

Volunteer Policy

1 Introduction

The National Animal Welfare Trust's Mission is to be one of the leading animal welfare and re-homing charities for the care and rehabilitation of animals.

The fundamental principle of our approach to animal welfare is that no healthy animal will be destroyed.

Our non-destruction principle is underpinned by our wish to ensure that the needs of the animals we care for (as required by the Animal Welfare Act 2006) are fully met. These needs are:

- ✓ its need for a suitable environment,
- ✓ its need for a suitable diet,
- ✓ its need to be able to exhibit normal behaviour patterns,
- ✓ any needs it has to be housed with, or apart from, other animals, and
- ✓ its need to be protected from pain, suffering, injury and disease.

Going beyond our statutory responsibilities, the Trust has developed a further set of Values that we aspire to. The challenge is in ensuring these are a consistent feature of the work that we do, in both caring for animals and in our relationships with the public who benefit from our work, and provide the resources needed to fulfil our Mission.

The National Animal Welfare Trust will be:

- ✓ Transparent and accountable - the Trust will strive to work in a way that is transparent and accountable to supporters, donors, beneficiaries and other stakeholders;
- ✓ Respectful - the Trust will treat all animals and humans with respect and dignity;
- ✓ Responsible – the Trust will promote responsible pet ownership and animal welfare, and has an expectation that the public who support our work by re-homing an animal will take proper responsibility for caring for that animal for the rest of its life.

The National Animal Welfare Trust will be run in such a way that it:

- ✓ Provides Value for Money - the Trust will ensure that every penny donated to us will be spent wisely and effectively;
- ✓ Is aspirational – the Trust will aspire to achieving best practice in all areas of its work;
- ✓ Attracts and retains high quality and committed staff and volunteers;
- ✓ Is compliant with the wide range of statutory responsibilities that control our work.

2 Our Commitment to Volunteers

NAWT values its volunteers and believe that they enrich the organisation and in no way replace paid staff. We hope that volunteers have a rewarding and fulfilling experience whilst with us and we are committed to making every attempt to ensure that:

- Volunteers are not put under any pressure or obligation to do anything against their personal values, beliefs or principles
- Volunteers will have their travel expenses reimbursed
- The separate volunteer roles are defined in the volunteer Profiles which are included in your Starter Pack
- The relationship between the volunteer and NAWT is freely entered into and mutually beneficial
- Training will be provided when required

3 Practical Guidelines

The following guidelines deal with the practical aspects of the involvement of volunteers. More detailed information, including copies of the relevant policies are included in the Induction Pack. The Induction Pack will be available from the Centre Manager.

3.1 Equal Opportunities

NAWT believes that volunteering should be open to all members of the community. However, for operational reasons we are unable to accept volunteers under the age of 16. For their own safety, volunteers must meet the physical and fitness criteria as set out in the relevant task description. There is an Equal Opportunities Policy included in the Induction Pack. The Induction Pack will be available from the Centre Manager.

3.2 Recruitment

An application form must be completed. An interview will follow to determine understanding and suitability for the role applied for. Two references will be taken up.

There is a three month probationary period for all volunteers.

The volunteering relationship is not legally binding and may be ended by NAWT or the volunteer at any time.

3.3 Induction and Training

All volunteers will undergo an Induction process and additional training will be provided as appropriate.

Volunteers are responsible for complying with all advice, procedures and instructions given during their induction and training whilst they are volunteering for NAWT.

3.4 Task Descriptions

Each volunteer will be given a written outline of tasks giving them a clear picture of what they are being asked to do and the responsibilities that go with these tasks.

A volunteering schedule will be agreed with each volunteer and we request a minimum attendance level of 75% in order to ensure that the animals receive the highest possible level of care and attention. Any changes in the volunteer's circumstances and/or availability should be reported and discussed with the Volunteer Coordinator/s.

3.5 Support and Supervision

All volunteers are provided with a named Volunteer Coordinator/s as their main contact within NAWT who can be approached when needed to request advice, training or individual issues.

A volunteer forum will be run to discuss developments which affect volunteers and give volunteers an opportunity to raise concerns and ask questions.

All staff will actively support volunteers in carrying out their tasks.

3.6 Agreement

All volunteers will abide by NAWT organisational policies and procedures.

Volunteers have a responsibility whilst representing NAWT not to act in anyway which will bring the Trust into disrepute

Volunteers will not normally become involved in the rehoming or sale process of any animal, or in decisions regarding animals and potential owners. The exception to this are the Homecheck Volunteers.

Volunteering is freely entered into but should a volunteer wish to cease volunteering, for whatever reasons, NAWT would request as much notice as possible and the volunteer will be given the opportunity to discuss their reasons for leaving if the volunteer would like to do so.

3.7 Insurance

Volunteers are covered by NAWT's Employers Liability Insurance policy provided that they are carrying out activities specified by us in the guidance note given to the volunteer at Induction or during the course of volunteering. A copy of the policy is available from the Centre Manager.

3.8 Health and Safety

Volunteers are covered by NAWT's Health & Safety policy, a copy of which is included in the Induction Pack. The Induction Pack will be available from the Centre Manager.

Appropriate risk assessments will be carried out where and when necessary.

Volunteers must not undertake tasks that they have not been trained or authorised to carry out.

Volunteers working directly with animals are required to wear uniform provided by NAWT. Replacement uniform will be issued if the original is damaged.

NAWT reserves the right to ask volunteers not to wear jewellery, clothing or shoes which may constitute a safety hazard.

3.9 Confidentiality

Personal information about members of the public, NAWT personnel, other volunteers and information about NAWT's business activities may become known to volunteers during their activities. Volunteers have a responsibility to ensure that this information is kept confidential and not discussed outside the organisation or communicated to any third party including the media.

3.10 Expenses

All volunteer travel expenses will be reimbursed. If a volunteer uses public transport the cost of fares will be paid. If the volunteer uses a car they will be able to claim 40p per mile expenses and 20p per mile expenses if they travel by motorbike.

3.11 The Volunteer's Voice

Volunteers are encouraged to express their views about matters concerning NAWT, either through the volunteer Forum or as individuals.

If a volunteer has a grievance they should inform the Volunteer Co-ordinator/s as soon as possible in order to have the matter investigated and resolved. If the matter is not resolved to the volunteer's satisfaction they may take it to the Centre Manager/HR Manager for further consideration.

3.12 Policy Review

NAWT will review this policy at least once each year in order to ensure that it is consistent with good practice and that it continues to meet the needs of the organisation and volunteers.

I, _____ (*insert name*) have read and understood the National Animal Welfare Trust Volunteer Policy

Signed _____ (Volunteer) Date _____

Signed _____ (NAWT) Date _____

Note: It is not intended that a volunteer should have the status of employee and neither of the above parties intend any employment relationship to be created either now or at any time in the future.