



HARPENDEN & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

VOLUNTEER POLICY

About Us

The Harpenden & District Local History Society (**the Society**) is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, as successor to a society established in 1973, with the object of educating the public in the local history of Harpenden and district and to undertake research into the origins and development of buildings, organisations, crafts, trades and other aspects of historical interest and to publish the results of such research. We also have a standing aim to make a valuable contribution to the cultural life of Harpenden and the surrounding area. The Society has recently established a museum and an archive, located in the Eric Morecambe Centre, Rothamsted Park, Harpenden.

Volunteers

A volunteer is someone who freely gives their time and does not receive financial reward beyond the reimbursement of expenses. The volunteer relationship is one of trust and mutual understanding. No enforceable obligation, contractual or otherwise, can be imposed on, or by, volunteers and volunteering does not affect a person's entitlement to welfare or out of work benefits.

Our Vision and Mission for Volunteering

Volunteers are vital to our work. We are reliant on the goodwill and involvement of our volunteers to realise the Society's objects. Volunteering is a great way to share enthusiasm, skills and ideas, to make a positive contribution to the local community and for individuals to get involved as befits their lifestyle and time commitments.

Recruitment and Selection

The Society embraces equality and diversity when recruiting volunteers. We strive to provide extra support and make reasonable adjustments, if needed, for volunteers with additional needs including disability, language or mental health.

We have a range of opportunities for volunteers to get involved in, including manning the museum and archive, conducting research, writing for publications and the website, giving talks, exhibiting artefacts, maps, photographs and documents, acting as welcomers, guides and marshals in the EMC and leading guided walks. The Society provides guidelines for those involved in the museum and the archive and in acting as welcomers, guides and marshals in the EMC.

Harpenden & District Local History Society is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered with limited liability in England and Wales under the Charities Act 2011 with charity number 1183526 whose principal office is at Eric Morecambe Centre, Rothamsted Park, Harpenden, Herts. AL5 2FR. www.harpenden-history.org.uk

Member of The National Council for Voluntary Organisations and we have adopted the Code of Ethics for Museums of the Museums Association.

Enquiries about volunteering are passed on to our Chairman, or other designated person, who makes contact to arrange an informal meeting. Information on specific opportunities is provided so that a decision can be made about which role best matches the individual's interests and time availability, and also our needs.

Application Process

All potential volunteers will be asked to complete an application form incorporating the need for at least one reference. For some of our roles we are required to take up a Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) enquiry. As required by law we have a policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders and the storage of information about our volunteers. Some roles will require formal training, e.g. safeguarding, and the Society covers all the costs of that training.

Induction and Training

It does not matter how much a volunteer already knows as there will be opportunities to learn, and we have roles to suit many levels of expertise. For most roles basic competence in IT is expected.

There will be an induction prepared and delivered by the relevant responsible Society member. This will include delivery of the following:

- This Volunteer Policy, our Safeguarding Policy, and our Health and Safety Policy.
- Details about the role of the volunteer, including their responsibilities, the hours when the volunteer is expected to provide their services, and the notice they must give to whom if they are unable to attend any particular session.
- Information about training.

Volunteers can access the Society's Constitution and latest Annual Report and Financial Statements at www.harpenden-history.org.uk

Support

We expect our volunteers to comply with our policies and procedures. Team Leaders will provide support to volunteers in their team, and will remain the volunteer's key contact throughout their volunteering with us. This will include regular meetings, either individually or together with other members of the team. Our Safeguarding Lead is also available as an additional point of contact for all volunteers.

Recognition and Reward

We simply could not fulfil our objects without our volunteers. To acknowledge this, we will always say thank you and show appreciation for a job well done. We take opportunities at our Annual General Meeting and Trustee Meetings, through our website and social media and in the local press to praise our volunteers.

Insurance and Risk Assessment

All volunteers are covered under the Society's public liability and personal accident insurance, details of which can be provided on request. Risk assessments are carried out for all activities and events.

Health and Safety

The Society takes our volunteers' health and safety, and that of members of the public, very seriously and, in respect of activities undertaken in in the EMC, has adopted the procedures of SLM, the operators of the EMC, to ensure, as far as is practicable, that all volunteers are protected from risks.

Resolving Problems

We hope that all our volunteers will have a very enjoyable experience volunteering with us. However, if a volunteer's expectations are not met or a specific concern arises, we want our volunteers to feel comfortable about letting us know. First of all, we suggest the volunteer talks to their Team Leader; he or she should be able to sort it out with the volunteer before it becomes a problem. If the volunteer does not feel this will resolve things, they can speak to the Safeguarding Lead.

Confidentiality

We expect all volunteers to adhere to confidentiality guidelines, which will be explained before the volunteering role commences. This includes the volunteer's use of social media and any contact with the press. All volunteers will be asked to read our UK GDPR Protocol and to acknowledge to their Team Leader that they have read, understood and will comply with its contents.

Data Protection

The Society is committed to protecting the privacy and security of volunteers' personal information in accordance with UK GDPR and all other data protection legislation currently in force.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The Society is committed to embracing diversity and promoting equality and inclusion. When representing the Society, we expect our volunteers to support our commitment to promoting equality.

Expenses

The Trustees are really appreciative of the time our volunteers contribute to the Society. Although we recognise that many do not claim any expenses, we would not wish that any individual feel they could not volunteer if we did not meet their volunteer related expenses, we will reimburse volunteers with any reasonable expenses they have incurred with the prior approval of the Society's Treasurer.

Representation

Volunteers are not entitled to represent the Society in any medium, unless this is a necessary part of the role being undertaken.

It's meant to be fun!

We wish our volunteers to take pride in volunteering and in furthering the work of the Society for the education and benefit of the community. Overall, it's meant to be fun! Our Chairman (chairman@harpenden-history.org.uk) is always happy to receive feedback on the activities of the Society and the experiences of volunteers.

12th December 2023