

## **Church of England Guidelines for Working with Volunteers**

### **Define their role**

Write down precisely why you need volunteers. How much time do you expect them to give? Write down clear descriptions of the required tasks if you can, so that people know what they are volunteering for and you know how to assess the suitability of potential volunteers.

### **Volunteer policy**

Think about documenting a policy for volunteers that can be shared with them, setting out your responsibilities to them and theirs to you.

### **Recruitment**

Think about where you will advertise for volunteers. It may depend on what you are recruiting for and, for example, whether it is to meet a short term emergency, or provide a longer term service. Consider social media, as well as posters, leaflet drops, local magazine/newspaper ads. Some job-search websites have volunteer sections too.

### **Selection**

The process needs to be rigorous and thorough without being unnecessarily bureaucratic. Restrictions are justified in certain circumstances, but it is important to be aware of good practice in equal opportunities. Your diocesan social responsibility adviser could offer guidance on the distinction between reasonable and unreasonable restrictions when selecting volunteers. ***Your diocesan safeguarding officer can help you identify particular restrictions and the screening necessary (e.g. Criminal Records Bureau checks), in relation to working with children and vulnerable adults.*** The clearer the pre-information about what will be expected (written or oral), the more likely it is that appropriate people will put themselves forward. Although it does not need to be a very formal process, it is important for both sides to be able to assess the suitability of the individual for the role.

### **Budget**

Include the costs of using volunteers in your budget, to cover possible outlay. There may be set-up costs, such as provision of a desk, computer or phone line, and there will be running costs such as reimbursing expenses, insurance, training and support, and management time.

### **Management, support and supervision**

Support of volunteers requires consideration of their needs, including:

- Adequate induction arrangements
- Someone they can turn to for immediate help or advice
- Information about the project
- Being thanked and valued
- Being involved in wider aspects of the project, in policy making and reflection both on past performance and future direction

The level of supervision will depend upon what they do, how long they have been doing it, how experienced they are. The effectiveness of both support and supervision will be linked with wider policies, internal communications and working practices, including relationships between volunteers and between them and staff and trustees.

## **Insurance, health and safety**

You are legally liable for your volunteers and clients, which means taking out suitable insurance (public liability, employee liability, personal accident and professional indemnity) and being aware of the relevant legislation. Under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974, you must have a health and safety policy. It should include reference to volunteers and they should have a copy. Your local authority or diocesan social responsibility adviser may have a template policy which you can adapt.

## **Training**

Training can be informal or formal and accredited; internal or using outside agencies. It might be a matter of keeping volunteers up to date with what is happening within the project or in the policy context they are working in. It might focus on imparting skills, such as listening or IT skills and, for some, there may be the possibility of volunteers getting NVQs or other qualifications. What is appropriate will depend on the nature of the volunteers, what they are doing and how long term they are.

## **Expenses**

These might include things like travel expenses, subsistence for those working a full day, uniforms or protective clothing, training events/conferences. The process for claiming expenses needs to be simple, clear and consistent for all volunteers. Payments should be regular, and sometimes in advance for people on low incomes. Beware of making ex gratia payments that could create tax, benefit or national insurance problems.

## **Provision**

As well as providing expenses, in some projects, you may need to provide guidelines, for example confidentiality guidelines, or information about protection issues. Conversely, volunteers have a right to information, as well as safeguards, if their own safety might be at risk. If you're working with a partner charity, they can help you with this. Alternatively, ask your diocesan social responsibility officer.

## **Inclusion**

Volunteers need to feel that they are part of the wider team, that they are trusted and their role is appreciated. Demonstrating this may entail more than treating individuals respectfully, for example, having places for volunteers on the management committee and involving them collectively when there are major decisions to be made.

## **Calculating their contribution**

It is helpful to have evidence for funders of the in-kind or cash value of volunteers. This might be calculated on the basis of the minimum wage hourly rate, or the rate for the job of roles such as lawyers, counsellors or drivers, or volunteer time could be computed in terms of full-time equivalent staff. Alongside this quantitative information, there can be commentary on to roles of volunteers (including trustees) and what they bring to the project (enabling greater reach, work with specific client groups, more activities, etc).

## **Cromer Church Volunteer Policy**

Cromer Church both recognises and values the role that volunteers play in the life of Cromer Church. This Volunteer Policy sets out our responsibilities to volunteers, and the responsibilities of the volunteers.

### **The responsibilities of Cromer Church when seeking volunteers**

#### **Defining the role**

Each volunteer role will have

- \* A clear title
- \* A clear remit of the tasks associated with that role
- \* An estimate of the time needed per week to carry out the role
- \* Identified as short term, longer term or emergency cover only

#### **Recruitment and selection**

- \* Volunteer roles will be advertised within the church and, where appropriate in the community
- \* The process for selecting volunteers will be in line with the Safer Recruitment Document
- \* Due care and consideration will be taken in accordance with equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation
- \* Volunteers applying for the vacancies will need to undergo certain checks in line with our Safeguarding Policy and undertake to follow the Parish Safeguarding Guidelines
- \* Volunteers will need to be sympathetic to the values of Cromer Church
- \* Volunteers should demonstrate a passion and gifting for the role they wish to undertake

