



HERTFORD MUSEUM  
*Inspiring Generations*

# **Hertford Museum Volunteer Policy**

*(revised June 2020)*

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Hertford Museum aims to collect, preserve and interpret evidence of the history of the county town and the surrounding villages in the district of East Hertfordshire for the interest, enjoyment and understanding of the local community and other visitors.
- 1.2 At Hertford Museum, volunteers are valued as a major resource and make a vital contribution to our aims. We intend to encourage, develop and support volunteer involvement with our work, in which volunteers are already stakeholders.
- 1.3 At Hertford Museum, a volunteer is understood to be a person who does voluntary work on our behalf. It is undertaken by choice and it is unpaid.

## **2. Principles**

- 2.1 This volunteer policy is underpinned by the following principles:
  - Hertford Museum does not aim to introduce volunteers to replace paid staff.
  - Hertford Museum will ensure that volunteers are properly integrated into the organisational structure and that mechanisms are in place for them to contribute to Hertford Museum's work.
  - Hertford Museum expects that staff at all levels will work positively with volunteers and, where appropriate, will actively seek to involve them in their work.
  - Hertford Museum recognises that volunteers require satisfying work and personal development and will seek to help volunteers meet these needs, in addition to providing the training necessary for them to do their work effectively.

## **Practice Guidelines**

The following guidelines deal with practical aspects of the involvement of volunteers.

### **3. Recruitment**

- 3.1 Volunteers will be recruited in accordance with Hertford Museum's equal opportunities policy.
- 3.2 Hertford Museum will endeavour to recruit volunteers with skills or interest of which the Museum is most in need, e.g. documentation, facilitating schools/activities, collections care.
- 3.3 All prospective volunteers will be interviewed to ascertain their interests, skills, suitability and how their potential might best be realised.
- 3.4 Two references will be sought for all prospective volunteers. These may be professional or personal references.
- 3.5 DBS checks may be required for any volunteers working with children.
- 3.6 Hertford Museum reserves the right to refuse an application to volunteer.
- 3.7 A trial period, the length of which will be determined at interview stage, will take place. At the end of this period, Hertford Museum or the prospective volunteer may decide to terminate the volunteer agreement.

### **4. Volunteer Agreements and Work Outlines.**

- 4.1 All new volunteers will be required to fill out a volunteer agreement form, establishing what is required of them and what they can expect from Hertford Museum. This document is not a contract. Hertford Museum has no intention of creating a contract with any volunteers.
- 4.2 All new volunteers will receive a verbal outline of their work prior to commencing.

### **5. Expenses**

- 5.1 Hertford Museum cannot contribute to volunteer travel expenses.

## **6. Induction and Training**

- 6.1 All volunteers will receive an induction into Hertford Museum and their own area of work. This will include health and safety provision.
- 6.2 Training will be provided as appropriate and where possible, volunteers will be entitled to receive additional training on the same basis as paid staff.
- 6.3 A copy of this policy and other relevant policies will be available for volunteers at all times in the Volunteer Handbook in the Assistant Curator's office.

## **7. Support**

- 7.1 All volunteers will have a named person as their point of contact. This will usually be the Assistant Curator.
- 7.2 All project volunteers (ie those volunteers attending each week on specific days to work on specific collection areas) will be entitled to make an appointment to meet with their point of contact to discuss any aspect of their work which may arise between meetings.

## **8. The Volunteer's Voice**

- 8.1 Volunteers are encouraged to express their views about matters concerning Hertford Museum and its work.
- 8.2 Hertford Museum will hold annual meetings for all volunteers. These are an opportunity for volunteers to get together, share their progress and ideas, find out about upcoming events and exhibitions and enjoy a cup of tea!

## **9. Insurance**

- 9.1 All volunteers are covered by Hertford Museum's public liability insurance whilst at museum premises.

## **10. Health and Safety**

- 10.1 Volunteers should be aware of Hertford Museum's health and safety policy a copy of which is available in the Volunteer Handbook.

## **11. Equal Opportunities**

11.1 Hertford Museum operates an equal opportunities policy in respect of both paid staff and volunteers. Volunteers will be expected to have an understanding of and commitment to our equal opportunities policy. A copy of this policy is available in the Volunteer Handbook.

## **12. Problem Solving**

12.1 Hertford Museum aims to identify and solve problems at the earliest possible stage.

12.2 Problems relating to volunteer tasks or other individuals should be taken up with the Assistant Curator in the first instance.

12.3 In the event that the Assistant Curator is unable to solve the problem or the volunteer in question is unhappy with her decision, any further complaint should be directed to the Curator.

## **13. Confidentiality**

13.1 Volunteers will be bound by the same requirements for confidentiality as paid staff. This is particularly relevant for volunteers with access to donor information and those working in the non public areas of the museum.