



## **VOLUNTEER POLICY**

**January 2023**

### **Introduction**

This policy sets out the broad principles for voluntary involvement in The Etches Collection. It is of relevance to all within the organisation, including volunteers, staff, members, and those elected or appointed to positions of responsibility.

This policy is endorsed by The Kimmeridge Trust and will be reviewed annually, to ensure that it remains appropriate to the needs of The Etches Collection and its volunteers.

### **Commitment**

The Etches Collection acknowledges that volunteers contribute in many ways, that their contribution is unique and that volunteering can benefit users of services, staff, local communities and the volunteers themselves. The Etches Collection values the contribution made by volunteers and is committed to involving volunteers in appropriate positions and in ways which are encouraging, supportive and which develop volunteering.

The Etches Collection recognises its responsibility to arrange its volunteering efficiently and sensitively so that the valuable gift of the volunteer's time is best used to the mutual advantage of all concerned.

### **Definition**

Volunteering is an important expression of citizenship as well as an important component of democracy. Volunteers are people who are, unpaid and of their own free will, contribute their time, energy and skills to benefit the community.



## **Statement of values and principles**

Volunteering is a legitimate and crucial activity that is supported and encouraged by The Etches Collection and is not intended to be a substitute for paid employment. The role of volunteers complements but does not replace the role of paid staff.

Appropriate steps will be taken to ensure that paid staff are clear about the role of volunteers, and to foster good working relationships between paid staff and volunteers.

Volunteers will not be used during times of industrial action to do the work of paid staff.

The volunteer role is a gift relationship, binding only in honour, trust and mutual understanding. No enforceable obligation, contractual or otherwise, can be imposed on volunteers to attend, give or be set a minimum amount of time to carry out the tasks involved in their voluntary activity. Likewise the organisation cannot be compelled to provide either regular tasks, payment or other benefit for any activity undertaken by the volunteer.

Although volunteers offer time freely and willingly without binding obligation, there is a presumption of mutual support and reliability. Reciprocal expectations are acknowledged – both of what the organisation expects of volunteers and what volunteers expect of the organisation.

## **Volunteer Co-ordination**

All volunteers will have a nominated member of staff to offer guidance and advice to help the volunteer carry out tasks effectively. Volunteers will be informed of who to contact to receive support and supervision.

The nominated post holder with overall responsibility for the development of voluntary activities within the organisation is the Operations Manager, Carla Crook. This person is responsible for the management and welfare of the organisation's volunteers



## **Recruitment & Selection**

The Etches Collection is committed to equal opportunities and believes that volunteering should be open to all regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, political beliefs or offending background that does not create a risk to vulnerable groups including children. The acceptance of volunteer assistance for a particular role is made on merit, the sole selection criterion being the individual's suitability to carry out agreed tasks. Information about the volunteer not relevant to the performance of the volunteering tasks concerned will be disregarded by the organisation in terms of recruitment and selection.

Volunteering opportunities will be widely promoted in ways that makes them accessible to all members of the community.

Volunteers who are considered unsuitable for a particular task will either be offered alternative voluntary involvement with the organisation or referred to the nearest Volunteer Centre.

All volunteers will be asked to produce two references and will be invited to attend an informal interview. If the volunteer will be carrying out activities with vulnerable groups (children and/or adults) there may be other safer recruitment procedures carried out including asking a volunteer to undergo an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) check. More detailed information will be made available specific to legislative requirements and to the particular volunteer position.

Volunteers will have a clear and concise task description, which will be subsequently reviewed every 6 months. The task description will be prepared in conjunction with the volunteer and the designated person referred to above.

New volunteers will be properly inducted into the organisation.

Volunteers will be properly briefed about the activities to be undertaken and given all the necessary information to enable them to perform with confidence.

## **Training & Development**



All volunteers will be made aware of and have access to all the organisation's relevant policies, including those relating to volunteering, health & safety, safeguarding vulnerable groups and equal opportunities.

