

A Response to Recent Events

As many of you are aware, the recent events in the UK have created a profound sense of unease across the country. These events, including riots and a distressing rise in Islamophobia, have impacted our communities deeply. During this uncertain time, it is crucial that we come together as an organisation to support one another.

Our organisation has always taken pride in our work supporting refugees and asylum seekers. We find the recent rise in Islamophobia abhorrent and contrary to our values. We remain committed to our mission of building stronger, inclusive communities.

This fact sheet will offer some advice and guidance on supporting volunteers, service users and each other in what is a difficult time for many.

Please keep the following in mind:

Personal Safety: Ensure you are not putting yourself at undue risk. If you feel the need to alter your volunteering patterns, please contact the team at Volunteering Matters.

- If your volunteering takes place in an area that has been impacted by the riots consider cancelling sessions for the next week, or until the area is safe. It may be possible to volunteer virtually instead.
- If you volunteer with members of the global majority or members of the Muslim community consider their safety in plans to volunteer or meet in person.

Living our Values: Do remember our core values of inclusivity and compassion which apply to us all in both professional and personal settings.

- If you become aware of a member of the Volunteering Matters community taking part in the riots or illegal activity please refer this to your engagement manager or coordinator. These actions may be considered a safeguarding concern under prevent guidance.

Social Media: Be cautious of misinformation on social media and acting in a way contrary to our values. Refer to our [Social and General Media Policy](#) for guidance on responsible engagement online.

Looking after our wellbeing: Ensure you are looking after your own emotional and physical wellbeing. Take a break from volunteering if you need to, or prioritise time with your friends and family.

- If you would like to have a check-in please reach out to your Volunteering Matters coordinator or engagement manager, we are here to listen.
- If you manage a team of volunteers consider holding a virtual tea-break to allow people to express their concerns in a safe and united space.

Having difficult conversations: Some of our service users may want to discuss the events that are currently taking place. If they reach out to you remember

- to actively listen the what they are sharing.
- withhold any judgement
- show that they have people around them that care
- speak to your coordinator or engagement manager for additional support and resources

We understand that these are concerning times for many. It is important to respect on these events and prioritise our mental health and well-being. Despite the challenges, our mission to create stronger communities through the power of volunteering remains steadfast. These events underscore why our work is so important and the role we all play in fostering a supportive and inclusive environment.

