

**seescape**

## **Volunteer Handbook**



**“Be part of a great team.”**



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seescape is the operational name of Fife Society for the Blind. Registered Scottish Charity no. SC001354.  
Fife Society for the Blind is a company limited by guarantee, registered in Scotland number SC164278.

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# 1. Welcome

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Thank you for volunteering with seescape. We value the contribution you make by offering your time, skills, experience, and commitment.

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Fife Society for the Blind was established in 1865 and aims to ensure that people in Fife living with visual impairment have access to a range of services to help them lead as independent a life as possible. As the charity has continued to expand and develop the operational name was changed to **seescape** in September 2018 to reflect our mission of helping sight impaired people become more fulfilled by empowering them to live and interact with their families and communities in a positive way.

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Volunteers are essential in helping us achieve this aim.

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## Our Core Values

**Responsibility** We strive to ensure we meet our social and financial responsibilities.

**People** We are committed to building and maintaining relationships within our organisation and within the community we serve.

**Respect** We believe in tolerance, acceptance, diversity, and equal treatment for each and every one within the workplace and beyond.

**Partners** We value working in collaboration with other organisations and people to benefit our service users and supporters

**Excellence** We are committed to the highest quality of work, grounded in honesty, integrity, respect, and professionalism.

**Safety** We are dedicated to ensuring the health, safety of our staff, volunteers and anyone who may access our services.

## 2. Our Services

### Sight Support Services

The sight support team assist people who are at risk through sight loss. They are able to provide:

- Assessments of need – a fully trained member of staff will visit the person at home to assess how they are coping and what they might need to remain independent.
- Rehabilitation - an assessment is conducted to ascertain what training is required e.g.in orientation and mobility, cooking and cleaning safely in the home, route planning by public transport.
- Assistive Technology- for many of our clients it could be something we all take for granted that we can help with, e.g., reading the newspaper. Our Assistive Technology team, work with clients to help them choose the most suitable technology for their needs. They can also offer ongoing training and support.

**Counselling** – offered pending funding and availability.

### Community Engagement

Our Community Engagement Co-ordinator supports both clients and volunteers to ensure people with sight loss remain connected to their communities and don't become socially excluded. We do this through our:

**Befriending Service** – clients identified as needing this service are matched with a suitable volunteer who provides the client with support each week to do an activity of their choice or simply to have a chat or a cuppa. these supported partnerships are time limited to a maximum of one year.

**Social Groups** – From Dunfermline to Cupar we have groups who meet on a weekly/fortnightly basis for activities and conversation. These are run by our fantastic volunteers and are hugely popular with clients.

## 3. Volunteer Opportunities and seescape commitment

Every aspect of life is affected when someone's sight is impaired, and volunteers can make all the difference to people. Volunteers can help our clients to enjoy a range of activities in their local community by:

- Volunteering at a Social Group
- Volunteer Befriender on one-to-one basis at home or in the community

Volunteers may also be able to support other areas of seescape's work, for example:

- Volunteer Can Collection Co-ordinator - Fundraising
- Volunteer Event Support e.g. Fundraising
- Volunteer – Admin Support in the office

To make your voluntary involvement with seescape as rewarding as possible, this handbook sets out the commitment that we ask of a volunteer and, in return, what you can expect from us.

Volunteers are individuals and seescape wants to ensure everyone is treated fairly and equally. seescape recognises that volunteers have very different contributions to make and values everyone.

### **seescape commitment**

seescape aims to make your volunteering role enjoyable and meaningful and we will aim to:

- Give you the opportunity to use your skills and experience and acquire new skills to enable the effective support of people with visual impairment throughout Fife.
- Recognise the different experience that you bring and recognise that you are a complement to paid staff and **not** a substitute.
- Give you a clear explanation of what you will be doing and what is expected.
- Prepare you for your volunteer role by providing suitable induction and training.
- Provide regular opportunities for you to meet and socialise with fellow volunteers and staff.
- Give you a **Named Contact** within seescape who you will continue to give you the opportunity to review and reflect on your volunteering and organise follow up training, as necessary.
- Ensure that you have a safe environment in which to conduct your volunteering.

## **4. Roles and responsibilities:**

### **Community Engagement Co-ordinator Responsibilities:**

- Provide induction and training as required (e.g., Induction, Visual Awareness, Guiding Techniques Training).
- Provide adequate safety information to ensure volunteers are competent to undertake their role.
- Give clear guidance on volunteer roles, responsibilities, boundaries, and endings.

- Offer further training to help with the volunteer's growth and development and to meet other identified needs.

### **Volunteer Responsibilities:**

- Adhere to the volunteer role, task description and agreed days/times.
- Adhere to the confidentiality policy.
- Comply with health and safety regulations. Provide details of annual car insurance, tax, and M.O.T and DVLA checks if their volunteering role involves transporting seescape clients.
- Make a regular commitment to volunteering.
- Notify us as soon as possible if you are unable to make a session.
- Notify us as soon as possible of holiday dates.
- Attend any training or meetings.
- Agree to regular communication and support.

### **seescape responsibilities:**

- Provide as safe a working environment as possible and adopt safe working practices as laid out in our policies and procedures (see more in Appendix: list of policies and procedures) Make sure you are aware, when/where and how volunteering will take place.
- Offer you a "taster" volunteer session so that you can decide if a volunteering role is for you. This is not available for Befriending.
- Offer and reimburse appropriate out of pocket travel expenses (details will be provided at your induction).
- seescape has public liability insurance, which includes volunteers (speak to CEC for more details).

## **5. Ongoing Support and Training**

As a charity, seescape seeks to provide opportunities for our volunteers to gain personal development, wherever possible.

