



CREATIVE ROYSTON VOLUNTEERING POLICY

Introduction

Creative Royston Management Committee (CRMC) organises the annual Royston Arts Festival, which takes place in September and features events, exhibitions and workshops in art, craft, music, dance and other creative arts. CRMC may also organise occasional events and lend its support to other Arts-related activities through the year. CRMC members are also all unpaid volunteers and that should be taken into account in reading this policy.

This policy was originally written in 2016 as part of the process of achieving the Hertfordshire Volunteer Centres 6 Point Promise certification. Since then, Hertfordshire Volunteer Centres have been reorganised and their support for the 6 Point Promise fell off during Covid as did the ability of Creative Royston to comply with it.

The 6 Point Promise now appears to be administered by Communities 1st comprising of previous charities: CVS St Albans, Community Hertsmere, Hertsmere Community Transport, Aberford Community Centre and Broxbourne & East Herts Volunteer Centre. Renewal of the 6 Point Promise requires attendance at a paid course which is run in November each year i.e. post-festival. It has yet to be decided whether the 6 Point Promise is still a desirable qualification in the light of changes to the administering organisational structure and the relevance to Creative Royston in what is a transitional period following substantial volunteer recruitment to CRMC during the post-Covid period.

The 2016 version of this policy has been amended in the light of the above to reflect the practicality of the situation but where possible the practices and principles of the policy have been retained.

Aims of the Volunteering Policy: -

- To set out the principles and working practices for voluntary involvement in Creative Royston activities and ensure that best practice is followed
- To provide a reference document which covers all aspects of Creative Royston's relationship with volunteers for everyone who is concerned with recruiting, supporting, developing and managing volunteers and promoting voluntary activities.
- To ensure that volunteers and CRMC members understand and accept volunteer involvement in Creative Royston.

Volunteering is the commitment of time and energy for the benefit of the community, and can take many forms. It is undertaken by choice, without concern for financial gain.

Core values

- Everyone has the right to volunteer without experiencing discrimination and Creative Royston has a responsibility to treat volunteers fairly
- Volunteering is a matter of free choice and no one can be coerced into becoming a volunteer.
- Volunteering is a valuable and integral part of society and volunteers deserve support and recognition.
- Volunteers assist in effecting social change and improving quality of life, and play an essential role in alleviating the effects of poverty, ignorance, inequality and injustice.

Creative Royston recognises the unique and special contribution that volunteers make to society generally and in particular to the work of this organisation. Volunteer involvement in appropriate tasks and projects is welcomed as it has a positive effect on our services. Volunteers bring a variety of skills and a fresh perspective, adding value to all activities and supporting our sustainability. They can offer time and passion

to a particular project, cause or issue and by involving volunteers, Creative Royston is able to build stronger links with the community in which it works. Volunteers act as ambassadors, promoting the organisation's activities and services.

Creative Royston:

- does not introduce volunteers to directly replace paid staff
- expects that CRMC will work positively with volunteers and, where appropriate, will actively seek to involve them in their work
- recognises that volunteering is a two way process, with volunteers giving their time to help and in return, gaining some benefits for themselves.

Creative Royston's involvement with volunteers covers 6 areas:-

1. Planning for Volunteer involvement

Creative Royston recognises the importance of planning. Volunteer involvement requires the investment of time and resources, particularly for new volunteers.

- Volunteer tasks have been developed for short term and ongoing opportunities the latter being mainly for CRMC members.
- Role descriptions have been produced where the role is substantial enough to warrant them and volunteer tasks are carefully considered before advertising for help.
- When planning new projects, any likely volunteers' expenses are included in budgets so that volunteer activities can be appropriately supported.
- Policies which cover volunteer activities are regularly reviewed by CRMC.

2. Recruitment and selection

The recruitment of volunteers follows good practice guidelines.

- Volunteering is open to everyone and Creative Royston is committed to equal opportunities; in its services and in the recruitment of its volunteers
- Volunteers are recruited using a variety of advertising methods
- Potential volunteers are contacted promptly by phone, letter or email and recruitment processes are fair, efficient and consistent.
- Volunteers are required to complete a simple application form but will also be supplied with additional information.
- Creative Royston will endeavour to ensure that a volunteer is suitable for a role where there is a choice of volunteers for a role. Creative Royston will select the most appropriate candidate based on their relevant experience, knowledge or previous commitment to the organisation.
- If the volunteer, or Creative Royston, decides that the volunteer task is inappropriate/unsuitable for whatever reason, feedback and discussions would include an opportunity to explore other options.
- Volunteers will be selected and screened for suitability through one or more of the following methods, dependent on the role:-
 - Informal discussion
 - Trial period
- Where appropriate, DBS checks will be required

3. Induction

The initial welcome and induction that new volunteers receive is key to their retention

- An information pack will be provided for new volunteers.

