

Draft Equality Impact Assessment – SWT Volunteer Policies and Procedures.

What is the EIA based on?

The adoption of Policies and Procedures to enable SWT to recruit and manage volunteers.

The ability for SWT to recruit and manage volunteers in the community will:

provide opportunities for people to develop skills via volunteering to increase their progressions toward employment
provide opportunities for people that improve their mental and physical health.
Ensure the community can benefit from a range of services provided by volunteers and expand SWT services to support those provided by employed staff.

Age:

We consider that the scheme will overall have a positive impact on this characteristic by providing opportunities for individuals to volunteer in the community and share their knowledge and experience.

The draft policy suggests that SWT can provide opportunities for volunteers over the age of 18.

If a young person approaches SWT to apply for a volunteering post, SWT staff will support the young person by signposting them to SPARK in Somerset to find alternative volunteering opportunities.

The opportunity to volunteer will help to increase people's employability and work skills making them more attractive to future employers, maximising their readiness to make successful transitions into employment or by supporting those that are retired to continue to make active contributions to their community.

Disability:

We consider that the scheme will have a positive impact on this characteristic.

- Some volunteers may have restricted access to volunteering opportunities due to disabilities. The additional volunteering opportunities offered by SWT will broaden the range of options for those with disabilities.
- Risk Assessments and Accessibility Assessments will be completed with each volunteer at the recruitment stage. These will identify whether any additional provision will need to be made to support the volunteer to take up a volunteering role.
- The model of using volunteers will increase opportunity by delivering support in their locality and/or remotely via digital connection.
- Evidence shows an increase in poor mental health. The ability for SWT to provide volunteering opportunities will enable people to be an active part of their community, to increase their social interaction and to increase their physical activity.
- The Volunteering policy states that where venues are required to deliver services only those that are fully accessible to those with disabilities or mobility restrictions will be considered.

- For many people volunteering is the first step towards engagement and building of confidence to progress towards improving communication skills, employment, and economic independence. Providing a supportive volunteering environment encourages participation and the increased development of responsibility.

Gender reassignment and Sexual orientation:

We have considered this and do not consider there to be a disproportionate impact on this characteristic and that the scheme will have a neutral impact

- Accessibility assessments during the recruitment process will consider a choice of access to toilet and changing facilities to accommodate requirements.

Other, e.g. carers, veterans, homeless, low income, rurality/isolation, etc.

We consider that the scheme will have a positive impact on this characteristic.

- The scheme will reduce barriers to volunteering opportunities for people living in rural isolated areas.
- People on low income will be able to access local volunteering opportunities without incurring transport costs.
- For many people volunteering is the first step towards engagement and building of confidence to progress towards improving communication skills, employment, and economic independence. Providing a supportive volunteering environment encourages participation and the increased development of responsibility.

We have considered the characteristics of marriage and civil partnership; Religion or belief; Sex; Race and ethnicity and do not consider there to be a disproportionate impact on these characteristics and that the project will have a positive or neutral impact.

Recruiting volunteers from a range of backgrounds is beneficial to the project as it will encourage and support more members of the community to ask for support from the project.