

Volunteer Handbook



www.scagroup.co.uk

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1. Welcome!

Thank you for your interest in volunteering with SCA.

Most of our volunteers work directly with our customers. It is therefore very important to us that you feel confident in what you are doing, that you feel supported and that you enjoy it. All these things will help to ensure that the customers you work with get the best possible care and attention. Please read this volunteer handbook before commencing your volunteer placement.

If you have any questions after reading the booklet, or during your volunteer placement please do not hesitate to contact your supervisor or the volunteer co-ordinator at our head office on 023 8036 6663.

When you start volunteering, you will be given access to the staff intranet. This is managed by the marketing department, who can be reached on 023 8036 6663.

The purpose of this handbook policy document is to:

- Confirm the SCA Group's commitment to involving volunteers;
- Recognise the contribution volunteers make to the success of the organisation;
- Provide a basis for the expansion of volunteer involvement;
- Provide overall support, guidance and direction to staff and volunteers;
- Establish the values and standards of the SCA Group in its involvement with volunteers;
- Ensure decisions are made fairly;
- Clarify volunteer rights and status;
- Clarify the boundaries between staff and volunteers;
- Help to ensure the ongoing quality of both the volunteering opportunities on offer and the activities carried out by volunteers.

Before commencing your volunteer placement at SCA, sign the agreement form and return to your line manager.

2. SCA Structure & Policy

The SCA Group is a not for profit social enterprise working in the Health and Social Care Sector. The group consists of SCA Care, SCA Transport, SCA Trafalgar Dental Services, SCA Quinn Centre and SCA Fenwick2.

Overall the organisation is run by a Board of Members. The Board meets regularly and oversees all operations and initiatives. The Board Members are all volunteers and they come from a wide range of statutory and voluntary backgrounds.

The Group Chief Executive is responsible to the Board and they manage the organisation on Board's behalf.

Then there are other directors, managers and co-ordinators that run departments, services, and projects. Much of the work is community or locality based and so we tend to operate in small specialist teams. These people will be your colleagues and you will get to know one supervisor and a small team in particular.

3. Company Information

This section contains some information to explain the types of services provided by each of the companies within the SCA Group. We have also included information about the types of volunteering role that might be available at each company.

If there is a volunteering opportunity that you feel we could offer and it isn't mentioned here then do let us know.

SCA Advocacy empowers and enables vulnerable people in our society to find solutions to problems that they have in their lives and speak up for their rights in times of trouble. These problems may be around family, relationships, finance issues, benefits, complaints, adult protection, child protection, bullying, power of attorney, as well many others. SCA Advocacy currently works with two local authorities, covering Bournemouth and Havant, and provides private advocacy across the SCA region.

SCA Advocacy also provides '**Involvement and Engagement**' support to health and social care organisations, and does this by running one off or regular focus/resident groups, group advocacy sessions, etc.

SCA Well-being Centre provides activities and support to individuals across the New Forest to promote positive mental health. As a result, the service assists people back into employment and support in managing family and housing affairs.

Activities are provided across the New Forest, though predominantly in Lyndhurst (Fenwick2 building), New Milton and Hythe, and volunteers can assist in a number of ways including

Locations:

- Fenwick2, Lyndhurst
- New Milton
- Hythe
- Other venues across the New Forest

Volunteering Opportunities:

- Supporting activity groups i.e. art groups, photography, health walks
- Befrienders
- Assisting with form filling

SCA Care provides care at home and day care services which together are a core business for SCA. SCA Care currently works with four local authorities - Portsmouth, Southampton, Hampshire, and Dorset, as well as PCTs in most of the corresponding areas.

Locations:

- Southampton and surrounding areas
- Waterlooville and surrounding areas
- New Forest
- Blandford

Volunteering Opportunities:

- Befrienders (telephone and in person)
- Reading to those with a sight impairment
- Writing letters and cards friends and family of customers to help maintain contact
- If you have craft or creative skills you could help customers to pursue a hobby
- Good neighbour scheme
- Taking customers out for walks and trips
- Helping out in our day centres for older people
- Handy persons to carry out 'odd jobs' for our customers

SCA Transport are specialists in the provision of Community Transport and Health and Social Care Transport services. SCA's range of services and 25 years of experience of providing services to those unable to use public transport due to physical problems or vulnerability are illustrated below. Since 2003, SCA have been accredited with and retained ISO BSEN 9001:2000 Quality

Management Standard.

