- Dacorum Mencap
- Dacorum Opportunity Class
- Dacorum Osteoporosis Support Group
- Dacorum Primary Care Trust
- Dacorum Rent Aid
- Dacorum Talking Newspaper
- Dacorum Volunteer Bureau
- Dacorum Women's Aid
- Druglink
- Gateway 2000 Club
- HACRO (Herts Ass. for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders)
- Heather Club
- Hertfordshire Constabulary
- Hertfordshire County Council, Adult Care Services
- Home-Start Dacorum
- Hospice of St Francis, Berkhamsted
- Ilex Trust
- Life Pregnancy Care Centre
- Mediation Dacorum
- Mind in Dacorum
- Relate Dacorum
- The Iain Rennie Hospice at Home
- The Mount Bovington Visitors' Centre Association
- The Puffins
- Tring Beavers Swimming Club for the Disabled
- Victim Support Hertfordshire
- Whipsnade Wild Animal Park
- Woodfield School

This publication is about Dacorum Borough Council's Services. If you would like this information provided in another language or another way, then please telephone 01442 228794.

Η έκδοση αυτή είναι για τις Υπηρεσίες του Δημοτικού Συμβουλίου του Dacorum. Αν θέλετε αυτές τις πληροφορίες μεταφρασμένες σε άλλη γλώσσα ή άλλο τρόπο, τότε παρακαλώ τηλεφωνήστε στο 01442 228794.

By yayın, Dacorum Belediyesi'nin sağladığı hizmetler hakkında bilgi içermektedir. Bu yayının başka bir dildeki çevirisini istiyorsanız, lütfen 01442 228794 no.lu telefonu arayınız.

這一份刊物內容是有關 Dacorum Borough Council 社區的服務，假如您希望該刊物內容以其它語言或方式提供；請打電話 01442 228794 洽詢。

এই প্রকাশনী ড্যাকোরাম বারা কাউন্সিল'এর পরিষেবাসমূহ (সার্ভিসেস) সম্বন্ধে। যদি আপনি এই তথ্য অন্য ভাষায় অথবা অন্য কোনো ভাবে দিতে চান, তা'হলে অনুগ্রহ করে 01442 228794 নম্বরে টেলিফোন করুন।

ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਡੈਕੋਰਮ ਬਾਰੇ ਕੌਂਸਲ ਦੀਆਂ ਸੇਵਾਵਾਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਹੈ। ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੂਜੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੂਜੇ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿ੍ਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਸ ਨੰਬਰ 01442 228794 ਤੇ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।

یہ اشاعت ڈیکورم بارو کونسل کی سروسز (خدمات) کے بارے میں ہے۔ اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی دوسری زبان میں یا کسی دوسرے روپ میں درکار ہو تو برائے مہربانی اس ٹیلیفون نمبر 01442 228794 پر فون کیجیے۔

यह पत्रिका डेकोरम बरों काउन्सिल की सेवाओं के बारे में है। यदि आप चाहते हैं कि यह जानकारी कोई दूसरी भाषा में अथवा अन्य तरीके से प्रकट की जाएँ, तो कृपया इस नंबर पर टेलीफोन करें 01442 228794।

ਆ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਡੇਕੋਰਮ ਬਰੋ ਕਾਉਨਸਿਲ ਦੀ ਸੇਵਾओं ਵਿਖੇ ਏ। ਜੇ ਤਮਨੇ ਆ ਮਾਫਿਤੀ ਆਞ ਆਧਾਮਾਂ ਅਥਵਾ ਆਞ ਡੋਏ ਰੀਤੇ ਜੋਏਏ ਡੋਏ ਤੋ ਮਡੇਰਆਨੀ ਕਰੀ 01442 228794 ਨੰਬਰ ਪਰ ਟੇਲਿਫ਼ੋਨ ਕਰੋ।

