



Leighton House Museum and 18 Stafford Terrace

Volunteer Policy

Purpose of this Policy

This policy aims to:

- Provide the foundation for involving volunteers
- Offer staff and volunteers a greater understanding of how volunteers are involved in our work
- Provide information about our volunteering policies and procedures which will be covered in more detail during induction, ensuring that volunteers are fully supported during their volunteer work
- Help ensure fairness and consistency in volunteering and volunteer management.

We ask all volunteers to sign the back page of this Policy to confirm that they have read, understood and agree with the content.

Volunteering roles

We offer a range of ways for the general public to get involved in the daily life of our Museums as volunteers:

- **Regular supporters** – specific longer-term positions for those who want to volunteer regularly in one or more roles to assist staff

About Leighton House Museum

Located on the edge of Holland Park in Kensington, the house is one of the most remarkable buildings of the 19th century. The house was the former home and studio of the leading Victorian artist, Frederic, Lord Leighton (1830-1896). Built to designs by George Aitchison, it was extended and embellished over a period of 30 years to create a private palace of art.

About 18 Stafford Terrace

18 Stafford Terrace was the home of *Punch* cartoonist Edward Linley Sambourne, his wife Marion, their two children and their live-in servants. A late Victorian family

home it is preserved almost entirely intact, giving a memorable insight into the lives of the Sambournes and the world in which they lived.

Why do we involve volunteers?

We have traditionally involved volunteers in different aspects of our work, from conservation work to Internships to general support in around the Museums.

Volunteers bring many benefits to the Museums, including:

- Achieving our vision
- Encouraging links between the Museums, visitors and the local community
- Bringing a fresh approach and a different perspective, one that reflects the views of local and wider communities and includes diversity of knowledge and experience
- Bringing credibility to the Museums – volunteers giving their time for free endorses that our work is of value
- Acting as ambassadors for our work outside the building
- Adding value to all aspects of our work.

In these ways, our volunteers make a positive impact on much of what we do. In return, we aim to provide interesting, rewarding and developmental volunteering opportunities.

The relationship between the Museums and its volunteers always aims to be mutually beneficial. We cannot offer voluntary work which is solely for the benefit of an individual – the public and the Museums must benefit as well.

Volunteering benefits

Our volunteering opportunities aim to be sociable, and offer new opportunities for learning and skills development when appropriate. Other benefits include:

- An insight into working in museums
- Hands-on experience to complement formal studies
- Transferrable workplace skills
- A chance to make a difference to the work of our Museums
- A reference for future employers upon the successful completion of a volunteering placement
- A newsletter and email bulletins



- The opportunity to attend exhibitions and occasional special events.

Definition of a volunteer

A volunteer is someone who freely undertakes to commit their time and energy for the benefit of one or both of our Museums, without expectation of financial reward. In contrast, someone who has a contract of employment carries out work at the direction of our Museums, and is paid for it.

We accept the offer of time by all volunteers with the understanding that it is at the sole discretion of the Museum in question. There is no obligation for the Museums to offer a volunteer any task, and there is no obligation for a volunteer to do a task for the Museum.

Therefore, Museum volunteers shall at no time be considered as, or have status as employees of the Museum. Nor shall they be considered as workers since, as volunteers giving their time freely, they are exempt from Minimum Wage Legislation.

Volunteers and staff

The Museums are not dependent on volunteers in any role: we offer a range of exciting structured and supported volunteering opportunities which complement and supplement the work of our staff. Our staff and volunteers are always included in the development of volunteering policies and procedures.

It is Museum policy that volunteers should not be used to displace paid staff or undercut their pay and conditions of service. In the interests of harmonious relations between volunteers and paid staff, volunteers never undertake the work of paid staff during industrial disputes.

Our Volunteering Agreement

We wish to assure our volunteers of our appreciation of their volunteering with us and that we will do the best we can to make the volunteer experience enjoyable and rewarding. The nature of that relationship – what we can both reasonably expect from each other – is set out in the Volunteer Agreement below:

During the course of volunteering we will do our best to:

- Provide adequate information, training and assistance for volunteers to be able to carry out their roles

- Provide volunteers with supervisory support, as well as feedback on volunteering performance
- Respect the skills, dignity and individual needs of volunteers
- Treat volunteers in line with our equal opportunities policy
- Try to resolve amicably and swiftly any problems and difficulties which may arise in line with the procedures detailed in the Volunteer Policy
- Keep confidential all personal information relating to volunteers
- Provide Public Liability / Limited Personal Accident Insurance cover for volunteers undertaking tasks approved and authorised by the Council
- Reimburse agreed out-of-pocket receipted volunteering travel expenses.

