

## Volunteering for Success

The Cotswold Canals Trust has a long and successful history of volunteering built up over the last 40+ years. It is our intention to continue to develop and strengthen our **first class asset**, and this brief policy document has been produced following consultation with existing volunteers. Further information on each of the topics is available.

### Aims *why we do what we do*

To restore the Cotswold Canals in the best way we can for the benefit of the community, the environment and for the greater education & enjoyment of all. Volunteers are essential to the restoration and to its long-term sustainability.

### Our Values *what we aspire to*

<b>Appreciation</b>	We value and recognise the huge contribution our volunteers make to the canal restoration.	
<b>Camaraderie</b>	The social side of volunteering is a fundamental key to success. Our volunteers are approachable, friendly and enjoy doing whatever tasks they undertake.	
<b>Excellence</b>	Our volunteers strive to do the best they can in every job they take on. That may be digging, bricklaying, clearing vegetation, welcoming visitors, teaching youngsters, doing paperwork, running boat trips ..... <i>the list of opportunities is almost endless.</i>	
<b>Health and Safety</b>	Our volunteers put health & safety at the forefront of everything they do. Volunteering with CCT helps keep minds and bodies fit and healthy.	
<b>Inclusion</b>	We welcome volunteers of all ages, backgrounds and abilities from across the community	
<b>Learning &amp; Collaboration</b>	Our volunteers are always learning and are happy to share their knowledge.	
<b>Respect</b>	Our volunteers respect each other, the environment, our customers, our members, local residents and the wider community, in accordance with Trust priorities, advice & guidance.	
<b>Sharing</b>	Our volunteers give their time, energy and skills for the benefit of the restoration and to leave a lasting legacy for future generations. They positively support colleagues wherever possible.	
<b>Sustainability</b>	Whatever our volunteers design, build or create will have the future in mind i.e. maintenance, re-use or up-cycling.	

## **Our Volunteer Policy** *what our volunteers can expect from us*

### **Advertising & Recruitment**

- We will do our very best to find a volunteering opportunity to fit with your availability, skills and preferences.
- We welcome all volunteers who approach us either by personal contact (registering on Connect, letter, email, telephone), or by dropping-in at one of our visitor centres, maintenance depots or open work-parties.
- We will advertise specific vacancies via recognised volunteer agencies and from time to time via appropriate media.



### **Broadening our Appeal**

- We will work with you and other local organisations to increase the attractiveness of our volunteer programme.
- We will make specific efforts to provide opportunities and recreational activities for younger people and families.



### **Diversity**

- CCT welcomes volunteers from every part of the community.
- Volunteering opportunities exist for all ages, genders, ethnic groups, religions, disabilities, educational backgrounds and sexual orientations.
- In the interests of safety and practical supervision, the Trust may require under 18s or certain vulnerable volunteers to be accompanied by a supervisor, carer or guardian.



### **Education, Skills & Training**

- We are committed to supporting our volunteers in gaining transferable skills.
- We will help to build your confidence, practical experience and skill-base by providing on the job mentoring.
- We will assist your specific personal development by providing professional training where this is a necessary part of your activities with the Trust.



### **Health & Safety**

- The Cotswold Canals Trust is committed to providing a healthy, safe setting for all its volunteer activities.
- Volunteering with us should help keep your mind and body fit and healthy. You will not be pressurised or be expected to undertake anything that you are uncomfortable taking on.
- Some tasks undertaken by volunteers naturally carry an element of risk. Your team leader or manager will have completed a risk assessment of those activities and will advise you on the work procedures and safety precautions to be taken.
- You may be asked to wear safety appropriate clothing, gloves and footwear. Where other personal protection equipment is required, this will usually be provided.
- Only suitably qualified volunteers may undertake certain tasks which require the use of power tools and/or other specialist plant & equipment. If necessary, training will be provided.
- Team leaders supervising under 18s and vulnerable adults will be appropriately screened by the Disclosure & Barring Service.



### **Induction & Welcome**

- When you arrive to volunteer with us you will be welcomed and made to feel part of the team.
- We will provide you with sufficient induction training and equipment to



ensure your personal safety, and that of others around you, before you start on any tasks.

