

VOLUNTEER

HANDBOOK



Caistor Arts & Heritage Centre

Updated March 2015

VOLUNTEERING AT CAHC

Caistor Arts and Heritage Centre exists to enrich the community's experience in art, local history, culture, knowledge and learning, with courses, events, projects and information all available in a welcoming and encouraging environment. All aspects of delivering this rely extensively on the support, willingness, commitment and creativity of volunteers. Therefore, CAHC promotes a wholehearted belief in the value and benefits of volunteering.

Volunteers at CAHC are NOT engaged to do tasks no one else wants to do, or to be directly substituted for paid roles, they ARE engaged to enable CAHC to operate more efficiently, to widen community participation and to gain mutual benefit.

Therefore, CAHC aims to offer volunteering roles that are clear, add value, work well and play an integral part in offering services and benefits to the local community, customers, visitors and members alike.

With these aims and objectives CAHC will encourage, support, and develop volunteers so they become knowledgeable and happy in their roles.

So, welcome to the team at 28!

This handbook gives you the information and help you need to be able to comply with CAHC's policies and procedures, be treated with respect, understand the commitment and responsibilities you have agreed to, and gain the very best out of your time as a volunteer here. This handbook will be reviewed on a regular basis, and CAHC will inform you of any changes or updated information. Please do not hesitate to ask at any time if you are unsure of anything contained in this Handbook.

CONTENTS

- Support
- Solving Problems
- Equality and Diversity
- Health and Safety
- Confidentiality
- Insurance and Expenses
- Safeguarding and Protection (children, young people and vulnerable adults)
- Farewell!
- Appendices, as appropriate / available

SUPPORT

CAHC believes it is important that all volunteers are properly encouraged and appreciated throughout their time as volunteers at the Centre. This will be achieved by providing regular, appropriate and reassuring support.

- All new volunteers receive **INDUCTION** and **VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK** in order to explain the operation of the role, identify expectations and agree to commitments. The length of induction will depend on the role to be undertaken.
- While carrying out their role, volunteers will always have **ACCESS** to appropriate management.
- **SUPERVISION** is an opportunity to raise any issues the volunteer or CAHC may have, update any information and gain feedback on the role. A brief record is kept, see appendix for proforma.
- A longer **REVIEW** usually takes place annually and aims to evaluate the progress of the volunteer's role, plans for any future action, and identifies training needs. See appendix for proforma.
- CAHC values the volunteer's commitment to **TRAINING**, which will be offered freely as a chance for the volunteer to learn more, as well as supporting the development of the role. Provision may be informal, through peer learning, written information, structured group workshops, talks, or courses.
- Centre **MEETINGS** can be held for volunteers and staff for discussion, ideas, planning, information sharing and news. Along with looking at review outcomes, suggestions expressed in these meetings will **CONTRIBUTE** to the planning, progress, and future of CAHC. The **VOLUNTEERS' NEWSLETTER** provides another opportunity for sharing information, and social events for volunteers, staff and directors are held throughout the year.

DEALING WITH PROBLEMS

It is both CAHC's hope and intention that staff, volunteers, and users (cafe customers, library members, Centre visitors etc) have a good and positive experience at the Centre. There is a right to complain if anyone is not happy about their visit, services, a staff member, or a volunteer. Staff Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures do not apply to volunteers, but as is usual conduct issues concerning the volunteer, or the volunteer's complaints (about the CAHC, a staff member or another volunteer), will still be listened to and dealt with fairly and transparently, as outlined below:-

IF THE VOLUNTEER HAS CONCERNS:-

- Raise the matter with the supervisor.
- If this does not resolve the matter, (or if the concern is about the supervisor, the volunteer may request a meeting with the Centre Manager. Those involved will all have an opportunity to respond to the identified concern, and timed action will be taken to improve the situation.
- If there is still a reason for concern after the time set, the volunteer may request a meeting with the senior Director, who will look into the concern and provide an outcome. A brief record will be kept.

IF CONCERNS ARE RAISED ABOUT A VOLUNTEER:-

- The volunteer's supervisor will discuss the matter informally, and try to resolve the problem.
- If there is no resolution, the supervisor will arrange a first formal meeting to identify and record changes needed in the volunteer's conduct over an agreed period of time.
- Should no resolution be reached in this time, the Centre Manager will become involved in a second formal meeting, where the steps needed to achieve change be drawn up. A formal warning of potential dismissal may be given.
- If no change is then achieved, the volunteer may be asked to leave.

SERIOUS MISCONDUCT

Serious misconduct will usually involve immediate suspension while an investigation is undertaken by the Centre Manager and Senior Director, the volunteer will be informed in writing of the outcome of the investigation, in two weeks following suspension. At any meetings, at any stage, the volunteer may be accompanied by someone of their choosing, and can appeal against any decision. This appeal must be addressed to the Board of Directors at the Centre address, and a decision, which will be final, gained within a month.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

CAHC is committed to providing an environment where staff, volunteers, visitors and users have a positive, good experience. We are all different, and it is expected that this diversity will be welcomed, respected and valued in an inclusive community.

