

FRIENDS OF THE NEW SELBY WAR MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
VOLUNTEER POLICY

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Date approved by Committee	21 May 2025
Signed by Chair on behalf of Committee	
Date of next review	21 May 2027

1. Our Mission: Improving Patients' Experience

Traditionally, local communities have supported their hospitals and this support continues today in the Selby area through the work of the Friends of the New Selby War Memorial Hospital.

Our mission is to improve the experience of patients during their hospital stay. We do this by providing supportive and non-clinical volunteers to help the NHS staff meet patient needs. And we also raise funds to buy equipment and facilities which are not otherwise provided by the NHS Trust.

2. Our Values

All our activities are informed by the needs of the patients. In meeting those needs we particularly value the qualities of compassion and commitment in our volunteers. We aim to be inclusive and encourage people from diverse backgrounds to get involved and help improve our services. We believe that people who enjoy their volunteering are likely to deliver a better service and we are committed to supporting our volunteers. We never work as substitutes for paid NHS staff; our aim is to complement the essential work that they do.

3. The Friends are an organisation of volunteers

Everyone involved with the Friends is a volunteer. As volunteers ourselves, we recognise the value of the contribution to the local community that volunteers make. We encourage our volunteers to get involved in social activities with other volunteers, to take on new responsibilities and to develop their skills and knowledge through relative training. In addition, we require our volunteers needs to adhere to agreed hospital policies on confidentiality and health and safety, so that the NHS staff can have confidence in working alongside them.

4. Volunteers' key responsibilities

- **Confidentiality** – This is essential in a hospital setting and all our volunteers must sign the Friends of the New Selby War Memorial Hospital Honorary Agreement which includes a Confidentiality Statement. It also covers holding information on our volunteers in paper and electronic form, in accordance with the Data protection Act 2018. In line with the practice of the national organisation of the Hospital Friends groups, Attend, we retain each volunteer's file for 6 months after they cease volunteering with us.
- **Trust** – While Friends of the New Selby War Memorial Hospital is responsible for volunteers while they are on hospital property, we recognise that the nature of the work means that many volunteers work independently. Volunteers need to respect this trust by keeping in contact, signing in on arrival and out on departure, and informing the Chairperson when they need to take a break or are no longer able to continue volunteering.

- **The right to be respected** – Everyone who comes into contact with Friends of the New Selby War Memorial Hospital volunteers has the right to be respected as an individual and feel they are being treated fairly. Volunteers are allowed access to patients on the understanding that they will treat them with dignity and report any abuse, molestation or mistreatment witnessed. Friends of the New Selby War Memorial Hospital volunteers themselves also have the right to be treated with respect and have access to the Chairperson for support if this is not the case.
- **Maintaining the reputation of the Friends of the New Selby War Memorial Hospital** – Friends of the New Selby War Memorial Hospital have worked consistently since 1985 to build its reputation as a valued partner in local health provision in Selby. Volunteers should keep the need to retain this good standing in mind and avoid any behaviour that could be seen as bringing the organisation into disrepute.

5. Volunteer roles

New volunteers are given a copy of the relevant role description for the service that they are joining. Both electronic and paper copies of role descriptions for all our current volunteer roles, linked to the relevant risk assessments, are kept in the Friends of the New Selby War Memorial Hospital office. It is the responsibility of the Chairperson to make sure that these are up-to-date (reviewed on at least an annual basis) and made use of in new volunteers' induction briefings.

6. Volunteer recruitment

The Friends advertise for volunteers in a variety of ways in an attempt to attract as diverse a group of volunteers as possible. While Friends of the New Selby War Memorial Hospital volunteers do not make clinical decisions or perform clinical procedures, our volunteer roles are not without their challenges. Many (but not all) of our volunteer roles require a reasonable level of physical mobility. Our volunteers always have the support of NHS Trust staff, but nonetheless many roles require the ability to work independently. Other Friends of the New Selby War Memorial Hospital volunteer roles, particularly those involved with fundraising, are less demanding. We aim to find a role appropriate to their interests and capabilities for as many prospective volunteers as we can.

The minimum age for volunteering with the friends is 16. Each new applicant needs to complete an application form, and help can be given with this if necessary.

The Chairperson interviews the applicant, sometimes with the support of an experienced volunteer or trustee. A Disclosure and Barring Service check is carried out at the appropriate level for the role. Guidance on this is provided by the Trust's HR department.

7. Insurance

Friends of the New Selby War Memorial Hospital has a public liability insurance policy. The policy covers all eventualities likely to affect hospital volunteers. If a volunteer or prospective volunteer has a specific query about our insurance cover they should contact the Chairperson.

