



Goulburn Abbeyfield House

Volunteers' Handbook

**Goulburn Abbeyfield House
82 Cowper Street, Goulburn
(P.O. Box 423, GOULBURN NSW 2580)**



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1. Your handbook explained

Welcome to your Abbeyfield House and your Volunteers' Handbook, and thank you for helping provide a housing choice for people in your local community who chose to live in your community managed Abbeyfield House. We greatly appreciate your assistance and will value your contribution.

Your handbook is a guide to volunteering at your Abbeyfield House.

Our goal is to provide an attractive, comfortable and affordable housing choice for our local community, and make it a place where residents live independently with dignity and pride in a supportive group house.

2. About Abbeyfield

2.1. The Goulburn Abbeyfield Society

Goulburn is a typical Australian large country town. It is well known for the 'Big Merino', a relaxed lifestyle and friendly people who are willing to pitch in and help.

We aim to provide good-quality housing and support for residents

We are a non-profit-making Association. All the income we create through our work goes into providing services for current residents and developing services to meet the needs of future residents.

2.2. Abbeyfield Australia

Abbeyfield Australia is the peak national body representing 26 affiliated Abbeyfield Associations. Together these community based incorporated Associations successfully manage Abbeyfield Houses and aged care facilities across Tasmania, Victoria, South Australia, New South Wales, the ACT and Queensland.

Abbeyfield's focus is affordable, assisted group housing for older people, and for adults with mild to moderate intellectual disabilities. Our model adapts to meet local community needs.

Abbeyfield Australia is a part of the world wide Abbeyfield movement encompassing 18 countries as diverse as the United Kingdom, Canada, New Zealand, Italy, Japan and South Africa. The Abbeyfield concept began in 1955 in the United Kingdom and today more than 9000 people in 850 houses throughout the world live in Abbeyfield Houses.

Abbeyfield Australia is a not for profit company limited by guarantee, a Public Benevolent Institution (PBI) and has Deductible Gift Recipient Status. (Donations to Abbeyfield Australia over \$2.00 are tax deductible.)

Whilst being a national peak body advocating for all Abbeyfield Houses and Hostels, a key role of Abbeyfield Australia is to maintain a management and support framework for local Abbeyfield Associations.

2.3. What is an Abbeyfield House?

An Abbeyfield House is a group house in which residents live independently within the dynamic of a shared supportive house. The residents 'come and go' as they please, socialise with other residents as much as desired, enjoy the support of a live-in housekeeper and remain engaged with the community.

Abbeyfield Houses are based on an 'assisted independent living' philosophy and residential concept where:

- each house has ten residents who each enjoy a private suite comprising bedroom and ensuite
- residents share a comfortable lounge room, dining room, garden, and laundry
- nutritious meals are provided by a full-time live-in house keeper
- all maintenance and house costs covered by the local Abbeyfield association.

An Abbeyfield House is a large house but it is not an institution or a facility. It is just an ordinary house in an ordinary street.

2.4. The Abbeyfield House business model

A unique feature of the Abbeyfield model is that each Abbeyfield House is managed by a local Abbeyfield Association (an incorporated Association managed by a volunteer Committee of Management). The local Association manages all aspects of the house in accordance with the governance principles and procedures of Abbeyfield Australia, and are responsible for issues such as:

- compliance with tenancy legislation
- compliance with food safety standards
- induction and ongoing liaison with residents
- employment of the live-in housekeepers
- consultation with residents (individually and via a residents' house meeting)
- budgeting and financial management.

Once constructed, an Abbeyfield House requires no ongoing government subsidy as operational costs are funded through affordable resident rent.

This business model:

- ensures consistent quality outcomes whilst encouraging local control (as all Abbeyfield Houses operate under a national framework)
- is very cost effective because it maximizes the commitment and contribution of volunteers at the local level
- ensures the local community remains engaged with its Abbeyfield House which is emotionally 'owned' by the local community as a community asset.