Location:

- Southampton and surrounding area

Volunteering Opportunities:

- Volunteer drivers using their own car to transport vulnerable people to and from locations in the local area.
- Administration support

SCA Trafalgar Dental Services runs seven clinics across the South Coast bringing dental provision to over 70,000 NHS patients. Trafalgar was established 5 years ago to fill the gap of dental need in areas of high deprivation. Trafalgar has a proven track record with the three PCT's that they work alongside making us a favourable provider when further NHS access is needed. SCA Trafalgar's Swanage surgery is in development at the time of writing.

Locations:

- Portsmouth
- Rowner
- Brune
- Southampton
- Totton
- Holbury
- Swanage

Volunteering Opportunities:

- Meet and greet patients at the practice, offering reassurance to nervous patients or those with additional needs.
- Assist with activities for children at afternoon clinics whilst they are waiting to see the dentist.

SCA Quinn Centre provides training solutions for the SCA Group and other health and social care providers in the region. SCA Quinn Centre offers a range of courses such as diplomas in care, moving and handling, medication and dementia training.

Location

- Southampton

Volunteering Opportunities

- Helping in the admin office
- Case study contributor
- Training (lead or assistant)

SCA Head Office is home to our senior management team, HR, Training, Finance, Payroll and admin staff. Our care office for the Southampton area and the Homesafe service are also based at head office.

Location

- Southampton

Volunteering Opportunities

- Helping with admin and reception duties
- Project work for one of our department managers
- Marketing
- Research
- Fundraising

SCA Fenwick2 is a health and wellbeing centre which has both paid and unpaid staff to help deliver our services. The centre offers meeting space for local groups and organisations, complementary therapies, a gym, and a day centre for older people with memory loss.

Location

- Lyndhurst

Volunteering Opportunities

- Fundraising
- Meet and greet our visitors and helping with office work
- Gardeners
- Helping out in our day centres for older people
- Helping with our bathing service
- Helping out at one of the many clubs and services which use

4. Application Process

All volunteers who join the SCA group are initially interviewed, over the phone. If we feel that you are suitable for a volunteering placement you will then have an informal interview with your potential supervisor at the location you may be volunteering at.

The first (informal, via phone) interview is to enable us to provide you with a clear picture of our organisation and the expectations we have for a volunteer's commitment. We also like to use this time to hear about your experiences and any plans you might have for your future employment.

The second interview, set up with your potential supervisor taking into consideration what you wish to gain from volunteering, will give you the chance to learn more about the work you are doing and also see where you will be working, and who you will be working with.

We like to ensure that our volunteers are interested in and will enjoy the kind of work we do. It is important that our volunteers are reliable and flexible, able to work in small teams and also to work on a one to one basis.

5. Rights & Responsibilities of SCA and Volunteers

In engaging volunteers, SCA recognises the rights of volunteers to:

- Know what is expected of them and to be given clear information and induction.
- Have clearly specified lines of support and supervision.
- Respect, confidentiality and privacy.
- Be shown appreciation.
- Have safe working conditions.
- Be insured.
- Know what their rights and responsibilities are.
- Be paid expenses connected with the volunteering placement.
- Be entitled to holidays and breaks.
- Be trained and receive ongoing opportunities for learning and development.
- Be free from discrimination.
- Experience personal development through their participation as volunteers.
- Ask for a reference.
- Be consulted on decisions that will affect what they do.
- Withdraw from voluntary work.

Volunteers should:

- Carry out their tasks in a way which corresponds to the aims and values of this organisation.

- Comply with all relevant guidelines as indicated in induction including the Volunteers Code of Conduct.
- Respect confidentiality of our customers and staff.
- Respect other volunteers, customers and staff.
- Respect the human rights of others.
- Carry out their tasks with regard to the health and safety of others.
- Attend training and support sessions where appropriate.
- Maintain professional boundaries. It is not appropriate to become friends with SCA customers. This is not to say that volunteers cannot be friendly, caring or supportive; however, maintaining appropriate boundaries is important. Volunteers are expected to follow professional standards.

