**EastSide Partnership**

**Volunteer Policy**

**About us**

EastSide Partnership, formerly East Belfast Partnership, is a broad based social partnership with community, statutory, political and business members who are dedicated to the regeneration of east Belfast. We were formed in June 1995 with the responsibility to get stakeholder organisations to work together to develop and implement plans for the social, economic, environmental and cultural regeneration of east Belfast.

Our vision is to build and sustain east Belfast in its important position within the city as the home of wealth creation and opportunity.

Our activities include large and small scale regeneration projects such as the £40m Connswater Community Greenway, pocket parks on derelict sites, visitor trails, education projects, tackling dereliction across the east of the city, developing and delivering arts festivals such as EastSide Arts Festival and the C.S. Lewis Festival and much, much more.

The single biggest asset as a community is our people who we believe are best placed to promote this part of the city as a vibrant, welcoming, fun and creative place in which to live, work and invest. Through volunteering with EastSide Partnership in our various activities, events and festivals, local volunteers have been able to demonstrate the welcoming, warm and humorous side of east Belfast to local, national and international visitors, changing perceptions of this part of the city and developing a visitor experience that continues to attract more and more visitors.

**Purpose of our volunteer policy**

Volunteering is a great way to share your enthusiasm, skills and ideas whilst having fun and meeting like minded people. By volunteering with EastSide Partnership you will be making a positive contribution to your community, showcasing east Belfast locally, nationally and internationally and helping to deliver real change that will benefit the whole of the city. Without the continued support of a dedicated team of volunteers, EastSide Partnership would be unable to deliver the range of events and activities we currently deliver. Volunteers are, therefore, critical to delivery of change in east Belfast.

We have a range of volunteer roles to get involved with such as marshalling, ticketing, arts and craft workshops, tour guiding, cycle leaders, setting up equipment for events and workshops, community clean-ups etc.

Advertising for volunteering will be through our various websites and social media outlets [www.eastsidepartnership.com](http://www.eastsidepartnership.com), [www.connswatergreenway.co.uk](http://www.connswatergreenway.co.uk), [www.eastsidearts.net](http://www.eastsidearts.net), Facebook and Twitter.

We require all volunteers to complete a registration form. Once received a member of our team will be in contact to discuss specific opportunities and to decide what best suits you as a volunteer in terms of experience, interests and availability and what also meets the requirements of EastSide Partnership.

**Access NI checks**

An Access NI check is a criminal history check. Given the nature of volunteering within EastSide Partnership and the various events and activities delivered we require an Access NI check to be undertaken for the protection of you, as a volunteer, and the people you are in contact with. We hope that this does not put you off volunteering with EastSide Partnership but this is a statutory requirement where volunteers may be working with children and young people. If you have any concerns or queries in relation to this please get in touch.

**Induction, Briefing and Training**

We are committed to ensuring that all our volunteers are fully equipped to carry out their roles at our events and activities. Where a training need is identified as required we will endeavour to provide the appropriate level of training.

When volunteering for an event, you will be fully briefed ahead of the event by one of our staff. Briefing will include;

* Information about the event or activity, why we are doing it and what we hope to achieve;
* The role of volunteer on the day;
* Introductions to staff and other volunteers;
* Site tour/event outline;
* Copies of relevant documentation such as site/event plans, emergency contact details, expense claims etc
* Essential procedures such as timekeeping, rotas, emergency procedures etc

**Support**

Our staff are there to support you throughout your volunteer experience. The dedicated Volunteer Co-ordinator for the event or activity will be your key contact within the organisation and will be available to meet to discuss how you are getting on and help resolve any issues that may arise during your volunteering with EastSide Partnership. Part of their role is to ensure that your volunteering experience is both enjoyable and meaningful.

**Recognition and Reward**

As a small regeneration charity based in east Belfast, EastSide Partnership has very limited resources to deliver a broad range of projects designed to make east Belfast a better place. Without the continued support of a valued and committed team of volunteers we would, quite simply, be unable to deliver positive change in east Belfast. To acknowledge the incredible support shown by our volunteers we will always try and thank you for all your hard work and show our appreciation for a job well done. Whether it be a t- shirt or a heartfelt thank you from the team we are committed to ensuring that the input of our volunteers is recognised by everyone.

We occasionally arrange social events for volunteers; allowing you to catch up with and meet fellow volunteers and celebrate your contribution Social media is also used to highlight the work of volunteers.

It is anticipated that, subject to resources, we will continue to support volunteering in this manner over the coming years.

**Expenses**

To try and ensure we reduce barriers to volunteering we will endeavour to meet all reasonable out of pocket expenses for volunteers including travel and meals (for volunteers working more than 4.5 hours in one session). In order to claim expenses an expenses form must be completed with valid receipts for personal expenditure. This should be handed to the Volunteer Manager or staff member on the day.

**Insurance, health and safety, accidents and risk assessment**

EastSide Partnership has a valid insurance policy so that volunteers are covered under employers’ liability insurance. This covers the volunteer activities you will be doing and a copy can be provided should you wish to read it. We carry out comprehensive risk assessments ahead of events and activities and will provide a health and safety briefing ahead of each volunteer event advising how to perform your role safely and what to do in the event of an accident/incident. We will have clear procedures for accidents and emergencies and will have a first aider available at all larger events.

**Resolving Problems**

Our aim is to try and ensure that our volunteers get as much enjoyment out of events and activities as the general public and that the volunteers are an integral part of the team. If your role as a volunteer does not meet your expectations or issues arise during your volunteer experience we want you to feel comfortable about letting us know. In the first instance, talk to the staff member in charge on the day and if that is not possible feel free to talk to any of the partnership staff involved with the event/activity and we will do our best to resolve.

**Confidentiality**

We expect all our volunteers to adhere to confidentiality guidelines which will be explained to you before you begin volunteering if required. These guidelines also include the use of social media and contact with the press.

**Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

EastSide Partnership is committed to embracing diversity and promoting equality and inclusion. When representing EastSide Partnership as a volunteer we expect you to adhere to these principles.

This is the Volunteer Policy of EastSide Partnership. It will be reviewed every 12 months.

The date of the next review is \_\_July 2016\_\_\_\_\_

Signed\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Signed\_\_\_\_

Maurice Kinkead Tony Wilson

Position – Chief Executive Position – Company Accountant