



## **EAST HERTS COUNCIL**

# **Volunteering Policy**

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## **Policy Statement**

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## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.0 This policy has been written to demonstrate BEAM's commitment to its volunteer programme and to individual volunteers. It ensures fairness and consistency in managing volunteers and helps volunteers know where they stand and how they can expect to be treated. The policy does not refer to the specific current volunteering role requirements to enable the scope of new volunteering opportunities to be included within this policy in the future.
- 1.1 A volunteer is a person who gives freely of his/her/their time, skills, and experience without expectation of financial reward. Volunteering can take many forms. Some tasks require skills whereas others require none. Volunteering may be for a limited time to complete a particular project or may be on an ongoing basis.
- 1.2 BEAM recognises the immense benefits that volunteers provide, and the bridges that they build between BEAM and the local community. In return BEAM hopes to give its volunteers an opportunity to exercise their skills in a different environment and to undertake new experiences.
- 1.3 BEAM tries to offer a range of volunteering opportunities and, in accordance with East Herts District Councils equal opportunities and diversity policies, to ensure that the opportunity to volunteer is widely available. The council aims to encourage all employees to maximise their attendance at work whilst recognising that employees will, from time to time, be unable to come to work for short and sometimes long periods of time.

## **2.0 The importance of volunteers to BEAM**

- 1.0 Volunteers are invaluable to BEAM as they enable us to deliver our programme of work that would not otherwise be possible. Working with volunteers provides an opportunity for

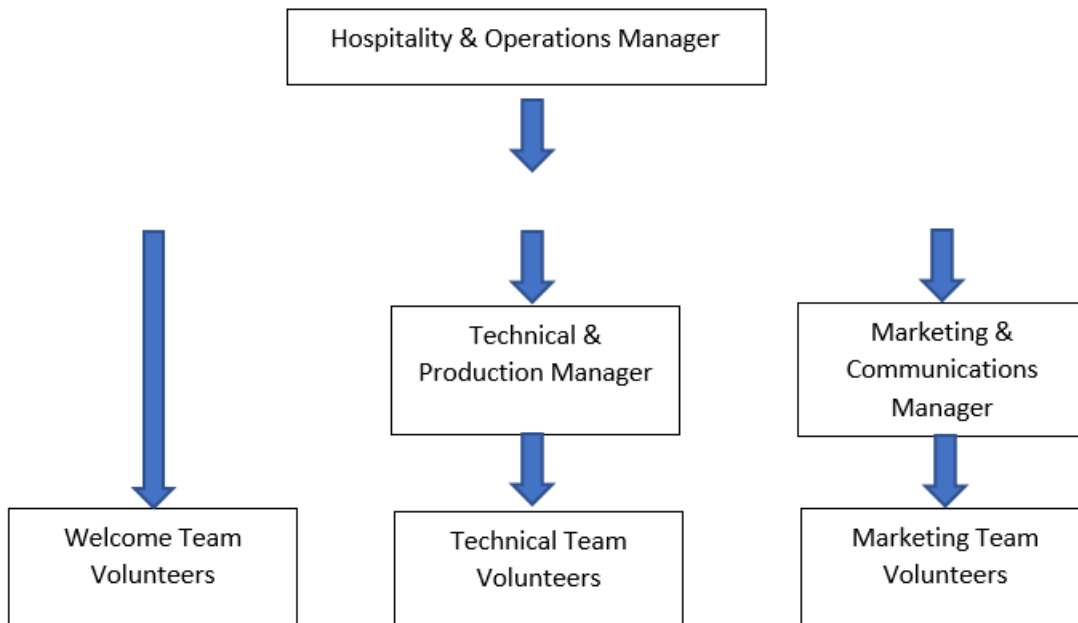
BEAM to engage on a deeper level with our visitors and community to provide a first-class experience for all.

- 1.1 BEAM welcomes the contribution made by volunteers and is committed to encouraging a diverse and inclusive volunteering programme where possible.
- 1.2 Volunteers will be managed by the Hospitality and Operations Manager, supported by the wider BEAM team.
- 1.3 Our Volunteering Values, are complementary values to help guide us and shape an engaging and appropriate volunteering experience.
  - **Inclusive** It is welcoming and accessible to all.
  - **Flexible** It takes into account how people who volunteer can give their time and fits around their circumstances.
  - **Impactful** It makes a positive difference.
  - **Connected** It gives people a sense of connection to others, a cause and/or an organisation.
  - **Balanced** It doesn't overburden those who volunteer with unnecessary processes and priorities.
  - **Enjoyable** It provides enjoyment and people feel good about what they are doing.
  - **Voluntary** It is the volunteer who has freely chosen to do it.
  - **Meaningful** It resonates with people's lives and interests.
- 1.4 This policy will be underpinned by guidance which will provide greater detail on different aspects of the volunteer journey and how we will work together to create an inclusive and appropriate volunteering experience.

### 3.0 Our Volunteering Programme

1.0 All volunteers fall under the management of the Hospitality and Operations Manager supported by department heads who will act as the volunteer key contact for their respective department. Department heads will be responsible for the overall experience for the volunteers which work within their teams.