Our work involves providing different sorts of care to a variety of people who our services. Some of our customers are those with long term conditions, such as Parkinson's Disease, Stroke, or Heart Disease, some may have a learning difficulty or mental health issue, and some will be older people, some of whom are physically frail or becoming confused.

6. Volunteer Recruitment

Volunteers will be recruited without discrimination in line with the SCA Group's Equal Opportunities Policy and Non Discriminatory Policy (see section 7). The principle behind recruitment and selection will be the individual's suitability to perform the designated assignment.

The following principles apply:

- Volunteers can be recruited from various sources, including: word of mouth, recruitment events and agencies, newspaper ads, and local community groups;
- Role descriptions will be produced for each assignment;
- Each candidate will be asked to complete a volunteer application form. **Two references will be taken up** and evaluated before you can begin volunteering with us.
- Candidates matched to volunteer tasks will be given an informal interview conducted by the placement contact/mentor;
- Due to the vulnerability of some customers, references will be sought and Disclosure and Barring Service checks will be required (DBS's are free for volunteers). Unfortunately, applicants who refuse background checks will be refused the opportunity to volunteer. Your rights during this process will be explained to you;
- In placing a volunteer in a position, attention shall be paid to the interests and capabilities of the volunteer and to the requirements of the voluntary activity;
- No placement shall be made unless the requirements of both the volunteer and the supervising staff can be met;
- Trial periods will be undertaken if necessary, the length of which will be agreed with the volunteer at the recruitment stage;

- If appropriate, a period of shadowing a more experienced volunteer or member of staff may be offered;

7. Equality and Diversity Policy

SCA aims to provide equality of opportunity in all aspects of its work. It wishes to ensure that it does not discriminate in the selection, employment and promotion of staff paid and unpaid, or in the provision of any service against or in favour of any persons on the grounds of their age, race, ethnic origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, transgender status, religion, or disability.

To ensure that its Equal Opportunity Policy is working, SCA considers it essential to monitor information about job opportunities and customers of our services.

Please find and fill in the Diversity Monitoring Form and return to SCA HR along with your application form, placing the diversity monitoring form in a separate sealed envelope.

8. Joining SCA as a Volunteer

Once you have decided to become a volunteer with SCA and any pre-placement checks are complete you will be notified of a date you can start to volunteer.

On your first day you will be welcomed by your supervisor who will introduce you to the team you will be working with. The general routine of the day will be described and you will be shown around the premises.

Your supervisor will carry out an induction to make sure you are aware of the following:

- Company structure and strategy, including information about social enterprises, the different companies within the group and the services we provide.
- Health and safety procedures
- Any other important information

We need volunteers to be reliable. The procedure to follow if you are unwell or cannot attend for any reason will be explained to you.

Please ask if you have any queries concerning your tasks or responsibilities.

9. SCA Newsletter

The SCA Newsletter is available for all staff & volunteers. The newsletter covers items such as company policy, news about care in the community, features about staff and social recreational activities. Articles and letters from staff & volunteers are always welcomed and will be considered for publication by the Editor.

10. Benefits

A volunteer claiming benefits should tell their benefits/employment adviser about their voluntary work commitments. Questions may be asked, but if you are actively seeking and are available for work, and as long as the voluntary work is genuine, it is our understanding that benefits will not be affected.

Genuine reimbursement of expenses incurred will not affect benefit. Please be especially careful if you are in receipt of sickness or invalidity benefit, as this can be seen as proving you are capable of work and therefore illegible for benefit.

11. Comments and Complaints

SCA has a Customers' Complaints Procedure. All customers are encouraged to speak to a member of staff should they have any comments or complaints to make about the services we offer. The detailed procedure is available from your supervisor or from Head Office, Amplevine House, Dukes Road, Southampton, SO14 0ST.

12. Confidentiality

All customer/staff information must be treated in the strictest confidence. Volunteers and paid staff are expected to respect confidentiality in any matters discussed in private with a customer. Many customers are also users of other statutory agencies.

