

Volunteers' Code of Conduct - Tyneside Welcomes

The purpose of *Tyneside Welcomes (T.W.)* is to support into social and financial independence refugee families displaced by the conflict in Syria. References to "The family" in this Code of Conduct refer solely to a family supported by *T.W.*

Volunteers will play a central role in supporting the family and in working towards their integration into the local community.

Bear in mind that a volunteer is not the same as a friend. This distinction may require careful explanation to both the family and volunteers.

T.W. will provide all its volunteers with a role description, training and development in role, directions concerning personal safety and appropriate supervision. Volunteers should familiarize themselves with the Volunteers' Handbook which sets out the context for this Code of Conduct.

As a volunteer you will be expected to:

1. Be responsible:

- Support the emergence of independence, agency and self-confidence in members of the family by guiding and encouraging them to complete tasks themselves and make their own decisions rather than by doing things for them. Since initially the family may need many things done for them, hold in mind that this will need to change first to collaborative decision making and task completion and then to independence
- Stick to your designated role and carry out your duties responsibly, safely and competently. Your primary responsibility is to the wellbeing of members of the family
- Avoid providing inaccurate or biased information to members of the family. In particular, members of the family requiring legal or welfare benefits advice should be signposted to specialist agencies — seek advice from a Volunteer Coordinator about this
- Undertake required training in Safeguarding and be mindful at all times of safeguarding risks to children or adults at risk. Become familiar with and follow *T.W.'s* Safeguarding policy
- Follow the protocol concerning gifts and hospitality both to and from the family
- Avoid making promises on behalf of *T.W.* about funds, furniture, household goods, food, transport or any other request for material help from members of the family. These matters should normally be discussed with a Volunteer Coordinator
- Follow the protocol for use of public transport and the use of volunteers' cars when accompanying members of the family
- Avoid acting as a spokesperson for *T.W.* unless authorised to do so
- Claim any expenses promptly, submitting receipts with any claims
- Avoid acting in a way that might bring *T.W.* into disrepute or as a spokesperson for *T.W.* unless authorised to do so.

- Avoid allowing *T.W.*'s name, resources, information or funds to be used for any purpose other than that required for your volunteer role
2. Be respectful:
- Respect members of the family avoiding prejudicial judgements about their abilities, customs, cultural and religious practices
 - Refer to the family by their names rather than as “the refugee family” or “our family/our refugees”
 - Understand that *T.W.* will learn from each family we support and that refugees, while requiring support initially, have much to offer society in the U.K. Supporting a family should become a collaborative experience with the family
 - Dress cleanly and modestly and behave in an appropriate and culturally acceptable manner while with the family or representing *T.W.*
3. Be present:
- Attend reliably and punctually, informing the Volunteer Coordinators promptly of any unavoidable delays or unplanned absences. Since meetings will often be arranged in neutral places, plan for any delays in getting there. Avoid scheduling meetings with the family before 9 a.m. or after 5 p.m. unless there is no alternative.
 - Attend the monthly volunteer support group meetings and express their views when requested to do so
4. Be discreet:
- Avoid discussing their experience and opinions of the family except with a Volunteer Coordinator or at Volunteer Support Group meetings
 - Raise any non-safeguarding concern or worry, even a small one, with a volunteer Coordinator. Safeguarding concerns should be passed without delay to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (see Safeguarding Policy).
 - Seek advice from a Volunteer Coordinator before discussing with professionals any matter that the family might consider confidential. If a safeguarding issue arises, it will be necessary to share information with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, with trustees and maybe with statutory agencies
 - Avoid making social media comments on their role or experience with *T.W.*
 - Avoid photographing members of the family except at the request of adult family members for their own use
 - Follow the telephone protocol established for volunteers
 - Avoid passing to the family their own phone numbers and addresses or those of other members of *T.W.*

Approved: 22/01/2020

To be reviewed 20/02/22