Sample text for Volunteer Handbook and related procedures

The Volunteer Handbook should be easily available on your web site, to volunteers and at your base. This is a guidance only to give you an idea of what to include within a Volunteer Handbook. As good practice the finalised document should be agreed by the local steering group.

Welcome

Welcome to << name of project >>! Thank you for wanting to be a part of this organisation, it is thanks to people like yourself willing to give up your time to help and support people in << town >> making the town a safer place to be.

Street Angels was launched in Halifax in November 2005 and since then the project has started in over 150 towns and cities across the UK and overseas. We have also branched out into work at festivals, inside clubs and pubs, around communities, chaplaincy and more. Locally we launched << details >>

The aims and objectives of Street Angels are:

- To provide a safe place for people who may be vulnerable to come to, get a drink, call a taxi and/or anything else they may need help with.

- To provide support around the town centre by going out into the town in teams and giving support to people in need, making the town a safer place to be.

Nothing we have done could have been done without the support of our highly dedicated volunteers, many of whom commit week after week to supporting the work of Street Angels in << town >>.

For any further information on Street Angels feel free to head over to << web site >>, or arrange a visit on our website to come along to << address of project >> and see for yourself. Our project is part of ROC Angels who support and resource a variety of local projects. See streetangels.org.uk for details.

If you would like to volunteer then please read this Volunteers Handbook carefully – it will outline what we do, why we do it and how we approach the work we do. This will ensure that all that is done whilst volunteering is done in the safest and most professional way. Volunteers are the foundation of << town >> Street Angels << may be good to include a local quote >>

Street Angels Job Description and Skills Needed

- Street Angels agree to adhere to the advice given on the following pages of the Volunteer Handbook. This is vital to the on-going professional role that << name of project >> provide.

- A wide range of tasks will need to be undertaken. Within the Cafe (safe space) visitors need to be greeted with care and respect. Drinks will be offered as appropriate. Everyone is expected to work as a team, and not leave jobs to just one or two others. Washing up, cleaning surfaces, emptying bins, sweeping and mopping are all integral to ensuring that the cafe runs smoothly. On the street you are expected to act with professionalism, treat everyone we meet with patience, tolerance and respect and ensure all members of the Street Angel teams are safe. Roles on the street include talking to people, assisting people who have become vulnerable, picking up bottles and placing them in the bin and observing from a safe distance any crimes or acts of aggression which may be taking place.

- Street Angels are expected to treat others and what they say with respect. Other team members need to be listened to and advice taken (e.g. if a team member is uncomfortable being involved in any given situation this should be respected and acted upon). At Street Angels we recognise that different people have different boundaries. Street Angels should never endanger themselves or any member of their team. For guidance on any of these things whilst out you can speak with your team leader or speak to the Project Coordinator for any advice or guidance.

- Street Angels use Nightlink Radios and these are an important part of the work we do, before you can use these radios you will be put through training on how to correctly use them, if you do not wish to use them however do not worry. The radio system must not be used for anything other than 'official business'. Once you have signed out a radio it becomes your responsibility, so ensure you don't leave the radio unattended. If a radio goes missing in your care you are responsible for any costs incurred in re-setting the town centre radio network (approx £2000).

- Above all Street Angels is fun! Volunteers are encouraged to enjoy themselves and recognise what an important contribution they are making to << town >>.

Street Angels Policies and Procedures

These are guidelines for all volunteers of << project >>. They need to be read and understood by each volunteer. If you have any questions feel free to contact your project coordinator at << email / phone contact >> or ask your team leader.

- A minimum of three volunteers are to be in the cafe / safe place at all times. Teams should be a mix of male and female whether on the streets or in the cafe. On the streets we work in teams of three minimum or five maximum. If someone joins a team as an observer they are not counted as a part of the numbers. We try not to leave the cafe unmanned, however if this is needed the cafe is to be locked and a sign to be displayed. All volunteers are referenced and DBS checked where appropriate.,

- Street Angels are not to be involved in any violent incident. Distance should be kept at all times, you may observe and make notes of the incident however you are not to get involved. Be sure to use your night life radio to let CCTV know where the incident is occurring and if required contact the emergency services.

- Never put yourself in a vulnerable position such as giving lifts home or to the hospital. As a Street Angel when faced with conflict you are expected to walk away- watch your back as you are leaving and be sure to look out for the other members of your team.

- All incidents witnessed or involving our volunteers must be recorded on the computer in the cafe. Give all the important details but do not give any names of those involved. This report is to protect volunteers from any future come back and ensure that any questions regarding an incident involving volunteers can be answered. Police may occasionally take statements about incidents witnessed- if this leads to court attending this will be a personal choice.

