

Flamstead Heritage Project

Living Histories, Lasting Journeys

Volunteer Policy

Introduction

Volunteers are an essential and integral part of the successful management of St Leonards, and the National Lottery Heritage Fund's Heritage Project - 'Living Histories, Lasting Journeys'.

St Leonards, and the Programme Board (PB) of the Heritage Project is governed by the Parochial Church Council (PCC), each member of the PCC and Heritage Board is themselves a volunteer, except for the Vicar and the Heritage Projects Project Manager.

The PB acknowledges that the volunteers are a major resource and make a vital contribution to its aims and objectives of the Heritage Project. It recognises the skills and expertise volunteers can bring to the organisation, and the training, personal development and additional benefits the PB can deliver to its volunteers.

Key terminology

The PB defines a volunteer as someone who, unpaid and of their own free will, chooses to give their time, energy, skills and expertise to support the PB in achieving its aims. The arrangement is voluntary on both sides without expectation of financial compensation, beyond reimbursement of genuine out-of-pocket expenses. Volunteering can be a useful mechanism for those hoping to acquire the skills to enhance their prospects of paid employment.

The volunteer role is a gift relationship, binding only in honour, trust and mutual understanding. No enforceable obligation, contractual or otherwise, can be imposed on volunteers to attend, give or be set a minimum amount of time to carry out the tasks provided. Likewise, the PB cannot be compelled to provide regular work, or payment or other benefit for any activity undertaken. The PB recognises volunteers as a core part of our team, with a distinctive but complementary role alongside paid staff.

Recruitment and selection

Prospective volunteers for Heritage Project may be invited to attend an informal interview to provide relevant information and to explore their aspirations and the experience they can bring to the PB. It is important for all involved to appreciate that this interview is not a competitive process, and it simply to assess suitability for the volunteer role in question.

The PCC is committed to equal opportunities and is bound by its **Equal Opportunities Policy**, except where certain specialist skills are needed. Volunteering opportunities will be advertised and promoted within the community with clear associated volunteer role descriptions for each opportunity.

It must be recognised that the PB may not always be able to provide an appropriate volunteering opportunity to an enquirer. All volunteer opportunities will be subject to a trial period.

In selecting a volunteer to work regularly with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults, the **Church Promoting a Safer Church and Safeguarding Policy**

must be adhered to which includes collecting at least two external references, a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and specialist training.

When appointed, an appropriate named contact for that role will lead the on the correspondence and management of the volunteer.

Induction, training and development

New volunteers will be made to feel welcome and will be provided with an induction. This will include the receipt of our Volunteer Welcome Pack. Opportunities to shadow the work of existing staff, consultants and volunteers will be provided if necessary.

All volunteers will be required to complete a Volunteer Details Form, sign up to our Volunteer Agreement and confirm, in writing, that they have read and understood documentation relating to health, safety and their well-being.

The PB is committed to developing volunteers and will provide a variety of methods to train and develop volunteer skills further. Training and development needs of volunteers will be assessed regularly, this provision will be reviewed in order to help evaluate its effectiveness. Feedback from volunteers is actively encouraged as this enables us to provide support and further training and development opportunities for our volunteers.

Rights and responsibilities

All volunteers are key ambassadors for the PB and the actions and communications of volunteers about and on behalf of the PB can have a significant impact, both positive or negative, on the PB and its reputation within the community. Volunteers are asked to be mindful of this responsibility and to behave in a way that is acceptable and respectful at all times.

Volunteers need to communicate in a consistent and responsible manner and sign up to the PB's volunteer agreement as part of their induction and welcome pack.

Health, safety and welfare

The health, safety and well-being of volunteers are of the utmost importance to the PB. As part of signing PB's Volunteer Agreement, volunteers are expected to thoroughly read and sign to declare that they have read the PB's Health and Safety Policy.

All volunteers will be provided with the appropriate information, supervision and training required to enable them to complete their voluntary work safely. Volunteers must take reasonable care of themselves and others when volunteering and follow any health and safety advice and instructions given for the role.

Volunteers should co-operate with the PB on health and safety matters and immediately report accidents/incidents or near misses to their named contact.

Support and recognition

Volunteers should feel able and well supported in raising any issues or concerns and be given clear guidance on who to contact if they have a grievance. Effective communication is key, feedback

between volunteers and their named contacts is the best way to avoid conflict, volunteers should always feel that they are supported and their point of view is recognised and valued.

Opportunities will be actively sought by the PB to recognise the value of volunteers' contributions and communicate their appreciation to volunteers both formally and informally.

Intellectual property

Both volunteers and the PB agree that the intellectual property rights of original work produced by volunteers in relation to their volunteering role with the PB automatically transfers to the PB, unless agreed in advance.

Travel and expenses

All volunteers can reclaim any business travel expenses which are incurred at the request of the PB and agreed in advance.

Volunteers should complete an expense claim form to claim any out-of-pocket expenses which should be accompanied by proof of expenditure, such as a receipt or invoice.

Data Protection and Confidentiality

All volunteer's details are held in accordance with current data protection legislation including the UK General Date Protection Regulation (UK GDPR). Data will be held securely and confidentially and will only be accessed by authorised individuals. Please refer to our Privacy Policy for further information on how we collect, manage and use the personal data of our volunteers.

Over time, the PB may implement the role of a Data Protection Officer, if required.

Informal exit interview

When possible, the PB would appreciate the opportunity to conduct an informal exit interview with any volunteers leaving the organisation. This will help support the PB in improving support and development of all volunteers.

This document should be read in conjunction with other supporting documents:

1. **Church Data Privacy Policy**
2. **Church Equal Opportunities Policy**
3. **Church Health and Safety Policy**
4. **Church Preventing Bullying and Harassment-policy**
5. **Church Promoting a Safer Church and Safeguarding Policy**