



AidBoxConnections

**Alleviating isolation, building friendships and
communities**

April 2023 Volunteer Handbook

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www.aidboxcommunity.co.uk

Registered Charity No. 1172697



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Introduction

Aid Box **Connections** 10 Week Program

Aims

To alleviate isolation and develop friendships that will last beyond the program for people who have been displaced and are now settling in Bristol.

How will we achieve this?

- You will be matched with someone who has been referred to the service, we will try and match you with someone who has similar age or interests.
- For the 10 weeks you will be in contact via the phone, WhatsApp or whichever means of communication works best for you both.
- The aim is to build a friendship *you are not a support worker providing a service* However your connection friend may have some practical problems or need support with health, housing, legal advice etc so we will provide you with a sign posting guide so that you can help your friend access the service they may need. Referring to the experts is crucial so that you can concentrate on being a friend.
- After the 10 weeks you can both decide if you want to leave the program as friends!



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Induction, Training, Reports and Ongoing Wellbeing Support:

To volunteer for ABC you must

- Provide 2 references
- Hold a current 'Basic' DBS certificate or share Enhanced DBS with 'Update Service' details
- Attend ALL required induction and training sessions
- Attend weekly/bi-weekly volunteer Wellbeing support sessions
- Complete weekly ONLINE reports

Online Report Form Link :

<https://forms.office.com/r/diZY4PdMeY>

Signposting Guide Link:

Updated version will be shared via email

Induction Training:

- *Introduction to & Voices of ABC (Hosted in person by ABC)*
- *Introduction to Connections (Hosted on Zoom by ABC)*
- *Asylum in the UK (CoHost: Elinor Harris, Bristol Hospitality Network)*
- *Safeguarding & Boundaries (CoHost: Elinor Harris, Bristol Hospitality Network)*

Zoom Connections Volunteer training session logins

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81268030056?pwd=SVBTSWg2c0RQaWE2dWN1K05la3VIZz09>

Meeting ID: 812 6803 0056

Passcode: Volunteer

Volunteer weekly Wellbeing Support sessions

*Wednesdays 1pm-2pm OR 6.30pm - 7.30pm

Zoom Logins for ALL Wellbeing support sessions

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81370160726?pwd=TEVJSjNnV3hvcEtJa3kzNTZ1UTlVQT09>

Meeting ID: 813 7016 0726

Passcode: Connection



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Structure of the 10 week Volunteer Connections Program

Once you have completed your induction and training we will connect you to your friend by giving you both only names and telephone numbers.

You will then call your new friend to introduce yourself and talk about how best and when you would both like to be in touch.

Over the 10 weeks ABC will be in close contact with both of you and provide support for you with a weekly zoom. You will record each contact and flag any concerns you may have so that if necessary ABC can support your friend further.

Week 1 - 4

-Report Form: Fill in report form a minimum of once per week to flag any concerns . Contact Naomi directly by phone if any urgent concerns.

-Volunteer Wellbeing Sessions: Attend one session per week: Wednesdays 1pm-2pm OR 6.30pm - 7.30pm

Week 4 - 10

--Report Form: Continue to fill in online report weekly (Unless you have concerns or an incident that need reporting, in which case fill in report form or contact Naomi as appropriate)

-Volunteer Wellbeing Sessions: These will be held on weeks 6, 8 and 10. Attendance is encouraged but optional.

Week 5

Assessment calls will be organised with 'Connection Friends'.

If all is well, both parties would at this point have the option to meet - though there is no obligation.

If both 'Connection Friends' wish to meet, friends MUST meet somewhere public, like a park and this MUST be followed up with a report.

We will discuss this further in supervision sessions

Week 10

You and your friend will fill in a 10 week assessment form where you can indicate your preference for the next steps.

A) Leave the program. Continue friendship outside of ABC remit

B) Stay on the program - all going well but prefer to stay within ABC review in 4 weeks

c) Friendship has not developed - either connect with someone else or leave the program.



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Do's & Don'ts

Do's

Chat, have fun, listen, share ideas about how to keep busy.