- There is a radio link to CCTV which also links to door security staff, nightclub managers and police (though this is limited). We need to sign on (our call is 'Street Angels') before we start and sign off - all Street Angels must be back at the base before signing off. More guidance on radio use will be given later.

- << name of project >> can be contacted through << name and phone >>

- Street Angels should find out as much information as they can about any given incident in order to work out what their next logical step should be. For example if the person has been raped you should first find out if they wish to report the incident to the police, if they do you should recommend that they do not have a drink or use the toilet as it will destroy any DNA evidence (See Sexual Assault Guidelines).

- There are limited funds available for taxis/bus fares for those in desperate need to get home. Ensure that a receipt is written out by the driver which contains the destination and the cost, and pass this onto the project coordinator.

- Although funds are available some people are not eligible. These are generally people known to Street Angels who have misused funds in the past. Teams should let one another know who these people are.

- We are to respect the café and contents. This means the café is to be left clean and tidy at the end of each weekend. As well as the Street Angels base the café is also a business during the week so we must see that all relevant standards are upheld.

- You are not permitted to visit other Street Angel projects unless authorised. If you wish to visit another project speak with your project coordinator and they will pass on your request and get back to you.

- We show respect to all, we care for those in need of our help and we do so without judgement. Street Angels is a Christian charity although we welcome anyone as long as they are respectful of our Christian ethos. Evenings begin with prayer and reflection and volunteers may throughout the night discuss their faith, however we do not force this upon others.

- Phones are not to be used whilst on patrol unless for an official purpose. People using their phones can look unprofessional and this can lead to complaints. Whilst on patrol volunteers need to be aware of their surroundings both for themselves and for their team mates. There are however many opportunities for volunteers to use their phones back at the base, and if you are expecting an urgent call just let the project coordinator or team leader know.

- Street Angels should not smoke, vape or drink whilst on duty except away from the public within designated areas.

- Photographs should not be taken with those you help as we often support people in vulnerable situations. If you wish to take photographs of other team members please ask permission before you do. Often members of the public will request photos with you which is down to your / team members discretion. We recognise social media is a great way to spread the message of what Street Angels do.

Nightlife Radio Users Guide

If you hire radios locally then they will have guidelines for use and those should be included. This is for guidance if using your own radios.

When the radio is not in use it must be placed in a secure area out of sight. Radios must not be left in areas where customers can listen in (in the café 2 Street Angels need to have the radios and relay information as appropriate)

On the streets radios must be kept in the inside pocket and used only as appropriate.

Using the radio for the first time can be quite an unnerving experience, the best way of getting over this is to relax, take a deep breath, talk slowly and clearly.

When using the radio always hold it about 6" away from your face - this will ensure that the message you are transmitting will not be distorted.

When passing a message ensure the talk button is pressed in for at least 1 second before talking. Use your call sign first (<< call sign >>) and the call sign of the business you are contacting. Once you have received a response pass your message keeping it clear and as precise as possible. Always try and reply back with the word "received".

The more information you pass the easier it will be for others to respond to you and for them to identify people.

All messages must be relevant - non relevant messages could prevent other serious messages from getting through. Street Angels must not respond to calls over the radio to attend any incident of an unsafe nature or attend other premises to provide First Aid.

Do look after the radio - a lost or misused radio can result in potentially dangerous situations.

The radio is not a direct link to police and these may need to be called on a mobile / café phone.

Please remember to sign on and sign off at the start / end of each night.

Conflict Training Overview

This is from training provided by West Yorkshire Police (the full day training is recommended).

There is a need to recognise that different agencies work under different policies and procedures, as we are not police or SIA Security, we need to adhere to Street Angels conflict policy.

Physical and verbal assaults are equally damaging therefore Street Angels need to report any assault (physical or verbal) they are victim to whilst on duty. If you are affected in any way, discuss it with other Street Angels, take time out, and ask for on-going support if needed.

It is a greater advantage to be a good witness than being involved.

People will watch how we behave - need to be professional and trained. One disrespectful comment after an incident can ruin all our work.

Our attitude must be positive - as this will affect the behaviour of others. Body Language makes up 55% of communication; tone of how you speak 38%; and words spoken 7% - attitude (reflected by body language) is key.

How we stand is important - hands must be above your waist with hands clasped in front of you, as though praying. This will enable you to quickly move your arm into a self defence movement to block an attack. Please keep your arms open and not folded in front of you as this communicates a willingness to fight. When stationary keep your body facing sideways, supported by one leg which is sideways behind your body. This will stop you from being pushed backwards onto the ground by your attacker. This will also prepare you better to walk or run away from your attacker.

Remember, the person standing in front of you may not be the person who attacks you. Therefore Street Angels must remember to protect themselves and the surrounding area.. Always keep your path out clear - don't fight flight! Keep an eye on people who act aggressively towards you. The best form of self defence is to get away.

