

Volunteer Policy

Why do we involve volunteers at Banbury Museum ('the Museum')?

To increase our contact with the local community and enhance the experience of visitors to the Museum.

- To benefit from the skills and perspectives that volunteers bring with them.
- To offer our volunteers new skills and experiences.
- To ensure that our services meet the needs of our visitors.

The following guidelines deal with the practical aspects of involving volunteers at the Museum. More detailed information is available on various aspects of this policy.

Recruitment

- The Museum will aim to identify worthwhile and satisfying opportunities for volunteers.
- The Museum will produce a volunteer role description for all voluntary opportunities.
- The Museum will aim to help any volunteer overcome barriers that may make it difficult for them to volunteer at the Museum.
- The Museum will operate its Equal Opportunities policy at all times
- Prospective volunteers will be asked to complete a volunteer application form and discussions will be held with all prospective volunteers to ensure that their skills and interests are best served by our volunteering opportunity.
- References will be taken up and any volunteers from outside the EU will need to have a visa that permits them to volunteer whilst they are in the UK.
- Volunteering opportunities will complement, rather than replace, the work of paid staff at the Museum.
- There is no upper age limit for volunteers. However, volunteers are discouraged from continuing beyond a point where the task they are doing becomes detrimental to their health and safety or that of others, or when they can no longer carry out a task effectively. There is a lower age limit of 18. Placements involving those under 18 may be discussed separately with the Museum Director.
- Most volunteer roles will *not* require a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check (formerly CRB). If a particular volunteer role does require it (e.g. a role involving substantial or regular contact with children or vulnerable adults) then those wishing to take on that role will be asked to give their consent to a DBS check.

Induction

- All volunteers will be entitled to a structured induction period to familiarise them with the work of the Museum in general and their own area of work in particular. Training will be offered as funds permit where it helps to fulfil the role more effectively.
- All volunteers will be asked to sign a Volunteer Agreement which requires them to abide by the rules and principles of the organisation. These will be clearly explained and copies of appropriate policies and procedures made available.

- All volunteers will be briefed about the importance of maintaining confidentiality and asked to sign a confidentiality statement.
- Most volunteers will have a satisfactory and enjoyable experience. Volunteers will be asked to agree to a one month trial period so that both the volunteer and the museum have the chance to see if the relationship is working and if it is not to end it on an amicable basis.

Support and supervision

- All volunteers will have a named person as their main contact and will be provided with regular supervision to feedback on progress, discuss future developments and air any problems in confidence. A grievance procedure exists to deal with any unresolved problems.
- Volunteers can give as much or as little time as they feel is appropriate. Whatever commitment volunteers can give is a great asset to the Museum. However we would ask that volunteers do consider this as a 'commitment' and if unable to attend for one reason or another, the volunteer manager or duty manager should be informed at least half an hour before the session is due to begin.
- All volunteers are covered by the Museum's insurance policy while they are on the premises or engaged in any agreed work for the Museum. NB the Museum's insurance policy does not include driving on behalf of the museum.
- The museum is currently unable to reimburse any travel, parking or other out-of-pocket expenses unfortunately.
- The Museum will ensure that volunteers are made aware of health and safety procedures and requirements, and will, as far as practicable, provide a safe environment for volunteers.
- Volunteers will be encouraged to express their views on matters concerning the organisation. Their opinion will be sought concerning any changes or developments which may affect them.
- The Museum will respect the confidentiality of volunteers and will not release any information about them without their agreement.
- The Museum will supply a reference to any volunteer seeking other voluntary work or paid employment.
- Volunteers will be introduced to staff members, made to feel welcome, valued for what they offer and thanked for their contribution.

Termination

- The Museum reserves the right to terminate the relationship with a volunteer. This will be done in writing. The Museum will where possible try and give at least two weeks' notice of termination of the volunteering relationship but has the right to terminate the relationship without notice at any time without prejudice.
- Any volunteer wishing to withdraw from their voluntary role is asked to give the volunteer supervisor as much notice as possible. The Museum would appreciate at least two weeks' notice of a volunteer leaving their role but recognises the volunteer's right to withdraw at any time without prejudice.
- Volunteers will be offered an exit interview upon leaving a voluntary role at the Museum.

Monitoring and Review

- It will be the responsibility of the Museum to regularly review the operation of this Volunteer Policy and to make sure that it is always in accordance with the Equal Opportunity policy and current volunteering best practice.