

## Volunteers - Consumer Care Policy

Version Number	1
Date of Equality Impact Assessment	22/12/15
Date approved by HWWB Board	07/03/16
Author	Jo Karasinski
Date Implemented	07/03/16
Last revised	
Next revision due	07/03/18
Volunteer Training delivered	As per Volunteer training timetable

The policy on the HWWB website is the only policy that is updated. Please note that it is the individual HWWB staff, board member or volunteer to ensure that they are reading the most current version of this policy. This can be done by checking the version number shown above against the version number of the policy filed here: [www.healthwatchwestberks.org.uk](http://www.healthwatchwestberks.org.uk)

**If required this policy can be supplied in different formats**  
**Tel: 01635 886 210 or email:**  
**[contact@healthwatchwestberks.org.uk](mailto:contact@healthwatchwestberks.org.uk)**

### Responsibilities

**1 HWWB Board**

Have overall responsibility for volunteers within HWWB

**2 HWWB Chief Officer (CO)**

HWWB Board have delegated to the HWWB CO the responsibility for developing policies and procedures for volunteering at HWWB and to ensure these are implemented effectively.

**3 HWWB Staff and volunteers**

All HWWB staff and volunteers are required to read and implement the volunteer, policies and procedures.

## Volunteers - Consumer Care Policy

### 1. Introduction

Healthwatch West Berkshire (HWWB) is the consumer champion for users of health and social care services in West Berkshire. Our consumer care policy sets out the standards to which we will carry out this work and for our interaction with service users groups, internal and external stakeholders and the wider public.

### 2. Policy

To support HWWB in this aim our consumer care policy is built around 4 core principles:

- consumer care will be provided in a professional manner by well trained and knowledgeable staff and volunteers
- all staff team members and volunteers will give priority to the needs of the individual service users, their right to information, to equality of access, to privacy and dignity
- the term “consumer” will include staff team colleagues, volunteer colleagues, elected board members, members of the champions group and partner agencies and we recognise that caring for our consumers begins with caring for others who form part of a service chain with HWWB.
- everyone working for or behalf HWWB can influence the quality of service that a consumer receives and consequently their perception of HWWB. **The practices which are set out below are relevant to everyone and everyone can and must be committed to these principles.**

### 3. Consumer care Aims

HWWB will:

- give consumer care a high priority
- develop values and practices on consumer care which are shared across the organisation and communicated effectively
- provide consumer care training for all employees, volunteers and board members
- openly provide clear information about our statutory role, which will be easily accessible to everyone who needs them.
- regularly monitor this consumer care policy to ensure the needs of all “consumers” are met

- provide a clear, accessible process for any consumer to comment or complaint about any aspect of HWWB work
- listen to “consumers” when they comment or complain

#### 4. Our Staff role

HWWB understands that we rely on our staff to deliver great Consumer Care and therefore we will ensure that our staff:

- are trained and competent to deliver our services. this policy will form part of the induction process for new staff and training updates will be given annually/where required on changes to legislation
- treat everyone related directly or indirectly to HWWB as we would wish to be treated ourselves with respect, courtesy and understanding.
- are fully trained to answer written or verbal enquiries accurately and clearly.
- give a contact name when dealing with telephone queries and wear name badges when dealing with consumers face to face.
- will always be polite, respectful and honest to our consumers without discrimination.

#### 5. How we deal with Correspondence and / or other types of communication

- visitors attending HWWB offices will be greeted by Greenham Common Trust Reception Staff and collected by a member of HWWB staff within 5 minutes of arrival, alternatively they can use the phone system in the reception to call to HWWB to collect them directly.
- letters will be promptly acknowledged and replied to within 5 working days
- telephones will be answered within five rings.
- emails will be dealt with in 72 hours.
- our consumers will have multiple ways of accessing our services, be it face to face, over the telephone or by electronic means.

#### 6. Problems with Consumer Care

HWWB will provide a fair and simple complaints service if consumers do not receive the service we aim for (See HWWB - Policies - Complaints Policy)

## 7. Review and Monitoring

- HWWB will review this policy on an annual basis, taking account of any changes within legislation, our organisation and other factors.
- HWWB will make this policy available when requested to do so to interested parties including members of the public.

## Equality Impact Assessment Form

Screening determines whether the policy has any relevance for equality, i.e. is there any impact on one or more of the protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010. These are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief Including lack of belief)
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

1 Name of policy/procedure being assessed:	HWWB - Policies - Volunteers - Consumer Care
2. Is this a new or existing policy/procedure?	New
3. What is the function of the policy/procedure?	To guide board members and volunteers on the procedures HWWB has in place in respect of consumer care
4. What is it trying to achieve and why?	Ensure volunteers understand HWWB approach to consumer care issues
5. Who is intended to benefit and how?	Volunteers - understand the measures HWWB has put into place regarding consumer care.
6 Is there any potential for differential impact (negative or positive) on any of the protected characteristics?	No
7. Is there any possibility of discriminating unlawfully, directly or indirectly, against people from any protected characteristic?	No
8. Could there be an effect on relations between certain groups?	No
9. Does the policy explicitly involve or focus on a particular equalities group i.e. because they have particular needs?	No
Signed - Signature: Jo Karasinski Name: JO KARASINSKI Position: Development Officer Date:22/12/15	

