



VOLUNTEER POLICY

1. Introduction

1.1. The aim of the Northumberland Archives is to locate, collect and preserve archive collections relating to past and present life within the county of Northumberland and to make these collections widely available and accessible for public use.

1.2 Volunteers, through their time, energy and skills can make a valuable contribution to the overall aim of Northumberland Archives. Equally, volunteer working can also bring benefits to volunteers themselves by improving skills and confidence and developing interests. Northumberland Archives is committed to developing, encouraging, and supporting volunteer involvement in our work, where appropriate. In so doing, we clearly recognise that the roles of volunteers will complement and not replace the roles of paid members of staff.

1.3 A volunteer is defined as a person who carries out voluntary work on behalf of the Northumberland Archives either at Woodhorn, the Berwick-upon-Tweed Record Office or at home. The work is undertaken by choice and is unpaid. Northumberland Archives undertakes to ensure that the work undertaken by volunteers is organised and supervised effectively.

1.4 Within Northumberland Archives, volunteers are involved mainly in the production of catalogues, indexes, transcripts or other types of finding aids which will enhance public access to archive collections. The product of any voluntary work carried out on behalf of the Service, in whatever form, will be considered to be the property of Northumberland Archives and can be used, as

appropriate, by the Service to further its access aims. Copyright in any content created will be the property of Northumberland County Council.

1.5 From time-to-time Northumberland Archives Charitable Trust may offer volunteer opportunities. Northumberland Archives will promote these opportunities.

2. Purpose of This Policy

The purpose of Northumberland Archives Service in adopting this policy is:

- To establish clear principles for the involvement of volunteers with Northumberland Archives.
- To clarify the role of volunteers and the relationship between volunteers and Northumberland Archives staff.
- To acknowledge the value of the contribution made by volunteers .
- To confirm the commitment of Northumberland Archives to involving volunteers in its work.
- To recognise the respective roles, rights and responsibilities of volunteers and Northumberland Archives.
- To establish a framework for the recruitment and support of volunteers.

3. Statement of Principles

3.1 Capacity within Northumberland Archives means that we are only able to offer volunteer opportunities within particular projects.

3:2 The tasks to be carried out by the volunteers will be clearly defined so that both paid staff and volunteers are sure about their respective roles and responsibilities.

3.3 Northumberland Archives will keep records of the work carried out by volunteers.

3.4 Volunteer work will complement, not replace, the work carried out by paid staff.

3.4 Volunteers will have the opportunity to represent their views to Northumberland Archives.

3.5 The policy and any procedures on volunteers will be regularly reviewed.

4. Recruitment

4.1 Northumberland Archives will adhere to the Equality and Diversity Policy of Northumberland County Council when recruiting and selecting volunteers.

4.2 We will make information about opportunities for volunteer working widely accessible, including information about actual tasks, necessary skills, commitment and time. This will be regularly reviewed.

4.3 Volunteers will be required to attend a preliminary interview prior to any volunteer work being offered. Northumberland Archives reserves the right not to accept a volunteer or to terminate an arrangement.

4.4 Northumberland Archives will request references for volunteers where it is considered to be appropriate to do so.

4.5 No volunteers will be accepted for placement without reference to the Head of Archives or the Berwick Archivist.

4.6 Northumberland Archives and the volunteer will enter into a service agreement, which sets out what the volunteer can expect from the Service and what the Service hopes to gain from the volunteer (See Appendix 1).

4.7 Wherever possible, placements will match the individual skills and interest of the volunteer. However, this may not always be possible, depending on the tasks available to be undertaken at the time.

4.8 Once placed with Northumberland Archives, we expect volunteers to comply fully with existing policies and procedures.

5 Rights and Responsibilities of Volunteers

Northumberland Archives recognises the rights of volunteers to:

- Be given clear information and a full induction to the organisation and its procedures, including its health and safety procedure .
- Work in safe working conditions.
- Be insured.
- Have a clear understanding of specified lines of supervision and support.
- Receive the necessary training to perform allocated tasks.
- Be free from discrimination.
- Ask for a reference.
- Withdraw from voluntary work.
- Receive reasonable travel expenses if requested.

