VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT POLICY

1. Introduction

1.1. Rochester Cathedral is committed to providing the widest possible access to our Cathedral and its varied activities and services. Encouraging volunteering at the Cathedral is a good way to do this.

1.2. The purpose of this policy is to:
   - define the terms and set out the principles, practices and procedures that the Cathedral will follow in its appointment, management and partnership with volunteers;
   - specify the expected standards of behaviour which volunteers must achieve in their roles;
   - assist clergy, staff and Chapter to understand why volunteers are involved and what their role is;
   - help ensure fairness and consistency;
   - ensure that our volunteers are valued and the contribution they make to our work is recognised.

2. What is a Volunteer?

2.1. Volunteering England defines a ‘volunteer’ as someone who commits time and energy for the benefit of others, who does so freely, through personal choice and without expectation of financial reward. An offer of voluntary work and re-imbursement of expenses does not constitute an offer of employment.
3. **Why do we use Volunteers?**

3.1. There are many reasons to involve volunteers in our work at the Cathedral:
- They provide additional resources allowing us to increase our capacity to more effectively deal with existing workloads and to undertake new projects.
- They provide a means to engage with our local community.
- They raise our profile.
- They bring us credibility (individuals freely giving their time demonstrates that the work we do is of value).
- They can bring a fresh approach along with valuable knowledge and experience.
- Using volunteers demonstrates both our willingness to provide access to the Cathedral and our commitment to life-long learning.
- By providing work experience opportunities for volunteers we can help provide a route to further study, training or employment.

4. **The Role of Volunteers**

4.1. Volunteers play a vital role in helping to meet the needs and expectations of the Cathedral visitors and worshippers and to ensure that activities and events are conducted with efficiency.

4.2. Volunteers are unpaid helpers; they should not be used to replace paid members of staff and services provided by volunteers should enhance and not replace those provided by paid staff.

5. **Who can Volunteer?**

5.1. Volunteers must be over the age of 16 (for volunteers over the age of 80 please see paragraph 14). They must be legally able to work in the UK. In some instances, it would be acceptable to use volunteers aged between 16 and 18 provided that a risk assessment demonstrated that placing the young person in a voluntary role would not put them, or the people with whom they were working, at risk. No volunteers under the age of 16 will be used. Should a volunteer become over the age of 80 whilst in a volunteering role a personnel risk assessment must be undertaken. Responsibility for ensuring that a risk assessment is undertaken lies with the Volunteer Manager.

6. **Responsibility for the Recruitment of Volunteers**

6.1. The Volunteer Manager has overall responsibility for ensuring that the agreed procedures for Safer Recruitment is followed. Whilst the Volunteer Manager has overall responsibility it is recognised that recruitment of volunteers in support of a range of disciplines may be led by their other key staff. In this instance the Volunteer Manager will ensure that these staff members are trained and familiar with the recruitment process and will provide the appropriate forms to which they must comply.

7. **Recruitment and Interviewing of Volunteers**

7.1. The Cathedral will seek to ensure diversity amongst its volunteer workforce. An application procedure will be used which is transparent and robust and which will ensure consistency of approach.

7.2. All volunteers must complete an application form, attend an informal interview and to provide the names and address of two personal referees. The referees must have known the applicant for at least two years and must not be family members and/or members of
the cathedral clergy or staff. References must be obtained before a volunteer can commence work.

7.3. All interviews will be conducted by the Volunteer Manager or, if being undertaken by another staff member, the Volunteer Manager must be involved using the agreed volunteer interview template which is available from the Volunteer Manager.

7.4. We will try to place the volunteer in a role suited to their interests, experience and abilities. The volunteer will have a review after six-month trial period. This is to check that the quality of work is maintained to an acceptable standard and to ensure that the needs of the volunteer are being met. Review sheets are available from the Volunteer Manager.

8. Screening of Volunteers & Safer Recruitment

8.1. If the volunteer’s role involves contact with children or vulnerable adults, a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check must be done. This will involve the completion of the relevant forms required by the Government’s DBS and the provision of the forms of identity laid down by the DBS. There will be no charge to volunteers for these checks. Volunteer roles requiring a DBS check have been pre-determined. These are:

- Education and Family Learning Volunteers
- Sunday Club Leader and helpers
- Choir Chaperones
- Bell Tower Captain
- Head and Deputy Server
- Chaplains Priest Vicars
- Licensed Pastoral Assistants

9. Equal Opportunities

9.1. We recognise that Equal Opportunities isn’t about treating everyone the same; it’s about treating people fairly, but differently according to their need. We will assess the needs of prospective volunteers so that they can be offered work that is within their capabilities and that which does not discriminate against them.

9.2. We ask that all prospective volunteers should notify us of any medical conditions or special educational needs so that we can ensure the role they are offered is suitable. In such cases where a volunteer role is offered a risk assessment will be conducted to ensure that the volunteer can be properly supported.

10. Induction, Training, Safeguarding and Health and Safety

10.1. Appropriate training and support for volunteers is vital to ensure the success of the placement: it ensures that volunteers appreciate the roles of staff members and can understand the working practices of the Cathedral workplace.

10.2. Safeguarding

10.2.1. Prior to starting as a volunteer all volunteers must undergo mandatory on-line safeguarding training appropriate to their role and as set out in the Volunteer Training Policy.