Any form of bullying behaviour by anyone is not tolerated or accepted at CAHC, and will be challenged by positive action.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

CAHC complies with all current Health and Safety legislation to promote a safe environment. Every reasonable step is taken to prevent injury or distress to all personnel, avoid hazards, unacceptable risks, or damage to property. Risk assessments are completed and regularly reviewed. Volunteers are expected to alert CAHC of any observations or information that can assist the risk assessment process, and are further encouraged to carry out their roles responsibly, with reference to their own and others' health and safety.

All Health and Safety procedures, policies and assessments may be accessed by all volunteers in the Centre's office.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Any personal details/records of volunteers, electronic or paper, are held securely and confidentially, and are only available to the Volunteer Manager, Centre Manager, and, on a need to know basis, the Chair of Trustees. Volunteers may request to see any of their personal information. These records will be kept for up to 6 months following a volunteer leaving CAHC (in case of reference requests), and then destroyed. Volunteers are asked not to give their own (or any other volunteer's or staff member's) contact details out any users at the Centre. Messages, which may contain personal information should not be left on open access. The Library has a system for volunteers to pass on members' information, and volunteers 'library cards cannot be used in the absence of any member's card.

EXPENSES, INSURANCE, AND MONEY MATTERS

Once Induction has taken place, all volunteers are covered by CAHC's insurance for agreed volunteering tasks with CAHC. Volunteers use of their car for volunteering tasks must be subject to their own vehicle insurance.

All volunteers may request travel costs between their home and the Centre (within a radius of 10 miles) to enable them to carry out agreed volunteering for CAHC - contact the Centre Manager for current rates. If volunteering for over 5 hours, the volunteer is entitled to soup/sandwich and a drink from the Centre Cafe. More usually, during a normal morning/ afternoon shift volunteers are welcome to have a free coffee, tea or squash drink from the Cafe.

If volunteers are requested to travel away from the Centre, eg; training, then expenses may be paid, with prior agreement.

Claim forms are available from the office, and are paid at the end of the month received. If asked to purchase an item with money from petty cash, the receipt must be provided by the volunteer.

Volunteers do not accept any library charges, retail payments or donations from visitors to the Centre - these must go straight to the Cafe till, the office, the donation box. or the library pods/printer. Volunteers must not accept heritage/display items without the formal loan arrangements being made through the office.

All materials used at the Centre in, for example, a craft activity, will be paid for by prior agreement with CAHC.

Formal work experience placements are eligible for travel expenses from the appropriate Job Centre.

Certain keys are issued/signed out to some identified members of staff or volunteers, otherwise volunteers do not hold keys and must return any used during a shift to the appropriate cabinet/manager.

Any personal belongings may be locked in the office/allocated kitchen cupboard while volunteering, though space is limited in both.

YOUNG VOLUNTEERS AND ADULT SAFEGUARDING

Children (aged around 16 and below) and Young People (aged around 16 and above to 18) are, with their parents' expressed permission, fully welcomed and involved with CAHC as volunteers in a variety of ways. These include Duke of Edinburgh students, workplace experience, weekly volunteers, or occasional helpers. Primary school children, and usually any child under the age of 12 years or younger, must have a parent on site while they are involved in any volunteering task. Similarly, all children under 12 years taking part in Centre activities must usually have a parent present as CAHC does not run childcare facilities. Adult volunteers may be involved in tasks with a child or young person, and some young people may be carrying out pre-arranged tasks on their own. At no time will children or young people be involved in any volunteering tasks or related activities off site, unless individually arranged between the Manager and the family.

DBS (disclosure and barring service) checks, formerly known as CRB, are not necessary for the activities/tasks involving children and young people at CAHC. At CAHC behaviour, conduct and boundaries around children, young people, and vulnerable adults must be appropriate, with ANYONE involved in CAHC being able to raise concerns and expect to be listened to. Children and Young People and vulnerable adults will see any adult around them as safe, responsible, understanding and trustworthy, and legally all staff and volunteers at CAHC have a duty of care to safeguard children and young people and vulnerable adults in their place of work/volunteering, as they would anywhere, by **recognising and responding** to concerns but **not investigating or becoming involved** themselves. Any observations of concern made by the staff or adult volunteer must be passed on verbally (followed by a written copy) to the Manager immediately. The Manager will then immediately contact Lincolnshire County Council - Children's Team on 01522 782111 or 782333 if out of hours.

LCC guidance on Safeguarding will be made available at Induction.

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AND FINALLY, THANK YOU AND FAREWELL !

Roles in CAHC do not usually come with set time periods, though various organisational changes could result in a volunteer being given a notice of termination, with the minimum of a week's notice. However, it would be more likely that another role is offered - the volunteer will not be let go that easily!

Similarly, the volunteer's personal situation may change, and CAHC would appreciate the minimum of a week's notice should they wish to leave. Career breaks are, however, perfectly acceptable and soon organised!

All volunteers leaving will be asked to complete a short Feedback and Evaluation form, which can be completed by the volunteer in person, or with the Volunteer or Centre Manager.

As noted previously, the volunteers' records are kept for up to 6 months, and volunteers are welcome to request brief references from CAHC during this time.

Previous volunteers can also apply again for roles should circumstances change. Any children returning to volunteering with CAHC must apply again, in order to ensure our records of their circumstances are up to date.

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