

Central England Area Quaker Meeting

Volunteer Policy

1. Principles

1.1 The Volunteering Policy is underpinned by the following principles:

- Central England Area Quaker Meeting (“CEAQM”) will ensure that volunteers are properly integrated into the organisational structure and that mechanisms are in place for them to contribute to CEAQM’s work and witness.
- CEAQM expects staff to work positively with volunteers at all levels and where appropriate, actively seek to involve them in their work.
- All volunteers however, will be treated equally by paid members of staff and volunteers alike, during the duration of their voluntary engagement.
- CEAQM recognises that volunteers require satisfying work and personal development and will seek to help volunteers meet these needs, as well as providing relevant training for them to do their voluntary work effectively.

1.2 Each Meeting, Branch or Committee which has volunteers integrated into it will have a nominated volunteer co-ordinator. Management, supervision, support and training of volunteers are the responsibility of each volunteer co-ordinator. In many cases, the role of volunteer coordinator will be combined with another role such as project officer. Individual volunteer co-ordinators are responsible for ensuring that volunteers are aware of their rights and responsibilities. (See appendix).

2. Definition of a Volunteer

For the purposes of this policy

2.1 A volunteer is defined as any individual who willingly gives their time, energy and skills, without payment of wage or salary, for the benefit of both themselves, CEAQM and to the good of the community.

2.2 Volunteers are people specifically recruited as volunteers, through a process that is open to all, and not restricted to Members and Attenders of the Religious Society of Friends. (For some voluntary roles, there may be a requirement for knowledge and understanding of Quakers, which may effectively restrict recruitment to Members and Attenders. This requirement should be applied sensitively.)

2.3 Members and Attenders appointed to roles through our Quaker nominations process, and Quakers giving service as part of their Quaker commitment, are not volunteers for the purpose of this policy.

2.4 Members, Attenders or others, who undertake voluntary tasks on an occasional or informal basis, are not covered by this policy.

3. Volunteer Recruitment

3.1 An underlying principle adhered to by CEAQM is that everyone has a right to apply to become a volunteer. Recruitment should aim to attract volunteers that are representative of the wider community's cultural and ethnic balance.

3.2 All prospective volunteers will be interviewed initially by the volunteer co-ordinator for the Meeting, Branch or Committee seeking volunteer services. All volunteers must agree to adhere to the policies and procedures associated with projects in which they participate.

4. Written information

4.1 All volunteer co-ordinators must provide volunteers with written Task Outline(s); these should clearly define the role(s) to be carried out.

4.2 CEAQM should ensure that in line with the handbook, each volunteer is made aware of and agrees to adhere to CEAQM's aims, policies, procedures and practices.

5. Induction, Support, Training and Departure

5.1 All volunteers must receive an induction to CEAQM and sufficient relevant training to fulfil their role.

5.2 Volunteer co-ordinators should offer consistent support, encouragement, guidance, relevant training for the role, and regular informal supervision sessions.

5.3 Volunteers should be encouraged to let CEAQM have as much notice as possible of when they wish to stop volunteering. Similarly CEAQM should give as much notice as possible of when a volunteering will end. It would be useful for the volunteer coordinator to have a conversation with the volunteer at the end of their time of volunteering to allow both parties the opportunity of sharing experiences and learning for the future.

6. Insurance, Health & Safety

6.1 All volunteers to be covered by CEAQM's Public Liability Insurance plus any other insurance policies appropriate to projects.

6.2 CEAQM commits to ensure that all volunteers are informed of Health & Safety practices and procedures. These should be included as part of each volunteer's induction process.

7. Volunteer Expenses

7.1 All volunteers will be entitled to reimbursement of reasonable out of pocket expenses upon receipt of proof, but are not entitled to receive any other money.

8. Grievance Procedure

8.1 Any volunteer may report a grievance in accordance with CEAQM's Grievance Procedure for all staff and volunteers.

9. Holidays or sickness

9.1 To assist CEAQM in providing appropriate cover for tasks, volunteers will be asked to inform CEAQM of any sickness or other absence and give notice of holidays.

10. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) & Ex-Offenders

10.1 As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to assess volunteers' suitability for positions of trust, CEAQM complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice. A disclosure is only requested if it is both proportionate and relevant to the voluntary role concerned. For those positions where a Disclosure is required, it will be stated clearly in the role description that a Disclosure will be requested in the event of the individual wishing to volunteer in that role.

10.2 Unless the nature of the position allows CEAQM to ask questions about a volunteer's criminal record, we shall only ask about "unspent" convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

10.3 CEAQM undertakes to discuss any matter revealed in a Disclosure with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of a voluntary placement.

11. Volunteer Records and personal data

11.1 Any personal data related to a volunteer will be managed in accordance with CEAQM data management procedures. The volunteer coordinator is responsible for obtaining the necessary permissions for CEAQM to hold and process personal data related to volunteers to comply with GDP Regulations.

Data and records will vary according to individual projects. However, standard records may include:

- volunteer contact details
- copy of written Task Outline
- relevant training and support received

11.2 Once a volunteer has left CEAQM, relevant information will be archived in a secure location and will be kept for three years.

This Policy will be reviewed every three years, or as otherwise required by legislation, in consultation with volunteers, staff and trustees.

Appendix 1

Volunteers' Rights and Responsibilities

CEAQM aims to give the following rights to volunteers, beyond minimal legal requirements, in line with its testimony to Equality. All volunteers to:

- be given a clear idea of their tasks and responsibilities within CEAQM.
- be given the name of someone within CEAQM who will look after their interests and who will offer them appropriate support, and supervision on a regular basis.
- be assured that any information shared with CEAQM is kept confidential as required by the Data Protection Act 1998.
- be given the same protection under health & safety regulations and public liability as paid employees.
- be offered opportunities for relevant training and skills development, appropriate for the voluntary tasks involved.
- have access to, and to play a part in, the decision-making process of CEAQM where decisions are being made that are relevant to their role.
- be informed about the CEAQM's policies relevant to the volunteer i.e. health & safety, grievance and problem-solving procedures.
- be provided with appropriate equipment, tools and materials associated to their tasks. be supported when things go wrong and to be encouraged to learn from their mistakes or difficulties.
- Volunteers should not: -
 - Have unfair demands made on their time
 - Be asked to do something which is against their principles or beliefs
 - Be subject to any discrimination e.g. on the basis of race, sexuality, age, gender. Be out of pocket through doing voluntary work.

Volunteers' Responsibilities

- To support and embrace CEAQM's aims and objectives.
- To do what is reasonably requested of them, to the best of their ability.
- To treat information obtained whilst volunteering in a confidential manner - this can be information about clients, members, attenders or other workers, paid and unpaid.
- To recognise that they represent the organisation and therefore need to act in an appropriate manner at all times.
- To honour any commitment made to the best of their abilities, notifying CEAQM in good time if their intention to attend changes.
- To abide by any relevant policies and procedures.
- To offer suggestions for changes/improvements in working practices to the Volunteer Coordinator.

Volunteer Policy	Prepared by Huw Davies
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