We believe that everyone in our congregations and communities will benefit from being actively involved in the life of our ministries, therefore volunteering is absolutely core to all we do.

We realise that volunteers will be able to offer a wide range of support at different times to fit around their other commitments. We are committed to equality and diversity and will ensure that volunteering opportunities are managed in line with the Equality and Diversity policy. There are a range of opportunities for volunteers to get involved in across the organisation, including at Sunday services, on an Alpha course in any context, insert activities/opportunities as required and at larger events such as [ ]. We aspire to volunteering being a great way to be involved in the life and ministry of INSERT CHURCH/PCC NAME.

This policy has been designed to help [employees and line managers/members of INSERT CHURCH/PCC NAME] understand their roles and responsibilities relating to volunteers, thereby helping all individuals who volunteer to understand what support is available to them and what they can expect when volunteering.

All volunteers will be and can expect to be treated in a fair and consistent way. We expect volunteers to conduct themselves in a manner appropriate to our Christian ethos.

Responsibility for recruiting, inducting, supporting and managing volunteers is devolved to the ministry teams/activity or group leaders who design the roles that volunteers undertake, although everyone is encouraged to identify potential volunteers and connect them to the relevant team/person. All teams and leaders are expected to follow the core requirements of this policy as a baseline, to ensure that all volunteers meet the regulatory and safety requirements of the role they will be taking up.

**[Work Experience**

We welcome applications from individuals who would like to complete a 1-2 week work experience placement with the following provisos:

* candidates should be UK School Year 11 or above
* candidates should be assigned to low risk, non-confidential office-based roles and a risk assessment should be carried out before the placement begins
* candidates should be subject to close supervision during the course of their placement
* candidates should come with a recommendation and have an internal sponsor
* a volunteer agreement [including a confidentiality agreement] should be signed
* these posts can only be approved with [Vicar/PCC/other agreement.]

**Volunteer recruitment**

Responsibility for recruiting volunteers for specific ministries, activities or events sits with the teams/people running those ministries, activities or events.

They are responsible for developing a clear definition of what the volunteer role/s will be, including the requirements for the role regarding compliance with organisational policy and external regulatory requirements including but not limited to Health and Safety, Safeguarding, Safer Recruitment and GDPR.

Volunteers drawn from the congregation should normally expect to have been part of the congregation for six months before volunteering in a position of trust.

All volunteers must sign a Volunteer Agreement and complete the required onboarding documentation (covering at a minimum, GDPR and Health and Safety requirements) before commencing volunteering. This is for our and the volunteer’s protection.

**Confidentiality**

All volunteers are expected to adhere to confidentiality guidelines which will be explained at the start of the volunteer placement. This includes social media and contact with any press. For any volunteers that may be handling personal data or confidential information, they may also be required to sign a non-disclosure agreement.

**DBS checks**

Some volunteer roles will require DBS Enhanced checks, and other security checks to provide information about any criminal convictions that a person wishing to volunteer may have. For example, any volunteer position which involves working with children, young people or vulnerable adults will be subject to a DBS check.

**Risk and insurance**

We have a valid insurance policy so that volunteers are covered by public liability insurance. It covers all (check with your insurer first) volunteering activities. The health and safety policy gives simple instructions on how to perform each task safely and all risk assessments are to include the risks associated with the volunteering roles as part of the wider delivery of the ministry, activity or event.

We have clear procedures for accidents and emergencies and first aiders.

**Volunteering whilst on benefit**

Individuals can still volunteer if they are receiving benefits, provided that all legal guidelines are followed.

**Induction, training and support**

Responsibility for inducting and equipping volunteers to deliver their roles sits with the teams/people running the ministries, activities or events. All volunteers are to have a named point of contact for the full duration of their volunteering period.

All volunteers will have an induction, which is to cover:

* the role
* a tour of the facilities and location where the volunteer will mainly be working
* an outline of current policies including health and safety, equality and diversity policies, pastoral requirements, safeguarding, data protection and how to manage an emergency, fire, or raise other concerns [expenses]
* a review of the applicable risk assessments (e.g. Food handling / desk set up)
* other essential information such as timekeeping, rotas, availability etc.

All volunteers will have opportunities to learn, and there are volunteering roles to suit all levels of expertise. Appropriate training can be explored to support the volunteer and balance our stewardship requirements.

The activity/ministry leader will have responsibility for the individual whilst they are volunteering and will remain the key point of contact throughout a volunteering period. His/her responsibilities will include meeting regularly with the volunteer to discuss how they are getting on, any training needs, and to deal with any matters arising.

**Resolving Problems**

We hope and strive towards making it possible for all volunteers to enjoy volunteering with us, by taking the approach set out in this policy. Should a volunteer feel that their volunteering is not meeting their expectations, not working with the commitments that have been made to them, or wish to raise any other concern, they should do so with their designated contact as soon as possible. Should we feel that a volunteer is not, for any reason, working within the agreed expectations, those concerns will be raised with the volunteer and we will seek solutions to enable expectations to be met.

**Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

We are committed to embracing diversity and promoting equality and inclusion. When representing us as a volunteer the expectation is that volunteers also support this commitment to promoting equality, in line with the equality and diversity policy.

**Expenses**

All volunteers are valued, and we want to ensure there are no barriers to volunteer involvement. We reimburse volunteers for out-of-pocket expenses related to their volunteering.

**Thanking volunteers**

We are immensely grateful for the sacrificial donation of a volunteer’s time, skills, experience and desire to see us thrive as we seek to deliver our vision. We wish to ensure that we communicate our gratitude to our volunteers at all times.

That desire is to be balanced at all times with our responsibility to carefully steward our resources that have also been voluntarily given sacrificially by our congregations and donors.

Any gifts for volunteers are to be tokens of our thanks rather than have any significant financial value and should only be given with Vicar/PCC/other approval.