



TOPSHAM MUSEUM SOCIETY

VOLUNTEER POLICY – STATEMENT OF INTENT

Created: 4 May 2016

Next review Date: January 2019

Topsham Museum Society understands that Volunteers are the foundation on which this organisation is built. Indeed, the involvement of volunteers is paramount to the Museum's ongoing existence.

This Policy Statement forms the framework of the entire volunteer programme, giving cohesion and consistency to all the elements in the organisation that affect volunteers (recruitment, expenses, health and safety and so on). It is the key to involving a diverse range of volunteers, to defining the role of volunteers within the organisation and how they can expect to be treated.

This Volunteer Policy:

- demonstrates our commitment both to the Museum's volunteer programme and to individual volunteers
- it helps to ensure fairness and consistency in how all our Volunteers are treated
- it offers Volunteers some security, in that they know how they can expect to be treated, and where they can turn to if they feel that things are going wrong
- it also helps ensure that Management and Trustees fully understand why Volunteers are involved, and what role they have within the organisation.

This Volunteer Policy is freely accessible to all. It will be reviewed on a regular basis to adapt or improve it.

VOLUNTEER POLICY

Recruitment

Topsham Museum Society will use appropriate means to advertise for Volunteers locally and take into account the principles of our Equality Policy. The applicant will have to complete a registration form, but help can be given with this if necessary. The applicant will be interviewed by the *Volunteer Contact* and, if this is successful, two references may be asked for and taken up. References will always be sought and checked if the Volunteer is to work with the Education Team.

Length of Appointment

Some Volunteer roles may be for a specified length of time at the end of which, the appointment can be extended if both the Volunteer and the Volunteer Contact are in agreement. The Volunteer can opt to leave before the specified time has expired. The majority of roles will have no specified length of time but Volunteers will be asked periodically by their Team Leader if they are happy to continue in the role or would like to do something different. There will be a trial period of 8 weeks to give the Museum and the Volunteer time to discover if they are suited to each other.

Induction

There will be an induction session delivered by the *Volunteer Contact* or other appropriate person to include:

- The role of the volunteer
- A list of all key volunteers
- Organisation and management structure
- Introduction to the relevant policies including Health and Safety and Equality
- Essential procedures i.e. timekeeping, rotas etc.
- Induction training and details of ongoing training
- Background to the Museum and Building
- Walk around the whole Museum with introduction to all aspects of the Museum's work
- Other information as appropriate.

Training

On the job training will be provided by Team Leaders. Volunteers will have the opportunity to attend formal training events, workshops and meetings appropriate to their role. All expenses for these events will be met by the Museum provided approval has been obtained in advance from the Team Leader or Treasurer.

Museum Policies

All Volunteers are required to abide by the stated Policies of Topsham Museum Society. Copies of these Policies are available on request from the Secretary and can be found in the *Museums Plans and Policies Folder* kept in the small office.

Expenses

All reasonable out-of-pocket expenses, if required and agreed beforehand, will be reimbursed, including expenses for travel and meals. Claims for expenses must be given to the Treasurer together with receipts.

Changing Roles

Volunteers are able to change roles, take on additional tasks or reduce their commitment. Volunteers may

make such requests to their Team Leaders or Volunteer Contact. Opportunities for new or additional roles will be advertised regularly in the Volunteer Newsletter. In addition they may be approached by a Team Leader or Volunteer Contact and offered a different or additional role.

Support

There will be a briefing session at the beginning of each season and the opportunity for de-briefing when the season finishes. All volunteers are expected to attend these meetings if at all possible. A note of these meetings will be circulated to all relevant volunteers. Team Leaders will support their team members and will discuss any problems or issues that may arise. The *Volunteer Contact* will receive support from the Chairman and Trustees of the Museum Council.

Insurance

The organisation has a valid insurance policy, a copy of which is available on request.

Confidentiality

The Museum is governed by the Data Protection Act, which all workers, including the Trustees, volunteers and Team Leaders, are obliged to observe. Volunteers may from time to time be party to confidential information regarding the Museum or its operations which may not be passed onto other people without permission from the Trustees.

Resolving Problems

The relationship between the Museum and its Volunteer is entirely voluntary and does not imply any contract. It is very important that Volunteers should enjoy making their contribution to the Museum but the first priority is that the Museum is able to maintain its standards of service.

If a Volunteer does not meet with the Museum's standards, it will be dealt with as follows:

1. Initially with a meeting with the relevant Team Leader who will explain the concerns
2. If this does not resolve the concern then a meeting with the *Volunteer Contact or a Trustee* will be arranged
3. If that does not resolve the issue then a formal meeting with the Chair of the Museum Council should follow
4. If a Volunteer's work still does not meet the Museum's standards then their services will no longer be required

If a Volunteer is dissatisfied with any aspect of his or her work they should:

1. Initially discuss their dissatisfaction with their Team Leader
2. If that does not resolve the concern then a meeting with the *Volunteer Contact or a Trustee* should be arranged
3. If that does not resolve the issue, a meeting with the Chair of the Museum Council should follow
4. If after this, the dissatisfaction remains and the grievance cannot be resolved, then it would be inappropriate for the complainant to continue to be a Volunteer

Volunteers will be able to freely state their case and can have a friend to accompany them at meetings.

John Dunsford

Signed John Dunsford

Chairman of Council of Trustees

May 2016