

Oughtrington Community Centre Volunteering Policy

Oughtrington Community Centre
1 Oughtrington Crescent
Lymm
WA13 9JD

Tel. 01925 75 4178
Email contact@oughtrington.co.uk
Website www.oughtrington.co.uk

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1. Document control and review history

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0.1	07/04/2024	Initial draft	AO
1.0	12/04/2024	Updated to released	AO
1.1	04/03/2025	Reviewed	AO

2. Terms and abbreviations

Term	Description
Facilities Manager	The volunteer with lead responsibilities for Buildings & site maintenance.
OCC	Oughtrington Community Centre
“Users of the Centre”	All users of OCC, hirers, volunteers and visitors
“Volunteer Engagement Officer”	The lead person responsible for the volunteering effort in question. It is expected that this role will usually be an OCC Trustee

3. Policy Statement

Oughtrington Community Centre (OCC) is committed to involving volunteers safely, responsibly and effectively and to recognising and celebrating the contribution that volunteers make.

OCC strives to involve a diverse range of volunteers and to offer a variety of volunteer roles that reflect the needs of the organisation, whilst also providing opportunities for volunteers to use and develop a range of skills, knowledge and experience.

This policy outlines how OCC involves, manages and supports volunteers and the principles that underpin volunteering within the organisation.

4. Who this Policy Covers.

This policy covers OCC Trustees and volunteers. Volunteers are also covered by other organisational policies and procedures. Volunteer roles should be considered when new policies are developed and volunteers should be listed/named as a specific category in policy documents.

5. Definitions

"The Compact Code of Good Practice on Volunteering" published in 2005 (reviewed in 2009) by the Institute for Volunteering Research contains a short definition of volunteering. It states that volunteering is: "an activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment or individuals or groups other than (or in addition to) close relatives".

The code goes on to outline four key elements which OCC will uphold and include in all of its activities.

a. Choice:

Volunteering must be a choice freely made by each individual. Freedom to volunteer implies freedom not to become involved.

b. Diversity:

Volunteering should be open to all, no matter what their background, race, colour, nationality, religion, ethnic or national origins, age, gender, marital status, sexual orientation or disability.

c. Mutual Benefit:

Volunteers offer their contribution and skills unwaged but should benefit in other ways in return for their contribution. Giving time voluntarily must be recognised as establishing a reciprocal relationship in which the volunteer also benefits and feels that his or her contribution is personally fulfilling.

d. Recognition:

Explicit recognition that valuing the contribution of volunteers is fundamental to a fair relationship between volunteers, voluntary and community organisations and Government. This includes recognising the contribution to the organisation, the community, the social economy and wider social objectives.'

6. Ethos of our Volunteer Programme

All Trustees at OCC have a responsibility for involving volunteers in their work and for providing a level of volunteer management. Trustees are expected to work professionally and respectfully with volunteers.

We treat volunteers with the same level of respect that we would a paid staff member or trustee. We recognise the unique position of volunteers and the particular qualities that volunteers bring to their roles within the organisation.

We look for the best in our volunteers and aim to work with people's skills and build on strengths, rather than focussing on what someone can't do.

7. Introduction

Oughtrington Community Centre is a community led organisation aiming to support the development of a vibrant, thriving and sustainable third sector to meet the diverse and changing needs of the local community.

To do this we:

- Promote, support and develop volunteering for individuals and local communities to make a positive difference.
- Develop and champion excellence in volunteer management
- Initiate and nurture the development of new groups, schemes, enterprises or activities to meet identified needs.
- Support local networks and forums to facilitate and encourage effective partnerships and strengthen cross sector working.

Oughtrington Community Centre is committed to involving volunteers directly within the organisation to:

- Allow us to offer additional services to our core work.
- Contribute to the delivery of our services to the local community
- Allow people to use volunteering as a way of gaining skills and develop confidence which can be utilised in other areas.
- Provide different skills and perspectives to our work.
- Offer opportunities if we can for participation by people who might otherwise be excluded.