2.5. NSW Government support

The Goulburn Abbeyfield House was built using money donated by the Goulburn community and a generous capital grants totaling \$1.8M grant the NSW Government. We appreciate all our supporters and recognize the assistance of the NSW Government and officers of the Department of Ageing Disability and Home Care (ADHC).

Substantial funding was also provided by:

- The Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation
- The Rotary Club of Goulburn Mulwaree
- The Rotary Club of Goulburn
- The Goulburn Workers Club
- The Goulburn Mulwaree Council

3. Volunteering at your local Abbeyfield House

As part of your induction as a volunteer at your local Abbeyfield House, an existing committee member will meet you at the house and show you about the premises.

You will also be introduced to the Housekeeper, meet some residents and talk with other volunteers. Some of the volunteers you meet may be members of the Management Committee of your local Abbeyfield Society.

You will also be given a copy of this Volunteer's Handbook to keep.

3.1. Abbeyfield House Management Manual

The management procedures for operating your Abbeyfield House are primarily found in the Abbeyfield House Management Manual. During your induction to the House you will be given a copy of the Manual to peruse at your leisure. Please return it when completed. This is a good way of getting a comprehensive understanding of the how the house operates.

3.2. Residents' Handbook

You will also be given a copy of the Residents' Handbook applicable to your Abbeyfield House. The Residents' Handbook is given to every new Resident of your Abbeyfield House, and you should also take the time to peruse it.

Reading the Residents Handbook will give you an excellent overview of the role of the Abbeyfield House and the rights and responsibilities of its residents.

3.3. Abbeyfield Australia policies

Your Abbeyfield House is affiliated with Abbeyfield Australia. As such the House and its Management Committee and all volunteers are required to abide by national Abbeyfield Australia policies.

Abbeyfield Australia policies are published on the 'publications' page Abbeyfield Australia website. Visit www.abbeyfield.org.au

You must take the time to peruse these policies and will be required to sign a form confirming that you have done so. This is very important.

Abbeyfield Australia policies include:

- Reducing the risk of fraud and corruption policy
- Donations policy
- Gifts policy
- Conflict of interest policy
- Whistleblower policy
- Code of Conduct and Ethics Policy
- Individual Planning Policy (ADHC, NSW) – guiding principles
- Abuse and neglect policy (ADHC, NSW)

3.4. Confidentiality and resident privacy

Every person is entitled to privacy - and this includes residents in our Abbeyfield House. Accordingly your Abbeyfield House is committed to complying fully with relevant privacy legislation including the *Privacy and Personal Information Act 1998* (NSW).

A copy of the Act is available on the information page of the Abbeyfield Australia web site. See www.abbeyfield.org.au

3.5. Police checks

As a volunteer at your local Abbeyfield House it is very likely that you will be asked to undergo a Police check. This is a very common practice in the aged and disAbility sectors and is definitely not a reflection upon your good character.

If you will be at the House on a semi-regular basis, the Management Committee will require you to complete a Police check. We understand that it may be an imposition upon you but we do ask that you oblige us willingly.

In the event that the Police check shows that you do have a criminal record, we will only take that into account if it is relevant to your volunteer role at the house.

3.6. Volunteer insurances

Abbeyfield volunteers are covered by a volunteers insurance policy which provides some insurance coverage in the event that a volunteer is injured whilst volunteering. The insurable coverage does not apply to volunteers aged over 85 years of age. For details of our volunteer insurance, speak to your Secretary who will consult the Abbeyfield Insurance manual or Abbeyfield Australia.

If you are injured whilst volunteering (in any capacity), contact the secretary of your Abbeyfield Society, or call Abbeyfield Australia on 03 9419 8222 or email admin@abbeyfield.org.au

3.7. Ongoing refresher training for volunteers

Whether you are a member of the Committee of Management, a volunteer in the garden, or a volunteer handyman, it is important that you stay abreast of changes at your Abbeyfield House. To accomplish this your local Abbeyfield Society and Abbeyfield Australia will provide forums and refreshers which you will be encouraged to periodically attend.

It will not be a burdensome commitment but will ensure that you are kept up to date on changes to policy, procedure or the law affecting your Abbeyfield House.