Where training is essential to enable the volunteer to carry out their role, this will always be provided by seescape or paid for if provided externally. Training for Volunteer Befrienders can be done remotely with suitable access to resources being determined prior to completion e.g. internet connection and suitable device. Where this isn't possible hard copies can be provided.

We value the contribution of volunteers and will recognise and reward this contribution on a regular basis. Volunteers are invited to special events (i.e. Coffee Mornings) and we will also celebrate their contributions during Volunteers Week, when practical. It is the responsibility of the Community Engagement Coordinator to maintain contact with the volunteers on an ongoing basis and will invite volunteers

together, either remotely (i.e. on Zoom) or in person (i.e. for training events and other meetings).

We ask volunteers to keep in touch regularly by updating the Coordinator on what activity is taking place. This can be done via whatever way the volunteer feels most comfortable with i.e. text, phone call, email. We ask volunteer befrienders to provide a monthly summary of what has taken place with their befriender/s. If there is a cause for concern, health and safety issue, accident, we ask all volunteers to get in touch immediately to inform seescape of the issue.

Individual volunteers can be offered Reflect and Review sessions which are an opportunity to have a more in depth conversation with the CEC about how they feel their volunteering experience is going and set identified goals for how they would like to progress their volunteering journey and experience with seescape.

Volunteers are actively encouraged to provide feedback about their volunteer experience, whether it's through one-to-one meetings, or other methods such as email, phone conversation, or periodic reviews. We always welcome comments and suggestions to improve our services.

## **6. Saying farewell**

The volunteer role may cease for a number of reasons. For example:

- The volunteer role could be for a fixed term e.g., Befriending, admin project or fundraising activity.
- The volunteer role may end where the opportunity or the Befriending match does not develop as anticipated.
- The volunteer role may end when the relationship between volunteer and client evolves into a personal friendship which is no longer a professional service relationship. The role/service may end but the friendship may continue.
- The volunteer role may end due to unforeseen circumstances.
- The volunteer's own circumstances may change.
- The clients' circumstances may change which makes it difficult to continue with support in existing form.

If you are unable to continue volunteering with us, we ask that you let us know through the Community Engagement Co-ordinator. On occasions we may need to end your volunteer involvement (e.g. if your Befriending Partnership has reached over 12 months in duration). This will be done in discussion with those involved.

We also appreciate feedback from volunteers, on an ongoing basis, and when leaving seescape we ask volunteers to provide feedback on their experiences and to help us make improvements.

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**We want your volunteering experience to be an enjoyable and satisfying one and we are always interested in hearing how we can improve.**

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## 7. Thank you and contact details.

Thank you for volunteering with us. We could not do this without you.

For more information on volunteering with seescape please contact Kirsite Henderson on 01592 644 979 (ext.: 2033) or dial: 01592 649 883 (text: 07946 288 712) or email: [kirstie.henderson@seescape.org.uk](mailto:kirstie.henderson@seescape.org.uk)

## 8. Appendix: list of documents related to volunteering

Please speak to the Community Engagement Coordinator at seescape if you wish to receive any of these documents. Some are specific to certain volunteer roles such as Befrienders, others are generic. Your Induction Training with seescape will go into more detail about ones most relevant to your role.

### Volunteer Induction Checklist (forms)

Description	Issued	Notes
<b>Stage 1 Application:</b>		
1. Volunteer Roles Summary		
2. Volunteer Application Form		Returned
3. Volunteer Consent Form		Returned and signed
4. Procedure for recruiting volunteers		



5. Volunteer Roles		
6. Volunteer Group Role Description		
7. Volunteer Befriending Role Description		
8. Recruitment of ex-offenders' policy		
9. Self-declaration		
<b>Stage 2 interview:</b>		
1. Volunteer Reference Request Letter		
2. Volunteer Reference Request Form		Received?
3. PVG seescape Guidance		Actioned via Volunteer Scotland?
<b>Stage 3: Induction:</b>		
1. Handbook Cover		
2. Volunteer Confidentiality and Data Protection Agreement		Returned and signed
3. Volunteer Agreement		Returned and signed
4. Adult & Child Protection Policy for Volunteers		Online training also
5. Lone Volunteering Policy		
6. Volunteer Mileage Claim Form		
7. Bank Details form		
8. Volunteer Travel and Subsistance Policy		
9. Image Permission Form		Sign and return
10. Volunteer Badge advice		Photograph required
11. Volunteers Risk Assessment statement		
12. Risk Assessment Template		
13. Incident Reporting Form		
14. Volunteer Activity Form		

15. Keeping in Touch Form		
16. Secure handling policy		
17. Equality and Diversity Policy		
18. Sighted assistance training leaflet.		
19. Volunteer Review form		
20. Volunteer Supervision Record		
21. Complaints Policy		
<b>Induction – Befriending specific documents:</b>		
1. Resources for Volunteers		
2. Background and boundaries for Volunteers		
3. Managing endings (befriending)		
4. Guidance Advice for Befrienders, (inc. COVID)		
5. Getting to know your Befriender		
6. Handling difficult conversations		
7. Active Listening		
8. Example Befriending Risk assessment (to be read in conjunction with Volunteers Risk Assessment statement (see section above 'General')		
9. COVID risk assessment for befriending visits		<b>If visits taking place</b>
<b>Induction – Group specific documents:</b>		
1. Group Guidelines (general and COVID-19)		<b>When meetings taking place.</b>
2. Premises and Risk assessment guidance		
3. Group planning events		
4. Fire Action		
5. Hygiene basics		

<b>Volunteer Training (other):</b>	<b>Booked</b>	<b>Completed</b>
Adult & Child Protection Training (online course)		
<b>Other non essential:</b>		
Communication (seescape refresher)		
Making a Positive Difference (seescape refresher)		
Health and hygiene certificate (external and fee)		

Last updated January 2022

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