

Hastings Museum and Art Gallery Old Town Hall Museum

Volunteer Policy and Procedures

February 2012

Review date February 2015

1.0 Introduction and statement of principles

- 1.1 This document states Hastings Museum's policy on involving volunteers. Its purpose is to enable HMAG to think about the value of its volunteers and to achieve clear, workable principles to which volunteers and their supervisors can work.
- 1.2 This policy sets out guidelines for the quality of opportunity, recruitment, training, support and development of volunteers within the service.
- 1.3 Hastings Museum welcomes the involvement of volunteers to help deliver the museum's objectives. We are committed to ensuring that staff at all levels work positively with volunteers. There is no intention to use volunteers to replace paid staff, but to add value to the offer of the Museum.

2.0 Need and Capacity

2.1 Volunteers will only be taken on when there is an identified role for them and when there is the capacity to manage them.

2.2 Role descriptions

- Each voluntary role is defined by a specific role description. This will clearly set out what the role is and the range of tasks the volunteers will need to perform. Role descriptions will be developed by the staff member who will be supervising that volunteer.
- Specific roles for volunteers make it easier to manage volunteers and to plan what resources, training and supervision is required. Clear roles give volunteers status and a sense of responsibility.

2.3 Risk Assessments

- All volunteer roles should have an accompanying risk assessment to determine potential hazards to the volunteers, staff, members of the public and museum and contents. Risk assessments will be developed by the staff member who will be supervising that volunteer.

2.4 Annual meetings will review roles, identify capacity and any volunteer vacancies, and deal with feedback from volunteers.

3.0 Recruitment

3.1 Advertising opportunities

- Hastings Museum will recruit volunteers to specific vacancies and role descriptions. Options for advertising that can be considered include local colleges and universities, Hastings Voluntary Action, word of mouth and existing networks.

3.2 Unsolicited enquiries

- People making unsolicited enquiries should be made aware of current vacancies and where to find out about future vacancies if there are currently none.

3.3 Application forms and interviews

- All prospective volunteers will be asked to complete a short application form and attend an informal interview, which will be conducted by the staff member who will be supervising the volunteer

3.4 Reference Checks

- Before appointment, two references should be obtained for each applicant. References may not be taken from relatives. Criminal Records Bureau checks may be required for volunteers if their work brings them into contact with children or vulnerable adults. Applicants will be advised if a CRB check is required during the application procedure.

3.5 Volunteer agreements

- All volunteers will receive a volunteer agreement. A copy of this agreement will be kept by the museum and the volunteer will be given a copy. This agreement details what the volunteer can expect from the museum and what we hope from them. This does not constitute or imply a contract of employment.

4.0 Induction and Training

All volunteers will receive an induction to the Museum and relevant policies and procedures. Inductions should be carried out by the volunteer's main supervisor.

4.1 At induction all volunteers will be given a work folder which will include:

- A description of their specific role and duties
- Specific task instructions to refer back to
- A copy of their volunteer agreement
- A work log to record tasks undertaken and hours worked

4.2 Policies and Procedures

As part of their induction it is vital that volunteers are made aware of and understand the following

- Health and Safety
- Evacuation procedures
- Child protection

4.3 Training

Role specific training needs will be discussed and organised between volunteer and supervisor.

5.0 Expenses

We are not able to reimburse travel expenses between the volunteer's home and the Museum. Travel expenses that are incurred as part of the volunteer's duties carried out for the Museum will be reimbursed. For all expense claims the volunteers will need to have receipts for the full amount claimed.

6.0 Supervision and Support

- All volunteers will have named supervisors who will be their main point of contact. If the supervisor is due to be away they should make provision for the volunteers in their absence.
- The supervisor will have regular meetings with the volunteers to offer supervision, feedback, discuss future progress and monitor concerns. Volunteers will also have an informal review every six months.

- References will be provided for volunteers on request.

7.0 Insurance

All volunteers are covered by Hastings Borough Council's Public Liability insurance while they are on the premises or engaged with work on our behalf.

8.0 Health and Safety

- We have a duty of care to all volunteers and will take steps to protect their health and safety at the Museum.
- Health and safety information will form a core part of the training and induction for all volunteers.
- All volunteers roles will be risk assessed (see 2.3)
- Prior to taking on a volunteer, we will request information from all volunteers on any health issues, needs and access requirements relevant to ensuring their safe involvement. This information will be held securely in line with our data protection policy.

9.0 Data protection

All data relating to volunteers will be held securely, will be used only for the reasons for which it was collected, and will not be shared with third parties, in line with our policy on data protection.