10.2.2. All volunteers, as part of Safeguarding must have photo identification. This will be provided by the Volunteer Manager. Volunteers will be supplied with ID badges on
lanyards and are required to wear these in an appropriate and visible place whenever they are carrying out Cathedral duties.

10.3. **Induction**

10.3.1. Volunteers must also undergo induction prior to starting. This training will include information on the Cathedral, health & safety and practical arrangements for volunteering and the Cathedral safeguarding. As part of the induction, the Volunteer Manager will clarify individual training needs and opportunities. Costs for training will be met by the Cathedral. Training needs will be regularly reviewed.

10.4. **Health & Safety**

10.4.1. The Cathedral has a statutory responsibility, under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, to its volunteers, employees, and members of the public, to ensure their health, safety and welfare whilst on council premises, or when undertaking council business off-site.

10.4.2. All Volunteers will be given instruction on health and safety matters appropriate to the role they are carrying out.

11. **Volunteering Charter**

11.1. Volunteers can expect:

- to be valued as an individual;
- to be respected for their knowledge and skills;
- to have support, feedback, appreciation and encouragement;
- to have opportunities to contribute to improvements;
- to have opportunities to discuss concerns and problems relating to their role;
- not to have their role changed without prior discussion;
- to be covered by the CathedralGuard insurance policy
- to have clear guidelines within which to carry out their role;
- a safe working environment.

11.2. In return the Cathedral would like its volunteers to:

- make a regular commitment to volunteer, according to the timings of their activity and support the activity fully;
- treat clergy, staff, other volunteers and members of the public with respect;
- follow advice and instructions, especially relating to safeguarding and health and safety;
- alert the Cathedral staff of any concerns they have as soon as they arise;
- give as much notice of absence as possible.

12. **Confidentiality and security**

12.1. Any information seen during volunteering should be regarded as confidential unless advised otherwise. No information should be released to anyone outside the Cathedral without permission from the Volunteer Manager.

12.2. Volunteers whilst acting on behalf of the Cathedral should not disclose their own personal details (home address, phone number, email address etc) or the personal details of any other volunteer or member of staff to members of the public; but should use their business address when an address is requested.
12.3. All personal data held by the Cathedral with regards to volunteers will be stored securely in compliance with the GDPR and will not be shared with anyone outside the organisation.

13. **Volunteer Agreements and Role Descriptions**

13.1. Each volunteer will sign a Volunteer Agreement containing a confidentiality clause and will be given a copy for reference. This will be countersigned by the Volunteer Manager of behalf of the Cathedral. Each Volunteer will also have a role description clearly setting out their tasks and responsibilities.

13.2. The signing of a Volunteer Agreement is in honour only and is not intended to be a legally binding contract of employment.


14.1. Each volunteer will be given a Volunteer Handbook containing Codes of Conduct, relevant procedures and information to assist them in delivering and understanding their roles.

15. **Volunteer Privileges**

15.1. All volunteers will receive the following privileges:

- Free tea and coffee when on duty
- 10% discount on café and shop items

16. **Staff Support**

16.1. Volunteers will be treated with respect and made to feel like a valued member of the Cathedral team. Guidelines for the use of volunteers should be regularly reviewed and all staff should be familiar with them.

17. **Recording Volunteer Hours**

17.1. The number of hours each volunteer works must be recorded as this helps to quantify the benefit to the Cathedral and to meet the Cathedral obligations under Health and Safety and Safeguarding.

18. **Safeguarding**

18.1. The care and protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults visiting and participating in Cathedral activities is important. Everyone who participates in the life of the church has a role to play in promoting a Safer Church for all. The Cathedral follows the Church of England safeguarding guidance; these policies can be found on the [diocesan website](#). For safeguarding training see paragraph 10.2.

19. **Insurance**

19.1. The Cathedral holds public and employer’s liability insurance policies. The volunteer is covered by these policies whilst acting for and on behalf of the Cathedral in connection with its business. However, for anyone over the age of 80 a risk assessment must be undertaken to comply with the insurance policy.
20. **Data Protection**

20.1. We recognise that we have legal duties under the Data Protection Act 2018 regarding personal information, which we hold pertaining to a volunteer.

21. **Grievance/Compliant Procedure**

21.1. In the event of a volunteer having a complaint, or if the Cathedral needs to resolve a problem with a volunteer, both parties can use the ‘Problem solving procedure’ in the Volunteer Handbook.

21.2. Should a volunteer wish to make any disclosure about a potential wrongdoing they can use the Cathedral’s Whistleblowing procedures.

22. **Leaving the Cathedral's volunteer programme**

22.1. All volunteers are free to leave at any time. If a volunteer is deemed to have broken the conditions of their Volunteer Agreement, or if a volunteering relationship is agreed to be exhausted, or there has been a breakdown of trust, it may become necessary to discontinue the volunteer’s services.

22.2. There may be occasions when volunteers wish to take a break from their volunteering role for a time and the Cathedral will respect this.

23. **Record Keeping**

23.1. The Volunteer Manager will be responsible for maintaining a secure central database record of all volunteers’ personal details including any training and will ensure that any paper records are stored in a secure manner.