We ask that as volunteers they will do their best to:

- Perform volunteering tasks as detailed in the Role Summary to the best of their ability
- Follow the letter and spirit of Museum policies and procedures as detailed in the Volunteer Policy, including Health and Safety, Equal Opportunities and Confidentiality
- Attend the Museum as agreed with staff, and when this is not possible provide as much notice as possible so that alternative arrangements can be made.

This agreement is not intended to be a legally binding contract between the Museums and its volunteers, and may be cancelled at any time at the discretion of either party. Neither of us intends any employment relationship to be created either now or at any time in the future.

About Regular Supporters and Work Experience Volunteers

We have a number of role summaries for those wishing to volunteer on a regular basis, or to give their time over a shorter period, including:

- Room guiding during our temporary exhibitions at Leighton House and during Open Access hours at 18 Stafford Terrace
- Administration and research
- Conservation support
- Helping out at events and following tours
- Supporting Museum educational activities

The roles are designed to meet the needs of the Museums as well as those of volunteers, so the nature and availability of roles will vary.

Hours of involvement

We structure volunteers' hours of involvement to meet the Museum's needs and the availability of volunteers. Leighton House Museum's opening hours are 10.00 am to 5.30 pm (closed Tuesdays). 18 Stafford Terrace is open on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays and volunteers are usually needed at Stafford Terrace during Open Access hours, 2-5.30pm.

Induction and Training

We are committed to offering volunteers the best possible introduction to the Museums and how they work. All volunteers will receive a general induction to the Museums and any necessary role-related training to help them perform their tasks. All training will be arranged at mutually convenient times.

Payment of volunteer expenses

We offer to reimburse volunteers for previously agreed and receipted out-of-pocket travel expenses to and from the Museums to a maximum of £6 per day. Please ask the Volunteer Coordinator (Tracey Lazarus) or House Manager (Sally Dobinson). Claims should ideally be made weekly and will be reimbursed in cash only on the production of receipts. The Museums are unable to pay other volunteering expenses.

Promoting equality and respecting diversity

The Council strives to promote fair and equal access to services and equal opportunities in employment and volunteering. It seeks to recognise and value the differences in the people we serve, employ and involve as volunteers. These differences include age, disability, faith or religious belief, gender, race and sexual orientation. The Museums aim to ensure that all staff and volunteers are treated fairly and strives for a working environment free from discrimination and harassment.

The Museums will strive to meet this commitment to equal opportunities by always trying to involve volunteers from a wide range of backgrounds and through regular monitoring and review. The Museums expect volunteers not to discriminate in the way they treat users of our services, staff or other volunteers.



There is no upper age limit for volunteers; however, the Council's Personal Accident Insurance cover for volunteers is limited by age from 18 up to 70 years. We ask that all prospective volunteers tell us if they have any health issues which may affect their volunteering. We will do our best to accommodate volunteers where this does not present a risk to the volunteer, staff or the public.

Recruitment of Volunteers

Voluntary positions are advertised on our website, through our local Volunteer Centre, on the Team London website and other channels as appropriate.

We recruit volunteers to specific and available roles in the Museums, and always in accordance with our equal opportunities policy. Volunteering positions will only be offered to those who apply through the official procedures outlined below, and where there is a good match for the Museums and the volunteer. It is important that volunteers recognise that there is a formal selection process. Volunteering will only be successful when volunteering is mutually beneficial. If volunteering with us isn't right for a volunteer we can try and suggest alternative options.

The recruitment process begins with the completion of a Registration of Interest Form. Prospective volunteers will then be invited to an informal interview and / or a taster session so we can find out more about each other. If a position is offered, volunteers will only be appointed following the completion of a successful induction.

References and proof of identity

It is our policy to ask for two references from all our volunteers. We will also ask you to provide photographic proof of identity (e.g. passport, driving licence, college card), and proof of address (e.g. a recent utility bill, driving licence, letter from the bank).

Volunteering on benefits

People are allowed to volunteer while claiming state benefits, including means-tested benefits such as Job Seekers' Allowance, Incapacity Benefit and Income Support. However, there are some guidelines and rules which claimants need to be aware of. Some of these rules are general and others relate specifically to a certain type of benefit. Volunteering England and the Volunteering Centre can provide further information.

