

Wimbledon Guild Volunteer Handbook



Wimbledon
Guild

Where no one has to face
life's challenges alone

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Welcome

We've been supporting people in Merton for more than 100 years. Whether you started volunteering with us recently or have been part of Wimbledon Guild for many years, we really value your contribution. As a volunteer, you help us support our local community and connect with people of different ages, backgrounds, and experiences. We couldn't do it without you and look forward to what we can achieve together in the future.



We want to do all we can to help you settle into your role. This handbook will give you some helpful information and act as a handy guide while you volunteer with us. You can get in touch with the Volunteer Programme Team at any time, and we're all here to support you every step of the way.

Welcome to the volunteer team!

Wendy

Wendy Pridmore
Chief Executive

How we can help

We're a community charity in Merton offering practical help and support, so people never have to face life's challenges alone.

If someone is worried about money, they're feeling low or overwhelmed, or they're looking for new friends and activities locally, we can help.

Below is a summary of the support we offer. If someone needs our help please ask them to call 020 8946 0735 or email info@wimbledonguild.co.uk to speak to a member of our team.

We can help when someone...



Wants to try something new

Are they keen to try Pilates, have a go at tap dancing or get in touch with their inner artist? There's always a new experience to enjoy with our fun and friendly classes, clubs and talks for people over 50.



Wants to meet new people

Like our activities, our busy HomeFood Café is a great place to build friendships and enjoy a healthy meal at a reasonable price. Or, if someone can't get out, we'll connect them with someone local who'll happily pop round for a regular cuppa and a chat.



Is feeling low

They can talk to a therapist one-to-one or join one of our friendly groups to tackle difficult feelings and emotions.



Is worried about money

From replacing broken appliances to supporting with bills, warm clothes or sorting school uniforms, we can help make sure they've got the things they need right now. We can also help with accessing welfare benefits and debt advice.



Has lost someone close to them

If someone needs to talk, we're here to listen. We'll help them explore their emotions and work out what life looks like going forwards.



Wants to stay independent

Whether it's arranging transport, adapting their home, or support to continue doing the things they love, we're here to help. We can also assist with getting them the care they need or talk to health and social care organisations.

You can always check with any WG staff and we'll be happy to help.



**Click here
to watch
the WG
video**

How you make a difference

Our volunteer team help us deliver our services and connect with our local community.

» Befriending Volunteers

Befriending Volunteers provide conversation to individuals who live alone and may otherwise go days without seeing another person. Our volunteers stay in touch with weekly or fortnightly visits and phone calls, making sure their clients feel connected and engaged.



“I signed up to the befriending service hoping to try and make a difference to someone’s life. I soon realised it makes such a positive difference to my life too.” - **Lucy**



» Community Garden Volunteers

Garden Volunteers follow wildlife-friendly, organic, and permaculture ‘no dig’ methods to grow everything from seed. The produce is used in our HomeFood Café, and the waste generated from the café is composted and returned to the Community Garden.

Throughout the year, the garden also hosts plant sales, and activities for schools and corporate groups.

“I love gardening and seeing things grow, especially when I know the food is going to the HomeFood Café.” - **Yu-Cheng**

» Event Volunteers

Event Volunteers greet people at our fundraising events, providing guidance and assistance during live performances and activities. The team sell raffle tickets, collect donations, and encourage participants to share photographs on social media. Event Volunteers also help set up and pack away the event, while promoting our services throughout the day.



“I gain more than I put in with each experience. I volunteer once or twice every year, but I can give back at a time that works around my life and work commitments.” - Mildred

» Exercise Class Volunteers

Exercise Class Volunteers make sure the class runs smoothly by welcoming participants, signing them in, and accepting payments. They assist individuals with mobility challenges as directed by the class instructor and actively participate in the session, chatting with clients before and after to make everyone feel included.

“Volunteering here deepens my bond with the community, turning small gestures into grand transformations.” - Emily



» HomeFood Café Volunteers

With support from our café chef, volunteers contribute to recipes, prepare and serve freshly cooked meals, take orders and payments, help set up the space for lunch, and clear away afterwards. They also chat to guests, providing company to those who may be on their own and appreciate a friendly chat.



“I’m so glad I can use my previous experience... It’s a really fun atmosphere and the team are so supportive.” - **Christian**



» Social Activity Volunteers

Social Activity Volunteers help plan and host weekly activities for small groups. From knitting and Film Fridays to Men’s Space, volunteers create an inclusive and welcoming atmosphere that encourages new participants to engage, and connect with others.

