

# **Holy Trinity Church Blacon Volunteer Policy**

# **VOLUNTEER POLICY**

This policy explains how Holy Trinity Church Blacon (HTB) aims to treat its volunteers fairly and consistently. The existence of this written policy will help to ensure that decisions are never made on an ad hoc basis and that all HTB volunteers will be treated equally and fairly.

HTB believes that volunteering offers a partnership between the volunteer and our activity, whereby the volunteer is supported and encouraged to access opportunities for personal and/or professional development.

The policy also ensures that volunteers will know what they can expect and what they can do if there are problems.

## **Recruitment**

HTB will ensure that volunteers are recruited under its Equal and Diversity Policy. Volunteers will be required to complete an application form (help will be given if needed). Initially, volunteers will be invited to meet with the Volunteer Co-ordinator or person appointed to supervise the volunteer. If the outcome of this meeting is successful the volunteer will be asked to provide two referees and undergo a check within the relevant legislation, if appropriate for the role.

Once satisfactory references and any checks have been received the volunteer will be invited to become a volunteer for HTB.

## **Induction and Training**

A meeting will be arranged with the designated supervisor or, if one has been appointed, the Volunteer Co-ordinator for HTB. This meeting will cover or provide information on:

- the role, responsibilities and duties of the volunteer
- HTB employees and volunteers
- the relevant HTB policies, including the Health and Safety and Equality and Diversity Policy, Safeguarding policy as well as this Volunteer policy
- essential procedures i.e. timekeeping, rotas, etc
- induction training and details of ongoing training
- the place where the volunteering will take place
- other information as appropriate

There will be a trial period of four weeks to give the church and the volunteer time to discover whether the duties are appropriate. A review will take place midway through the trial period and at the end. This will consist of a meeting between the volunteer and the Volunteer Co-ordinator.

If everything is satisfactory to both HTB and the volunteer, the arrangements for the volunteering will be confirmed.

### **Specifying the Tasks**

Tasks description will be drawn up in accordance with the specified task. There will be a range of volunteering opportunities available to volunteers and these may change depending on the nature of the work of the activity. A task list will be given to volunteers who will have the opportunity, through appropriate profiling, to choose a task of their choice.

### **Payments to Volunteers**

Volunteers, including Trustees, cannot be paid for their *voluntary* activity but may receive out of pocket expenses, as outlined below.

When payments are made to volunteers distinctions have to be made between two kinds of payment.

- 'Allowed expenses' are not treated by HM Revenue & Customs as income or earnings, are not subject to tax or national insurance, do not affect benefits, and may be paid to trustees.
- 'Remuneration' refers to all other payments, and may include payment in kind. Remuneration is treated as taxable income or earnings, and may be paid to volunteers and charity trustees only in circumstances permitted by the charity's governing document.

**The definition of 'allowed expenses'** depends upon whether or not the volunteer receives remuneration.

**All volunteers**, whether or not they receive remuneration over and above 'allowed expenses', may receive tax-free reimbursement for:

- expenses for travel necessary for doing the work (but not for travel from home to the usual place of voluntary work); and
- actual expenditure necessarily incurred in the course of the work.

**Volunteers who receive no remuneration**, but only reimbursement of 'allowed expenses', may also receive tax-free reimbursement for:

- travel expenses between home and the usual place of voluntary work;
- cost of special clothing necessary for the work;
- reasonable cost of meals taken because of volunteering for more than four hours or because the volunteering needs to be carried out at meal times;
- reasonable cost of crèche or other costs for child-minding or dependant care.

**Other conditions for 'allowed expenses'** are that they must be:

- genuinely incurred (i.e. the money actually paid);
- authorised by the church;

- wholly for the church's work; and
- necessary for the work.

**Evidence:** Wherever possible, volunteers should provide receipts or other evidence in support of expense claims.

**Mileage:** HM Revenue publishes from time to time recommended rates for vehicles of different engine sizes and for bicycles for which mileage may be reimbursed tax-free.

### **Volunteers in receipt of benefits**

When taking on volunteers on benefit, HTB will write, as appropriate, to JobCentre Plus / Department for Work and Pensions / Housing Department, stating clearly:

- that the volunteer is not replacing a paid worker;
- that the volunteer will be unpaid, receiving only allowed reimbursement of expenses;
- the details of the volunteer's role, listing duties and hours; and
- that the church is a charity.

**Any payment to a volunteer over and above 'allowed expenses'** may affect the volunteer's right to benefit and advice should be sought before making such payments.

**NOTE:** The situation in relation to benefits for volunteers is complex and detailed interpretation of the rules varies from one office and agency to another. The rules are also changed from time to time. Up-to-date information is in Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) publications and detailed guidance is available from [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk).

### **Responsibilities**

Volunteers may not gain financially from their voluntary activity and HTB will ensure that they will not be used to substitute or take those responsibilities of a paid member of staff; nor will they be asked to do work which goes against their beliefs or principles.

### **Support**

The designated supervisor, other staff and volunteers will supervise and support the volunteer in his/her duties and in managing their time. The designated supervisor will have regular meetings with the volunteer to discuss any problems or issues that may arise and to assess whether the level and amount of work required is appropriate.

### **Insurance**

All volunteers will be covered under the relevant insurance policies and procedures of HTB.

A risk assessment of the volunteer's tasks will be undertaken before a volunteer commences his/her volunteering.

## **Confidentiality**

All volunteers will be expected to respect the confidential nature of the information that they will have access to.

## **Resolving Problems**

The relationship between the church and its volunteers is entirely voluntary and does not imply any contract. However, it is important that HTB is able to maintain its agreed standards of service to the members of the community who use its services, and it is also important that volunteers should enjoy making their contribution to this service.

If the work of a volunteer fails to meet the standards of HTB it will be dealt with as follows:-

1. Initially a meeting will be arranged with the designated supervisor who will explain the concerns that have arisen.
2. If this does not resolve the concerns then a further meeting will be arranged which a member of the PCC of HTB will attend.
3. If following this meeting the work of the volunteer still does not meet with the standards of HTB then he/she will be notified that HTB no longer wishes to continue with the agreement with the volunteer.

At all times the volunteer will be able to freely state his/her concerns and may have a friend to accompany him/her.

If a volunteer is dissatisfied with any aspect of his/her work for HTB he/she should:

1. Initially explain any dissatisfaction informally to the designated person.
2. If that does not resolve the issue/concern then he/she should request a formal meeting with the designated person.
3. If that does not resolve the issue/concern then a formal meeting with a member of the PCC should be requested.
4. If after this, HTB is unable to resolve the matter and the volunteer's dissatisfaction remains unresolved, it would be deemed inappropriate for the volunteer to continue with his/her volunteering with HTB.

\* It should be noted that volunteering is treated in the same way as employment for the purposes of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

**This policy was discussed and agreed at a meeting of the Parochial Church Council held on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2019.**

Signed.....*CP Upton*.....

**(Chair of the meeting)**