- You will be shown the facilities and what to do.
- On your first day you will be allocated a buddy to help you with any queries and show you the ropes.

### **Insurance**

- All organised activities undertaken by Cotswold Canals Trust, its staff and volunteers, are appropriately insured.



### **Keeping you informed**

- We are committed to open and frequent communication between the different parts of CCT.
- We will continually improve and develop our communications strategy to ensure we reach the widest audience.
- We will use our volunteers and their achievements as key elements in our external PR programme.



### **Motivation & Retention**

- We greatly appreciate the time and energy that you give to the Trust, recognising that everyone must put their family responsibilities first and foremost.
- We want to ensure you continue to be happy volunteering with Cotswold Canals Trust.
- We are open to suggestions for improvement and any constructive feedback will be gratefully received, acknowledged and acted upon as appropriate.
- We aim to continually improve the professionalism of volunteer team leaders and managers.
- We will further develop and enhance the way that our volunteer programmes are managed
- We will ensure that successes in which you have participated will be recognised and celebrated.
- From time to time we will host thank-you events.



### **Occasional Issues**

- The Trust endeavours to ensure good practice at all times.
- By specifying our core values and providing appropriate training and procedures, the risk of problems arising is minimised.
- Very occasionally difficulties may arise while you are volunteering with us. Your local team leader or manager should be able to deal with such matters at the time.
- If appropriate, the team leader or manager may record the general aspects of the matter so that our processes might be reviewed and the type of incident avoided in the future.
- For instances where you might be uncomfortable dealing directly with your team leader or manager you may contact the Trust. The matter will then be dealt with objectively and independently of any personalities.



### **Personal Data**

- We will take all reasonable precautions to ensure the protection of any personal information held about you. We will use this to manage your volunteering effectively with us, and we will not share such information with third parties.



### **Travelling, Refreshments and Expenses**

- Tea, coffee and drinking water are often provided at sites. Volunteers usually bring along their own drinks/packed lunches.
- Our volunteers usually make their own way to volunteer centres, depots or project sites. Onward transportation to some sites may be provided from the base, where access is problematic.
- Where a volunteer has difficulty accessing a particular location a lift share can normally be arranged within the team.
- Team leaders and managers may have a budget for small or consumable items that are required for Trust activities. Expenses for such budget approved items may be reclaimed.
- Where volunteers are asked to journey beyond the restoration area on Trust business, travel expenses may be claimed.



## **Our Volunteer Policy** *what we expect from our volunteers*

### **Ambassadors**

- While you are volunteering for the Trust, even if up to your waist in wet mud, you are representing us to the wider public.
- You will be well presented, polite and appropriately dressed for the activities being undertaken.
- You may inform the general public to the best of your knowledge and point them to further sources of information where you are unsure of any facts. Please do not make anything up.
- You should not speak on behalf of CCT unless you have been formally given such authority.
- You may of course provide personal opinion, provided it is not in conflict with the Trust's aims and objectives.



### **Courtesy**

- We are very aware that volunteers must put their own health, family, friends and personal commitments first. However, if you have said you will do something, or you are expected to turn up for an activity, please do notify any delays or absence to the appropriate person.



### **Customer facing**

- Where you perform a customer facing activity e.g. at visitor centres, presentations, boat trips etc; we ask that you are well groomed and smartly dressed to suit the occasion.
- Visitor centre teams and boat crews should also wear suitable approved green CCT clothing. Basic CCT T-Shirts are provided free of charge for this purpose.



### **Keeping us informed**

- Let us know how you are getting on so we can share the news.
- Keep us informed of any successes, queries or concerns.



### **Volunteering good practice**

- Your managers and team leaders will have assessed any risks associated with activities that you are likely to perform.
- You should also take your own sensible precautions at all times with regard to health & safety.
- Please make sure that you listen, take on board and familiarise yourself with any relevant instructions, guidance and formal procedures given to you to follow. These are for your own, your colleagues', and the general public's protection and benefit.

