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Document Title: Volunteer Policy

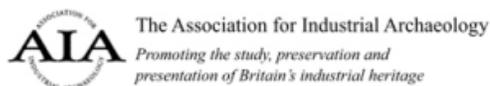
Document Description:

Volunteers play a vital role in the development of Sudbury Gasworks and the success of its business plan model. This policy covers the role volunteers undertake day-to-day, and the way in which volunteers are recruited for individual roles. It also covers guidelines for their management, policies and procedures, and actions to take should they face any problems whilst volunteering with the Trust.

Version	Review Date	Created By	Adopted by Trustees on	Signed (Chair)	Comment
01	09/02/2022	Rachael Cooksey - Gasworks Manager	09/02/2022	T. Webber	

All SGRT policies are reviewed biennially (unless changes are required to be made sooner)

Sudbury Gasworks Restoration Trust is a company limited by guarantee and registered as a charity in England and Wales.
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The Pilgrim Trust

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1. Introduction

Sudbury Gasworks Restoration Trust (SGRT) exists to establish Sudbury Gasworks as a flexible, financially sustainable, and accessible community facility for the people of Sudbury Parish and beyond. We aim to preserve and interpret Sudbury Gasworks, and its associated historic, cultural, and industrial collections and use them as inspiration for educating, entertaining and inspiring the Sudbury community as well as visitors to the area alongside an engaging activity programme.

We provide unique learning environments through the operation of a high quality, welcoming visitor attraction with associated commercial activity.

2. Volunteers

SGRT has a commitment to the involvement of volunteers and believes that volunteers play a vital role in extending the scope of our work allowing us to add value to our service and helping to meet service needs or demand and achieve our goals, which would not otherwise be possible.

SGRT recognises that volunteers may be different from paid staff in terms of age, race, cultural background, socio-economic background, and educational level and will help to diversify and strengthen the workforce as well as offer a wide range of skills and enthusiasm.

SGRT undertakes to increase volunteer opportunities by considering the potential for volunteer roles in all project planning.

The aim of the volunteer programme is to provide opportunities for a diverse range of people who wish to give their time to work with staff events, research and on site development to enable them to share their skills, learn new ones and contribute to the aims of our service.

3. Role of the volunteer

Volunteering is defined as “unpaid activity where someone gives their time to help an organisation or an individual who they are not related to” (Volunteering England).

Volunteers are distinct from work placements and internships.

The volunteer role is based on a mutual agreement between SGRT and the volunteer and is binding in honour only. There is no enforceable obligation, contractual or otherwise, on volunteers to attend, give or be set a minimum amount of time or carry out the tasks provided. SGRT is under no obligation to provide regular work or provide payment or other benefit for any activity undertaken.

Volunteer roles play an important role in the operation of SGRT and volunteers will, in all roles both on and off site, be representatives of SGRT and should always conduct themselves in an appropriate manner.

SGRT will not introduce any volunteer role where this would replace or substitute a paid employment opportunity or affect the content of an existing paid job description. Volunteers will not in any

circumstance be required to carry out the duties which are currently or have in the past been carried out by a paid member of staff, cover a vacant post, cover for sick or annual leave or substitute in any other way the work of paid staff.

Volunteer roles will supplement and support the work of paid staff adding value to existing services.

SGRT will fully consult with all Trustees on the volunteer policy and programme and any subsequent changes to it.

4. Recruitment and Selection

All Volunteers will follow the same recruitment and selection procedure.

All volunteer roles will be advertised by us on the website and other relevant sites and social media platforms. We will not engage in speculative recruitment.

All volunteer roles advertised will specify the required skills, knowledge and experience required to undertake the role. It will also specify where possible the location and frequency required of the role.

We will direct all prospective volunteers to the SGRT website where there will be a role description and application form to complete and return.

When a completed form is received the prospective volunteer/s will be contacted by the Gasworks Manager and an informal interview will be arranged to discuss skills, role and expectations and may or may not include a presentation to demonstrate skills.

Following a successful interview for certain roles the person responsible for the role will request references (at least one) from the details given on the application form. A Disclosure and Barring Service check DBS (formerly known as Criminal Record Bureau Check – CRB) will be requested at this stage if applicable.