- Signpost your Link to other services using guidance given - The purpose of this program is to create friendships, you are not a Keyworker or a support worker however your friend may need practical help so we have a comprehensive signposting guide to support you to enable your friend to access the services they need (You will receive a copy of ABCs Signposting Guide via email)
- Escalate any non-urgent welfare concerns about your friend via the report form (this will be checked on Mondays or Thursdays or directly to Imogen and Naomi)
- Keep a record of each phone contact on the report form
- Report Urgent safeguarding concerns

Don'ts

- Do not give advice (giving well meaning advice can result in putting the person in danger, instead refer to the services who can give advice safely)
- **Do not visit in person until discussed**
- Do not make any promises

Important Information

If you have any concerns for your friend or their family you must communicate these via the report form or contact Naomi or Imogen directly. If you feel your friend is in immediate danger you must call 999.

Imogen - imogen@aidboxcommunity.co.uk - 07870 645 605 (10am-4pm Mon - Thurs)

Naomi - naomi@aidboxcommunity.co.uk - 07378 684 891 (9.30am-3pm Mon - Thurs)

With your help we can make sure that many of our most vulnerable service users feel looked after and a little less isolated.

Thank you x



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Confidentiality

You will have access to personal information about your friend. Legally, people are entitled to have their confidentiality respected and if breaches of this confidentiality occur, they can take legal action. It is crucial that ABC service user identity and information remains confidential unless exceptional circumstances occur.

All volunteers must adhere to this whilst volunteering for ABC and even after leaving ABC.

You must **ONLY** discuss your friends details with those who need to know within ABC. Please think carefully about the privacy of an environment – could anyone hear for whom the conversation is not intended? Could you go somewhere more private to have a conversation if necessary?

Please ensure that any confidential information is safely disposed of and that any personal information is kept securely.

Boundary setting and keeping yourself safe

- Always follow policies and Procedures
- Talk to the organisation manager, volunteer coordinator or Imogen if you have any concerns or need to talk about a situation you have been involved in or just need some support
- Respect confidentiality at all times
- Keep your details up to date with the volunteer coordinator
- DO NOT give out your address
- DO NOT PROVIDE ANY ADVICE; Asylum advice, financial advice or medical advice
- DO NOT Visit in Person
- DO NOT Make any promises
- DO NOT do something you do not feel comfortable doing
- DO NOT talk about a customer to anyone outside ABC or to anyone who does not need
- DO NOT give or receive any gifts



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Safeguarding

(Please make sure that you have read the full ABC safeguarding policy that you have been sent)

Safeguarding means to protect the health, well being and human rights of individuals. Safeguarding at ABC means to enable adults to retain their independence, well-being and choice and live a life free from abuse and neglect.

- If you suspect that your friend is in immediate danger of harm to themselves or another person you must call 999.
- If you suspect that your friend is at risk of harm but not in immediate danger you must report this via the report form or directly to Naomi or Imogen who will pick this up and follow safeguarding procedures.

You may need to write down details of an incident or concern . The Safeguarding team will escalate concerns where necessary.

If someone tells you of abuse or a feeling of wanting to harm themselves or others - Remain calm • Listen carefully • Reassure them that they will be taken seriously • Do not promise confidentiality as it is essential that you **SHARE** the information with certain people who will need to know.

It is essential that you **DO NOT PANIC** It is essential that you **PASS INFORMATION ON** *You will be supported by ABC*

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Imogen McIntosh - 07870 645 605



Vicarious Trauma

Sometimes in your volunteering role with AidBoxConnections, you will work with survivors of trauma. Sometimes this can have an impact on us. You may develop symptoms in response to being exposed to the trauma of others. This is known as 'Vicarious' or 'Secondary Trauma'.

It can be overwhelming and lead to burn out.

Common Signs of Vicarious Trauma

Reference: <https://www.bma.org.uk/advice/work-life-support/your-wellbeing/vicarious-trauma>).

If you are currently or have recently been working with survivors of traumatic incidents or torture survivors, you should be aware of the following signs.

This could indicate that you are suffering from vicarious trauma.

