

Volunteer Policy

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1. Purpose

- 1.1 The policy outlines the principles on which the relationship between volunteers and the charity is based and provides basic information about volunteering with the Church. Volunteers are vital to the effective functioning of our Church. They are integral to the structure and operations of the Church as a charity and contribute strongly towards its aims and objectives.

2. Scope of the Policy

- 2.1 The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is composed mainly of unpaid volunteers and relies on those people giving their time and effort to make it an effective decision-making and governing body. Other volunteers support the PCC by giving their time to carry out roles which have been initiated by, or agreed with, the PCC. This policy is intended for volunteers who have accepted an agreed role with the Church as a charity.

3. Distinction between Volunteering and Employment

- 3.1 The volunteering relationship is based on trust and does not involve the obligations associated with employment. No payment, other than the reimbursement of agreed expenses, is made by the PCC to people who give their time as volunteers.

4. Recruitment

- 4.1 The PCC welcomes and respects the breadth of experience, skills, dedication and goodwill that volunteers bring. Informal interviews may be carried out to ensure that applicants are suitable for the role in question. We will base our selection on the ability of each applicant to fulfil the role concerned, taking into account any effect the volunteer may have on the safety of all parties, our Church and reputation.
- 4.2 For certain roles, a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check will be required.

And safer recruiting

5. Age

- 5.1 In most cases you will need to be over 16 years of age to volunteer independently, and under 18s will be asked for parental consent. Younger people may get involved in some aspects of volunteering with us if they are accompanied by a responsible adult. We do not have an upper age limit for volunteers but there may be situations that require us to ask someone to stop volunteering – for example when health issues are considered a risk to the person concerned or others around them.

6. Management

- 6.1 Your line manager will be the staff member, PCC member or senior volunteer who is responsible for the area in which you volunteer. (If in doubt about who has line manager responsibility, then clarification should be sought from the Vicar or Churchwardens.)

7. Induction, Training and Development

- 7.1 If required, you will be given access to training or information to help you successfully carry out your volunteering role.
- 7.2 You will be offered an appropriate induction as required, including information about the volunteering environment and any equipment you may be using in your role. If you choose to take on an additional or alternative role or activity as a volunteer, your line manager will be happy to help you widen or develop your skills and knowledge accordingly.
- 7.3 Any concerns about inadequate training or induction arrangements should be promptly reported to the Vicar or Churchwardens.

8. Equal Opportunities and Diversity

- 8.1 You will be volunteering in an organisation that is committed to equal opportunities and diversity. This commitment is reflected throughout the PCC's policies and practices.

9. Responsibilities and Expectations

- 9.1 We want you to enjoy volunteering with us and we take our responsibilities towards you very seriously. As a volunteer, you will also be a representative of the Church and, as such, we ask that you act appropriately.

9.2 The PCC's responsibilities to its volunteers are to:

- offer opportunities to everyone who wants to volunteer without discrimination, such that no-one is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements that cannot be shown to be justifiable
- match your skills and experiences with the right role for you wherever possible, listening to your motivations and aspirations
- offer appropriate training and support for your role
- celebrate success and recognise loyalty and dedication
- respect all our volunteers and listen to what you have to say, consistently encouraging two-way communication
- provide information about the Church's work, policies and procedures
- reimburse agreed out-of-pocket expenses
- make necessary arrangements to ensure your health, safety and welfare as a volunteer
- encourage a positive and friendly atmosphere
- provide access to trained members, to support, guide and advise you.

9.3 Our expectations of you as a volunteer are to:

- aim for high standards of efficiency, reliability and quality in your volunteering
- work in partnership with other volunteers, staff and the general public
- support, respect and adhere to our organisational policies, guidelines and management decisions – including all aspects of equal opportunities, health and safety, data protection and use of our name
- always to consider and protect the Church's good reputation in your actions and conduct
- act responsibly and within the law
- let your staff contact or appropriate Church Officer know first if you have any problems so that we can find a solution together
- let your line manager know if there are changes in your personal circumstances that may affect your volunteering
- have the best possible experience by getting involved and enjoying your volunteering.