Information will be shared with you on a 'need to know' basis. This means that you will only be told things that will help you in your part in the delivery of a service.

Do not talk about customers outside the workplace or in front of other people, customers or carers. However, if a customer or carer tells you something, or you notice a change in their condition, please do pass this information on to your supervisor.

All customer, employee and volunteer information held on computer is in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and therefore all computer held records are available on written request by the individual concerned; although a fee may be charged for this service.

SCA volunteers and staff are requested not to leave paperwork/equipment containing personal data in cars/public places.

13. Future Employment

If you are seeking employment remember to mention your voluntary work experience. Your supervisor will be happy to ask the HR team to supply a written reference to any future employer.

If possible to do so, we would welcome you to stay with us as a volunteer whilst undertaking paid employment.

14. Dos & Don'ts

Volunteers will be given clear guidelines as to what is required of them, including tasks which they are not authorised to do. These are usually concerned with Health & Safety rules and your supervisor will explain to you what these are.

- All volunteers must wear identity badges when volunteering.
- Volunteers must not give their address or telephone number to customers or their carers/supporters.
- Volunteers must agree with their supervisor methods for maintaining contact when lone working.
- Volunteers must not cut customers' fingernails or toenails.
- Volunteers must not smoke, drink alcohol or take non-prescribed drugs whilst volunteering.
- Volunteers must not offer non-prescribed medication to customers.
- Volunteers are not permitted to act as signatories for wills or other legal documents.

- On no account are volunteers to borrow money or lend money to customers.
- Volunteers must not handle customer money. Refer any requests to do so to the appropriate supervisor.
- Do not assume people wish to be called by their first name, please ask their preferred form of address.

15. Conflict of Interest

An SCA volunteer:

- Cannot be related to any party involved in a case (i.e. advocacy work)
- Should declare any conflict of interest they may have while volunteering at SCA

16. Gifts to Staff & Volunteers

It is well appreciated that staff and volunteers working with people may establish close relationships which may result in the persons concerned wishing to make some actual expressions of their appreciation of the service given.

If a gift is offered to anyone in their capacity as a volunteer or employee of SCA, it must in all circumstances be refused unless it is of token value only. There would be no objection if staff accepted a gift of token value only, especially if it were associated with some particular event e.g. Birthday, Christmas etc. You must tell your supervisor about all gifts, even if of token value. What cannot be allowed is acceptance of any sum of money, no matter how small.

We hope volunteers can appreciate the seriousness of accepting anything other than token gifts from customers and the difficult situations which can arise.

The full SCA policy on 'Gifts to Staff' (*Central Document 336*) is available to staff and volunteers on request.

17. Intellectual property

Should a volunteer produce any work that falls within the category of being "Intellectual property" for example, the design of a leaflet or logo, SCA reserves the right to retain ownership of such work and will if requested give the sum of one pence to the volunteer for the transfer of ownership.

18. Health Safety & Insurance

SCA is fully insured to cover all members of staff and volunteers carrying out their usual duties. Please note however, that personal possessions are not covered by our insurance therefore please do not bring valuables into your place of work.

If you are a volunteer driver for SCA, or drive to and from appointments as a volunteer, you are also advised to check that your motor insurance is up to date and includes cover for business use.

A copy of the SCA Insurance Policy is displayed at each place of work. On commencing voluntary work with SCA, your supervisor will advise you of the procedures in case of fire and will also show you the locations of the first aid box and accident book.

All staff, paid or unpaid, have an obligation to behave at all times in a way which will not endanger themselves, other staff, our customers or any other people. No staff or volunteers should undertake any task which they are not trained or authorised to do.

All accidents, however minor, should be reported to a supervisor immediately and recorded in the accident book.

If you require any personal protective equipment please inform your supervisor.

19. Task Description

It sounds rather formal, but task descriptions are very useful for a number of reasons:

- Seeing the task description may help you decide whether or not you want to join us.
- As new volunteers you may feel you have some idea of what is expected of you.
- It can help you 'get on with something' rather than feeling like a 'spare part'.

A task description will be given to you and explained by your supervisor.

