

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF SWANAGE

VOLUNTEERS POLICY

Committed to Volunteering

Volunteers are vital to the effective functioning of our churches. Volunteers are our link to our community. They are integrated into the structure and operations of the church as a charity, and contribute strongly towards its aims and objectives.

Who is this Policy for?

The governing council, the Parochial Church Council (PCC) is composed mainly of unpaid volunteers and relies on those people giving their time and effort to make it an effective decision making and governing body. Other volunteers support the PCC by giving their time to carry out roles which have been initiated by, or agreed with, the PCC. The volunteering relationship is based on trust and does not involve the obligations associated with employment. No payment, other than reimbursement of agreed expenses, is made by the PCC to people who give their time as volunteers.

This policy is intended for volunteers who have accepted an agreed role with the church as a charity. It outlines the principles on which the relationship between volunteers and the charity is based and provides basic information about volunteering with us.

Recruitment

The PCC welcomes and respects the breadth of experience, skills, dedication and goodwill that volunteers bring. Informal interviews are carried out to ensure that applicants are suitable for the role in question. We will base our selection on the ability of each applicant to fulfil the role concerned, taking into account any effect the volunteer may have on the safety of all parties, our church and reputation.

Volunteers in any role may be required to complete a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check in the light of the volunteers work. The PCC will follow the Safer Recruitment Policy.

Age

In most cases you will need to be over 16 years of age to volunteer independently and under 18s will be asked for parental consent. Younger people may get involved in some aspects of volunteering with us if they are accompanied by a responsible adult. We do not have an upper age limit for volunteers but there may be situations that require us to ask someone to stop volunteering – for example when health issues are considered a risk to the person concerned or others around them.

Getting started

Welcome to the team! We want to make sure you have everything you need to get started so we'll provide you with either an induction or access to useful materials and information. Your contact will usually be the person responsible for your area of work as a volunteer, a churchwarden, Rector or Vicar.

Equal Opportunities and Diversity

You will be volunteering in an organisation that is committed to equal opportunities and diversity. This commitment is reflected throughout the PCC's policies and practices.

Responsibilities and Expectations

We want you to enjoy volunteering with us and we take our responsibilities towards you very seriously. As a volunteer, you will also be a representative of the charity and church and, as such, we ask that you act appropriately.

The PCC's responsibilities to its volunteers:

- To offer equal opportunities to everyone who wants to volunteer
- To match your skills and experience with the right role for you wherever possible, listening to our motivations and aspirations
- To offer appropriate training and support for your role
- To celebrate success and recognise loyalty and dedication
- To respect all our volunteers and listen to what you have to say, consistently encouraging two-way communication
- To provide information about the church's work, policies and procedures
- To reimburse agreed out-of-pocket expenses
- To make necessary arrangements to ensure your health, safety and welfare as a volunteer
- To encourage a positive and friendly atmosphere
- To provide access to trained members, to support, guide and advise you

Our expectations of you as a volunteer

- To aim of high standards of efficiency, reliability and quality in your volunteering
- To work in partnership with other volunteers, staff and the general public
- To support, respect and adhere to our organisational policies, guidelines and management decisions – including all aspects of equal opportunities, health and safety, safeguarding, data protection and use of our name
- To always consider and protect the Church's good reputation in your actions and conduct
- To act responsibly and within the law
- To let your contact know first if you have any problems so that we can find a solution together
- To let your contact know if there are changes in your personal circumstances that may affect your volunteering
- To have the best possible experience by getting involved and enjoy your volunteering

Safeguarding

As part of your induction you should receive a copy of our safeguarding policy, "Promoting a Safer Church." A copy is also available on the Team website and in each church with contact details of the Safeguarding Officer. Working Together to Safeguard Children, the Statutory Guidance from the Government makes it a requirement on all organisations, including faith organisations that provide services to children that they provide at least a one hour induction on Safeguarding for all volunteers. This is met by completing a CO online training course. Anyone working with children or adults who may be at risk in a role that is occasional, supervised etc. needs an Enhanced DBS check and also a C1 level training course.

