



MUSEUM VOLUNTEER POLICY

1. Introduction

We (Almond Valley Heritage Trust) aim to “preserve and interpret the history and environment of West Lothian,... and make this heritage accessible, engaging, and enjoyed by a wide audience. We recognise the additional value that volunteers bring to our museum and to our customers/visitors.

When involving volunteers we aim to work within the following principles of good practice:

- All voluntary roles will be well thought out and clearly described so that everyone is sure about their respective roles and responsibilities;
- We will comply with current Data Protection legislation and guidance in the handling of all information we hold on all volunteers;
- Our volunteering opportunities will complement the work of paid staff and enhance the work of our organisation;
- Volunteers will have regular opportunities to share their thoughts/ideas/concerns with an allocated person in line with our policies and procedures;
- All of our existing and future policies and procedures will take into account how they affect volunteers.

2. The Purpose of this Policy

By adhering to this policy we aim to:

- Recognise the value of the contribution volunteers make to our organisation;
- Be true to the purpose, values, and intentions of the organisation in our approach to involving volunteers;
- Recognise the roles, rights and responsibilities of volunteers;
- Reiterate our commitment to involving volunteers in our organisation;
- Create and work to agreed principles for the involvement of volunteers; and
- Ensure that we offer satisfying volunteering opportunities as well as support volunteers appropriately to carry out their role to the high standards possible.

This policy should be read and considered alongside any other relevant policies, procedures and guidance etc. that we use to support the volunteering in our organisation (Refer to Employment Policy Manual stored in office).

This policy is not:

Either implicitly or explicitly, a binding contractual or personal agreement. Almond Valley Heritage Trust reserves the right to change any aspect of the policy at any time after consultation with relevant parties.

3. Recruitment and selection

We will work to our equalities and diversity policy when recruiting and selecting volunteers. In addition, we will abide by any relevant legislation e.g. on Data Protection and the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults. All potential volunteers will be asked to complete an application form and attend an informal interview. Written role descriptions will describe the time, commitment, skills and qualities required as well as the types of activities volunteers will carry out. All volunteers will be asked to provide photo ID and 2 references where possible. Where individuals are not successful in gaining a voluntary role in our organisation we undertake to refer them to other suitable organisations and opportunities where possible. All volunteers will receive appropriate training and development opportunities to help them carry out their volunteering role.

4. Support

Once their volunteering has started we expect volunteers to adhere to our existing policies and procedures. All volunteers are covered under The Almond Valley Heritage Trust's Public Liability Insurance. All volunteers will receive appropriate induction into their volunteering. This includes the provision of user friendly information on any policies and procedures connected to their role.

Following induction, volunteers will have regular support meetings, either one to one or in groups, to discuss progress, identify areas for development, or to address any issues. Written notes of these discussions may be held within the individual volunteer's records in accordance with data protection requirements. These records can be shared with volunteers at any time at their request. Ongoing training and development needs will be met as required.

5. Volunteer benefits

Our Volunteers volunteer for many different reasons: some enjoy the social side of working with people who share a similar interest, or have the satisfaction of knowing they have helped make the collections more accessible to the public whilst making Almond Valley Heritage Trust a better place for visitors. Others, to develop their skills or gain new skills while serving with Almond Valley Heritage Trust.

Almond Valley Heritage Trust offers a discount on prepared foods in the tearoom, with a nominal charge for tea or coffee.

Volunteers can seek a reference from the Curator after they have volunteered with Almond Valley Heritage Trust for 3 months.

Volunteers will receive a free membership card after volunteering for 6 months that will be valid for 2 adults and 2 children for the length of their volunteering commitment.

We cannot guarantee paid employment to volunteers as all recruitment is carried out in accordance with Almond Valley Heritage Trust's Equal Opportunity Policy.

6. Problem solving

Where a problem is raised, for example, by a volunteer or about a volunteer, we will endeavour to resolve this using a range of options including our complaints process, codes of conduct and support mechanisms.

7. Responsibilities

Overall responsibility for the carrying out, monitoring and review of the effectiveness of this policy and associated procedures rests with the Curator. Implementation and adherence to this policy is the shared responsibility of all staff and volunteers within the organisation.