

Policy statement on gifts & hospitality

From time to time, volunteers may be offered gifts, hospitality or some other benefit (collectively known as gifts or hospitality) by those outside the charity when volunteering for Parkinson's UK. There may also be times where volunteers believe it is appropriate to offer a gift or hospitality to someone outside the charity. This policy outlines how volunteers must deal with the receipt or offers of such gifts or hospitality.

1. Volunteers must treat with caution any offer of gifts or hospitality arising from their volunteering and have a duty to make sure that charity funds are spent for the purpose for which they were intended.
2. Volunteers should never expect or generally accept gifts or hospitality as a reward for their volunteering (either for doing or not doing something) or for showing advantage to someone or some other organisation. For example volunteers should not accept expensive gifts (such as a case of wine) in return for giving a talk about the charity, or for choosing to use a particular supplier.
3. One-off gifts of a trivial nature, such as a box of chocolates or flowers or minor seasonal items such as calendars or diaries, may be accepted.
4. Volunteers should also generally not offer gifts or hospitality to others working or seeking to work with the charity. For example, volunteers should not offer free attendance at charity events or gifts bought with charitable funds to a service provider in return for the continuation of favourable rates.
5. Conventional hospitality (such as a working lunch/dinner or overnight stay) may be accepted where it is normal and reasonable in the circumstances. For example, when speaking at an event volunteers may accept overnight accommodation paid for by the organiser but the value of this should be reasonable in the circumstances.
6. Conventional hospitality may also be offered to others where again it is normal and reasonable in the circumstances. For example, a Trustee may offer to pay for lunch when meeting with one of the charity's stakeholders to discuss the work of the charity.
7. One-off gifts of a trivial nature may be offered to others where it is normal and reasonable. For example, a box of chocolates may be given to a speaker at a local event.

8. Before accepting or offering any gifts or hospitality volunteers must consider whether doing so is in the direct interest of the charity and proportionate to that interest. When considering this, think about whether a fair minded member of the public, knowing the facts of the matter, would see anything improper or suspicious in the gift or hospitality being offered or received. If a volunteer has any doubts, then they should speak to their staff contact for advice or a member of the Volunteering team or simply refuse.
9. Where a volunteer uses their own money to pay for a gift or hospitality, they may claim back the money spent through the normal volunteer expenses process as detailed in the Volunteer expenses policy and subject to the monetary limits stated. Volunteers should talk to their staff contact before purchasing a gift or hospitality.
10. All gifts or hospitality, accepted or offered by volunteers, which exceed a notional value of £10.00 (£25.00 for Trustees) should be reported to their staff contact, in line with staff policy. These will then be reported to the Company Secretary on a monthly basis who will maintain a charity wide register of gifts and hospitality which is open to public inspection. This limit will be reviewed every two years.
11. If volunteers are in any doubt of the likely value of any gift or hospitality the details should be provided for inclusion in the Register.
12. Volunteers may accept cash donations to Parkinson's UK's charitable funds as long as the cash is banked by the charity and a receipt is issued.
13. Gifts of cash to individual volunteers and not to Parkinson's UK's charitable funds should always be refused and never offered to others.
14. Should a cash donation be proposed to a volunteer by a current or potential supplier or contractor to the charity the offer should, before it is accepted, be referred to their staff contact, who will need to be satisfied that nothing improper or suspicious would be seen by receiving the donation.

Review

The Gifts and Hospitality policy will be reviewed every two years by the Audit Committee - a committee of our Board of Trustees who is responsible for keeping key governance policies under review.