SGRT reserves the right to determine that a prospective volunteer may not be appropriate for the role. However, every effort will be made to signpost unsuccessful applicants to other volunteering opportunities within the service or locally.

We will ask all successful applicants to agree to the terms of the Volunteer Agreement. The Volunteer Agreement is a document setting out the guidelines on mutually agreed undertakings between the Volunteer and SGRT. This agreement can be terminated by either party at any time and is not intended to be a contract nor is it legally binding.

We will contact all unsuccessful applicants by letter, and we will retain their applications on file for three months.

Targeted volunteer projects may operate differently at the discretion of the Gasworks Manager where a prospective volunteer is not shortlisted for an advertised role but is found to have skills which could be used, short term, within the project to enhance it or where prospective volunteers have disabilities which could prevent them from applying through the more formal process.

5. Equality and Diversity

We will not pay volunteers for the work they carry out, (expenses will be considered on a case basis). However, in all other respects volunteers are entitled to be treated on an equal basis with paid staff.

Volunteering opportunities are open to everyone regardless of gender, ethnic origin, cultural background, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, religious belief, age. SGRT will seek to make volunteer roles accessible to as wide an audience as possible and will consider the profile of the surrounding Derbyshire and Staffordshire communities in its volunteer recruitment process. In addition, we will seek to consult with a range of communities, groups and individuals in order to develop the volunteer programme.

SGRT has a commitment to equality and diversity principles and will seek to challenge all forms of prejudice and discrimination.

6. Management of Volunteers

It is the role of the Gasworks Manager and Volunteer Group Leaders to coordinate and provide regular support to volunteers. Supervision sessions will be offered to volunteers by the Manager. The Volunteer Group Leader will be available to deal with any questions or problems that volunteers within the service may have.

It is also the role of the Gasworks Manager to develop the volunteer programme and promote its sustainable and successful future through the assessment of volunteer needs, devising new projects for volunteers and developing relationships with various internal and external partners, colleagues, team members, organisations, and groups.

We will undertake an induction with all volunteers into the service and the role they will carry out. This will include a general induction to the volunteer role followed by an induction training session which will offer more in-depth information on volunteering with SGRT.

We will ensure all volunteers receive the training required to carry out their role. Other additional training needs that may arise during volunteer roles can be discussed with the Gasworks Manager.

7. Policies and Procedures

We will expect all volunteers to carry out their role in accordance with the Equality and Diversity Policy, Health & Safety Policy, Confidentiality Policy and Problem-Solving Process. Further information can be found in the volunteer handbook.

All volunteers will be covered by SGRT's employee liability insurance.

8. Expenses

Where volunteers are entitled to claim out of pocket expenses they will be informed of this by the Gasworks Manager.

Volunteer expenses will only cover out of pocket expenses and mileage/costs to and from the main site (travel for training/events etc) and will only be paid on production of a valid ticket for travel or fuel receipt.

We ask volunteers to use the cheapest form of public transport available unless they are working at a rural location where there is no public transport. The maximum reimbursement payable for a return journey is £5.50. However, if volunteers wish to use their own vehicle, this will be reimbursed at 45p per mile as advised by Inland Revenue, up to the maximum of £5.50.

In exceptional cases, for example where the volunteer has a disability and needs to use a taxi or would otherwise be prevented from volunteering by this limit, additional amounts may be reimbursed but volunteers will be expected to seek authorisation from the Gasworks Manager in advance of travel.

The £5.50 sum will be reviewed annually to ensure alignment with the cost of public transport in the region.

Claims must be submitted within one month of the expenditure, claims submitted after this time will not be accepted unless failure to claim is due to mitigating circumstance.

9. Time Off

It is understood that volunteers will have to take time off for holidays, sickness, and emergencies. It is requested that whenever possible, advance notification of time off for holidays will be given to the Gasworks Manager.

As volunteers are not paid members of staff, they will not be required to complete a self-certification sickness form or provide GP sickness certificates for periods of sickness. It is requested that whenever possible, volunteers advise the Gasworks Manager if they are unable to attend due to sickness. Expenses cannot be paid for the period of the volunteer's absence.

