
CHAMPION'S HANDBOOK

YOUR DETAILS

NAME:

ADDRESS:

TEL NO:

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the CommunityCheck Project. This handbook is your guide and reference to help you gain as much out of your volunteering as possible.



CONTENTS

Introduction

Your contact details	1
Introduction	1
Contents page	2

Welcome

You are a Champion!	3
Why am I needed?	4
Why volunteer	4

Your Role

What will I be doing?	5
Who will I be working with?	5
How much time will it take?	5
Your duties	6

Support & Development

Your support	6
Further Development	7
Learning	8

Volunteer Requirements

Your commitment	9
Confidentiality	9

Your Treatment

Complaints	9
Equal opportunities	9
Health & Safety	9
Be Safe!	10

Forms

Meeting Planner	11
Accident Reporting Form	12
Complaints Form	13

Notes	14
--------------	----

Welcome

You are a Champion!

The CommunityCheck Project was developed by StudentForce for Sustainability from a similar scheme run by Cheshire County Council and was then adapted for Northamptonshire with support from Northamptonshire County Council, Corby Waste Not, along with others. It was extended to include Leicester in 2004. From 2005, the CommunityCheck project became part of DEFRA's Environmental Action Fund which is aimed at bringing about behavioural change for sustainable development.

The project came to a close in 2008 and as part of the exit strategy a toolkit was developed by StudentForce to aid organisations such as ours in carrying out our own CommunityCheck projects.

The project was established to increase awareness within our community of environmental issues.

As a Checker you will help to encourage people to adopt practical methods that will benefit our environment and therefore our communities. Also, you will gain benefits yourself! There are many benefits to be gained by volunteering.

The issues that the project engages include waste production, water use and energy efficiency. By increasing people's awareness of how our everyday practices affect the environment and by introducing alternative (more sustainable) practices, we can contribute to producing overall benefits to our environment.



Why We Need You!

CommunityCheck visit organisations to conduct CommunityChecks. After the CommunityCheck we send the organisation a report, with recommendations for how they can make their building more sustainable. Although the organisations are interested in adopting these recommendations, they have limited resources (principally time) with which to implement them.

The role of a Champion is to help the organisations after the CommunityCheck, to help them adopt our recommendations.

The aim of CommunityCheck is to increase sustainable consumption and save money in publicly accessible places, using skilled volunteer teams.

The benefits of volunteering

Just by being a volunteer you will enjoy many benefits. Things you can expect to enjoy are:

- Meeting new people
- New experiences and gain new skills
- The feeling of doing something worthwhile
- Having a good time!

As a Champion you will gain certain skills and qualities

- Improve your environmental knowledge and receive training
- Gain a letter of reference and certificates
- Gain work experience
- Gain transferable skills e.g. communication, team working, problem solving, report writing, data analysis

When you register with CommunityChecks, we take into account your motives for volunteering to ensure that you gain what you want from your volunteering experience.

What will I be doing?

As a Champion you will work under the guidance of the project co-ordinator to provide practical and accurate environmental advice to publicly accessible organisations.

Following training you will be expected to attend one CommunityCheck visit. You will then be put in touch with an organisation who has expressed an interest in being provided with volunteer support to make their organisation more sustainable. You will work directly with the organisation, providing support tailored to their needs. This will involve designing an Action Plan with the organisation, with specific targets for improving the environmental performance of their building. You will then support the organisation to achieve these targets, this may involve;

- Providing staff training
- Researching suppliers of environmental products
- Finding local suppliers

One of the essential tasks for Champions is to help organisations to set up monitoring systems for their resource use (e.g. recording electricity meter readings).

Who will I be working with?

You will be principally working with the organisation contact, but you will be provided with full support by your area's project co-ordinator.

How much time will it take?

Our volunteers are expected to commit at least 20 hours of their time to the CommunityCheck Project (travel time is included); this is required due to the time invested in the half day training workshop, although this will vary with the needs of the organisation and the number of organisations that you choose to work with.

Any meetings/training will need to be arranged with the Checked organisation, but extra tasks (e.g. research) can be carried out at your convenience.

Ideally we would like a Champion to commit to the project for at least 3 months, shorter term commitment will be considered, but in these cases the volunteering opportunity of a Checker may be more suitable.

Duties

The following section gives details of the specific tasks involved in the Champion role. Although these tasks are basic requirements we are always keen to be flexible according to your skills and needs.