- All volunteers will receive an induction relative to their role so that they are prepared for the tasks allocated to them.
- All volunteers will be given a named person to contact – the Volunteer Coordinator.
- Creative Royston will ensure that volunteers are properly integrated into the organisation and that mechanisms are in place for them to contribute to our work. In the case of CRMC members that is by attendance at CRMC meetings and other volunteers will be invited to contribute feedback and attend post-festival review meetings.

4. Support and safety

The Volunteer Coordinator will be the named person for all volunteers as their main point of contact. They will be provided with appropriate support, which will offer opportunities for feedback on progress, discussion of future developments and the chance to air any problems.

- Volunteers are covered by insurance and are included in health and safety policies.
- Out of pocket expenses are met wherever possible and the process for claiming expenses is set out in the Volunteer Guidelines
- Volunteers not wishing to claim their expenses can donate them back to the organisation. Expenses, other than for travel/phone etc may be met, providing approval is sought in advance. All volunteers are required to itemise and submit expense claims on a simple, standard form.
- In some circumstances, expenses can be paid in advance with the approval of the Volunteer Coordinator and Chair.
- Rates of reimbursement (e.g. for mileage) will be set and reviewed regularly by CRMC.
- Creative Royston will aim to identify and solve any problems at the earliest possible stage. A procedure covers complaints either by or about volunteers.

5. Training and personal development

Creative Royston recognises that volunteers' motivation for volunteering may change over time and the skills they develop in their volunteering may change what they want to do.

- Training relevant to volunteers' roles will be provided, if necessary
- Volunteers' motivation is met with appropriate tasks and those with extra support needs are enabled to volunteer wherever possible.
- Creative Royston recognises that volunteers require satisfying work and personal development and will seek to help volunteers meet these needs
- Volunteer briefing sessions establish volunteers' satisfaction with their current role and need for more information, suggested changes to the role etc.

6. Involving, rewarding and recognising volunteers

- Volunteers contribute to decision making and are fully involved in the organisation's activities.
- Newsletters/email updates keep volunteers up to date with Creative Royston's activities
- Volunteers receive appropriate recognition for their efforts. We don't forget the importance of a simple thank you!

The Appendix from the 2016 policy containing the 6 Point Promise has been left in place for reference purposes given our continued commitment above to the practices and principles of the 6 Point Promise. (Please note some references in the Appendix are out of date or no longer applicable.)

Valuing Volunteer Management 6 Point Promise.



The Valuing Volunteer Management 6 Point Promise is an initiative which aims to raise awareness of the need for good practice in volunteer management. It is a Hertfordshire wide scheme.

Volunteer involving organisations are encouraged to self assess their current policies, practices and procedures with an easy to use online checklist. (The checklist will also be available in hard copy).

The checklist will consist of a series of simple statements about basic volunteer management. Organisations can decide whether they fully meet the criteria, meet them partly, or not meet them at all. Where gaps are identified, the Volunteer Centres will be able to help with 1:1 guidance, template documents and training

sessions.

Once all the criteria of the 6 Point Promise have been met, the organisation will be issued with a certificate and listed on the Volunteer Centres Herts web site. www.volunteeringherts.org

The benefits of signing up to the 6 Point Promise will be:-

- to be recognised by potential funders as taking volunteer management seriously
- to be eligible for nomination for the countywide Valuing Volunteer Management Award.
- to be recognised by volunteers as a good organisation with which to work
- to be more likely to recruit and retain volunteers
- to have a higher profile – named on Volunteer Centres Herts website
- to have access to further support from your local Volunteer Centre

The Valuing Volunteer Management 6 Point Promise covers the following:-

1. Planning for Volunteer involvement

A Volunteer Policy covers all aspects of the relationship with volunteers. Role descriptions are produced and volunteering is open to everyone

2. Recruitment process

Potential volunteers are contacted quickly and recruitment processes are fair, efficient and consistent

3. Induction

New volunteers receive thorough preparation for their tasks and have a named person for ongoing support

4. Support and safety

Volunteers are covered by insurance and are included in health and safety policies. Out of pocket expenses are met wherever possible.

5. Training and personal development

Volunteers motivations are met with appropriate tasks and those with extra support needs are enabled to volunteer

6. Involving, rewarding and recognising volunteers

Volunteers contribute to decision making and are fully involved in the organisations activities. Volunteers receive appropriate recognition for their efforts.