10. Confidentiality

SGRT will take appropriate measures to maintain confidentiality concerning the personal details of all volunteers and will do so in accordance with Data Protection principles.

In return volunteers are required to respect the confidentiality of SGRT staff, sites, service users and data.

11. Health and Safety

Volunteers must work safely and not put themselves or others at risk. All health and safety policies and procedures apply equally to staff and volunteers. Guidance on the Health and Safety Policy can be found in the Volunteer Handbook.

Everyone has a legal obligation to protect others from harm or risk. SGRT does work with vulnerable adults and children through their partner projects. Any concerns a volunteer has about a child or vulnerable adult should be raised with the Gasworks Manager, however if the concern is about them or they are not happy to discuss it with the Gasworks Manager, the volunteer should contact the SGRT Trustee representative for Safeguarding, Julie White.

Volunteers should not use their car during volunteer duties without discussion and agreement from the Gasworks manager. If agreed, volunteers must inform their insurance company that they intend to use their car for the purpose of volunteering. Use of a personal vehicle during a volunteer role will not be covered by SGRT insurance policy and would therefore be used at their own risk.

12. Young Volunteers

SGRT does work with young volunteers under the age of eighteen. We will take appropriate measures to safeguard young people in voluntary activity in line with Derbyshire County Council 'Procedures for Safeguarding and Protecting Children and Vulnerable Adults'.

All staff who are responsible for young volunteers should be checked by Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS – formerly known as the Criminal Record Bureau – CRB). We are unable to carry out

these checks on volunteers under the age of eighteen however we shall follow up two references for volunteers between the ages of sixteen and eighteen.

We will seek parental consent for voluntary activity from the parent/legal guardian of all volunteers under the age of sixteen and where possible for volunteers between the ages of sixteen and eighteen. Details of the voluntary role, location and times of participation will be provided to parent/legal guardian.

Young volunteers will not be placed in any unsupervised voluntary roles either at or away from SGRT sites and will not be left to supervise other young people or be responsible in any capacity for members of the public including children visiting our sites.

13. Gifts

It is the policy of SGRT that neither members of staff nor volunteers should accept any offers of gifts, money, favours, discounts, loans, legacies (things you are left in wills) or hospitality. Hospitality includes things like meals, refreshments and offers of transport. The list is not exhaustive which means that something which is not mentioned may still be considered a gift or hospitality.

Neither members of staff or volunteers should solicit gifts or hospitality (other than modest refreshments such as a cup of tea at a meeting).

This is legislated under The Bribery Act 2012; section 117 of the Local Government Act and section 2 of the Prevention of Corruption Act 1916.

The policy and procedure help to protect SGRT's reputation; people's confidence in our staff and services, staff and volunteers by ensuring you avoid behaviour which could leave you open to prosecution and the council from potential prosecution.

There are exceptions but you may still need to declare them:

- Gifts and hospitality of minimal value, for example a small box of chocolates from a service user; a branded pen from a company; tea or coffee from a business or client when you visit them. Reasonable offers of transport if it is linked to the business in hand.

- Discounts of a modest nature offered to all employees or volunteers as long as the total discount over twelve months is less than £250 and the individual discount is no more than £50
- Gifts and hospitality from other employees, volunteers, or the council itself
- Promotional offers, such as “free gifts” from suppliers which should be used during your volunteering.

If an offer is made in person, you should politely but firmly decline it or seek permission to accept it.

The form for declaring gifts and hospitality is available on request from the Gasworks Manager.

14. Problem solving and Resolution Process.

Any volunteer has the right to complain if they are unhappy or feel that they have not been treated fairly. The problem-solving process can be found in the Volunteer Handbook.

It is recognised that it is rare that volunteer’s behaviour will result in disciplinary action and that most instances of inappropriate behaviour will be of a minor or passing nature which can be dealt with orally and informally. It is also recognised that such instances may indicate that there is a need for the volunteer to undertake training and SGRT is committed to continually developing volunteers to ensure that they are equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to perform their task well and appropriately.

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