

1.1 Volunteer policy



Brake is a road safety charity dedicated to preventing road death and injury and supporting those bereaved or injured in road crashes. Brake employs a small team of paid staff who are greatly assisted by a network of volunteers. Brake takes time, and care, promoting volunteering opportunities, welcoming volunteers, and liaising with volunteers. This policy explains how we do these things for the benefit of the charity.

If you are considering volunteering, please do so. Your help will be greatly appreciated and will really make a difference. If you are an existing volunteer, our continued thanks for your ongoing dedication and support of the charity.

Purpose

This policy aims to:

- help the charity maintain and grow an effective network of volunteers through good practice management of volunteers;
- ensure volunteers are treated in a fair and consistent way;
- help volunteers understand what they can expect from the charity;
- enable volunteering for Brake to be a positive experience that assists the charity achieve its work;
- protects both the charity and volunteers from reputational damage or any other kind of harm.

Why Brake welcomes volunteers, and types of volunteer roles available

Brake's strategy is to engage as many people as possible. Together we are stronger. We believe volunteers are a crucial asset, helping us carry out our work. Volunteers can carry out many activities, ranging from fundraising, to educating and campaigning, to helping out in our offices.

Examples of volunteering at Brake include:

- Community fundraising on behalf of Brake
- Giving presentations about road safety in schools
- Promoting Brake's Road Safety Week locally, for example in a workplace
- Running local road safety campaigns, or supporting national campaigns
- Giving media interviews about personal experiences (most commonly if affected by a road crash)
- Helping Brake in our head office

Who can volunteer for Brake?

Lots of different people volunteer for Brake. They are united by a shared enthusiasm and passion for Brake's work.

Brake volunteers have a wide range of differing talents and skills, and Brake has a range of volunteering opportunities to suit different people. Volunteering for Brake can also help people to develop skills further.

Some volunteers have particular talents that they use to help Brake; for example volunteers have sung, Baked for Brake, and taken part in a wide range of sporting activities as part of events that aim to raise funds and awareness of the charity.

Some volunteers have particular skills that can assist us. Some volunteers have strong communication skills (for example the ability to talk in front of a group of people). Some have useful organisational skills (for example the ability to arrange a fundraising event). Some have great social skills (for example the ability to persuade others to support road safety). Other volunteers are fantastic at administrative tasks.

Whoever you are, if you share our enthusiasm and passion for road safety, then you probably have a talent or skill that can enable you to be a great volunteer.

Why volunteer for Brake

There are many different reasons people volunteer for Brake. These include the opportunities to:

- make a positive contribution to Brake's work;
- interact with like-minded people;
- develop personal talents and skills further through volunteering experiences.

Many Brake volunteers have a personal reason for being passionate about Brake's work. For example, because they have been bereaved or injured in a road crash, or know someone who has been affected in this way, or have witnessed the devastation of road crashes in their community, or are concerned about road safety and sustainability issues in their community. Whatever motivates our volunteers, Brake welcomes all volunteers who can help us.

Volunteer management policy

1 Responsibility for volunteer management

Brake's volunteer manager is generally responsible for the overall organisation of recruitment, training and supervision of volunteers although other staff may share this duty, for example staff responsible for particular volunteer-led projects.

2 Recruitment of volunteers

Brake will actively promote its volunteering opportunities. It will ensure volunteering opportunities are promoted effectively through our website, social and traditional media, marketing opportunities, and other means within our capacity. Brake will follow its Equal Opportunities Policy when recruiting volunteers.

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3 Selection of volunteers for particular tasks

Brake will take care to match volunteering opportunities to the right volunteers, considering a volunteer's interests, talents and skill areas. We will listen to our volunteers with care, considering their views and thoughts about what they can offer the charity, harnessing their enthusiasms and abilities.

4 "Approved volunteers"

Volunteers are required to inform Brake, and seek permission from the volunteer manager, before carrying out activities where they are claiming to be an official Brake representative, approved to say things on Brake's behalf.

Usually this applies to the work of volunteers:

- a) in organisational environments who are carrying out road safety / road crash victim awareness raising work (for example in schools, nurseries, companies, clubs, police forces, etc),
- b) in the media (often volunteers who have a story to tell about their own experiences, for example their bereavement or injury).

Volunteers with permission to do such work are called "approved volunteers". They will be approved through a process that will include an interview with Brake and/or training from Brake that they pass. Protocols stipulating this process are kept up to date and followed by Brake.

Brake keeps a protected list of its approved volunteers.

5 Safety of vulnerable people

Brake requires any volunteer carrying out activities in the name of Brake in an environment involving children or other people who can be described as vulnerable to be checked against the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

As part of this process Brake will request to see the DBS check.

(This DBS policy excludes people operating in organisations to which they already belong, for example a parent working in a school their child goes to, or an employee working in their own company.)