The protection of children and vulnerable adults

A Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check is a process for gathering information about someone's criminal convictions and other cautions, reprimands and final warnings given by the Police. The DBS check is just one of the ways we try and ensure that children and vulnerable adults are protected. Volunteers will be introduced to our policy on the protection of children and vulnerable adults during induction training.

Currently, we ask only those prospective volunteers who have access to sensitive information and / or will be working closely and regularly with children or vulnerable adults to undergo a DBS check at an enhanced level. This usually applies to volunteers who want to be involved in education activities. Those wishing to volunteer in such roles are required under the provision of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974) Exemptions Order to declare all criminal convictions – current and spent. This information will automatically be disclosed as part of the DBS check, but it is useful to discuss any convictions in advance. There is no cost to the volunteer for a DBS check. A DBS check has no official expiry date; any information included will be accurate at the time the check was carried out. Therefore, if you have already had a DBS check, and use the DBS update service we can use that to carry out the check and make sure your certificate is up to date. It is up to us if we decide if and when a new check is needed.

DBS checks can take several months; however, it may be possible for some volunteers to work under supervision while waiting for clearance.

We will not discriminate against any existing or future potential volunteer who has a criminal record – current or spent. The intention of a Disclosure sought through the DBS is not to cause the rejection of individuals with a criminal record or a record of other past misdemeanours. We are aware that almost a quarter of men and a similar number of women have a criminal record. We will conduct an individual risk-assessment where an area of potential risk is highlighted on a Disclosure based on:

- The nature and seriousness of the problem disclosed, and its relevance to the duties of volunteers and the safety of all
- How long ago the problem disclosed took place
- Whether there is a pattern of offending behaviour and the extent to which the person in question has been reformed and rehabilitated in the intervening period

We will comply with the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act which protects the right of ex-offenders not to disclose a spent conviction unless it is listed in The Exceptions Order to the Act which relates only to those wishing to work or volunteer with children or vulnerable adults.

All information disclosed by the DBS is sensitive, personal information and will be stored safely in lockable, non-portable storage containers with restricted access. Disclosure information will only be used for the purpose of the protection of children and vulnerable adults and for which the individual's full consent has been given.

Once a recruitment (or retention) decision has been made a disclosure will not be kept for longer than absolutely necessary.

The following legislation applies:

- A person who is barred from working with children or vulnerable adults will be breaking the law if they work or volunteer, or try to work or volunteer with those groups
- An organisation which knowingly employs someone who is barred to work with those groups will also be breaking the law
- If an organisation works with children or vulnerable adults and dismisses a member of staff or a volunteer because they have harmed a child or vulnerable adult, or would have done so if they had not left, it must tell the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

Support during volunteering

Volunteers are the management responsibility of the member of staff with whom they are placed. We aim to ensure that all volunteers enjoy their time with us and that the experience is as productive as possible for both parties, and we are always open to feedback from volunteers. During the course of your volunteering there will be a range of opportunities for volunteers and staff to exchange constructive feedback on the volunteering experience, including one-to-one sessions.

Keeping in touch

We aim to keep everyone informed about the activities of the Museum and you will be sent via e-mail, updates about events and possible volunteering opportunities.

Facilities

Volunteers can use the Volunteer Room for tea/coffee breaks and lunch. The closest tube stations are High Street Kensington, Olympia or Holland Park, and bus routes 9, 10, 27, 28, 49, 328 are close by. There is only limited pay-and-display parking on the streets surrounding the museum. Disabled badge holders are able to park on the street near the Museum.

Dress code

There is no uniform for volunteers; however, volunteers working with the public or in front-of-house areas are required to dress smartly.

Code of Conduct

We expect all employees and volunteers to conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times, acting honestly, courteously, and without prejudice. Volunteers are representatives of the Museums and should perform their tasks in line with our policies.

Problem Solving Procedures

Whilst it is important to have procedures in place to help solve any problems that arise, the involvement of volunteers in the Museums is usually of an excellent quality, and is a feature of which we are proud.

The member of staff supervising a volunteer's work will deal with any day-to-day issues that may arise as part of a volunteer's ongoing support. He or she will also aim to take every reasonable step to resolve any other problems that arise during the course of volunteering as quickly and as amicably as possible. It is hoped that an informal discussion will be sufficient to deal with most situations; however, the following procedures should be followed where a formal complaint is made – either by the volunteer or about the volunteer.