1.1 Our volunteering community comprises of the following groups:



1.2 We will seek to develop and deliver volunteering opportunities for tasks to be undertaken in ways which will provide identifiable benefits and motivation for potential volunteers. Department Heads will also discuss individual volunteer requirements to ensure that volunteers feel adequately supported in their role throughout their time as a volunteer.

1.3 Department Heads are responsible for the day to day running of the volunteer activity and the volunteers within their teams. Department Heads are expected to have a good understanding of BEAM policy and practice and work with the Hospitality and Operations Manager to ensure these are followed.

1.4 The Hospitality and Operations Manager will be available to provide advice and guidance on the following areas:

- Role and Activity development
- Recruitment
- Selection
- Training
- Support and Supervision
- Dealing with concerns, issues, and problems

#### 1.5 Support for Department Heads

1.6 Department heads play a major role organising and leading teams of volunteers across the venue. We are committed to providing the necessary support to those volunteers in that role to ensure they can deliver that role safely.

1.7 All Department Heads will be provided with information and guidance about their role including a Job Description.

1.8 Department Heads will provide advice and guidance on the following areas:

- Volunteering role and activity delivery
- Recruiting and welcoming new volunteers into the team
- Dealing with concerns, issues and problems

1.9 The Hospitality and Operations Manager is available to provide support on the following areas:

- BEAM wide policy and practices
- Role of the Department Head in relation to managing volunteers
- Dealing with concerns, issues, and problems

## **4.0 The relationship between BEAM and our volunteers**

1.10 A volunteer is not an employee and will not have a contract of employment with BEAM. BEAM will agree a role, with the volunteer and there will be an expectation that the volunteer will meet the role's requirements and that BEAM will provide work for the volunteer. However, the volunteer is free to refuse to fulfil the role and BEAM is not bound to provide the work. BEAM and the volunteer will endeavour to give as much notice as possible if unable to meet these expectations, however

either party can terminate the agreement with or without notice at any time.

1.11 The relationship of a volunteer to BEAM is one bound by trust, mutual understanding and benefit; it is a 'gift' relationship, with time given freely and willingly, without expectation of financial reward by the volunteer. Neither we nor the volunteer regard the relationship as a contract of employment.

1.12 No enforceable obligation, contractual or otherwise, can be imposed on the volunteer to attend, give or be set a minimum amount of time or carry out the tasks provided. Likewise we cannot be compelled to provide regular work or benefit for any activity undertaken.

1.13 The relationship is based on the principle that volunteers add value to our work by performing a wide range of roles, and by contributing specialist skills and a flexible approach.

1.14 Although volunteers offer time freely and willingly and without binding obligation, there is a presumption of mutual support and reliability.

1.15 We will provide guidance on expectations.

1.16 BEAM will agree working practices and procedures for all volunteering activity, with Staff and Department Heads to ensure all requirements of the volunteer experience and journey are completed efficiently and effectively.

1.17 Volunteering agreement

1.18 The volunteer will be invited to enter into a volunteering agreement with the BEAM (East Herts District). This agreement will identify:

- the volunteer's role
- the training that the volunteer is expected to undertake
- the insurance cover that will be provided for the volunteer
- who will supervise the volunteer
- the notice that will be given to a volunteer if his/her role is to come to an end.

## **5.0 Dress Code**

1.19 Volunteers are requested to present themselves in a smart but casual manner. Branded volunteer t-shirts/polo shirts will be provided by the venue.

## **6.0 Principles for volunteer management**

1.20 This policy sets out the broad principles of volunteering at BEAM and forms the foundation for good-practice volunteer management across the organisation.

1.21 Fundamentally:

- We will always aim for fair and equal treatment for all volunteers.
- We aim to match volunteers with suitable projects so that we gain from the activities of the volunteers and the volunteers gain from working with us.
- Each volunteer will be appointed by the Hospitality and Operations Manager and Department Heads to guide and advise them in their tasks.
- We will provide clear, up to date Volunteer Job roles, so expectations are managed appropriately.
- We will provide and maintain necessary documents (including policies, procedures and handbooks) and training relevant to BEAM and the volunteer roles, so volunteers can be confident and impactful in their volunteering.
- We will include our volunteers in all relevant communications.
- In return we expect that volunteers will provide their time and help us to keep our venue, projects and activities on track.

1.22 This policy is relevant for all current and potential volunteers, as well as every department head involved with selecting, supporting, developing volunteers, managing volunteer projects or promoting voluntary activity within BEAM.



## **7.0 Recruitment of Volunteers**

- 1.23 All volunteering roles within BEAM will have a written Job Description - a clear, complete and current description of duties and responsibility of the role that they are expected to fill. Prior to any volunteer assignment or recruitment effort, a Job Description must be developed. This will be used as part of our recruitment process. Job Descriptions should be reviewed each time recruitment takes place and updated at least every two years or whenever the work involved in the role changes substantially.
- 1.24 All Job Descriptions shall include a description of the purpose and duties for the role, a designated department head, volunteering location, hours and timing for the volunteering, and a list of required skills and experience.
- 1.25 Opportunities to join the team as a volunteer will be advertised through BEAMS website, social media and in the venue.