- Work independently, but with the support of the coordinator
- Attend the training workshop and spend time reading the associated material
- Arrive at the agreed time for CommunityChecks and to remain for agreed hours
- Take the lead in meetings
- Provide advice, support and be a point of contact for the Checked organisation(s)
- Develop your knowledge of environmental issues
- Read and reply to messages (email, letters, phone messages)
- Attend team events whenever possible
- Develop your range of duties when ready to be agreed by the co-ordinator
- Be an ambassador for CommunityCheck!



What we provide you

As a Checker we want you to enjoy your time with us and gain the most from your experience that you can.

As a Checker you will receive:

- An induction to the organisation
- Opportunities of learning

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Travel expenses</i>• <i>Insurance cover</i>• <i>Necessary materials will be provided</i> | <i>Your organisation will have to address these issues</i> |
|--|---|

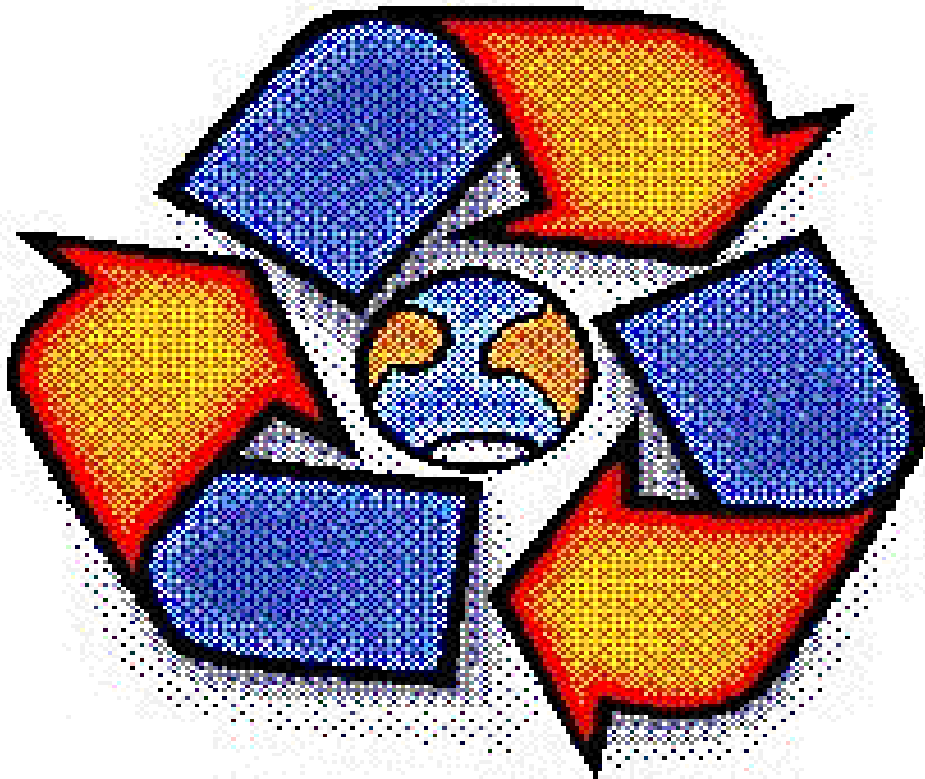
Your project co-ordinator is the person with whom you can discuss any questions or problems. You will be given a chance to do this on a regular basis. If there is any aspect of the organisation that you do not wish to be involved in, you will not feel obliged to do so.

You will also be given the opportunity to develop your skills and interests within the organisation in a manner that suits you.

Further Development

When you become a Champion, there are several opportunities open to you. If you do wish to add some variety to your volunteering you may wish to consider some different options.

- Become a volunteer mentor to new volunteers
- Take part in planning discussions
- Contribute to the CommunityCheck website
- Help with marketing
- Represent volunteers on the steering group