#### **Management, Support and Supervision**

- \* Adequate induction arrangements
- \* Someone they can turn to for immediate help or advice
- \* Information about their role
- \* Being thanked and valued
- \* Being involved in wider aspects of church life as appropriate related to their role
- \* Volunteers will meet with church leadership at least every six months to appraise the role, receive support and make any necessary adjustments to the role
- \* Training, whether formal or informal, will be offered as appropriate
- \* Expenses will be available for some aspects of some roles. The process for claiming expenses will be clear, simple and consistent for all volunteers
- \* Cromer Church will provide a healthy and safe environment
- \* All volunteers will be covered by the insurance policy of Cromer Church

#### **All volunteers are expected to**

- \* Respect confidentiality and privacy
- \* Be punctual and reliable
- \* Carry out the duties listed in their Volunteer Position Description
- \* Be accountable
- \* Give notice if your availability to do the role changes

- \* Report any injuries or hazards that you notice in the workplace
- \* Adhere to the church's policies and procedures
- \* Deal with complaints in an appropriate manner
- \* Undertake training as requested
- \* Ask for support when needed
- \* Support other team members

Dated: May 2021

Review date: May 2022

**Cromer Church Volunteer Position Description**

Title of the volunteer role

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Remit of this volunteer role

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.....  
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Estimate of the time needed per week to carry out this volunteer role

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Line Manager

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Timescale of this role (please tick)

- ..... Emergency cover only
- ..... Short term - until the remit above is completed
- ..... Longer term - until the volunteer steps down or the Vicar ends the role

***To be completed by volunteer :***

Please tick the following after reading the Cromer Church Volunteer Policy

- ..... I have read the Management, Support and Supervision section
- ..... I have read what is expected of volunteers

Please complete below to show you are in agreement with the policy

Signed ..... Print name ..... Dated .....

## **Request for Reference for Volunteer Worker at Cromer Church**

If deemed appropriate by PCC a request for references will be made for volunteers at Cromer Church.

It is suggested that if the volunteer has been well known to Cromer Church and has been serving/worshipping for the last three years at Cromer Church then a reference is not deemed necessary.

However, it is envisaged that all volunteers that will be working with children unsupervised by parents or volunteers working with vulnerable adults will require a reference.

The following standard letter is to be used by the proposed line manager/supervisor of the volunteer.

Dear

REQUEST FOR REFERENCE FOR A VOLUNTEER WORKER AT CROMER CHURCH

Re: *(name of volunteer)*

Volunteer role:

The above person has given your name as someone who may be contacted in relation to his/her application to volunteer in the above role.

Please could you forward a reference for this candidate to undertake this role outlining in particular

- \* How long you have known the applicant
- \* Explain under what circumstances have you known them eg through work, volunteer work?
- \* Personal qualities they have which would help them do well in this role
- \* Specific experience and/or knowledge they have
- \* Any concerns that you have regarding this person undertaking this role?

Please return your reference to me by .....

Yours sincerely

(name)

(contact details, address, e mail, phone number)

## **Model interview / discussion**

This is a simple model interview / discussion form template for a volunteer which can be used, amended or substituted by a local model as required.

### **Name of Church**

Interview / discussion questions for a volunteer seeking to work with children / adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect and outcome

The purpose of the interview / discussion is to explore the applicant's suitability. Notes of the interview / discussion must be retained and attached to this form which must be returned to the Priest to be held on behalf of the PCC. The following factors must be addressed:

### **Name and address of applicant:**

1. What experience have you of working with children / adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect?
2. Can you give an example of something that you have done that demonstrates your commitment to working with vulnerable groups (i.e. children and/or adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect)?
3. Can you give some examples of how you would provide kind, consistent and safe care?
4. Can you describe how you would respect the background and culture of children / adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect with whom you would volunteer?
5. How would you treat all children / adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect as individuals with equal concern?
6. Do you know of any reason why you should not be working with children or adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect? Are there any police or employment matters outstanding which could affect your ability to volunteer?



**Outcome**

Are there any issues in the Confidential Declaration? Do the references support the appointment?

Do you recommend their approval to the PCC?

Signed:

Name (Print):

Date Approved by PCC:

YES / NO YES / NO YES / NO

Date:

**Cromer Church Volunteer  
Six Monthly Role Review**

Volunteer Name

Volunteer Role

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***Each volunteer thanked for their service***

What has gone well over the last 6 months in your role?

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What has not gone so well over the last 6 months in your role?

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What could be improved for your role?

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What help do you require to do your role?

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*Does anyone want a confidential 1-2-1?*

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Line Manager Carrying out review ..... Signed.....

Date.....

**Cromer Church Group Start-up Readiness Review**

Before any group can begin to meet, or start up again under the auspices of Cromer Church, and in the premises of Cromer Church, then certain items need to be in place to meet Cromer Church Safeguarding policy and procedures along with other Cromer Church policies.

The following is not an exhaustive list or in a particular order, but is deemed the bare minimum that is required to be in place by the PCC:

- Group Agreed with Church Leadership

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- Identified Leader with appropriate safeguarding level of training

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- Named Helpers with appropriate level of DBS clearance

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- Volunteer policy followed for all named helpers

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- Group minuted in PCC minutes as going to start *(to enable to be covered by Church insurance and to be listed on Safeguarding 'list of activities' as required)*

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- Agreed scheduling and booking of premises through the Church office.

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Dated..... Signed ..... Name.....