8. Volunteer Induction and Training

The core induction and training programme for new volunteers consists of:

- A volunteer information sheet. This includes information about the Friends organisation, expectations about reliability and time commitment, accident reporting, tabard/lanyard, security ID pass, health and safety precautions, storage of personal belongings and the volunteer's role.
- An induction briefing delivered by the Chairperson
- A mentor session where the newcomer works alongside an experienced volunteer, preferably in the location where the newcomer is due to start a regular volunteer time slot
- A Volunteer Handbook is available to read upon request

Training sessions of wider relevance – such as food safety awareness are organised as and when this is required and/or is available.

9. The trial period

We treat volunteers' first 4 weeks after induction as a trial period. During this time new volunteers can let us know whether the role they have started to carry out is suitable, whether they want to ask for a different role, or whether hospital volunteering is not for them after all. Likewise, when major problems crop up with a new volunteer – with reliability, for example, or consistently inappropriate behaviour – we can decide that the issues are unlikely to be easily resolved, that he or she has not proved suitable for a hospital volunteering role and ask them to leave.

10. Volunteers' input

We want our volunteers to be involved in the development of Friends of the New Selby War Memorial Hospital. Volunteers have the right, and are encouraged, to have their say about their experience while volunteering with the Friends. This could be anything from observations about working practices, to suggestions about the development of their volunteer role, concerns about being discriminated against or queries about what to do if they are not happy with how things are going.

11. Problem solving procedures

Occasionally an established volunteer will have a persistent problem or complaint that cannot be resolved through an informal contact or meeting as outlined above. Very occasionally an established volunteer might themselves not meet the standards

expected by Friends of the New Selby War Memorial Hospital. Their behaviour might be causing problems for patients, hospital staff, or their fellow volunteers. We have Problem Solving Procedures in place to resolve both types of problem. These procedures can be accessed electronically via the Chairperson. Paper copies are also available in the Friends' Office.

Naturally, we hope these procedures will not be required. We aim to offer an enjoyable and positive experience to all our volunteers at all times and to recruit motivated, committed people with the right skills and personal qualities for their role.

12. Supporting our volunteers

The Chairperson is normally the first point of contact for new volunteers. The Chairperson organises volunteer recruitment and induction and is available to answer volunteering queries by phone. The Chairperson may be contacted with comments, queries, suggestions and complaints which s/he will pass to the relevant person.

If the volunteer would prefer a face-to-face meeting the Chairperson can book a room to ensure privacy if required and make meeting notes to record what is discussed. Volunteers are welcome to bring a friend with them to meetings of this kind.

Our AVC Linda Richardson is available by email at richardson.5@hotmail.com

13. Review of policy

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner in the event of changes in guidance or legislation. This is done by the AVC, prior to being authorised by a meeting of the Trustees Committee.

PROBLEM SOLVING PROCEDURES RELATING TO VOLUNTEERS

1. Volunteers problems relating to their role

If a volunteer is dissatisfied with any aspect of their volunteering role and cannot resolve the issue through an initial contact or meeting with the AVC, he or she can request a meeting with the Chairperson (or deputy) of the Friends of the New Selby War Memorial Hospital.

A written summary of the volunteer's concerns (as agreed with the volunteer) will be sent to the Chairperson (or deputy) at least 3 working days before the meeting.

The volunteer is welcome to bring a friend with him/her to the meeting.

The content of the meeting will be documented.

Following the meeting a written summary of the discussion and the decisions reached will be issued to the volunteer and other relevant personnel for example Friends of the New Selby War Memorial Hospital officers, volunteers, hospital staff.

Any unresolved issues will be dealt with in line with Friends of New Selby War Memorial Hospital Complaints policy.

2. Friends of the New Selby War Memorial Hospital problems with volunteers

If a serious issue about a volunteer in their role, e.g. accusations of theft, acts of violence, abusive or discriminatory behaviour is raised the volunteer will be suspended. The York Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust will be informed of the allegations where this involves hospital patients, staff or property. York NHS Trust will be involved in the investigation (and may lead depending on the allegation) of such issues along with the Friends of the New Selby War Memorial Hospital Chairperson (or deputy).

Where less significant concerns are raised about the behaviour of an established volunteer (someone who has volunteered with us for longer than 12 weeks), the concerns are resolved by:

- A face-to-face meeting to explain the concerns and agree a way forward is arranged between the volunteer and the Chairperson. The volunteer can ask a friend to accompany them to the meeting.
- Following the meeting the main points of concern and agreed actions are summarised in a letter to the volunteer within 5 working days
- If there is insufficient improvement after an agreed timeframe, a second face-to-face meeting will be arranged. This will be between the volunteer and the Chairperson (or deputy). The volunteer can ask a friend to accompany them to the meeting
- A further summary of the meeting, main points and actions will be summarised in a letter to the volunteer
- If there is no improvement in behaviour within an agreed timeframe, he/she will be requested to stop volunteering with Friends of the New Selby War Memorial Hospital.

