Volunteer Expenses

It is considered good practice where possible to allow volunteers to claim reasonable out of pocket expenses for any expense they incur while carrying out their volunteer role. Otherwise it could be that only people who can afford to volunteer do so, which has equal opportunities implications.

It is very important that only genuine out-of-pocket expenses are paid.

Items for which volunteers should be reimbursed:

• Travel between home and place of volunteering activity and travel whilst volunteering. This could be by public transport or by the volunteer using their own car in which case a mileage allowance would be paid. If traveling by public transport, tickets should be retained, by way of a receipt. If the volunteer is using his/her own transport, a record of all mileage should be kept. The mileage allowance paid should be concurrent with the general organisation staff mileage allowance. An excess could be set for the round trip between home and place of volunteering. Volunteers should be advised to notify their motor insurance company and ensure their policy specifically includes “business use”.

• Car parking charges. Car park ticket should be retained, by way of receipt.

• Postage, phone calls, stationary etc (Receipts must be kept)

• Cost of protective clothing(Receipts must be kept)

• If working longer than four hours in any one period, a subsistence allowance to a maximum of £x.xx, will be paid. Receipts for items purchased must be retained.

Claims for expenses should be made on a Volunteer Expenses Claim form (this should be a simple form) together with receipts. Payment in cash is easier as some volunteers will need the money on the day and not everyone has a bank account.

Volunteers should be encouraged to claim expenses to avoid situations where other volunteers feel bad about claiming because not everyone does. Where volunteers do not claim expenses, because they don’t want to take resources from your organisation, they can be encouraged to claim and then gift back (using gift aid if they are tax payers) the money to your organisation. You then have a true cost of your volunteer programme.