This volunteer policy sets out the principles and practice by which we involve volunteers.

8. Principles.

Oughtrington Community Centre:

- Recognises that voluntary work brings mutual benefits to volunteers themselves, to service users and the organisation as a whole.
- Will ensure that volunteers are properly integrated into the organisational structure and that mechanisms are in place for them to contribute to the work of OCC
- Expects that Trustees will work positively with volunteers and, where appropriate, will actively seek to involve them in their work.
- Recognises that volunteers require satisfying work and personal development and will seek to help volunteers meet these needs, as well as providing the training for them to do their work effectively.

9. Recruitment:

Recruitment of volunteers will generally be from all sections of the community, and will be in line with Equality and Diversity principles.

We are committed to equal opportunities and believe volunteering is open to all regardless of an individual's age, sex, marital status, ethnic origin, nationality, sexual orientation, political beliefs, HIV/Aids status, marital status, adaptable needs or religion. Decisions are made on the basis of an individual's suitability for the role.

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The volunteering roles offered by OCC are not likely to require a CRB check however volunteers with criminal convictions either spent or unspent will be accepted into the opportunities offered unless the conviction conflicts with the role in which they are applying for. OCC is committed to giving individuals with CRB issues a foot into volunteering. The majority of roles within OCC will not involve a CRB check

Volunteers with Learning Disabilities will be welcomed if the arrangement is mutually fulfilling. Roles can to a certain extent be adapted to suit the ability of the volunteer and elements of the opportunity can be performed where possible.

Volunteers that disclose additional issues (substance addiction, mental health or physical disability for example) will be considered on personal/individual merit. Whilst volunteering the Volunteer Engagement Officer will support the volunteer and provide regular reviews if needed to ensure the correct level of support is being provided.

4. Volunteer Documentation

Each volunteering role will have a role description outlining their main duties and the terms of their volunteering role.

All volunteers with OCC will be required to sign a Volunteer Agreement, this document outlines a mutual promise that both sides shall uphold.

Volunteers will also be provided, if desired, with a skills record, a document outlining training received and skills gained. This record will allow the volunteer to use their time with

OCC effectively as they transition into other roles. This record will also be used to identify training needs.

10. Induction and Training.

Where appropriate volunteers will be given a health and safety induction and will provide them with an overview of the premises and day to day running of OCC activities.

Volunteers will be given induction training which will detail the work that OCC does and equip them with the full view of operations (where appropriate).

Role specific training will be provided and the appropriate tools and skills developed and training needs identified.

11. Support and Development.

Volunteer feedback and input is wholly welcomed and volunteers will be encouraged to make suggestions about systems and processes they are involved in.

OCC will inform volunteers on all decisions and updates affecting OCC as a whole and attention particularly drawn to those which affect them directly.

12. Records.

Minimum details will be kept on volunteers. This will include the registration form, references, crisis contact, correspondence and any other relevant information in accordance with OCC confidentiality / Data Protection policy.

OCC will ensure that there is a clear and accessible system to enable volunteers to claim out of pocket expenses

13. Insurance

Volunteers will be covered by the OCC insurance policy while carrying out agreed duties.

OCC will take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure the volunteers' health, safety and welfare while at work in accordance with the centre's Health and Safety policy.

14. Equal Opportunities

Volunteers and staff will work in accordance with the OCC equal opportunities policy and will prevent discrimination on any grounds.

15. Problems

Grievance / complaints Policy

OCC has a policy to help deal with grievances that volunteers may have. In line with this policy volunteers have the right to discuss any concerns they may have with the Volunteer Engagement Officer at any time. If the problem is with the Volunteer Engagement Officer, all grievances should be directed to the Facilities Manager. If the Facilities Manager is unsuitable, then the Board of Trustees (via the OCC address) are the point of contact.

Below is the current postal address where complaints should be forwarded.

Oughtrington Community Centre
1 Oughtrington Crescent, Lymm, WA13 9JD
Tel. 01925 75 4178