“It gets me out the house, it provides structure to the week and it’s an opportunity to meet new people.” - **Liam**

» Talking Therapies Volunteers

Our counsellors/therapists who are on a training placement or volunteering after qualification provide a valuable and professional service to those most in need.



Your volunteer experience

Visit our Wimbledon Guild website's 'Volunteer Resources' page for project-specific guidance packs, policies, procedures, and helpful information. Access the page with the password: Info4Volunteers!

Key contacts

In your WG Volunteer Induction Pack, which you received after your in-person or online induction, you'll find staff member names and phone numbers that will be useful during your time with us.

Designated point of contact

To make sure you feel supported and confident in your role, you will be allocated a dedicated Wimbledon Guild staff member. This person is your go-to contact for any questions, concerns, or suggestions while you volunteer with us. They will check in with you regularly to see how you're doing and to make sure you're enjoying your experience.

If you're unable to volunteer on a specific day due to illness or any other reason, please give our WG reception a call at 020 8946 0735, and the team will inform your designated point of contact. If you know in advance that you will be on holiday or unavailable to volunteer on certain dates, feel free to let your designated point of contact know in person or via email.

Induction

Every volunteer receives an induction led by the Volunteer Programme team and your designated point of contact. During this session, we'll cover all the essentials: a detailed look at your role, key contacts for support, fire safety, first aid procedures, safeguarding, and boundaries. Once your references are complete, we'll conduct a DBS check and ask you to complete any necessary eLearning modules, which you can do remotely or in person at Wimbledon Guild. However, if you're a Befriending Volunteer, we will ask you to complete your DBS check and eLearning modules once you have been matched with a client.

Training

As a volunteer, we want to make sure you feel fully prepared for your role. iHASCO provides training tailored to your volunteer position, along with access to over 150 optional short courses for your personal development. The platform is compatible with any device, features closed captions and can be translated into 35 languages. We kindly ask all volunteers to complete refresher training every two years. If you're interested in exploring additional training sessions, inform your designated point of contact. The Volunteer Programme team offers optional in-person training sessions throughout the year, including visual impairment awareness and wheelchair training. If there's a specific training you'd like us to hold in person, just let us know.

Befriending Volunteer	Safeguarding Adults (Level 2)
Community Garden Volunteer	Safeguarding Adults (Level 2)
Exercise Class Volunteer	Safeguarding Adults (Level 2)
Event Volunteer	Safeguarding Adults (Level 2)
HomeFood Cafe Volunteer (Kitchen)	Safeguarding Adults (Level 2) Food Safety & Hygiene (Level 1) Food Allergy Awareness
HomeFood Café Volunteer (Front of House)	Safeguarding Adults (Level 2) Food Safety & Hygiene (Level 1)
Social Activities Volunteer	Safeguarding Adults (Level 2)

Induction Review

After four weeks in the Volunteer Programme, we ask all volunteers to complete a short online [WG Volunteer Induction Review Form](#) or if you prefer, we can catch up in person or over a phone call. This brief form will help us understand if you need any additional training, if there's anything you haven't been shown yet, or if there are specific areas where you'd like more information.

Depending on your role and based on the feedback you provide; your designated point of contact will arrange an informal Volunteer Induction Review meeting. This is a great chance for you to share your thoughts and ensure you have all the resources you need to feel confident and supported in your role.

If, for any reason, the role isn't what you expected or if you're not enjoying it, this meeting is the perfect time to discuss any concerns, questions, or feedback in detail. We're here to help, and we can explore next steps together. Likewise, if we've received any feedback from staff, volunteers, or clients, we'll be sure to share that with you too.

Expenses

To make sure you're not out of pocket while volunteering, you can claim approved expenses. This includes up to £5 per day for travel (whether it's mileage, tram, train, or Oyster Card). If you volunteer for more than 5 hours, you can enjoy a meal or claim up to £7 for reimbursement. Befriending Volunteers who meet clients in the community can also claim up to £7 for food or refreshments. Once you've completed our expenses form, simply send a copy via email or in person, and you can expect your reimbursement by bank transfer (BACS) within two weeks. Please note that we can't process expenses that are older than three months, those submitted without receipts, or expenses that haven't been pre-approved.