10. Health and Safety

10.1 We are committed to ensuring your wellbeing and safety whilst you are volunteering and, in turn, we expect our volunteers to contribute to maintaining a safe environment, and in particular to:

- Take reasonable care for the health and safety of yourself and other persons who may be affected by your actions or omissions
- Co-operate with staff by assisting them to fulfil their statutory duties
- Follow the health and safety policy, procedures and measures put in place by the PCC or any other organisation whose premises you may be working on
- Note emergency evacuation procedures and escape routes
- Report accidents/incidents or dangerous circumstances promptly to the Vicar or a Churchwarden, whether or not any person has been injured
- Be aware of actions to take when an emergency situation arises and who, from the PCC, to contact for support.

11. Copyright, Intellectual Property and Photography

11.1 The rights to any original works that you may produce in the course of volunteering will belong to the PCC, unless otherwise agreed in writing and approved by the PCC. Examples include photography, artwork, graphic design and written work, including the results of research. We may use photographs of volunteers carrying out their roles for promotional purposes, such as in a leaflet or online. You may, of course, request that an image is not used or withdrawn.

12. Media Relations

12.1 No comments or stories should be given directly to the media, unless your volunteer role specifically includes talking to the press or other local media. Diocesan media relations are handled by trained specialists who can give advice. Any requests from the press, etc. should be referred to the Vicar, Churchwardens or PCC.

13. Data Protection and Confidentiality

13.1 We take great care to protect your information as part of our data protection responsibilities. As a volunteer, we expect you to protect any personal or confidential information to which you may have access. Our Church has a Privacy Policy and GDPR Guidelines with which you should familiarise yourself.

14. Expenses

14.1 Volunteers may request reimbursement of reasonable out-of-pocket expenses, such as travel costs or the cost of materials. Payment of reasonable expenses must be approved and authorised by the PCC Treasurer, preferably in advance, and VAT receipts or tickets will be required.

15. Insurance

15.1 The PCC has appropriate types of insurance in place to cover its volunteers. These include employers' liability insurance and public liability insurance in the event of a volunteer being harmed due to the negligence of the PCC or a third party being injured as a result of the actions of a volunteer whilst performing Church duties. However, our insurance does not cover your personal belongings.

16. Using Your Own Vehicle

16.1 The PCC does not provide motor insurance for you as a volunteer. Driving in connection with charitable volunteering is normally classified by insurers as “social, domestic and pleasure” which is part of your standard cover. We recommend that you check with your insurer but there should not be any additional cost. If we have agreed to reimburse your expenses for travelling in your own vehicle, we use the government HMRC approved standard mileage rates, which include an allowance for insurance as well as fuel, maintenance, and tax, etc.

17. Smoking and Substance Abuse

- 17.1 All PCC premises and events are smoke free. No smoking is allowed in or around our premises. Volunteers are asked not to smoke when wearing a badge, branded clothing or anything that would identify them with the Church.
- 17.2 Volunteering whilst under the influence of alcohol or drugs will not be accepted. We regard this as a disciplinary issue and you will be subject to instant dismissal.

18. Resolving Concerns

- 18.1 If you have any problems or complaints about your volunteering, please talk to your line manager immediately. The Church takes the concerns of its volunteers very seriously and will make every reasonable effort to resolve any difficulties.

19. Audit and Whistle Blowing

- 19.1 The PCC is accountable to the Charity Commission and to the public. We have a responsibility to monitor our activities to maintain our reputation as a trustworthy charity that manages its affairs honestly and efficiently. If you believe any member of staff or volunteer is behaving in a way that is likely to bring the Church into disrepute or cause financial loss, you should let your line manager know immediately. If, for any reason, you would rather not talk to him or her, you should speak to the Vicar, Churchwarden or Treasurer. If this is not possible you are entitled to go directly to the Charity Commission.

20. Complaints Handling Policy

- 20.1 A copy of our complaints policy is available from the PCC Secretary. Our policy is to try to resolve all complaints informally, although a formal procedure is available, where appropriate.

21. Construction and Application of the Policy

- 21.1 Queries on the construction and application of the policy should be directed in the first instance to the PCC Secretary.

22. Policy Review

- 22.1 This policy will be reviewed every 3 years to ensure continuing appropriateness.

Agreed by the PCC - July 2018