- Experiencing lingering feelings of anger, rage and sadness about persons victimisation
- Becoming overly involved emotionally with the person
- Experiencing bystander guilt, shame, feelings of self-doubt
- Being preoccupied with thoughts of person outside of the volunteer situation
- Over identification with the person (having horror and rescue fantasies)
- Loss of hope, pessimism, cynicism; Distancing, numbing, detachment, cutting person off, staying busy. Avoiding listening to person's story of traumatic experiences
- Difficulty in maintaining professional boundaries with the person, such as over extending self (trying to do more than is in the role to help the person).



Strategies for reducing risk of vicarious trauma If you feel you may be suffering from vicarious trauma

Try following these coping strategies to reduce the risks-

- Check how you are doing - recognise and chart your signs of stress, vicarious trauma and burnout
- Take care of yourself emotionally - engage in relaxing and self-soothing activities, nurture selfcare
- Look after your physical and mental wellbeing; Maintain a healthy work/life balance - have outside interests
- Be realistic about what you can accomplish - avoid wishful thinking
- Don't take on responsibility for your patients' wellbeing but supply them with tools to look after themselves
- Balance your caseload - mix of more and less traumatised clients, victims and non-victims
- Take regular breaks, take time off when you need to; Seek social support from colleagues, family members; Use a buddy system; Use peer support and opportunities to debrief
- Take up training opportunities
- If you need it, take up time-limited group or individual therapy
- There are also significant organisational factors that can increase the risk of a person being vicariously traumatised, which should be assessed and addressed. If you think that you may be affected by vicarious trauma and you need support, contact your team leader.



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Rights and Responsibilities

Aid Box Community has the right to:

- Make decisions about appropriate placement of its volunteers.
- Review volunteer performance according to organisation policies and procedures.
- Expect volunteers to perform the given tasks to the best of their ability, be prompt and reliable.
- Set the parameters and guidelines of the volunteer work positions.
- Request the completion of a DBS application form in some cases.
- Insist volunteers are not to be left alone with our customers until a valid DBS check has been completed
- Release a volunteer who is considered to be incompatible with a volunteer role.

Aid Box Community has responsibility to:

- Provide a clear outline of duties
- Provide orientation and necessary training
- Set clear lines of communication about complaints and conflict resolution procedures
- Provide safe, healthy working conditions
- Include volunteers in relevant decision making processes
- Provide supervision and support
- Provide emergency procedures guideline
- Provide required documentation relating to the volunteer work to be undertaken Rights and Responsibilities of Volunteers at Aid Box Community
- Take complaints seriously. To escalate any concerns you feel have not been resolved satisfactorily contact Robin Adlem robin@aidboxcommunity.co.uk



Rights & Responsibilities of the Volunteers

As a volunteer you have the right to:

- Work in a healthy and safe environment
- Be engaged in accordance with equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation
- Be given accurate and truthful information about the organisation for which you are volunteering
- Be given a copy of the organisation policies and procedures that affect your role
- Not to fill a position previously held by a paid worker
- Have a role description and agreed hours contribution
- Be provided with orientation to the organisation and the role
- Have your confidential and personal information dealt with in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018.
- Be provided with appropriate training and support to carry out your role

As a volunteer you have the responsibility to:

- Uphold the mission values of ABC and not act in any manner which may affect ABCs reputation.
- Be reliable
- Respect confidentiality
- Be accountable for your actions
- Be committed to the organisation
- Undertake training as required by the organisation
- Ask for support when you need it
- Let the organisation know as early as possible if you are unable to fulfil your role
- Be courteous to customers, staff and other volunteers
- Raise any issues you may have with the organisation and not denigrate the organisation to clients, staff or other volunteers
- Give notice before you leave the organisation

Emergency Contacts

Emergency 999

Free

Police, Ambulance, Fire Brigade, Coast Guard, Cliff, Mountain, Cave Rescue

Non - Emergency 101

Free

Police - for non emergencies noone is in immediate danger or to report a crime

Non- Emergency Medical

111 Free

Use this for illnesses and minor injuries where life isn't threatened, but you would like some advice on what to do next. Calls are free.

Domestic Violence help line

0808 2000 247

Free

Call us, 24-hours a day, for free and in confidence.

Need Someone to talk to

Samaritians 116 123

24/7 Free

Calls to this helpline number do not appear on phone bills. Samaritans is available round the clock, every single day of the year, providing a safe place for anyone who is struggling to cope.

