



London Borough of Hounslow Swimming Club

VOLUNTEERING POLICY

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1. Introduction

London Borough of Hounslow Swimming Club (LBHSC) exists to involve more people more effectively in volunteering to help solve real problems and enrich communities.

It does this by:

- Working with volunteer involving organisations to improve the diversity and quality of volunteer placements.
- Providing potential volunteers with the means to access volunteering opportunities.
- Helping people who might otherwise have found themselves excluded to take part in their communities.

London Borough of Hounslow Swimming Club is committed to involving volunteers directly within the organisation to:

- Contribute to the delivery of our services
- Form our board of management
- Make sure we are responsive to the needs of our users
- Provide different skills and perspectives
- Offer opportunities for participation by people who might otherwise be excluded.

This volunteer policy sets out the principles and practice by which we involve volunteers. The Swim England volunteer handbook and volunteer managers' handbook gives further details about the support and procedures in place for volunteers.

2. Principles

London Borough of Hounslow Swimming Club:

- Recognises that voluntary work brings benefits to volunteers themselves, to service users and to paid staff.
- Will ensure that volunteers are properly integrated into the organisational structure and that mechanisms are in place for them to contribute to the organisation's work.
- Will not introduce volunteers to replace paid staff.
- Expects that staff at all levels will work positively with volunteers and, where appropriate, will actively seek to involve them in their work.
- Recognises that volunteers require satisfying work and personal development and will seek to help volunteers meet these needs, as well as providing the training for them to do their work effectively.
- Will endeavour to identify and cover the costs of involving volunteers.
- Recognises that the management of volunteers requires designated responsibilities within specific posts.
- Will endeavour to involve volunteers from a wide range of backgrounds and abilities and ensure our volunteering opportunities are as accessible as possible.

- Will endeavour to set examples of good practice in volunteering to other organisations in London Borough of Hounslow Swimming Club.

Recruitment

Recruitment of volunteers will generally be from all sections of the community, and will be in line with London Borough of Hounslow Swimming Club Equal Opportunities Policy. Positive action in recruitment may be used where appropriate.

A potential volunteer will be asked to complete a registration form (help will be given if necessary). All potential volunteers will be invited for an informal talk with the appropriate contact person within ten working days. If the opportunity is suitable a trial period will be agreed with the volunteer. A clear role description outlining the tasks to be undertaken and skills required will be given to the potential volunteer.

Where it is reasonable to do so we will be flexible with the tasks within role descriptions – e.g. where some tasks may be difficult for a person with anxiety, or to better fit the motivations of the individual.

Where applicants are not placed in the role applied for, they will be provided with verbal feedback (or written explanation if requested) and given the opportunity to discuss alternative volunteering roles either within London Borough of Hounslow Swimming Club or other volunteer involving organisations.

3. Trial Period

There will be a trial period of four weeks to give the organisation and the volunteer time to discover if they are suited to each other. Progress will be reviewed during the trial period and also at the end, when the volunteer will either be referred back to London Borough of Hounslow Swimming Club for support and guidance if they are not suited to the role, or formally accepted for volunteering by London Borough of Hounslow Swimming Club.

4. Volunteer Role Descriptions and Handbook

Volunteers will receive a role description and handbook containing full information about the organisation and their chosen area of volunteering and a clear idea of their responsibilities and the organisation's responsibilities to them.

5. Induction and Training

Volunteers will receive a full induction which will include:

- 1) An introduction to other volunteers and staff members
- 2) A tour of the Leisure Centre with particular attention to the location of exits and the assembly point
- 3) A copy of the Swim England Volunteer Handbook with copies of LBHSC policies in respect of Health and Safety, Equal Opportunities, Confidentiality, Boundaries and Safeguarding
- 4) Expenses Form and verbal instruction as to its completion

- 5) Health and Safety procedures including verbal instruction regarding the Fire Evacuation Procedure
- 6) Housekeeping e.g. use of BVSC kitchen, location of toilets

6. Support

Each volunteer will have a named supervisor. The supervisor is responsible for training and supervising the volunteer, as well as giving feedback and answering queries. They will also plan work for the volunteer.

