

Wolverhampton Library and Information Service Volunteer Policy

Introduction

This policy gives a framework for recruiting and supporting volunteers.

The purpose of this policy is to outline the relationship between the library service and their volunteers.

Wolverhampton Libraries aim to encourage, develop and support volunteer involvement within libraries and welcomes volunteers from all sections of society, including those from underrepresented groups.

By engaging volunteers from all backgrounds libraries can help and combat social exclusion and encourage community participation and involvement. Using volunteers, the library services hope to add further value, support and diversity to the service.

There are many types of volunteering opportunities, all of which enhance core services and overall service provision.

Definitions

A volunteer is a person who spends unpaid time volunteering on defined activities.

A person who performs or offers to perform a service voluntarily.

There is no legal definition of the word 'volunteer'. However, the definition of volunteering used in the '2005 Compact Code of Good Volunteering Practice'¹ is "*an activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something which aims to benefit the environment or individuals or groups other than or in addition to close relatives*".

We believe that a volunteer is also someone who meets an existing need for help.

Recruitment and Selection

Volunteers must be of minimum age 15 but there is no upper age limit.

All volunteers must go through a selection process of application & informal interview.

A volunteer will be matched to the best opportunity available in their area wherever possible.

When an opportunity has been assigned, two references will be requested, and a pre-employment medical questionnaire completed. A volunteer agreement is also completed and signed.

A trial period will then be undertaken, followed by a review.

Wolverhampton Libraries have no obligation to accept all volunteers and reserve the right to refuse any applicant or end a volunteering placement without notice.

Expectations

Volunteers agree to;

- Commit to an agreed period and/or set number of hours.
- Comply with relevant council policies and procedures i.e. data protection, equal opportunities, health & safety, child protection etc.
- Work within agreed guidelines and remits.
- Be reliable and courteous.
- Give adequate notice if unable to attend.
- Respect confidentiality.
- Attend a basic induction session and any other relevant training which is required to help them carry out their duties.

The Library Service Agrees to;

- Select and treat volunteers in accordance with the council equal opportunities policy.
- Give support and supervision always whilst on site.
- Offer an induction session and adequate training for agreed roles and duties.
- Relate health and safety issues to maximise safety and welfare.
- Monitor the volunteer's attendance and performance.
- Acknowledge the volunteer's contribution.
- Provide indemnity cover under the corporate insurance policy.
- To provide volunteers with all essential information, policies and procedures.
- Provide recourse for any grievance and disciplinary issues the volunteer may have.