Street Angels need to recognise the different forms of violence i.e. grabbing / pushing; punching / slapping; kicking; weapons displayed / used. While on patrol,

Angels must judge effectively the levels of violence as some seemingly violent behaviour could just be horse play, while other forms of aggression could result in the death of the victim.

Common Law says "a person has a right to defend themselves from attack... Only reasonable force to be used to repel attack".

To ensure that the personal space of the other person is kept is important - if we get too close they may feel threatened. You only get within 18" of people we love or want to kill! Personal space varies from person to person.

Recognise warning signs - if any of one of these happens we should begin to move away: prolonged eye contact; facial colour darkens; standing tall / head back; ground kicking; large movements; accelerated breathing; non-verbal adapter.

When the behaviour progresses to danger signs we should get out quick: fist clenching; facial colour pales; lips tighten over teeth; eyebrows / chin drop; hands above waist; shoulders tense and stance changes; target acquisition glances; body lowers.

Use natural barriers or create barriers when you see warning / danger signs. Personal Attack Alarms need to be at ready. Establish a position away from any fights / action. Get out!

We need to keep ourselves safe, watch out for other Street Angels, and listen to advice of others especially if the attack is towards you. As Street Angels never stand your ground or aim to win an argument - to move away is the best course of action! Keep these guidelines in mind and don't let personal attitude affect your work...

Sexual Assault Guidelines

When we come across someone who says they are a victim of sexual assault what the victim says is true - this must be our starting point. We need to treat the person with understanding and ensure their comfort and well-being. It is good practice to let them speak to a person of the same gender. The victim can be either male or female - treat both with the same respect.

Street Angels need to contact the police straight away (check with the person this is ok with them). To protect evidence we need to encourage the victim to refrain from washing, changing clothing or visiting the toilet - though we can not stop them. If the assault involved oral sex then encourage the victim to refrain from drinking and clearing out the mouth as this too could destroy evidence.

Leave questions to the police - do not ask leading questions, take in depth notes of any conversations that take place with Street Angels (you will need to ask the person's permission) as this can be used as evidence.

Rape Crisis England & Wales - 0808 802 9999

Health and Safety Rules and Procedures

The following rules are for your safety and apply to all Street Angels

Yellow Jackets - When on patrol Street Angel Jackets or vests must be worn. This is both so as to identify you to members of the public, and so that we can easily see each other. Please do not wear Street Angel jackets away from Street Angels.

Radios - At least one, ideally two people with radios to be left in the Café at all times with ear pieces in and information related as relevant. Each Patrol Group to take at least one, preferably two radios. This allows for ease of access to a radio if necessary, even if the group gets split up.

Possible Exposure to Blood & / or Body Fluids - Always wear gloves (even when picking up bottles from the street), and dispose of them securely. Any accidental exposure to be washed with Anti-bacterial / disinfectant type hand wash.

Records - Record all incidents on the PC. Record all injuries to Street Angels or other Volunteers on the incident log as well and inform and in the Accident Book. This is a requirement under Health and Safety Executive rules.

Sharps - Any injury, no matter how small, if caused by exposure to Sharps (Needles, knives, etc.) must be recorded in the Accident Report book and should be referred to a Doctor as soon as possible.

Fire - Do not prop fire doors open with anything, especially the fire extinguisher. Ensure you are aware of where the Fire Alarm-points, Extinguishers, etc. are. Read the notice informing you of what to do in case of fire.

Smoking - No Smoking or Vaping in the Café or at the Café door at any time. This applies both to volunteers and to visitors. Smoke detectors are fitted and will be set off by the smoke.

Alcohol - No volunteers are to drink alcoholic beverages during their time on duty, and must not be under the influence of alcohol when on duty. No alcoholic drinks are to be brought into the café by volunteers or visitors. Visitors should leave bottles, etc. outside if they wish to come in.

Drugs - No drugs will be tolerated in the café at all. Any breach at all of this rule will result in the person being asked to leave / ejected from the café.

Risk Assessment (sample):

HAZARD	LIKELIHOOD	CONTROLLED MEASURES	CONTROLLED
Assault	Low / Serious	Radio / minimum of 3 persons per team and in café / never on own / CCTV / Police / Training / CCTV in café	Yes - radio training in handbook and on first use / Conflict Awareness in Handbook and 'on job' training
Infection from bodily fluids	Low / Serious	Provision of barrier gloves / training / disinfectant and cleansers / sharps box	Yes - induction training on reason for use of gloves
Road Traffic Injury	Very low / Very Serious	High viz jackets / training / Street Angel First Aiders	Yes - induction training on road sense
Allegation Improper actions of behaviour	Low / Potentially Costly	Training / team working / rules / records of all incidents for traceability / CRB / volunteer recruitment procedure	Yes - induction and handbook training covers / Appropriate Checks made on volunteers
Fire (in café)	Low / Serious	Signage for information/ fire alarm / fire extinguishers	Yes - covered by café structures
Accidental Injury	Low / Low Serious	Street Angel First Aiders / First Aid kit suitable for size of site / mobile phone (personal) to call ambulance	Yes - Street Angels First Aid trained are on the radio scheme / First Aid kit in café and on street

The Health and Safety Executive site has guidance on managing risks and a sample Risk Assessment template.