Volunteers and supervisors will agree on appropriate arrangements for catch-up sessions. This will vary according to the nature of the role and how often the volunteer comes in. We recommend that each project that involves volunteer holds volunteer meetings at least every quarter to allow volunteers the opportunity to speak with staff and other volunteers, as well as to raise any queries or concerns.

7. The Volunteer's Voice

Volunteers will be regularly kept up-to-date with activities in our organisation and will be consulted in decisions which affect them.

Volunteers will be given the opportunity to share their views and opinions of their experiences of volunteering with us. We will also recognise their contribution through social media, during Volunteers' Week and through the use of certificates, newsletters and by saying thank you.

8. Records

Minimum details will be kept on volunteers. This will include the registration form, placement details, crisis contact, correspondence and any other relevant information in accordance with London Borough of Hounslow Swimming Club Data Protection Policy.

9. Confidentiality

All volunteers are bound by the same requirements for confidentiality as staff, as laid down in any London Borough of Hounslow Swimming Club policy or by verbal instruction from their supervisor. Volunteers who will have access to confidential information will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement. Breach of confidentiality is taken very seriously and may result in us asking the volunteer to leave.

We are bound by GDPR to ensure that we treat volunteer information with respect. Only staff who need to see information for purposes related to volunteer involvement will be able to access it. We will not pass information on without permission.

10. Expenses

London Borough of Hounslow Swimming Club will ensure that there is a clear and accessible system to enable volunteers to claim out of pocket expenses. London Borough of Hounslow Swimming Club values its volunteers and is committed to ensuring there are no barriers to volunteer involvement. All agreed out-of-pocket expenses are reimbursed, including expenses for travel by the cheapest means of public transport, and reimbursement of meal costs, up to a maximum value, when volunteering over a meal period.

11. Insurance

Volunteers will be covered by insurance while carrying out agreed duties.

12. Health and Safety

London Borough of Hounslow Swimming Club appreciates that all staff and volunteers have the right to work and volunteer in a safe environment. Therefore, all staff and volunteers must carry out their duties in line with LBHSC Health and Safety Policy whilst engaged in their work/volunteering activity.

13. Equal Opportunities

All volunteers will be expected to have an understanding and commitment to equal opportunities and diversity and should therefore ensure that they have read London Borough of Hounslow Swimming Club Equal Opportunities Policy. Volunteers are expected to comply with this policy at all times. Volunteers may also request training in respect of diversity issues if they feel that would assist them in their volunteering role.

London Borough of Hounslow Swimming Club is not able to accept volunteers under the age of 18.

London Borough of Hounslow Swimming Club is based in premises which are fully accessible to people with disabilities and within the limits of the annual LBHSC budget will provide additional support and equipment as necessary for volunteers with a disability.

14. Problem Solving

The relationship between London Borough of Hounslow Swimming Club and its volunteers is entirely voluntary and does not imply any contract. However, LBHSC has a Volunteer Problem Solving Procedure to help deal with grievances that volunteers may have. In line with this procedure volunteers have the right to discuss any concerns they may have with their named contact at any time.

If the contact person is unable to resolve the problem they will refer the matter to the London Borough of Hounslow Swimming Club and ultimately the Chief Executive, with the permission of the volunteer.

London Borough of Hounslow Swimming Club has a procedure on how it will deal with any disciplinary issue regarding a volunteer.

15. When a Volunteer Leaves

When volunteers move on from their role at London Borough of Hounslow they will be asked to provide feedback on the volunteering experience by way of an exit questionnaire. They will also be given the opportunity to discuss their responses to the questionnaire more fully with the LBHSC Chairperson.

On the basis of their voluntary work, volunteers will have the right to request a reference. Volunteers will be supported to move on to other options.

16. Monitoring and Evaluation

London Borough of Hounslow Swimming Club will systematically monitor and evaluate its use of volunteers with reference to this Volunteer Policy.

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually.

Approved by London Borough of Hounslow Swimming Club Secretary: Agnes Czaczyk

Date: 1st June 2023. Annual Review 31st Dec 2024
