



# YOUTH VOLUNTEERING AND SOCIAL ACTION CHARTER

## ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENTS

The social action and volunteering opportunities we provide to young people embed:

**INCLUSION:** We promote equality of opportunity for young people and protect them against discrimination. We open all our voluntary opportunities to over 14s, and younger if possible, unless there is a clear safeguarding reason not to. All young people will be treated fairly throughout their experience with us.

**REWARD AND RECOGNITION:** We recognise, value and celebrate the commitment and achievements of young people.

**LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT:** We provide appropriate induction, goals, training, and support so young people can complete their activities, and regular feedback so they can reflect on learning and develop confidence and skills.

**YOUTH PARTICIPATION:** Young people take part in decision-making at the appropriate level and are given opportunities to lead and shape the activities they are involved in. We also give young people a voice in wider organisational decisions.

**VARIETY AND PROGRESSION:** We provide diverse tasks and projects for young people, offering opportunities for progression.

**VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION:** Involvement is voluntary - young people will not lose or gain financially through participation, nor feel pressured into completing tasks that go against their beliefs, are unrealistic, or beyond the scope of their role. While some opportunities we offer may be compulsory parts of qualifications, we will not take advantage of volunteers through unpaid internships that replace staff roles.

**COMMUNITY IMPACT:** Young people will understand the clear benefit of their role to a community, cause or social problem.

**FLEXIBILITY:** We offer flexibility by developing roles with individuals according to their motivations, availability and needs. We offer tasks that are challenging and ambitious as well as enjoyable.

**SAFETY AND SECURITY:** We will protect young people while they are with us. They will be covered by appropriate insurance, risk assessments and safeguarding measures.

**PARTNERSHIP:** We will work in partnership with other organisations to improve our own practice and make meaningful links to other opportunities for young people. Where we facilitate social action for young people within other organisations (for example, their school or youth club), we will promote above principles with partner organisations.



## DEFINITIONS

### Social action

Young people all over Wales do lots of different things that make a positive difference. They help neighbours, sign petitions, fundraise for charity, volunteer and lots more. All these kinds of activity can be called social action. Social action is a very broad category that includes any **practical action** in the **service of others** to create **positive change**.

### Volunteering

One important kind of social action is volunteering. Volunteering is **committing time and energy** for the **benefit of society** and/or their community and themselves, and can take many forms. It is undertaken **freely and by choice**, without concern for financial gain.

## WE EXPECT OUR VOLUNTEERS TO:

- ✓ Make a personal commitment that reflects their individual circumstances
- ✓ Agree expectations with us about their role and acceptable behaviours
- ✓ Support our commitment to inclusion
- ✓ Communicate honestly about changes in circumstances, and in giving feedback about their experience
- ✓ Support participation and ownership of those they involve in their activities
- ✓ Participate positively in inductions, training, support and feedback sessions
- ✓ Operate within the policies, procedures and guidelines provided by us



This charter was developed by Welsh Centre for International Affairs on behalf of WCVA for the third sector in Wales. It has been developed based on insight gathered from young people and youth volunteering stakeholders in Wales and builds on the nine key principles of the former Millennium Volunteer initiative that recognized and rewarded youth volunteering, and the six principles of the UK wide #iwill campaign for youth social action.

