

## Expectations of volunteers

All volunteers are expected to:

- respect confidentiality and privacy
- be punctual and reliable
- carry out the duties listed in their Volunteer Role/Position Description
- be accountable
- give notice if their availability to do the role changes
- report any injuries or hazards that they notice in their 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.

Original policy: August 2021

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Ratified: March 2026

**This document and related documents to be updated during 2026**

## Church of England Guidelines for Working with Volunteers

### Define the 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. DBS 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 the 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 recognises and values the role that volunteers play in the life of Cromer Church. This policy sets out our responsibilities and the responsibilities of volunteers.**

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

#### **Defining the role**

Each volunteer role will have a **clear title**; a **clear remit** (the duties, responsibilities and tasks associated with that role); **an estimate of the time needed** per week to carry out the role; and have been identified as being **short term, longer term or emergency cover only**.

#### **Recruitment and selection**

- Volunteer roles will be advertised within the church family and, where appropriate, in the wider community.
- The process for selecting volunteers will be in line with our Safer Recruitment Policy.
- 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**

All volunteers will have set out in their Role/Position Description:

- clear information about their role
- adequate induction arrangements
- someone they can turn to for immediate help or advice.

All volunteers will be:

- thanked regularly, and have their work valued
- invited to be involved in wider aspects of church life as appropriate to their role
- invited to meet with their line manager/team leader at least once every 12 months to appraise the role, receive support and make any necessary adjustments to the role
- be offered training, whether formal or informal, as appropriate to their role.

Cromer Church will:

- explain what expenses can be claimed for the role and have a clear, simple and consistent process for claiming those expenses for all volunteers
- provide a healthy and safe environment
- cover all volunteers under Cromer Church insurance.