6 Sensitivity to the needs of bereaved and injured volunteers "telling their story" and offers of support

Some of Brake's volunteering opportunities include enabling bereaved and injured volunteers to "tell their story", for example to the media or through a presentation. As a provider of support to people bereaved and injured by road crashes, Brake is aware that this volunteering task can often be emotionally very challenging. While it is impossible to generalise, and everyone is different, many people bereaved or injured in road crashes find this task easier to undertake two or more years after the crash. For this reason, Brake has a policy of suggesting such volunteering opportunities to bereaved or injured people at that stage and not sooner. However, Brake respects and encourages the rights of bereaved and injured people to speak about their experiences at any time.

Brake staff are required without fail to ensure that any volunteer who is bereaved or injured is aware of Brake's support services, inclusive of our victim support helpline, providing emotional, practical and procedural advice and advocacy services for road crash victims. Volunteers should be reminded that services like the helpline are entirely confidential and that Brake staff working outside of the helpline team, for example, cannot access these records.

When preparing to "tell their story" Brake works in partnership with volunteers to ensure the story:

- is factually accurate;
- does not cause any risk of libel or slander (for example, not accusing someone of a criminal offence if not proven in law);

- does not invade privacy (for example, revealing names and addresses not previously in the public domain);
- if campaign points are raised, that these are in line with Brake's campaigns.

7 Instruction of volunteers

Brake will ensure volunteers are fully prepared and instructed with regard to their volunteering task, and given tasks that they are able to undertake. We will match level of instruction appropriately to the demands of the task. In some cases, little instruction is required. For other tasks, significant instruction may be required, including assessment of a volunteer's suitability to undertake a task.

8 Tools for volunteers

As well as instructing volunteers, Brake will ensure volunteers are given the right tools to do their job effectively, for example, promotional materials and online guidance. Brake will also ensure that tools are regularly reviewed and developed accordingly.

9 Listening to our volunteers

Brake volunteers have a wealth of experience of delivering Brake's work. Their views are invaluable and can help us to develop our opportunities and tools for volunteers. Brake staff will actively seek opportunities to listen to our volunteers, and where possible harness their ideas in development of our work.

10 Monitoring of volunteers

Brake is committed to quality improvement. Volunteers engaged in delivery of a Brake service (for example, delivering road safety presentations on behalf of Brake) may be required to have their standard of delivery monitored at any time, or required to provide feedback to the charity, of any kind reasonably required by the charity, regarding the activities they have undertaken and the outcomes of those activities.

11 Ceasing of volunteering

Volunteers can choose to cease volunteering for Brake whenever they wish, and can inform the volunteer manager of this either by phone or email. Brake is extremely grateful to its volunteers for their time but understands they may not be able to volunteer every time or may choose to withdraw from this type of support in the future. On rare occasions, Brake can require a volunteer to cease volunteering (this could happen, for example, if a volunteer refused to follow Brake's instructions or was misrepresenting the charity). Volunteers will be informed of this by the volunteer manager, including in writing.

12 Travel for volunteering purposes

Volunteers are encouraged to consider the safety and sustainability of their travel arrangements when going somewhere for Brake purposes. All volunteers are encouraged to sign the Brake Pledge if they drive, and choose to walk, cycle or ride public transport if possible.

13 Expenses

On occasion, certain expenses may be refunded by Brake but only if pre-arranged with Brake. In order to claim expenses, the volunteer will be sent, and must return, an expenses form along with receipts for all expenditure.

14 Support of volunteers

Brake's volunteer manager, or another employee in that team, aims to be readily available to volunteers (during normal office hours) to chat over the phone, or via social media or email, about their volunteering. There will always be access to assistance, advice, a listening ear and a shoulder to lean on. This support helps Brake staff and our volunteers to forge a close and effective working relationship. Volunteers are encouraged to access this support by staying in touch with their primary Brake contact.

15 Thanking and developing volunteers

Brake will always say thank you and show appreciation to volunteers for a job well done. We will also seek opportunities to help our volunteers to develop in their volunteering, by reviewing with them what they have achieved and what they may go on to achieve, brainstorming with them additional approaches and ideas.

16 Insurance

Brake has a valid public liability insurance policy covering relevant volunteering activities.

17 Resolving problems

It is Brake's aim that volunteering for Brake is a positive experience. However, if a volunteer wishes to raise any issues about the quality of their volunteering experience, they are encouraged to do so. They should firstly talk to their Brake contact. Alternatively, they can call Lisa Kendall, volunteer manager, on 01484 683294 or email lkendall@brake.org.uk.

If a volunteer wishes to make a formal complaint they can request Brake's complaint policy from the volunteer manager or access it online at www.brake.org.uk (type complaints policy into to the Brake search box).