In all cases volunteers can be accompanied at meetings on these issues by a volunteer, member of staff or friend. All matters relating to complaints by or about volunteers will be treated as confidential.

Dealing with complaints by volunteers

If a volunteer has a complaint he or she should raise the matter formally with his or her supervisor who will discuss the matter with them. Should the volunteer wish to take the matter further, the complaint will be discussed with the Senior Curator (Daniel Robbins). If the complaint relates to the Senior Curator, the complaint may be discussed with the Head of Culture. The matter will be dealt with within 14 days. The Head of Culture's decision will be final.

Dealing with complaints about volunteers

If a member of staff, the visiting public, or a volunteer makes a complaint against a volunteer, that volunteer will be informed immediately and involved in initial discussions about the alleged incident, which will be investigated by the member of staff responsible for the volunteer. The volunteer will be able to respond to the complaint and the matter will be dealt with within 14 days. Depending on the nature of the complaint, there may be all sorts of ways in which the issue can be resolved. If the complaint against the volunteer cannot be resolved, that person will not be able to continue to volunteer. Volunteers can appeal decisions to the Senior Curator, and will receive a response within 14 days. The Senior Curator's decision will be final.

If a volunteer is believed to have behaved in a manner that constitutes gross misconduct, e.g. theft, assault, act of violence, malicious damage, deliberate falsification of documents, harassment or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol, their volunteering will be discontinued immediately while the matter is investigated by the member of staff supervising the volunteer. The volunteer will be able to put their case, and the matter will be dealt with within 14 days. If the complaint against the volunteer is upheld they will not be able to volunteer in the future. Volunteers can appeal decisions to the Senior Curator, and will receive a response within 14 days. The Senior Curator's decision will be final.

Voluntary ending of service

In the majority of cases volunteering is brought to an end at an agreed time. A short exit interview may be held to enable the Museums to learn what was enjoyable about the volunteering experience and what could be improved. If possible, when volunteers decide to move on, we would appreciate as much notice as possible to allow time to conduct the exit interview and find a replacement volunteer.

Confidentiality

Volunteers are required to treat as confidential any information they come into contact with whilst volunteering that relates to the Museums, its staff, volunteers, donors, partner organisations, policies and practices and any other information to which a duty of confidentiality applies.

Personal details and Data Protection

We need to ask for some personal details from our volunteers. This is so that we can contact volunteers or next of kin in emergencies and for providing references if required and appropriate. We take our responsibility for looking after this information seriously. We will respect the privacy of volunteers, and have notified (registered with) the Information Commissioner, who is responsible for the Data Protection Act 1998. We will follow the Data Protection Act at all times when asking for or handling personal information. We only ask for information that we need, we keep the information securely, limit access to it, and will not pass personal details on without consent unless legally entitled to. Sometimes we may ask for data that the law considers particularly sensitive, e.g. health information. This is to ensure we can take account of the Health and Safety of volunteers. We will always ask for explicit consent before taking or using this information. Volunteers should inform their supervisor of any changes in personal information.

Copyright

All written material, whether held on paper, electronically which was made or acquired by a volunteer during the course of volunteering with us, is the property and copyright of the Museums. We may therefore ask volunteers working on specific projects to transfer copyright to the Museums.

Insurance

The Council has Public Liability Insurance which covers volunteers in the event of an accident they have while undertaking their duties as volunteers for the Council in the Museums, or any injuries they might accidentally inflict upon staff or visitors whilst volunteering in the Museums assuming such injuries / claims arise due to negligence on the part of the Council / volunteer.

Schools placing students on voluntary work placements may require Employer's Liability Insurance as part of their contract terms, and these should be checked with the Council's Risk and Insurance Manager before any placement commences.

Security

All volunteers are required to comply with our security procedures helping to ensure the general security of the Museum buildings, property and work environment.

Training will be provided during induction.

Health and Safety

We will do all in our power to ensure your well-being and safety while volunteering. If you become aware of any potential hazard or unsafe working conditions, you should have no hesitation in raising with them with your supervisor. You should take all reasonable steps to safeguard your health and safety, and that of any other person who may be affected by your actions, and to observe at all times published safety and fire rules and procedures. These procedures are covered during induction.

All accidents, no matter how slight, must be reported and entered into the Accident Register.

The Museum supplies safety clothing and equipment wherever necessary. Where such clothing and/ or equipment is provided it must be worn or used in the appropriate manner.

I confirm that I have read, understood and agree with this Volunteering Policy.

Name _____ **Date** _____