

Volunteer Policy

Introduction

Caerphilly Over 50 (CO50), formerly known as Caerphilly 50+ Forum, is legally defined as an unincorporated association. It is a voluntary organisation. Our aim is to help older people throughout Caerphilly Borough. This may be through a wide variety of events or projects, or through dissemination of information to members or by making representation to local or national government on their behalf.

CO50 activities are managed by a Steering Committee that is elected from members attending the Annual General Meeting. The members forming the Steering Committee are defined as the “Volunteers” of CO50. This elected body of Volunteers are then responsible for electing the Officers of the Committee as defined in the Constitution.

The range and extent of what can be undertaken by CO50 depends on the ability to attract volunteers to seek election to the Steering committee. Volunteers help enhance the objectives achieved by CO50 by putting their time, skills, knowledge, or experience at its disposal. They help keep CO50’s work relevant by bringing a range of personalities, backgrounds and experience into the organisation.

This policy is intended to ensure good practice in the involvement of volunteers in CO50’s work and promote understanding of the respective roles of Committee Volunteers and Officers in the organisation.

1. Governance

The Constitution describes most of the ways in which CO50 will operate. However, since the Constitution can only be modified via the AGM (or, exceptionally, through an extraordinary General meeting), some matters of Governance are described in our approved policies that are available on our website [[Policy Documents](#)].

It is important that volunteers understand that they must act objectively in a manner that is NOT party political. CO50 has many positive links and contacts within Caerphilly Borough Council but Volunteers must be aware that CO50 is an independent entity and that, where necessary, we will make constructive criticism of policies and actions from the Council.

CO50 has a Public Liability Insurance policy that includes Employee cover. This is essential for the protection of Volunteers as they are now regarded in law as “employees”. It is the responsibility of all Volunteers to understand the Insurance cover, especially the “Declarations” which describes what we have disclosed to the Insurer what we do NOT do.

2. Role of Volunteers

Volunteers are expected to make a long-term commitment to CO50 of at least 2 years. They are expected to attend Steering Committee meetings on a regular basis. In order to make a positive contribution, they must maintain an awareness of current topics under discussion. COPA have published several Position Papers on their website on key topics to which CO50 have contributed and agreed. Following developments from the local Council and relevant National debates as well as having general discussions with neighbours and local group members will assist in forming objective views. By maintaining a level of awareness, they should bring items to the committee to discuss and formulate future positions.

All volunteers will need a reasonable level of IT skill being able to communicate via email and video conference. In general, communication with and between Volunteers will be via email. Responses should be made in a timely manner on receipt of any communication from Officers requesting comments or contributions even if it is to confirm a "nil response".

The Steering Committee will be responsible for developing a Business Plan and for maintaining and, where necessary, modifying the plan.

Steering Group members should take reasonable steps to ensure that they operate their computer securely to prevent compromising other members to whom they send email. Training can be provided to help with this where necessary.

Volunteers will be made aware of the code of conduct that has to be exercised in Steering Group meetings.

3. Officers

The desirable posts to be filled are defined in the Constitution. A role description outlining the general tasks, required skills or qualities will be agreed for each post. Training in support of each role will be catered to the experience of the volunteer/officer appointed.