Environmental Policy:

<< project >> promotes and provides storage for recycling of products at the base. All Street Angels are asked to recycle as much as possible. << project >> relies on the use of the Internet for communication, publications and information sharing thus minimising the use of paper. We also encourage, where possible, car sharing between Street Angels as a means of getting to and from the base.

Child Protection / Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults

A full copy of the various policies relating to this can be found on our web site and at our base. Below is a copy of the Code of Behaviour for volunteers:

You must:

treat all children, young people and vulnerable adults with respect

provide good practice that you wish others to follow

ensure there is always more than one adult present during activities with children and young people or have at least within sight or hearing of the activity. As a minimum precaution have another adult within sight or hearing of the activity

respect the right to privacy that young people have, also encourage young people and adults to trust and feel comfortable to point out behaviour or attitudes that are disliked

remember that actions, including physical contact, towards children and young people (and vulnerable adults) can be misinterpreted, even if good intentions were behind the action

challenge unacceptable behaviour and report allegations/suspicions of abuse or harm

You must not:

have unacceptable physical or verbal contact with children and young people

be drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour / make suggestive or derogatory remarks or gestures in front of children and young people

either exaggerate or trivialise issues of abuse towards children and young people

rely on your good name or that of your organisation to protect you

take a chance when common sense, policy or practice suggests another more sensible approach

All Street Angel volunteers will undergo a DBS (Disclosure Barring Services) check and references taken. Street Angels will never work “one to one” with people and always in groups of at least two generally three. The above guidelines must be adhered to.

streetangels.org.uk/training includes the ROC Angels Safeguarding Policy and Quiz. Either create your own Safeguarding Policy or feel free to use this one.

Where We Patrol

Street Angels operates within the town centre, there are a number of practical reasons for this and below is a map which covers the area within which we operate. If for any reason a team feels they need to go beyond this and it is safe to do so they may, but only after they have contacted the project coordinator.

One of the key reasons for this is that Street Angels are linked to the nightlife radios and CCTV beyond this map teams are outside of much of the CCTV coverage and are therefore not being watched, and if any incident was to occur there is little Street Angels could do, if you suspect something is happening outside of our operating area contact the required emergency service.

Equality & Diversity Policy

ROC Angels (ROC) is committed to treating all people equally and with respect irrespective of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

We aim to create a safe and welcoming atmosphere for everyone. We want to challenge all forms of oppression including, for example, those based on race, ethnicity, nationality, creed, gender, sex, class, sexuality, gender reassignment, learning ability, physical impairment, mental illness, HIV status, age, occupation, income, wealth and unrelated criminal conviction.

We aim to design our activities, services and decision making processes specifically to encourage and support participation from people who face disadvantage in society, including women, BME people, disabled people, LGBTQ people, and people on low incomes.

We expect all our staff, volunteers and partner agencies to treat each other and beneficiaries and service users of our projects with unconditional positive regard. Any behaviour which does not match our values will be challenged and, where necessary disciplined.

A Volunteers Handbook may also include: a map, list of steering group, charity details, complaints procedure details, web site, Facebook, Instagram and TikTok links, logos and pictures.

A sign-up form should include: Name; E-Mail; Mobile; DOB; Full Address; Current DBS Number and Organisation Held With; Emergency Contact Name and Mobile; Character Reference Name, E-Mail, Role; Tabard and Jacket Size. Other information to collect would be Criminal Offences the person would like to declare and any Health Conditions. A statement within the Submit section should say, "By submitting this form I will adhere to all the policies and procedures of << local group name >> and follow the guidance and direction of the coordinator and steering group."

Other documents that may be needed / need to be worked on locally include:

Safeguarding Policy (the ROC Angels one is at festivalangels.org.uk/training)
General Health and Safety / Specific Health and Safety
Data Use, Retention and Disposal
Anti Bribery
Sexual Harassment
Welfare Plan

festivalangels.org.uk/volunteer has these documents which we use as part of Festival Angels - please feel free to use these as a template.

Sample documents from Street Angels projects:

Chester Street Angels
Whitby Street Angels
Windsor Street Angels



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