Hospitals and Accident & Emergency

Bristol Royal Infirmary (also Accident and Emergency

Department) Marlborough Street, Bristol, BS2 8HW Tel: 0117 923 0000

Bristol Royal Hospital for Children Paul O'Gorman Building, Upper

Maudlin Street, Bristol BS2 8BJ Tel: 0117 342 8460

Southmead Hospital Southmead Road, Bristol, BS10 5NB Tel: 0117

950 6383 **Accident and Emergency** The Emergency Department has moved to Gate 35, Level 0, Brunel building, Southmead Hospital, BS10 5NB.

Frenchay Hospital Frenchay Park Road, Bristol, BS16 1LE Tel: 0117

970 1212

Walk in GP Centres

Bristol Walk-In Centre (GP Centre) 35 Broad Street, Bristol, BS1

2EZ Tel: 0117 906 9610 Opening Hours – Mon – Sat 8.00 am – 8.00

pm Sun/Bank Holidays – 10.00 am – 6.00 pm

Boots Broadmead (walk-in centre & GP surgery)

59-63 Broadmead, Bristol, BS1 3EA Tel: 0117 929 3631

Eyes

Eye Hospital

Lower Maudlin Street, Bristol, BS1 2LX Tel: 0117 9284613

Dental

Dental Hospital

Lower Maudlin Street, Bristol, BS1 2LY Tel: 0117 9230050 Bristol



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Definitions

Asylum Seeker:

Asylum Seeker someone who has arrived in a country and asked for asylum.

Asylum is when a government accepts that your home country is unable or unwilling to ensure your protection and allows you to remain in their country to stay safe.

In the UK being an asylum seeker means that you do not have the same rights as a British citizen would. For example, people seeking asylum aren't allowed to work.

The right to seek asylum is a legal right we all share. It isn't illegal to seek asylum, because seeking asylum is a legal process. If your claim for asylum is rejected, it also does not mean you have done anything illegal – it just means you have not been able to meet the extremely strict criteria to prove your need for protection as a refugee.

Refugee

Once someone is determined as needing protection, they become known as a refugee.

Until they receive a decision as to whether they are a refugee or not, they are known as an asylum seeker.

A Refugee is

- Person outside of their country of origin
- Unable or unwilling to get protection from their own state
- Unwilling where the state is doing the persecution or is colluding with the persecution i.e., police stand back and watch (gay people)
- Unable - there is no recognised effective state, a country has fallen apart
- A well-founded fear of persecution (UK's interpretation of this - An abuse or denial of a fundamental human right i.e. right to life or liberty)

The persecutions must be due to

- Race
- Religion
- Nationality
- Political opinion
- Membership of a particular social group (i.e. women at risk of FGM, Learning difficulties, homosexuality)



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Definitions Continued...

Living in a Warzone is not on this list! So, a lot of people arrive in the UK from the crossfire of war thinking they will get asylum, however as 'war' is not included, personal persecution asylum is not guaranteed.

The UK does have 'Humanitarian protection' This is where you do not fulfil the Refugee criteria, but you are at immediate risk of persecution from war so you may get 2-or 3-years humanitarian protection. This can be renewed if the country is still unsafe, and you are still at immediate risk of persecution.

The home office makes a decision as to whether they feel your 'fear of persecution' is 'well founded' and therefore is open to interpretation by the individual in the home office.

The Home office will be looking for reasons for Asylum Seekers to fail their application. For example, you may have fled your country because you were genuinely persecuted by militia or at risk of gender-based violence, but your asylum claim may be rejected because it was determined that your home country should be able to provide adequate protection against these dangers.

Refused Asylum Seeker

A person whose asylum application has been unsuccessful and who has no other claim for protection awaiting a decision. Some refused asylum seekers voluntarily return home, others are forcibly returned. For some, it is not safe or practical to return until conditions in their country change.



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Thank you

Thank you for volunteering with Aid Box Community and enabling us to support vulnerable refugees and asylum seekers in Bristol.

You are a crucial part of our ABC jigsaw and we are truly grateful for all of your efforts.

We hope that you enjoy your time with us .