



Volunteer Policy

St Werburghs Community Association

Mission statement

St Werburghs Centre is based in East-Central Bristol and serves the local communities of Ashley, Easton and Lawrence Hill wards, and communities of interest city wide. The Centre is managed by the St Werburghs Community Association, which aims to provide meeting spaces and facilities for individuals, community groups and voluntary organisations in the area. We run various events and projects and we also have other organisations based in the centre who are working within the local community:

- KHAAS, supports Asian families with special needs children
- Awaz Utaoh provides services that will enable users to feel valued, uplifted and empowered.
- KICC, Christian organisation that engages in worship, Bible Study and prayers.
- Amicus Foster Care, an independent fostering agency supporting families to care for Children and Young People who are looked after by Local Authorities.
- Greenhouse, an organisation which provides free counselling for anyone who has experienced sexual abuse at any point in their lives.

St Werburghs Centre focuses on building mutually beneficial partnerships between groups and organisations in the community, promoting community engagement and cohesion and providing a place where people meet and interact peacefully and constructively in everyday life. It is a place where people of different age, gender, ethnic and faith get along together with the people whom they live near to. We aim to provide an environment that not only feels safe and welcoming but also gives the feeling of belonging.

The Community Centre has been operating on this site since 1972 and in 1999 was registered as a charity and company limited by guarantee. In June 2010 we completed £1m Capital Project and in November 2010 we achieved the VISIBLE Communities™ accreditation which is a quality systems standard for the charity and community sector distributed by Community Matters.

In November 2013 we won the Community Venue of the Year Award at 'Voscurs', Bristol's Voluntary & Community Sector awards. In January 2016 we have been awarded Silver in the Green Tourism 'Conference Venue' Category.

Principles

- ✚ The Management Committee/Trustees and staff of St Werburghs Centre are fully committed to the recruitment and support of volunteers within our organisation.
- ✚ The staff and management of St Werburghs Centre hold the belief that volunteers can provide a variety of skills and experience that would not otherwise be available.
- ✚ St Werburghs Centre recognises that volunteers require satisfying work and personal development and will seek to help volunteers meet these needs.
- ✚ St Werburghs Centre will ensure that volunteers are properly integrated into the organisational structure and that mechanisms are in place for them to contribute to the Centre's work.
- ✚ St Werburghs Centre does not aim to introduce volunteers to replace paid staff.
- ✚ Volunteers also bring a different perspective to our work that reflects the views of clients and the local community. Further, it is recognised that volunteers bring credibility to our organisation – by giving their time free it suggests that our work is of value.

Recruitment

Before recruiting volunteers, St Werburghs Centre will ensure that:

- ✓ Staff understand why we are recruiting a volunteer and levels of support we offer.
- ✓ There is work for the volunteer to do (job description).
- ✓ This work will contribute clear value to our organisation and the volunteer.
- ✓ There will be in place an adequate selection and support system.

St Werburghs Centre is committed to recruiting volunteers from a diverse range of backgrounds and will operate within a framework of our equal opportunities policy to ensure that all of our activities and projects are accessible to all.

We will ensure that promotion of our volunteering needs takes place in local centres as we believe in value of work 'done by the community for the community'.

We will also advertise our volunteer posts in a cross-section of the media e.g. newsletters of disabled, BME and gay & lesbian led groups.

Recruitment of our volunteers may involve a process of formal/informal interviews/CRB checks/application form/taking up of references/a trial period/etc. We will regularly evaluate and monitor our progress towards diversity of our volunteer recruitment.

Equal Opportunities

St Werburghs Centre operates a non-discriminatory policy regarding the volunteering opportunities available.

No volunteer will be discriminated against on the grounds of:

- age
- HIV antibody status
- ethnicity
- gender
- learning difficulty
- mental health difficulty
- physical or sensory impairment
- political belief
- nationality
- religion
- marital status
- sexual orientation
- Unrelated criminal conviction or by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable.

Exceptions will be made only where such discrimination can objectively be justified. Any volunteer is free to challenge a decision made via the Complaints Procedure.

Confidentiality

Volunteers will be bound by the same requirements for confidentiality as paid staff.

Except in the course of discharging his/her duties, information, which comes to the knowledge of a member of staff, must be kept within the organisation. This applies equally when the member of staff has left the employment of SWCC.

Specific guidelines relating to confidentiality apply in addition to projects working with service users (see Confidentiality Policy, available from your supervisor). Unauthorized breaches of confidentiality may be dealt with through the Disciplinary Procedure.

Volunteers should feel free to discuss any worries, questions or general observations with their supervisors.

Child Protection

SWCC believes protecting children is everybody's business. Volunteers same as members, trustees and paid staff have a duty to protect children and young people who they come into contact with from abuse, and to abide by the SWCC Child Protection Policy, available from your supervisor.

Health and Safety

Volunteers are covered by St Werburghs Centre Health & Safety Policy, which is available from the director.

The health & safety of our volunteers is of paramount importance to St Werburghs Centre. If at any time you have any questions about Health and Safety issues, talk to your supervisor.

Risk assessments are carried out in all our workplaces and before any special event or trip.

All volunteers ultimately undertake their duties at their own risk, having been briefed on safety procedures and having a full knowledge of accident/emergency procedures. Volunteers will be expected to act in a responsible manner and never to carry out actions, which would put themselves or others at risk. If a volunteer sees anything that constitutes a health/safety risk whilst volunteering for St Werburghs Centre, they have a duty to report the matter to their supervisor or the director.

Volunteers should know:

- their nominated first aider(s).
- the location of the nearest telephone.
- who to contact in an emergency.
- the fire assembly point for whatever building they are in.

All accidents must be reported. An "incident/near miss" form should be filled in and returned to the supervisor or the director and entered in the accident book. No volunteer must ever be left alone with a child/vulnerable client. Where possible volunteers should not work one to one and unsupervised with clients on ANY project.

Support and Problem Solving

All volunteers will have a supervisor - named person, as their main point of contact.

They will be provided with regular supervision to feed back on progress, discuss future development and air any problems.

We aim to identify and solve problems at the earliest possible stage. A Complaints/Grievance & Disciplinary procedure has been drawn up for dealing with complaints either by or about volunteers. Please see Appendix I.

Volunteer Agreements and Voluntary Work Outlines

We wish to assure you of our appreciation of your volunteering with us and will do the best we can to make your experience of volunteering with us enjoyable and rewarding.

Each volunteer will have a job description and a Volunteer Agreement establishing what St Werburghs Centre undertakes to provide for them and what their rights and responsibilities are. Neither of these documents is a contract and is binding in honour only. It works in line with information given by a volunteer in a Volunteer Application Form.

Appendix I: Complaints/Grievance & Disciplinary Procedures

Objective: To ensure that all volunteers have a means of seeking redress if they think they have been treated unfairly and to ensure they also have a clear understanding of how they will be dealt with if their performance or behavior is considered unacceptable.

Complaints or Grievance Procedure:

Any volunteer who thinks they have been treated unfairly shall first raise the issue in writing directly to the Director. If this does not lead to a resolution of the problem then the volunteer has the right to lodge, in writing, a Formal Grievance with the Chair of the Management Committee. The Chair shall appoint a panel comprising two members of the Management Committee and one person from another organisation to investigate and determine the merits or otherwise of the complaint. The panel shall be formed taking due account of the gender and ethnic background of the volunteer bringing the complaint who shall also have the right to be supported or represented by a person of their choice. The decisions of the Panel will be final. It shall be an aim to arrange for the complaint to be dealt with within four weeks.

Disciplinary procedure:

Under normal circumstances the overall performance of SWCC will not be too sensitive to the performance of an individual volunteer. However when the behavior or performance of a volunteer is unsatisfactory or disruptive it can have an adverse impact upon employees, other volunteers and/or the performance of SWCC. Under such circumstances the application of a Disciplinary Process may be appropriate.

The discipline procedure consists of the following stages:

(i) Informal verbal warning: The Manager/Chair of Management Committee shall invoke the informal verbal stage as soon as it is clear that the problem is having a noticeable impact upon SWCC. The volunteer shall be verbally informed of the nature and time scale of the improvement required and shall have the opportunity of explaining any mitigating circumstances that apply.

(ii) Formal verbal warning: The formal verbal stage shall be invoked if the required improvement is not forthcoming by the deadline set.

(iii) Formal written warning: The formal written stage shall be invoked if the required improvement is not forthcoming by the dead line set by the formal verbal warning. The written warning shall state that a continuation of the problem will lead to the volunteer being barred from working with SWCC again.

(iv) Formal final interview: If, following the expiry of the deadline set by the written warning, the required improvement has not been achieved then the volunteer shall be invited to attend a meeting with a panel drawn from the Management Committee at which any

mitigating circumstances may be presented by the volunteer. Normally the panel shall confirm the intention to bar the volunteer from work at SWCC.

N.B. Each stage must be entered in the personnel records of the volunteer.

Behaviour that will lead to an instant dismissal:

A volunteer shall be barred from working with SWCC without warning for the following reasons:

- a) physical abuse of a colleague, other occupant of the SWCC or any client of the SWCC;
- b) fraud or theft of property from SWCC, a colleague or any other occupant of the SWCC;
- c) willful damage to any property of SWCC or any other occupant of the SWCC;
- d) conviction for any criminal offence resulting in a custodial sentence;
- e) conviction for any offence involving abuse of another person.

Volunteer Agreement

As a volunteer member of St Werburghs Centre you have certain rights and responsibilities that serve to protect you and facilitate your position. These are outlined below. If at any point you feel that you are being asked to work outside of their limits please inform your supervisor or the director.

You have a right to:

- specify the time of your volunteering hours and go home on time.
- equal treatment in recruitment, placement, training and support.
- be respected and safe and to be able to say 'no' at any time.
- induction into St Werburghs Centre and its projects. The information given is subject to our confidentiality policy.
- information about the tasks that you will be expected to undertake before you start them and appropriate training, if needed.
- enjoy your volunteering and have fun.
- claim out of pocket expenses (travel, lunch, if working over 4 hours daily and any other expenses agreed at the discretion of the Director)
- be respected and supported by all volunteers and staff of the St Werburghs Centre.
- express your views about matters concerning St Werburghs Centre and its work.
- know whom you are accountable to for your actions on projects and during activities.
- progress within St Werburghs Centre and to be able to ask for job references.
- receive a Volunteer Certificate stating dates, number of hours and specification of the work you have done.

You are responsible to:

- be reliable; meet time commitments and standards agreed to, and to give reasonable notice so that other arrangements can be made.
- perform your volunteering role to the best of your ability.
- be honest about your suitability for specific projects and activities.
- develop skills and attend training required for a project.
- act in accordance with best practice and equal opportunities.
- be responsible and keep St Werburghs Centre activities safe and in line with relevant policies and legislation (Health and Safety, Child Protection, Confidentiality).
- maintain discipline, work as part of a team, respect confidences, support other volunteers, do not undermine others and set a good example.
- recognise that whilst volunteering you are a representative of St Werburghs Centre

Inappropriate behaviour or any acts which bring SWCC reputation into disrepute will not be tolerated and will be dealt with using the disciplinary procedure.



Volunteer Application Form

To join the St Werburghs Community Centre as a volunteer, please complete this form and return it to us.

Your Personal Contact Details

Name _____

Address _____

_____ Postcode _____

Telephone (daytime) _____ (evening) _____ Mobile _____

Email _____

Emergency Contact Details

Please give details of someone we would be able to contact in an emergency while you are volunteering with us.

Name _____

Address _____

_____ Postcode _____

Telephone (daytime) _____ (evening) _____ Mobile _____

Email _____

What is this person's relationship to you? _____

Chosen Project Area(s)/Volunteer Vacancy:

Tell us which project area/Volunteer Vacancy you are applying for. You can mention more than one.

Why you want to volunteer?

Please use this space to tell us about why you want to volunteer for St Werburghs Community Centre.

You can tell us about:

- the kind of work you would like to do
- the kind of job you are hoping to work towards
- the kind of training you would like to have access to

We cannot guarantee that we can offer all the work and training you want, but we might be able to point you in the right direction.

About your skills and experience:

Please use this space to tell us about your skills and previous experience (paid or unpaid) that you would like to use while working at the SWCC:

Your availability

Which days of the week are you available?

If relevant, which evenings are you free?

References

Please provide details of two people who we can contact and will provide written references to support your application to become a volunteer with the St Werburghs Community Centre.

If you do not have employment references, we can accept references from friends and others who know you, but not from your immediate family or household.

1. Name _____
Address _____
Telephone (daytime) _____ Mobile _____
Email _____
How do you know this person? _____

2. Name _____
Address _____
Telephone (daytime) _____ Mobile _____
Email _____
How do you know this person? _____

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence? (declaration subject to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974)	Yes / No
Please give brief details:	

All applicants will be required to provide a proof of the right to work in the UK before starting a job/voluntary position. Applicants must either be EU nationals or hold a current permit that will enable them to work in the UK.

Are you entitled to work in the UK?	Yes/No
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I can confirm that to the best of my knowledge the above information is correct. I accept that providing deliberately false information could result in my dismissal.

Signature:	Date:
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Please return this form to the address on the front as soon as possible, and we will contact you about your application. You will be invited to come to the SWCC for an informal interview, which will give you a chance to find out more about our Volunteer Programme and your chosen project area.

Thank you for applying to volunteer at St Werburghs Community Centre.

Office use only

<i>Date arrived:</i>	<i>Passed to:</i>
<i>Interview date:</i>	<i>Days and hours agreed as:</i>
<i>Start date and induction date:</i>	

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