Health and Safety

We are committed to ensuring your wellbeing and safety whilst you are volunteering and, in turn, we expect our volunteers to contribute to maintaining a safe working environment.

All church volunteers must:

- Take reasonable care for the health and safety of yourself and other persons who may be affected by your actions or omissions

- Co-operated with staff by assisting them to fulfil their statutory duties
- Follow our health and safety policy and measures put in place by the PCC or any organisation whose premises you may be working on
- Report accidents/incidents or dangerous circumstances to a Churchwarden, whether or not any person has been injured
- Be aware of actions to take when an emergency situation arises and who, from the PCC, to contact for support

Copyright, Intellectual Property and Photography

The rights to any original works that you may produce in the course of volunteering will belong to the PCC, unless otherwise agreed in writing and approved by the whole PCC.

Examples include photography, artwork, graphic design and written work, including the results of research. We may use photographs of volunteers, carrying out their roles for promotional purposes, such as a leaflet or online. You may, of course, request that an image is withdrawn.

Media Relations

No comments or stories should be given directly to the media, unless your volunteer role specifically includes talking to the press or other media. Generally our media relations are handled by trained specialists at the Diocese and so any requests from the press, etc. should be referred to your contact.

Data Protection and Confidentiality

We take great care to protect your information as part of our data protection responsibilities. As a volunteer, we expect you to protect any personal or confidential information to which you may have access.

Expenses

With prior agreement volunteers may request reimbursement of reasonable out-of-pocket expenses. Payments must be authorised in advance and receipts will be required.

Insurance

The PCC has appropriate types of insurance in place to cover its volunteers. These include employers' liability insurance and public liability insurance in the event of a volunteer being harmed due to the negligence of the charity, or a third party being injured as a result of the actions of a volunteer whilst performing church duties. However, our insurance does not cover your personal belongings.

Using your own vehicle

The PCC does not provide motor insurance for you as a volunteer. Driving in connection with charitable volunteering is normally classified by insurers as "social, domestic and pleasure" which is part of your standard cover. We recommend that you check with your insurer but there should not be any additional cost.

Smoking and substance abuse

All PCC premises and events are smoke free. No smoking is allowed in or near our sites. Volunteers are asked not to smoke when wearing a badge, branded clothing or anything that would identify you with the church.

Volunteering whilst under the influence of alcohol or drugs will not be accepted. We regard this as a disciplinary issue and you will be subject to instant dismissal.

Training and Development

You will have access to training or information to help you successfully carry out your volunteering role.

You will be offered an appropriate induction including information about the volunteering environment and any equipment you may be using in your role. If you choose to take on an additional or alternative role or activity as a volunteer, your contact will be happy to help you widen or develop your skills and knowledge accordingly.

Resolving concerns

If you have any problems or complaints about your volunteering, please talk to your contact immediately. If the problem is not resolved please talk to a churchwarden, The Rector or Vicar. The charity takes the concerns of its volunteers very seriously and will make every reasonable effort to resolve any difficulties.

Audit and Whistle Blowing

The PCC is accountable to the Charity Commission and to the public who support us so generously. We have a responsibility to check and audit our activities to maintain our reputation as a trustworthy charity that manages donations honestly and efficiently. If you would like to know more a PCC member will be able to inform you how we do this in practice.

If you find that any member of staff or volunteer is behaving in a way that is likely to bring the charity into disrepute or cause financial loss, you should let your contact, churchwarden, Rector or Vicar know immediately. If, for any reason, you would rather not talk to one of these people, you are entitled to contact the Charity Commission.

Complaints Handling Policy

As part of your induction you should receive a copy of our complaints handling policy, in which we detail how we deal with complaints. A copy is also available on the Team website. Our policy is to try and resolve all complaints informally, although a formal procedure is available where appropriate.

This Policy was adopted by the PCC on 18.09.2019

Reviewed 20.07.2021 & 25.10.22

Date for next Review: October 2023

PCC of Swanage
Charity Registration Number: 1134114