

Bath Record Office: Archives and Local Studies **Volunteering Policy**

1. Mission statement

Bath Record Office: Archives and Local Studies collects and keeps safe archives and local studies collections relating to Bath & North East Somerset and its people, it provides access to archives and local studies materials, promoting them for the benefit of the community, and it is the permanent home of the Council's archive.

2. Service aims

Bath Record Office: Archives and Local Studies forms part of Heritage Services under the Economy & Growth Directorate of Bath & North East Somerset Council. Heritage Services' statement of purpose is 'For learning, inspiration and enjoyment', which informs its aims:

- to enhance the quality of life for residents of Bath & North East Somerset
- to maximise public enjoyment of the Council's world class heritage
- to enable people to learn from the activities and achievements of past and present societies
- to promote understanding and appreciation of different cultures
- to contribute to the district's economic prosperity through our Business Plan

3. Aim

Volunteers play an important role in helping the Record Office care for and make available our collections. We value our volunteers who assist, but do not replace, the paid staff in delivering the record office service. This policy outlines how we provide volunteering opportunities and manage their recruitment, supervision, training, well-being and health and safety.

4. Definition

A volunteer is a person who freely agrees to give their time and skills to support the activities of Bath Record Office: Archives and Local Studies.

They work within clearly defined roles to complement and enhance the activities offered by the service and to add value to the service already provided by paid staff.

5. Recruitment of volunteers

- 5.1** Bath Record Office welcomes approaches from anyone who wishes to volunteer and will consider all those whose skills and expectations can be matched against appropriate defined tasks. However, in order to provide a meaningful experience, we will only accept volunteers for whom there are sufficient resources to provide appropriate management and support, and the facilities to ensure that their defined tasks can be undertaken effectively.
- 5.2** The Record Office may also advertise for volunteers on the Record Office website or target specific sources of potential volunteers when appropriate for specific projects.
- 5.3** Potential volunteers will be asked to complete an application form and will be invited to attend an informal interview to discuss their interests and skills to ensure that they are given appropriate and rewarding tasks if accepted. This also provides the opportunity to discuss any potential access issues for which reasonable adjustments may need to be made.
- 5.4** We ask that all volunteers read and agree to the Volunteering Guidelines, Volunteering Agreement and Confidentiality forms and any other relevant documentation before they start volunteering with us.
- 5.5** The Volunteering Agreement makes clear what the volunteer and Bath Record Office can expect of each other. The Volunteering Agreement is not a contract of employment.
- 5.6** Bath Record Office reserves the right to refuse any volunteers for whom there is no suitable role.
- 5.7** Volunteers at the Record Office undertake a month's trial period before becoming permanent volunteers, allowing them time to discover whether they feel comfortable

in their role and also giving the Record Office the chance to assess a volunteer's suitability.

5.8 A risk assessment will be completed when recruiting volunteers below 18 years of age and made available, along with a copy of the volunteer role description, to the parent or guardian of the volunteer. Similarly, any role in which a vulnerable adult will be volunteering will be risk assessed prior to their beginning in the role.

6. Our commitment to volunteers

Bath Record Office: Archives and Local Studies will:

6.1 Respect and not exploit its volunteers. It is recognised that the levels of time and commitment that individuals can provide will vary.

6.2 Attempt to match the skills, interests and expectations of individuals to defined tasks when volunteering.

6.3 Provide a volunteer role description to include a clear description of tasks associated with the role, details of skills required, and training offered to support the role including any health and safety issues, data protection and information security.

6.4 Prepare written, detailed instructions which explain to the volunteer how the tasks associated with a volunteer role should be completed.

6.5 Provide appropriate support and supervision and clear information about which member of staff to report to and seek assistance from.

6.6 Provide all volunteers with induction training on starting. This will cover:

- Emergency evacuation
- Security, Health and Safety, Grievance/Complaints Procedure and other relevant policies and procedures
- An introduction to other staff members and volunteers
- Familiarisation with the Record Office and work areas

- Specific training required to carry out the allocated tasks, as and when needed

6.7 Provide volunteers with the appropriate equipment and facilities to carry out their tasks effectively.

6.8 Provide review sessions with each volunteer at appropriate intervals

6.9 Recognise and acknowledge the work carried out by volunteers and welcome the suggestions of volunteers.

6.10 Treat volunteers in accordance with Bath and North East Somerset Council's Equal Opportunities Policy.

6.11 Provide a safe working environment that meets the requirements relating to Health and Safety, Insurance cover, Child Protection and other relevant legislation.

6.12 Respect the confidentiality of all personal information held by the Record Office relating to volunteers unless there is a legal obligation of disclosure under the Data Protection Act (2018) or Freedom of Information Act (2000).

7. Volunteer undertaking

All volunteers will be expected to:

7.1 Agree that copyright in any material produced from voluntary work for the Record Office will be owned by the Record Office unless previously agreed otherwise.

7.2 Comply with Bath & North East Somerset Council's Equal Opportunities policy, and the Record Office's regulations, policies and procedures on issues such as security, health and safety, emergency evacuation, confidentiality and any others as appropriate.

7.3 Provide feedback or evaluation at the end of their work with the Record Office if requested.

7.4 Each volunteer will be required to wear a badge to identify them as an official volunteer with Bath Record Office. This should be worn at all times when volunteering.

7.5 Each volunteer is responsible for completing the volunteer log which records time of arrival and departure.

8. Working patterns

8.1 Work will take place on site at the Record Office located in the basement of the Guildhall. There is an allocated volunteer's workroom but some project work may need to be undertaken within the Record Offices strong rooms.

8.2 All volunteers must sign in at and collect a 'Visitors Pass', which should be worn at all times.

8.3 Volunteers sometimes work independently, but specific projects may require work as part of a small team, or in pairs.

9. Expenses

9.1 Bath Record Office will be able to reimburse travel expenses and other subsistence costs up to £7 upon submission of receipts.

9.2 Tea, coffee and biscuits are provided by the Record Office.

10. Termination of volunteering role

10.1 Both the volunteer and Bath Record Office have the right to terminate the Volunteer Agreement at the discretion of either party.

10.2 While there is no employment relationship and no contractual obligation exists, we ask that any volunteer who no longer wishes to actively volunteer with us lets us know by speaking with their supervisor, in the first instance.

10.3 On occasion it may be necessary for Bath Record Office to end a volunteer's involvement with the service. This may be because the role is no longer needed or the volunteer is no longer suitable for the role. Due notice will be given.

11. Responsibilities

11.1 Bath Record Office: Archives and Local Studies does not have a dedicated volunteer coordinator. Volunteer recruitment and ongoing supervision is divided between the professional staff. Volunteers working on archives collections will be supervised by the Collections Managers whereas volunteers working with local studies collections will be supervised by the Local Studies Librarian or Assistant Local Studies Librarian.

11.2 Administration work concerning the volunteer programme is carried out by the Collections Managers. This includes keeping volunteer details up-to-date, organising 'thank you' events and training sessions for volunteers, producing a bi-annual newsletter, compiling statistics and processing expenses claims.

11.3 Each volunteer is allocated a supervisor, although volunteers working in groups usually fall under the supervision of the Collections Managers.

12. Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years or earlier if any significant changes occur within the service.

Version control

Version	Date	Detail
1.0	01/05/2020	Succeeds previous Bath

		Record Office Volunteering Policy drafted in 2017
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