



Appendix C: Volunteer Listener Role Descriptor

CONTEXT: Volunteers with the Listening Service Edinburgh (LSE) provide an independent, confidential listening and support service to all court users at the Sheriff and Justice of the Peace Courts in central Edinburgh. The Service is based in the public areas of the courts.

The LSE is not a counselling service; however it supports users who may be finding their experience difficult, stressful or confusing. Court users include those accused of committing offences, relatives and friends of those accused, witnesses, jurors and other members of the public attending the court.

There are over 30 volunteers in the Service, including a volunteer management Board composed of the Trustees of the organisation.

Role	The role of the Volunteer Listener is to offer a neutral 'listening ear' to any court users requiring immediate and short-term support at that moment.
Specific Tasks	<p>Working at all times within the requirements of OSCR and Data Protection legislation, the specific tasks of the Volunteer Listener are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support court users on a one-to-one basis • help court users find their way around the court system, indicating the location of the courts, information desks and boards, witness and jury rooms • maintain court user confidentiality – see Service Confidentiality Policy • work as part of the Listening Service Edinburgh team in the court • promote the Listening Service, when appropriate <p>NB: It is not the role of the Volunteer to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • act as a “messenger” between court user and court officials • advise court users about their case and any likely outcomes • represent a court user’s position in court or to the court user’s manager • act as an “advocate” for court users outside the boundary of the court setting • provide cover or take messages for court staff
Qualities and skills	<p>The post requires someone who</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has an interest in and good understanding of the purposes of the Service • can maintain confidentiality • can work in a team • shows respect to all court users and team members • is resilient <p>The post holder will require</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the ability to build rapport with court users

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • good listening and communication skills • the ability to work within the requirements of data protection legislation at all times • the ability to work well with all colleagues <p>Experience of working in a team or in a support role will be advantageous.</p>
Recruitment and Training	<p>The recruitment process involves an interview and two days' mandatory training. Two references are taken up.</p> <p>Recruits will need to apply for membership of the PVG (Protecting Vulnerable Groups) Scheme managed by Disclosure Scotland. Application, whether for new or existing members, is made through the Listening Service via Volunteer Scotland and is free of charge. There is an induction session at the court which marks the beginning of a three month probationary period.</p>
Time commitment	At least one morning or afternoon session twice a month (or fortnightly) but weekly preferred, and, if possible, for at least a year
Support	Members of the Board or designated volunteers will provide support sessions usually as a group or in a one-to-one setting if required.
Expectations	<p>Volunteers will be expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • show a commitment to on-going training and be willing to participate in regular support sessions. • respond promptly to e-mails, or other communication • be conscientious about completing necessary administrative tasks such as filling in expenses forms, monitoring and evaluation. • carry out the duties and responsibilities of the role without remuneration.
Opportunities offered by the post	<p>Further development of communication skills</p> <p>Improved understanding of the role and activities of voluntary and charitable organisations</p> <p>Acquiring experience and understanding of the Scottish Justice System</p> <p>Satisfaction from contributing to the wellbeing of the diverse court users at Edinburgh Sheriff and Justice of the Peace Court.</p> <p>Satisfaction from working in a diverse team</p>
Location of volunteering	Edinburgh Sheriff Court and Justice of the Peace Court, 27 Chambers Street, Edinburgh EH1 1LB
Expenses	Volunteers receive no remuneration or ex-gratia payments. They are entitled to receive reasonable reimbursement of expenses for supplies and travel, and any out of pocket expenditure in accordance with the expenses policy.