Learning

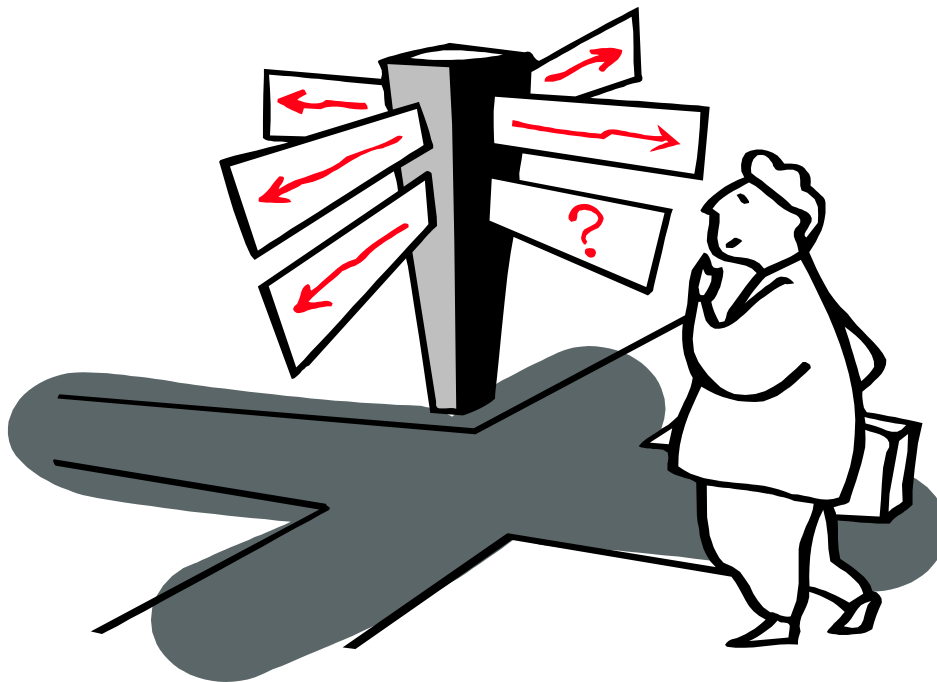
As a Champion you may want to broaden your knowledge of environmental issues or expand on your environmental experiences.

There are several opportunities open to you.

If you wish to develop your learning, your volunteer co-ordinator will be happy to discuss the opportunities open to you.

Options include –

- Learning visits
- Guidance notes
- On Line Learning e.g. Learn Direct Courses
- Professional Membership of IEMA (Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment)



Your Commitment

As a volunteer it is understood that you have given up your time freely to help us and this is very much appreciated. However, we would ask that if you cannot volunteer at an arranged time,

- **to please notify your volunteer co-ordinator.**

By becoming a Champion you will also be expected to act within certain requirements. Your rights and responsibilities are defined in the Handbook.

- **Continued, unacceptable behaviour may lead to dismissal.**

Confidentiality

Clients request that any information concerning their premises remains confidential. Volunteers are expected to respect this. Similarly, any information held about volunteers will remain under confidentiality rules by the project co-ordinator.

Complaints

If you feel that you have been treated unfairly or have been put at risk during your volunteering-

- Let your volunteer co-ordinator know
- Fill out the Complaints Form (found within handbook) and return it to your co-ordinator.
- Use the form to highlight any concerns over equal opportunities or health & safety.

Equal Opportunities

CommunityChecks is committed to positive action to promote equality of opportunity in its voluntary activities. In order to achieve this we have an equal opportunities policy and monitoring forms. The equal opportunities monitoring form is issued with registration but its completion is voluntary.

Health & Safety

We regard the health and safety of our volunteers as being of the highest importance. The provision of a health and safety policy along with a Duty of Care ensure that CommunityChecks are taking steps to make your volunteering safe.

Policies are available to see on request

BE SAFE!

Some things to consider whilst volunteering

- Obey any safety rules
- Only use machinery or tools with permission and after training
- Use any equipment or clothing provided to protect you.
- Report anything that seems dangerous, damaged or faulty.
- Do you know what to do if there is a fire and how to raise the alarm?
- Keep fire exits free from obstacles
- Make sure you have been given all the information you require to carry out your voluntary work safely.
- Learn to say no! Volunteer work should be enjoyable, don't agree to anything that you are not sure about.

If you have an accident –

- Tell your CommunityCheck co-ordinator
- Complete the accident reporting form located at the back of your handbook.

Volunteer Accident Reporting Form

In the event of any accident where a volunteer has been injured, please complete this form with as many details as possible and return to your volunteer co-ordinator.

Date:

Person reporting injury:

Person affected / injured:

Incident date:

Location of incident

Description of incident including cause and nature of injury

Action taken / recommendations

Signed _____ Date_____

CHAMPION'S HANDBOOK

COMPLAINTS FORM

Complainant _____

The complaint

Measures taken by complainant

Office Use Only

Measures Taken

Outcome

Volunteer Informed Y/ N

Notes: