

Members' Library Service Request Form

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Originator	Kate Maynard
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Document Title	Museum Service Volunteer Policy

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REPORT TO: Members' Library Service

MEETING DATE:

BY: Depute Chief Executive (Partnerships and Community Services)

SUBJECT: Museums Service Volunteer Policy

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To advise Members about an updated version of the East Lothian Council Museums Service Volunteer Policy.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Members note the content of this report.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 East Lothian Council Museums Service manages Prestongrange Museum, the John Gray Centre Museum and Dunbar Town House Museum and Gallery. The Service also manages John Muir's Birthplace in Dunbar on behalf of the John Muir Birthplace Charitable Trust, supports the Coastal Communities Museum Trust (CCMT) to operate the Coastal Communities Museum, Musselburgh Museum and Heritage Group (MMHG) to operate Musselburgh Museum and Dunbar and District History Society support the operation of Dunbar Town House Museum and Gallery. Outreach, exhibitions, events and learning services are offered throughout the County and the Museum Collection is held in Haddington in an environmentally controlled store.
- 3.2 Volunteers are an essential and valued part of the ELC Museums Service team and as such should be properly managed and supported. The ELC Museums Service Volunteer Policy has been updated to reflect some procedural changes and it also required some minor editing. The main thrust of the policy remains the same. It describes how volunteers and supported and managed to work within ELC Museum Service to assist and support in service delivery.
- 3.3 ELC Museums Service was successful in re-applying for Museum

Accreditation in 2017 for Dunbar Town House Museum and Gallery, Prestongrange Museum and John Muir's Birthplace. 'Museum Accreditation is the UK Standard for Museums and Galleries. It defines good practice and identifies agreed standards, thereby encouraging development'. As part of our commitment to maintain the highest professional standards the Service remains committed to Accreditation and the Volunteer Policy will be submitted as evidence for future Accreditation reassessment.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Volunteer Policy supports our work towards aims and objectives within the Museums Service Business Plan relating to the ELC Plan Outcomes 'Grow Our People' and 'Grow Our Communities'

5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 The subjects of this report have been through the Integrated Impact Assessment process and no negative impacts have been identified.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Financial -there are no financial implications
- 6.2 Personnel - there are no personnel implications
- 6.3 Other- there are no other implications

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 Appendix 1: ELC Museums Service Volunteer Policy 2017

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EAST LoTHIAN COUNCIL MUSEUMS SERVICE VOLUNTEER POLICY

Original approval date: June 2013

Updated: October 2017

Review date: October 2020*

* this policy will be subject to earlier update or review following approval of a proposed Corporate Volunteer Policy for East Lothian Council.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

'ELMCS' refers to East Lothian Council Museums Service and currently comprises John Muir's Birthplace (Dunbar), Prestongrange Museum (Prestonpans), Dunbar Town House Museum and Gallery, John Gray Centre Museum (Haddington), the museum store and our partner community museums: Musselburgh Museum and the Coastal Communities Museum.

The ELCMS Mission Statement:

"Preserving and presenting East Lothian's cultural heritage."

Preserving includes collecting, documenting and conserving the physical and intellectual evidence of East Lothian's cultural heritage as outlined in the Collections Policy.

Presenting covers all aspects of facilitating access to the collections; to information about the collections and to the information contained within the collection items as outlined in this policy. It also includes the presentation of aspects of the cultural heritage which East Lothian shares in common with the wider community in Scotland, the UK and across the world, for example in the areas of art, history, science and the natural world.

1.1 Values and Principles

ELCMS recognises that volunteering can benefit our organisation by increasing the range of skills, interests, life experiences and cultural backgrounds within the organisation. Volunteers can look at the work we do with a fresh eye and provide valuable input to the ELCMS vision and aims. We value their contribution of time and skills as an essential ingredient to our success.

ELCMS recognises that volunteers not only provide a valuable resource for the organisation but also benefit as individuals. Where possible, ELCMS will aim to respond to volunteers' needs by providing opportunities for them to gain relevant experiences or competencies in their chosen area of interest.

1.2 Objectives of the Volunteer Policy

Volunteers give their time to ELCMS and in return they have the right to involvement and participation throughout the organisation, and recognition for the tasks they perform. The aim of this policy is to define good volunteering practice for use throughout ELCMS and to provide guidelines for staff in relation to volunteering.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed every three years to ensure it remains appropriate to the needs of ELCMS and its volunteers.

This policy is not implicitly or explicitly a binding contractual or personal agreement. ELCMS reserves the right to change any aspect of the policy at any time after consultation with the relevant parties.

2.0 GENERAL

Volunteers may be involved in all areas of activity within ELCMS but shall not be engaged to replace paid staff.

2.1 Diversity

ELCMS is committed to developing and maintaining a culture within our organisation where differing ideas, abilities, backgrounds and needs are fostered and valued.

All prospective volunteers will be treated equally and fairly. Where a prospective volunteer has a particular access need this will not be a barrier to their volunteering and every effort will be made to explore how to remove or work around real or perceived barriers (see the ELC Museums Service Access Policy for more information).

3.0 RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

The Volunteer Programme and specific volunteering opportunities will be made widely available through the ELCMS Website, Volunteer Scotland, Strive and, on request and where possible, in alternative formats.

3.1 Application procedure

All prospective volunteers will be sent information about volunteering at ELCMS and, if appropriate, a Registration Form, and/or be asked to provide a copy of their CV. On receipt of this, applicants will then be asked to attend an informal interview in order that both parties can find out more about their expectations and the suitability of the voluntary position. Before starting with ELCMS, volunteers will be required to read this Policy, sign a Volunteer Agreement and provide relevant contact details.

We will endeavour to support young people under the age of 16 or adults with additional support needs to volunteer where possible as long as ELCMS have a member of staff with appropriate PVG clearance/training/experience available to supervise and support.

3.2 References and Disclosures

Each volunteer will be required to provide ELCMS with two referees before commencing their placements. A referee can be professional or personal (including ELCMS staff), but not a relative.

Depending on the nature and purpose of ELCMS business undertaken by some volunteers, which may involve work with our valuable collections and contact with children or vulnerable adults, offers of a voluntary position may be subject to a background check through schemes such as PVG Scheme or Disclosure Scotland. Volunteers will be made aware of this during the recruitment period.

4.0 INDUCTION AND INVOLVEMENT OF NEW VOLUNTEERS

All new volunteers on entry to ELCMS will receive the first phase of an induction to their designated work area by their Volunteer Line-Manager. The first month of a volunteer's placement will be treated as an induction period and the placement will be reviewed at the end of this time. ELCMS Volunteer Induction Pack will be used to ensure volunteers are given all the appropriate information.

4.1 Length of the Volunteer Agreement

Placements will be reviewed constantly. An informal review of the placement will take place at least annually to discuss any issues a volunteer or manager has. The meeting is a chance to chat about the volunteer's role and offers an opportunity to examine and assess the volunteer's work; to discuss future goals and to identify any training and development needs. However, it is important that any issues arising by either party are not put off until an annual meeting. The volunteer can request a chat with their VLM or any other staff member at any time.

Engagement as a volunteer is at the discretion of ELCMS and the individual volunteer and may be terminated at any time.

4.2 Expenses

ELCMS will provide funding for payment of travel expenses. Volunteers will be given clear information about what expenses can be claimed and how to make a claim.

4.3 Insurance

Individuals who are volunteering or are on an unpaid work placement with ELCMS will, like paid staff, be covered by the Council's insurance policies.

4.4 Health & Safety

ELCMS and East Lothian Council have the same duty of care for volunteers as they do for staff, contractors, visitors and others who may be affected by its activities. Volunteers have a duty to co-operate with ELCMS and the Council in the implementation of its Health and Safety Policy, and ensure that they carry out their work without risk to themselves or others, and to report risks and accidents to their line-manager. As part of their Induction period, and when engaged in certain tasks, volunteers may be asked to read Council policies in relation to Health and Safety issues.

Where relevant, volunteer activities will be risk assessed prior to being undertaken, the risk assessment (RA) will be recorded on the ELC health and safety management system (RIVO Safeguard) and that assessment shared with the volunteer.

4.5 Computer Use

Where required, volunteers will be given their own login and will be able to access the Volunteers folder in the Corporate Network and restricted access to the internet. Volunteers will be required to sign up to the Council's Policy for the Acceptable Use of the Councils Information & I.T. Infrastructure and the Non Disclosure Policy. This is only available for volunteers who regularly attend a Council venue with available networked computers.

4.6 Copyright

Any copyright documents or work created by individuals in the course of their volunteering for ELCMS will be the intellectual property of ELCMS, and volunteers will waive all moral rights to ownership under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

4.7 Training

ELCMS will provide any training required for the role, including health and safety training. Volunteer training will be arranged as required. Volunteers will be encouraged to attend.

4.8 Records

Records will be maintained on each volunteer, including:

- Recruitment documentation
- Dates of service
- Tasks performed
- Training records
- Any complaints documentation

Volunteers' personal records shall be treated as confidential in accordance with data protection legislation. Individuals will be able to access their own records. The legal basis for processing volunteers' personal data is consent.

Volunteers' personal records will be destroyed/deleted 6 months after the volunteer leaves East Lothian Council Museums Service.

4.9 Absence

Volunteers should be required to give timely notice of cancelling their attendance on any particular work day/s due to holidays or for other personal reason. ELCMS should undertake to reciprocate with reasonable notice if supervising staff are absent.

5.0 SUPPORT

In all areas of ELCMS where volunteers are involved (including fieldwork) there will be a designated member of staff to supervise their tasks who will be known as the Volunteer Line-manager (VLM). In the case of staff absence all volunteers should be made aware of alternative members of staff to approach. This may include staff at other locations with whom contact should be established as part of the induction process.

5.1 Problems

ELCMS aims to identify and solve problems at the earliest possible stage. The procedure for dealing with problems will be made available to all volunteers and staff. In the event of a dispute or other problem arising that cannot be dealt with on the spot by ELCMS staff on duty, it should be reported to a VLM or other member of ELCMS staff either by phone or email as soon as possible.

5.2 Confidentiality

Volunteers are likely to become aware of confidential information about the ELCMS, its staff, customers and suppliers. Volunteers should not disclose this information or use it for their own or another's benefit without the consent of the party concerned. This does not prevent disclosure once the information is in the public domain (unless it has been made public as a result of the volunteer's breach of confidentiality) or where the law permits or requires disclosure.

5.3 Recognition

ELCMS acknowledges that although volunteers do not seek reward, they deserve and are appreciative of recognition for the tasks they perform. ELCMS will seek ways to publicise and recognise the individual and collective contribution of its volunteers.

6.0 EVALUATION AND MONITORING OF THE VOLUNTEER PROGRAMME

The input of volunteers and staff into the evaluation of the programme will be encouraged, valued and sought through informal and formal methods.

6.1 Leaving ELCMS

ELCMS recognises that volunteers may choose to leave for personal reasons at any time. By creating a supportive environment where volunteers can express their needs and opinions both formally and informally, it is the intention of ELCMS that no volunteer will leave without letting us know the reason they are leaving, preferably in advance and filling out a Leaver's Questionnaire if appropriate.