Northumberland Archives expects that its volunteers will:

- Work within agreed guidelines.
- Follow the task remit.
- Work at times agreed with Northumberland Archives and give advance notice of any major variation to this.
- Carry out specified tasks in a way which supports the aims, values and standards of Northumberland Archives.
- Respect confidentiality.
- Show courtesy to members of the Northumberland Archives staff.
- Attend training sessions, where and when agreed.

6. Support For Volunteers

6.1 Northumberland Archives will provide an induction to the Service, including written information about the Health and Safety procedures.

6.2 All volunteers will be provided with access to a named member of Northumberland Archives staff who will act as their “mentor” and will be responsible for supervising and reviewing the volunteer task on a regular basis.

6.3 Written information can be supplied about insurance arrangements for volunteers, if required.

6.4 Training appropriate to the designated task will be provided.

7. Relationship With Paid Staff.

7.1 Northumberland Archives will endeavour to ensure that good working relationships are fostered between paid staff and volunteers.

7.2 Paid staff at all levels will be aware of the role and contribution of volunteers. Equally, volunteers will be given clear information about the roles undertaken by paid staff.

7.3 Volunteers should recognise that paid staff have many and varied duties and might not always be able to give volunteers their immediate attention.

7.4 The roles of volunteers and paid staff will be clearly defined, complimentary and mutually supportive.

7.5 In the event of any industrial action, volunteers will not be requested to carry out the work of paid staff. They may continue with their regular duties, provided that adequate supervision can be made available, but will not be asked to undertake additional work.

8. Service Agreements

8.1 The propose of entering into a service agreement is to ensure that the role of volunteers is made clear, that satisfactory arrangements are in place for their management and the impact and benefits of volunteering are acknowledged.

9. Responsibility and Review

9.1 The overall responsibility for the implementation, monitoring and review of this policy rests with the Head of Archives.

9.2 This policy will be reviewed within three years, or earlier, if required.

Created: June 2007

Reviewed: June 2010

Reviewed: June 2017

Reviewed: June 2021

Reviewed: June 2024



APPENDIX 1

VOLUNTEER SERVICE AGREEMENT

Northumberland Archives values the work carried out by its volunteers. This agreement outlines what a Volunteer can expect from the Northumberland Archives and what the Service can expect from a volunteer:

What a Volunteer can expect from Northumberland Archives:

- Be given clear information and a full induction to the organisation and its procedures, including its health and safety procedures.
- Work in safe working conditions.
- Be insured.
- Have a clear understanding of specified lines of supervision and support.
- Receive the necessary training to perform allocated tasks.
- Be free from discrimination.
- Request a reference.
- Withdraw from voluntary work at any time

What Northumberland Archives can expect from a volunteer.

- Work within agreed guidelines
- Follow the task remit.
- Work at times agreed with Northumberland Archives and give advance notice of any major variation to this.
- Carry out specified tasks in a way which supports the aims, values, and standards of Northumberland Archives.
- Respect confidentiality.
- Show courtesy to members of Northumberland Archives staff.
- Attend training sessions, where and when agreed.
- Copyright in all work produced for Northumberland Archives will be the property of Northumberland County Council.

I agree to the terms outlined in this Service Agreement:

NAME OF VOLUNTEER:

ADDRESS:

POSTCODE:

SIGNATURE:

DATE:

By ticking this box. I agree to receiving information from Northumberland Archives:

REPRESENTATIVE OF NORTHUMBERLAND ARCHIVES

NAME:

POSITION:

DATE:

Data Protection Act 1998: The personal details recorded on this form will be retained by Northumberland Archives solely in connection with volunteer opportunities at Northumberland Archives and will not be disclosed to a third party without the consent of individuals concerned. Furthermore, in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation in effect from May 2018, only individuals whom have opted to receive information will receive correspondence.