The online volunteer expenses form can be found [here](#) and you can request a hardcopy from your designated point of contact.



Keep us updated

We're here to make your volunteer experience enjoyable and rewarding, and we're happy to make reasonable adjustments where possible. We ask all volunteers to complete our WG Volunteer Induction Form when they join. If there are any changes to your contact information, emergency contact, support needs, or medical conditions, you can update your details at any time by clicking on the form below or by informing your designated point of contact.

[WG Volunteer: Updating My Information Form](#)

The details you provide will be automatically updated in our database, and you can easily access and review them whenever you volunteer with us. Thank you for helping us keep everything up to date!

Socials

As a gesture of appreciation, we invite our volunteers to informal friendly gatherings at Wimbledon Guild and various venues in Merton. These socials offer a great opportunity to meet staff and volunteers in different roles, enjoy a free lunch and connect in a relaxed setting. We always value your feedback on how we can improve these events, so please feel free to share your thoughts with your designated point of contact.



Try a different volunteer role

While volunteering with us, you may wish to explore different volunteer roles or assist at fundraising events. You can stay informed about the latest opportunities through our monthly newsletters, volunteer opportunities on our website, or by contacting your designated point of contact who will put you in touch with our Volunteer Programme team.

Taking a break

We understand that life can be unpredictable, and sometimes you may need to step back from volunteering. If you need a break, just let your designated point of contact know. After three months, they'll check in with you to see how you're doing and chat about whether you're ready to return or would prefer to extend your break. Depending on the role, we might need to fill your position temporarily, but rest assured, your point of contact will keep you in the loop.

WhatsApp

We use WhatsApp groups to help our volunteers stay connected and up to date with everything happening in their roles. If you'd like to join a WG volunteer WhatsApp group, just let us know. Please note your phone number will be visible to other volunteers and WG staff members in the group. We ask that everyone keeps conversations respectful, uses an appropriate tone, and only shares content that's relevant and suitable for

the purpose of the group. Our WG staff will act as the admins to make sure everything runs smoothly. If you have any concerns speak to your designated point of contact.

Saying goodbye

If you decide it's time to stop volunteering, just let your designated point of contact know as soon as you can, and this helps us share the news with those you support and volunteer with. When you're ready to step away, the Volunteer Programme team will send you an email with a link to our [**WG Volunteer: Volunteer Experience Exit Form**](#) so that we can improve our volunteer programme or the services we deliver. We'll ask you to return your WG lanyard, and we'll update our system by pausing your access to our monthly newsletter, and eLearning platform, and marking your status as 'exited' in our database. If you would prefer an in-person exit interview, that's no problem and just let your designated point of contact know. If you ever decide to return, just reach out to the Volunteer Programme team as you won't need to complete a new volunteer application with us.

References

All volunteers can request a reference from the Volunteer Programme team at any time. While we can't complete external documents, we're happy to provide you with a reference document for job applications, education, or other volunteering opportunities.

Taking care of yourself and others

As a volunteer, please adhere to our policies and procedures to ensure a safe and positive volunteering experience. We are committed to providing you with the necessary information, training, and support for your role. Take a moment to review the essential information below to ensure your safety and that of those around you. Our policies can be found on the [Volunteer Resources](#) page on our website, and you can request a policy at any point.



Insurance

WG volunteers are covered by our insurance whilst carrying out tasks listed in the volunteer role description only.

Volunteers aged 86+ are not covered by our travel/personal accident insurance, please contact us if this affects you.

No policy can guarantee your safety so please be aware of risks not covered in your role description and take steps to protect yourself.

Data protection and confidentiality

Making sure personal information is safe is crucial. Please be mindful of keeping any information, whether about our staff, those we support, or fellow volunteers, confidential and secure. This applies to both digital and hardcopy formats. As you volunteer, you may come across personal information relevant to your role, shared verbally, digitally, or in hard copy.

We provide support to help you comply with data protection (GDPR requirements). Feel free to request a copy of our Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy at any time.



Driving

If you're considering using your own car to drive individuals while volunteering with us, and you've already discussed it with your designated point of contact and received the green light, you must complete the [Volunteer Driver Information Form](#).

You can easily send us the required documentation via email to the Volunteer Programme team, or if you prefer, feel free to bring it along in person.

- A copy of your full driving licence
- Current insurance policy. Before using your own vehicle in your volunteer role, please: Inform your insurance company that you intend to undertake voluntary driving on behalf of Wimbledon Guild and check that you are covered by your regular motor insurance policy.
- Include your volunteer driving miles when declaring your annual mileage to your insurer.

If your vehicle registration or insurance cover changes while you are volunteering with us, please keep us updated. Don't forget, you can also claim back 45p per mile on expenses.



Health and Safety

We prioritise the health, safety, and well-being of everyone associated with us, including our volunteers. We rely on our volunteers to contribute to maintaining a safe environment for all. If there are any accidents or incidents, please report them promptly, and we'll assist in completing an accident form. For any health, safety, and lone working concerns, reach out your designated contact. In case of emergencies, call 999 immediately.



Drugs & alcohol

To protect your health and safety and that of others, we ask everyone not to volunteer under the influence of drugs or alcohol. If you take medication that may impact your ability to carry out your role, let us know and we can talk through any concerns that you might have.

Contacting WG staff procedure

If you notice a situation that poses a risk to someone's health and safety, whether it's happening now or could happen in the future, it's important to speak up. This could be related to safeguarding concerns you've observed or that have been shared with you by a client, volunteer, or staff member. It also applies to any first aid incidents or emergencies. Your involvement is crucial, and we want to ensure everyone feels safe and supported. Don't hesitate to reach out and report any concerns.

For a quick guide on what to do during office hours and after hours, be sure to check out our [Contacting WG Staff Procedure](#). It's essential to have our WG reception number saved in your phone.



Dealing with problems

If you have a complaint about a person or a service, or if you'd like to know more about the procedures in case a complaint is made against you, we're here to help! Your concerns are important to us, and we aim to resolve any issues quickly and fairly.

Complaints might include things like overstepping boundaries, not following health and safety guidelines, or using inappropriate language. If the team identifies a serious breach of the Volunteer Agreement, we may ask you to take a short break from volunteering. This allows us to investigate thoroughly and ensure we get to the bottom of any concerns.

You can find our Volunteer Problem-Solving Policy on the resources page of our website.

To provide feedback, raise a concern or make a complaint:

- Contact your designated point of contact.
- If you prefer speaking to our Volunteer Programme Manager, Zara Harris, email zharris@wimbledonguild.co.uk or call Reception at 020 8946 0735.
- For staff-related complaints, contact our Chief Executive, Wendy Pridmore, at wpridmore@wimbledonguild.co.uk or call Reception at 020 8946 0735.

Anonymous Feedback

We value your feedback and welcome any thoughts or ideas to enhance your volunteer experience. If you would like to share any anonymous feedback, you can complete our online form or pop a message in the boxes in the HomeFood Café, Reception and at Drake House.

Whistleblowing

Please be assured that any person who raises genuine concerns under this policy will not under any circumstances be subjected to any disadvantage as a result of having raised their concerns.



Promoting what we do

Spreading the word

We'd appreciate your assistance in promoting our services and reaching different communities across Merton. While volunteering, feel free to capture moments and share pictures with your designated point of contact. Volunteers appreciate glimpses into each other's experiences.

While in the community, act as our representatives by identifying individuals who may benefit from our services. Provide them with our leaflet, share our phone number, or direct them to our website.

You can also share our news on social media and provide local community contacts willing to distribute our leaflets or display posters. If you choose to promote Wimbledon Guild on social media, please maintain a positive approach. Respect confidentiality online, refrain from posting photos without permission, and uphold a person's privacy.

Connect with us:

 Facebook - [@wimbledonguild](https://www.facebook.com/wimbledonguild)

 X (formerly Twitter) - [@wguild](https://twitter.com/wguild)

 Instagram - [@wimbledon_guild](https://www.instagram.com/wimbledon_guild)



Fundraising

We run various fundraising campaigns and we're always on the lookout for businesses or organisations that might be able to sponsor a prize or offer a donation. If you'd like to find out more, please email events@wimbledonguild.co.uk.

Contact information

The Volunteer Programme Team are available Monday - Friday from 10am - 5pm.

 020 8946 0735

 volunteer@wimbledonguild.co.uk

Our volunteer programme can help you develop your skills or learn some new ones. Get in touch today to find out more: call us on 020 8946 0735 or email volunteer@wimbledonguild.co.uk

Wimbledon Guild, Guild House

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