The development of training and support for volunteers is a high priority for the organisation in order to equip them with the necessary information and skills to carry out their tasks. It will be the responsibility of the designated person referred to above to see that this training is provided. It is the responsibility of the volunteer to attend relevant training.

Training in the supervision of volunteers will be provided for all those who have direct responsibility for volunteers.

### **Support, Supervision and Recognition**

Volunteers will have a named person to whom they can take their volunteering concerns and seek guidance and support.

Volunteers will have access to regular support and supervision. This will enable both the volunteer and the supervisor to identify, monitor and evaluate the volunteer's involvement, recognise achievements and identify individual training needs, including that relevant to their particular volunteering role and to their wider personal development. The frequency, duration and format of these sessions will be negotiated between the volunteer and the designated officer referred to above.

Volunteers will be given the opportunity, where relevant, to share their views and opinions with the organisation's wider staff, at staff meetings etc.

### **Personal Interest**

Volunteers who wish to carry out personal interest research programmes fall into two groups.

1. Personal Research/study. In this instance, the researcher is working on personal projects utilising either the specimens in the collection, or data from the general day to day operational duties or workings of the museum. In this case, the volunteer must obtain express permission from the



museum director and complete our standard 'Request to Study' form and be bound by those terms.

2. Research volunteer. In this case the research is being done to develop museum archives or improve collections. All such research is the property of the museum.

### **Expenses**

The organisation's volunteers are able to claim reasonable out of pocket expenses, subject to the production of receipts as evidence of the expenditure. What can be reclaimed from the organisation and the calculation of expenses will be explained to the volunteer before they start any activity likely to give rise to expenses.

The organisation has a consistent approach to the reimbursement of expenses which are the same for volunteers, staff, etc. and are as approved by the Inland Revenue.

A monthly reminder will be issued to all volunteers specifying the closing date for expense submissions. All expenses must be submitted using the expense form provided.

### **Uniform**

All Etches Collection volunteers will be provided a branded T-Shirt to wear during their shift at the Museum.

### **Insurance**

The organisation's liability insurance policies include the activities of volunteers and liability towards them.

The organisation does not insure the volunteer's personal possessions against loss or damage



## **Confidentiality**

The organisation will advise the volunteer on its confidentiality policy and procedures, where relevant. This would include those relating to personal information held by the organisation relating to the volunteer.

## **Settling Differences**

The organisation aims to treat all volunteers fairly, objectively and consistently. The organisation seeks to ensure that volunteers' views are heard, noted and acted upon promptly and aim for a positive and amicable solution based on the organisation's guidelines for settling differences.

The designated officer referred to above is responsible for handling problems regarding volunteer complaints or conduct and these should be referred to him/her. In the event of a problem, all relevant facts should be obtained as quickly as possible. Support will be provided by the organisation to the volunteer while it endeavours to resolve the problem in an informal manner. If an informal resolution proves impossible, the organisation's wider grievance or complaints policies and procedures (which include volunteers) will be referred to. If a volunteer's behaviour is repeatedly or seriously unacceptable, they may be asked to change their role, or to leave the organization.

## **Rights and Responsibilities**

The organisation recognises the rights of volunteers to:

- know what is (and what is not) expected of them
- have adequate support in their volunteering
- receive appreciation
- volunteer in a safe environment
- be insured
- know their rights and responsibilities if something goes wrong

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- receive relevant out-of-pocket expenses
- receive appropriate training
- be free from discrimination
- be offered the opportunity for personal development

The organisation expects volunteers to:

- be reliable
- be honest
- respect confidentiality
- make the most of training and support opportunities
- carry out tasks in a way that reflects the aims and values of the organisation
- carry out tasks within agreed guidelines
- respect the work of the organisation and not bring it into disrepute
- comply with the organisation's policies

Please can you sign date and return a copy of this Volunteer Policy to confirm you have read and understood the policy.

Print Name.....

Signature.....

Date.....

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