

St. Helens Archive Service

Volunteering Policy

1. Introduction

St Helens Archive Service recruits and manages volunteers to help fulfil its aims and objectives. Volunteer roles provide opportunities for individuals to gain skills, knowledge, a sense of civic pride and involvement in preserving archival materials for future generations.

2. Terminology

- **Archives** are records of everyday activities of Governments, organisations businesses and individuals. Archives may take many forms, handwritten, typed, printed, photographic and digital. They are preserved due to their evidential and historic value.
- **Local and family history resources** comprise published information about the history of the local area and its communities, for example, newspapers, locally based books pamphlets and journals covering a wide range of topics.

3. Practice

- Volunteers are involved in specific roles to enhance and support the work of St Helens Archive Service but not as a replacement for paid, trained Archive/Library staff
- Volunteers are given defined roles and tasks which are discussed and agreed before a role is undertaken
- Volunteers are expected to express their views and provide feedback on the placement
- Volunteers are required to act in a positive, professional and courteous manner.

4. Recruitment

- 4.1. Various recruitment methods are used to engage volunteers. Volunteering opportunities are shared via social media, promotion within libraries, local organisations and online resources (such as Archive NRA JISC mail).
- 4.2. Prospective volunteers are interviewed to find out their skills, interests and experience. Volunteers are asked to complete a Volunteer Application Form and references are obtained.

4.3. Any prospective volunteer who is deemed unsuitable to join the Archive Service will be given constructive feedback.

5. Induction and Training

5.1. Each volunteer receives induction training including health and safety procedures, information about aims and values and orientation around the building.

5.2. Volunteers receive training about handling documents, collections care and training specific to their role and tasks.

6. Health and Safety

6.1. Health & Safety policies and procedures are included in induction training and hard copies of handbooks are available to volunteers.

6.2. St Helens Council Public Liability and Employers Liability policies provide indemnity to any person volunteering to assist the Council in its role.

7. Equality and Diversity

7.1. St Helens Council is committed to the principles of equality and diversity in the workforce and in the service it provides to the public. There is no discrimination on the grounds of age, disability status, employment status, ethnic or cultural origin, gender or gender reassignment, marital status nationality, religious or nonreligious belief, responsibility of dependents, sexual orientation social background, we recognise, respect and value diversity and difference.

8. Expenses

8.1. Reasonable travel expenses to and from a place of volunteering will be reimbursed, providing the claim is supported by appropriate receipts.

9. Confidentiality

9.1. Where volunteers have access to sensitive information, they are required to treat this as confidential.

10. Competency

10.1. St Helens Archive Service reserves the right to terminate a volunteering arrangement. Volunteers who are considered unsuitable (for whatever reason) could be asked to leave the volunteer programme. The Archive Service will provide feedback in this circumstance in a courteous and professional manner.

11. Review

Version date	April 2021
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Approved by	Bill Renshaw
Date of review	April 2024