

Volunteering Policy

May 2020

Company	Thirteen
Lead Manager	Susan Borrow
Date of Final Draft and Version Number	July 2020
Review Date	July 2023
Officer Responsible for Review	Jo Beckwith

Policy Review History

Version	Action & Changes	Author	Date
1	New Policy	SG	15.10.15
2	Policy amendment – refocus purpose of policy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes made to remove all ‘Employee led volunteering’ elements. Focus is on ‘Nonemployee led volunteering’ only. 	NR	30.05.18
3	Policy amendment – amalgamation of customer services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes made to include Co-regulation. 	NR	30.05.19
4	Policy Review	JB	27.05.20
5	Policy Amendment- Feedback from customer consultations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rewording in 1.1 to say ‘volunteering within Thirteen’ 	JB	30.05.20
6	Policy Amendment- Feedback from the board of governors. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added in to 4.1 information regarding training and induction for the volunteers. 	JB	16.07.20
7	Policy Amendment- Feedback from the board of governors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rewording of 4.1.6 	JB	11.08.20

1 POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 This policy sets out Thirteen's approach to promoting and supporting individuals that volunteer within Thirteen.
- 1.2 The policy is driven by the necessity to support and empower interested individuals to volunteer via a consistent and established pathway. All volunteers should experience a meaningful experience that benefits them and the organisation.
- 1.3 Volunteer contributions require recognition, and all voluntary activities must be aligned to Thirteen's vision and values and must not create a direct conflict with the business aims and remit. Volunteers can bring significant benefits to communities and business, but they are not a free resource so must be supported and managed appropriately.
- 1.4 Thirteen recognises that volunteering has mutual benefits, but it is important to provide guidance, so these benefits are realised whilst protecting the Group.

2 REFERENCE MATERIAL

- 2.1 The following sources have been utilised for guidance and best practice:
 - National Council for Voluntary Organisations
 - Volunteering England Good Practice Bank
 - Regulator of Social Housing Regulatory Standards – Consumer (RSH)

3 DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 'We define volunteering as any activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment or someone (individuals or groups) other than, or in addition to, close relatives. Central to this definition is the fact that volunteering must be a choice freely made by each individual' (National Council for Voluntary Organisations 2016).

4 POLICY CONTENTS

4.1 Non-Employee led Volunteering

- 4.1.1 Individuals who wish to spend time volunteering within Thirteen for various reasons.
- 4.1.2 Volunteering can be for a specific project or a longer-term commitment and should be arranged through the Volunteer Coordinator. All volunteers should experience a fair and consistent pathway to volunteering.
- 4.1.3 It is the volunteer's responsibility to ensure that their benefits and work searches are not affected by their volunteering commitments. Reasonable expenses will be reimbursed from the Volunteer Programme budget. Further information is available within the Volunteering Procedures.

- 4.1.4 The Volunteer Coordinator will promote volunteering opportunities through Thirteen to staff, customers, and external agencies. This will be done using the support of internal communications.
- 4.1.5 Volunteers will receive a full induction training program, including completion of Thirteen E-Learning compliance modules, provided by the Volunteer Coordinator. They will also then receive a full induction into the service area they are joining, this will be provided by the service manager.
- 4.1.6 Volunteers must adhere to all relevant Thirteen policies and procedures and will have awareness of the key policies before they can start their volunteering, included in this will be the Health and Safety and Safeguarding.

4.2 Co-regulation

- 4.2.1 Volunteers work with Thirteen to provide assurance to the Thirteen Board and the Regulator of compliance with the RSH Consumer Standards – Tenant Involvement & Empowerment.
- 4.2.2. The Customer Involvement Framework provides a number of activities for volunteers to be involved in within their own time commitment.
- 4.2.3 The Senior Compliance Business Partner – Co-Regulation will promote opportunities through Thirteen, customers and external agencies through relevant media.
- 4.2.4 Customers may only be involved in Co-Regulation if they are compliant with their tenancy agreement or other contractual agreements.

4.3 General governance

- 4.3.1 Thirteen will not use volunteers to fulfil a role within the agreed company staffing structure; volunteers are to support and enhance business and service delivery.
- 4.3.2 All volunteers will be expected to understand, support and demonstrate Thirteen's values. This includes the commitment to equal opportunities and diversity.
- 4.3.3 Staff should be aware that volunteers will need one to one support of varying amounts before agreeing to host a placement (Volunteer Service) or co-regulation activity.
- 4.3.4 All volunteering will be supported by relevant procedures and guidance
- 4.3.4 Any financial costs incurred by hosting a volunteer should be covered by Thirteen.
- 4.3.5 Thirteen will keep records of volunteering to facilitate evaluation of opportunities provided and participated in.

5 Governance Information

Equality and Diversity	A comprehensive Equality Needs and Impact Assessment has been carried out, tis policy has not been found to be discriminatory towards any party.
Customer Involvement and Consultation	Internal team consultations with Health and Safety, Governance, Risk Assurance, Service Delivery, Finance and Communications.
Monitoring and Review	<p>This policy will be reviewed on a 3-year cycle.</p> <p>The Volunteer Coordinator will oversee the review, it will incorporate cross-company consultation as appropriate.</p>
Responsibility	<p>Jo Beckwith – Overall implementation of the policy.</p> <p>Volunteer Coordinator – day to day commitment to policy requirements.</p>

6 Appendices

List of volunteering procedures within Thirteen:

- Volunteer Expenses Procedure
- Volunteer Recruitment, Placement and Management Procedure
- Volunteer Problem Solving Procedure.