20. Smoking

In accordance with current legislation, smoking is not permitted at any SCA premises, or in customers' homes, either in the building or grounds. This applies to staff and volunteers.

21. Support & Training

From time to time those working at SCA will have supervision meetings to plan their work and discuss activities. This can be a time to discuss any issues which may have arisen in your work, any problems, training needs or just a time to get to know your fellow work mates.

Volunteers will be given appropriate induction and training for the work they are required to complete. Supervisors and managers are willing to provide any information and support available and relevant to their work. Training events are sometimes arranged and volunteers' attendance is encouraged although not compulsory.

Your supervisor will regularly monitor your performance and any concerns or issues will be discussed with you in a supportive way.

If your performance or actions do not meet our high standards then we may have to end your volunteering placement with SCA. Ending your placement will only be a 'last resort' and we will endeavour to provide you with the right amount of training and support to continue your placement wherever possible.

If this is the case your supervisor will follow the company's discipline and grievance procedure, a copy of this document is on display at each SCA office / location.

22. Volunteer Timesheet

Volunteers are essential to providing SCA services. To accurately record the value of our volunteers, volunteers are requested to complete a monthly timesheet and submit this to the supervisor by the 6th of the following month.

23. Volunteer Expenses

It is very important that volunteers are not treated in such a way as to suggest a contract of employment. To avoid the possibility of creating such a contract with volunteers and adhere to national minimum wage legislation any training provided must be necessary to carry out the work of SCA Group. Volunteers must only be reimbursed for expenses they have incurred. SCA Group has expectations of our volunteers rather than required duties.

SCA volunteers will be offered reimbursement for travel expenses, and lunch (*if working all day*). Expenses are paid so as not to exclude anyone from voluntary work for financial reasons.

The expenses form is included in the forms section.

Please do not be embarrassed to claim your expenses.

24. Dress Code

SCA volunteers are requested to dress appropriately for the volunteering activity. This will be discussed with the supervisor prior to volunteering with us.

25. On hold Policy

As a volunteer at SCA it is important that you are able to take time out when you need to. For example, a holiday or moving house. At SCA it is acceptable to have a break as a volunteer and be able to return. Our on hold policy is a way of managing your volunteering.

If you are planning on going on holiday or would like to be placed on hold for whatever reason, please give as much advanced notice to your supervisor as possible. If possible, please inform them of how long you plan to be on hold for.

If you wish to return to SCA after being on hold, you will be offered the opportunity to do so, with retraining/ alternative volunteering offered as required.

26. Leaving SCA

We appreciate the valuable contribution that volunteers have to offer to our service, but we also realise that sometimes volunteers have to leave us for whatever reason.

Our work can be quite physically demanding. If your circumstances change (*family circumstances, health, and age*) and you feel you cannot continue with our duties, please do request an alternate volunteering opportunity or 'retire'. We value your contribution and would not like you to feel you must stay.

Also, if appropriate we may ask you to find less strenuous voluntary work elsewhere if we feel you are unable to join in fully.

See section 12 regarding future references.

We would be interested to know your reason for leaving us but only if you choose to let us know.

The exit interview questionnaire is included in the forms section.

27. Further Information

If you have any questions about any aspect of volunteering with SCA please do not hesitate to contact your supervisor or the volunteer co-ordinator at our head office on 023 8036 6663.

28. Forms

The forms in this pack are:

- Volunteer application form*
- Diversity monitoring form*
- Volunteer agreement*
- Volunteer availability form

- Expenses claim form*
 - Volunteer timesheet
 - Volunteer induction form
 - Volunteer exit interview
- *to be completed and returned before volunteering can commence

Volunteers don't get paid, not because they're worthless, but because they're priceless.
Sherry Anderson

Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they just have the heart.
Elizabeth Andrew

The heart of a volunteer is not measured in size, but by the depth of the commitment to make a difference in the lives of others.
DeAnn Hollis

Volunteering creates a national character in which the community and the nation take on a spirit of compassion, comradeship and confidence.
Brian O'Connell

If you want to lift yourself up, lift up someone else.
Booker T. Washington

Don't ever question the value of volunteers. Noah's Ark was built by volunteers; the Titanic was built by professionals.
Unknown