

Seaford Museum and Heritage Society Volunteer Policy

Registered CIO 1158790

1. Introduction

Seaford Museum and Heritage Society (SMHS) is run entirely by volunteers who donate thousands of hours of help to the Museum each year. They are involved in a wide range of activities from caring for the archives and collections to setting up displays, helping run events, answering enquiries, stewarding and general maintenance. For many people volunteering with SMHS is a way of developing their interest in local history, using existing skills and acquiring new ones. It is also a really good way of meeting people and contributing to the cultural life of the area. This policy gives guidance on the recruitment and management of volunteers and information for volunteers carrying out work for SMHS.

The SMHS encourages active involvement, within these guidelines, regardless of age, gender, ethnic origin, nationality, religious or political belief, sexual orientation, disability or socio-economic background.

This policy also applies to school and work placements or academic internships subject to additional terms and conditions contained in the SMHS Safeguarding Policy.

SMHS hopes that volunteers will enjoy their time with the Museum and will carry out their role to the best of their ability. The Trustees hope that volunteers will keep them informed of any problems encountered during their time with the Museum.

2. Purpose of Policy

This Volunteer Policy is designed to give an overall direction and guidance to everyone engaged in volunteering at Seaford Museum. It is only designed for internal guidance and does not form, implicitly or explicitly, a binding contractual or personnel agreement.

3. Recruitment

Opportunities for volunteering at Seaford Museum will be advertised on the Society's website and in the Museum.

Potential volunteers will need to complete an application form and submit it to the Volunteer Co-ordinator. They may then be invited to an informal interview at the Museum to determine their suitability for the roles available. Any offer will also be subject to satisfactory references and proof of identity.

After appointment, volunteers will work for an introductory period of 16 weeks. This is to allow both the volunteer and the museum to decide whether the arrangement

suits both parties. The volunteering agreement can be terminated by either side at any time.

4. What can be expected when volunteering at Seaford Museum

Volunteers can expect:

- A welcoming, stimulating and supportive environment in which to volunteer.
- Full induction into the working of the Museum.
- Training in the role(s) undertaken.
- A safe working environment and a briefing on health and safety issues (as part of the Induction process).
- To have their work recognised and appreciated by the SMHS
- Opportunities to use existing skills and to develop new ones as appropriate
- To be kept informed of changes within the Museum and to be consulted about major developments.
- To be treated fairly and with respect by everyone involved in the museum community.

5. Expectations of Volunteers at Seaford Museum

SMHS expects that volunteers will:

- Volunteers must be no less than 18 years of age. (See the Safeguarding Policy for age restrictions for work experience placements).
- Attend a full volunteer induction, annual training day and further training, as appropriate.
- Carry out their role in a way that corresponds with SMHS's aims, values, policies and procedures.
- Dress appropriately for their role and wear their name badge when involved in customer-facing work.
- To be punctual and reliable, keeping to their arranged hours of work, letting their supervisor know, by email or by leaving a message on the phone, giving as much notice as possible.
- To follow the SMHS Safeguarding procedures.
- To take responsibility for their own safety within the Museum, working in accordance with the SMHS health and safety procedures.
- To respect confidentiality with regard to personal and privileged information they encounter within their role.
- To treat all volunteers, visitors and members of the Society with respect.
- Not engage in any actions or communications by any means that might bring the SMHS into disrepute
- Recognise that copyright for any creative work carried out by volunteers during their work for SMHS belongs to SMHS.
- Recognise that SMHS has the right to terminate a volunteer's engagement if their services are no longer needed for any reason and at any time.

6. The Volunteer Agreement

Each volunteer and their team leader will sign a volunteer agreement, a copy of which will be retained by both parties. As part of the induction process this agreement will be discussed, along with specific needs of the relevant role.

Volunteers who do not follow the SMHS's procedures or who fail to carry out their volunteer role will be supported by their team leader and, if no improvement is made, may be asked to leave.

Any volunteer who encounters difficulties on the course of their duties should ask their team leader for help. If this help is not forthcoming, they should speak to the Volunteer Co-ordinator or one of the trustees.

7. Health and Safety

SMHS has a duty of care to all volunteers and will take all reasonable steps to protect their health and safety at the Museum and at off-site activities run by SMHS. Volunteers are required to follow all health and safety procedures as set out in the SMHS's Health and Safety Procedures, a copy of which will be issued to all new volunteers.

All volunteers must have an awareness and understanding of the health and safety hazards and risks that affect the organisation and building. SMHS expects everyone to be responsible for the day-to-day arrangements to ensure that work in and visits to museum galleries are organised in an efficient and safe manner.

Any accidents or near misses involving volunteers will be recorded in the Museum's Accident Book.

8. Safeguarding

All volunteers will be expected to adhere to the Society's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

9. Equal Opportunities

SMHS is committed to equal opportunities for all people, whatever their background. SMHS will treat all people fairly, whether they are volunteering, seeking to use the Museum or contracting to supply goods and services to SMHS. SMHS will not discriminate unfairly on grounds of racial heritage, ethnic origin, disability, age, gender, marital status, nationality, physical attributes, religious beliefs, sexual orientation or socio-economic background.

10. Copyright, data protection and confidentiality

Copyright in the results of any work carried out by volunteers in the course of their duties at Seaford Museum is vested in SMHS.

Information held in SMHS's databases must not be used for any unlawful reason and must not be copied, on paper or otherwise, without permission.

In the course of their work volunteers may deal with material in which SMHS or other people hold the copyright. All volunteers must be careful not to breach copyright law during their work.

In the course of your volunteering at Seaford Museum, you may come into contact with and use confidential information. That information might be about people, such as names and addresses or even information about people's circumstances, families, health and other private matters. It might be about technical, commercial or financial matters. We have to make sure individuals and other organisations can trust us, so it is vital that everyone understands what information they can and cannot share.

SMHS will take care to explain to you what information you can and cannot access and give you guidance about what information you can and cannot share.

SMHS has a Data Protection Policy, which will be issued to all new volunteer. It explains the rules and guidelines relating to working with personal information and helps volunteers ensure that they do not breach the Data Protection Act 2018.

11. Insurance

SMHS has Public Liability Insurance that covers volunteers in the course of their duties. The Museum does not insure volunteers' personal possessions against loss or damage.

12. Review

This policy was formally adopted by the Trustees on.....2025 and will be reviewed annually by SMHS or sooner if required.

Version 2 August 2025