

# Voluntary Action Waltham Forest



## Membership Guidance Notes

### Benefits of Membership

**Your group will be part of a thriving and recognised key local infrastructure organisation offering a wide range of organisational development support services, representation and liaison.**

### Services on offer to our members include so far:

- Funding advice, including a funder search facility
- Free subscription to our newsletter 'Voluntary Views'
- Postal or electronic receipt of all our mailings with valuable up-to date information and opportunities e.g. funding, training, events
- Concessionary use of our meeting and training rooms in the heart of Walthamstow
- One to One organisational development support, including outreach surgeries and events to progress your organisation through the stages of membership to strengthen and grow your group.
- Access to VAWF's aKtion Kit, which will help your organisation grow and strengthen. The aKtion requires that organisations go through an organisational health check, a skills audit and as necessary, put in place an improvement action pla.
- The loan of equipment such as OHP, screen, flip chart stand, laminator and binder
- Enjoying the full benefits and features of the community web portal [www.voluntaryaction-wf.org.uk](http://www.voluntaryaction-wf.org.uk) including having your own website and training on how to do this
- Accessing all our networks and projects
- Free or subsidised (accredited and non-accredited ) training – for example business planning, managing your finances, management skills, ICT, etc
- Direct advice by telephone and email
- Invitations to member only meetings and surveys
- Deciding on the direction of this your organisation.

# MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA 2009

## TYPES OF MEMBERSHIP

There are three types of membership depending on the stage your organisation is at:

- 'Standard' member organisations**
- 'Advanced' members organisations**
- 'Advanced Plus' member organisations**

Statutory or for-profit organisations are welcome to join us as 'Associate' organisations, receiving or mail outs.

Membership of Voluntary Action is renewed automatically and subject in the relevant cases to the payment of an annual fee (see below).

Whilst we accept that there may be organisations that would not want to be 'Advanced' or 'Advanced Plus' Members of Voluntary Action, for all those that have this aspiration **we offer all the required support through our organisational development team.**

We of course also help any group of people that have the aspiration to form a group (provided their aims are charitable and not in contravention with our basic principles) to draw up a governing document such as a constitution, terms of reference etc and to become a Standard member of Voluntary Action.

When you become an Advanced Member or Advanced Plus Member, Voluntary Action will issue an appropriate certificate. You can use your 'Advance' or 'Advanced Plus' status as credentials with, for example, funding organisations from which you are seeking to raise money for your projects and activities.

### **Standard Membership**

The requirements for groups wishing to become standard members are:

- That they have an appropriate governing document.
- Complete a form and to agree that they would contribute a maximum of £1 in the event of the organisation being wound up during the time of membership or within one year afterwards.
- Sign up to an equal opportunities statement
- Pay the appropriate membership fee (groups with an income below £10,000 don't pay)
- Organisations must be based in, or have a service or activity in, Waltham Forest
- Organisation must be **non-profit making** and **independent of local or central government control** – others can become associate members (see below)

As a standard member organisation you enjoy all the benefits of membership as described above in Page 1.

# MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA 2009

## Advanced Membership

'Advanced' member Organisations must fulfil all the Standard membership requirements as above. They also must demonstrate that they have the following up to date documents in place:

- an equal opportunities policy (or statement of intent);
- a complaints procedure;
- a health & safety policy
- a child protection policy (where appropriate);
- a vulnerable adults policy (where appropriate).

Our Organisational Development Support team can help your group in developing with the above.

## Advanced Plus Membership

'Advanced Plus Member' organisation must fulfil all the 'Standard' and 'Advanced' membership criteria. Additionally, they will need to demonstrate that they are an accredited organisation through OFSTED, IIP, PQASSO etc.

If you are seeking to be an Advanced Plus member organisation we have various guides to help you put the above in place. Our Business Development Officer, Anthony Fincham will be able to assist you.

**For full details and downloadable forms, see**  
[http://www.voluntaryaction-wf.org.uk/temp/groups\\_join.asp](http://www.voluntaryaction-wf.org.uk/temp/groups_join.asp)

# MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA 2009

## Process of becoming a member:

### Current members:

1. If you are already a member of Voluntary Action Waltham Forest, we will look at your file. Depending on the documentation that we keep of your group we will confirm whether you are a 'Standard' or 'Advanced' or 'Advanced Plus' member organisation. In the latter case we will also send you a Certificate.

If you are a 'Standard' member organisation we will encourage you to work with us to become an 'Advanced' or 'Advanced Plus' Member Organisation and will tell again what your group needs to do to upgrade its membership status.

2. Near the time of your membership with Voluntary Action elapsing we will notify your group what procedure must be followed to renew membership.

### New members:

1. As a new member you are required to complete an application form. Depending on the type of membership you want for your group you will need to send relevant documentation as follows:

Standard member	Advanced member	Advanced Plus Member
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Governing document</li><li>• Membership fee (if applicable)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Governing Document</li><li>• Membership fee (if applicable)</li><li>• Documents as listed above for 'Advanced' members (Page 3)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Governing Document</li><li>• Membership Fee (if applicable)</li><li>• Documents as listed above for 'Advanced' members (Page 3)</li><li>• Evidence of quality standard held or completed aKtion Kit.</li></ul>

2. We will then check your submission and come back to you if any matters needing clarification.
3. Unless you hear from us to the contrary you will receive all the relevant membership benefits.

### Associate members:

If you apply to be an associate member, e.g. a representative of a statutory agency or a profit making company, you will only be required to:

- Complete an Application Form
- Pay the relevant membership fee

## **MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA 2009**

You will receive our mail outs and bulletins.

### **Fees**

The fees are detailed on the application form and are subject to change as and when necessary in agreement with the Executive Committee.

### **Reasons for withdrawing membership.**

Voluntary Action's Executive Committee may withdraw full, provisional or conditional membership, or an offer of membership of any type to an organisation for any or a combination of the following reasons:

1. The organisation fails to produce the appropriate policies as outlined in 'process of becoming a member' as above.
2. It is evidenced that the organisation is involved in activities likely to cause undue controversy or damage to the reputation of Voluntary Action, or of the voluntary and community sector in Waltham Forest as a whole, eg action is likely to cause real harm or damage to its members.
3. The organisation is involved in activities that are incompatible with their role as a voluntary or community organisation, eg using a charity status to run as a private or for-profit business.

Voluntary Action will not seek to act on hearsay, but may upon receiving a complaint seek to ask the person to use VAWF's complaints procedure, may contact the organisation directly via Voluntary Action's Director, or may inform local authorities of their concerns.

### **Appeals process to expulsion or rejection of membership**

An appeals procedure is in place, the details of which will be sent upon request.

References – the attached Criteria for VAWF to give funding references is also part of our terms and conditions of membership, and represents an additional benefit for members.