## **8.0 Selection of volunteers**

- 1.26 We have a fair and consistent process for selecting volunteers that is relevant and appropriate to each role.
- 1.27 Our volunteering recruitment communications will use language that is accessible and easily understood, using various formats and messages to attract a diverse range of applicants.
- 1.28 We will select volunteers according to the venues needs (detailed in Job Descriptions) and aim to match volunteers' skills, knowledge, experience, motivation and availability to suitable projects and activities.

- 1.29 Anyone being considered for a volunteer role will be invited for an informal interview with the Hospitality and Operations Manager or Department Head, who will explore their skills, experience, interests and suitability, as well as their motivation, with the aim of setting up teams that are best suited for the role.
- 1.30 Reasonable adjustments may be made to the selection methods to suit the access requirements of applicants with disabilities.

## **9.0 Equal opportunities and diversity**

- 1.31 BEAM recognises the importance of encouraging diversity and achieving equality among volunteers, as well as employees and audiences. Volunteers are actively encouraged from a wide cross-section of backgrounds and experiences to help ensure that BEAM's various volunteering opportunities are accessible to an increasingly diverse range of people.
- 1.32 BEAM values and respects the individual by providing equality of opportunity to all for active involvement subject to the scope of the organisation's needs and resources.
- 1.33 All staff, volunteers, contractors and partner organisations are expected to actively support BEAM's commitment to diversity and equality.
- 1.34 Acceptance of volunteer assistance for a particular role will be made on merit, the sole selection criterion being an individual's suitability to carry out the specified task(s) subject to the needs and restrictions of the location, along with their availability in line with the needs of the volunteering opportunity.
- 1.35 Reasonable adjustments will be considered for a volunteer with a disability in accordance with BEAM's Equal Opportunities Policy.
- 1.36 Volunteers are required to be over 18 years of age.

BEAM has no upper age limit for volunteers, recognising the contribution made by older volunteers in terms of valuable knowledge and experience. However, BEAM would be irresponsible if it permitted volunteers to continue beyond a point where volunteering is detrimental to their own or other people's health and safety.

## **10.0 Basic Requirements to join as a volunteer**

1.37 All volunteers need to:

- Show us identity documents (ideally photographic) to confirm their identity.
- Provide us with their full contact details.
- Provide us with emergency contact details.
- Inform us about any access, support or health needs.
- Agree to our Volunteer Agreement and relevant policies and practices.

1.38 Volunteers will be expected to undertake a venue induction on site at BEAM which includes:

- An introduction to BEAM
- Our values, mission and strategy
- Key Security and Health and Safety requirements
- Venue Orientation

1.39 Volunteers will need to complete the following core training:

- Relevant Health and Safety
- Security
- Safeguarding
- Role Specific e.g. handheld payment and ticket scanning devices

## **11.0 References**

1.40 Volunteers are required to provide us with two personal references. References will be taken up after interview via email.

## **12.0 New starters**

- 1.41 No new volunteers will be allowed to take up their role until the relevant vetting checks have been completed. These would have been detailed in the Job Description.

## **13.0 Induction, training and development**

- 1.42 New volunteers will be made to feel welcome and will be provided with an informal induction. As part of their induction to BEAM, volunteers will receive a copy of the volunteer handbook, containing essential information for all volunteers, together with material relevant to the specific role.
- 1.43 Volunteers will be asked to attend training and undertake annual refresher training to meet relevant needs and any other training activities relevant to their specific volunteering activity. Training will be provided face to face and in some cases online.

## **14.0 Support and supervision for volunteers**

- 1.44 BEAM respects volunteers by both listening to and learning from what they have to say, supporting a two-way dialogue between staff and volunteers.
- 1.45 Department Heads are encouraged to discuss progress with their volunteers on a regular basis. This provides an opportunity to monitor their contribution, establish whether the volunteer would like to change their current contribution, and ensure that they feel valued and satisfied with their volunteering.
- 1.46 Volunteers are free to end their involvement at any time. Wherever possible, an end date should be agreed between volunteer and Hospitality and Operations Manager /Department head. Exit interviews may be conducted to find out why a

volunteer is leaving, share any learning points and establish whether the volunteer may want to be involved again in the future.

## **15.0 Health and safety**

1.47 We are committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of our volunteers. We want to make sure that volunteers are aware of and understand the health and safety risks associated with their role. We aim to provide volunteers with the appropriate information, instruction, supervision and training required to provide a safe environment while volunteering at BEAM.

1.48 Volunteers should at all times follow BEAM's (East Herts District Councils) health and safety policies and procedures. Volunteers have a duty to take care of themselves and others who might be affected by their actions. Volunteers should not act outside their authorised area or work. Volunteers should report all accidents to their volunteer coordinator.

## **16.0 Recognition and Benefits**

1.49 BEAM is committed to recognising the contribution our extensive volunteer community make to the venue and will develop a recognition and benefit offering to reflect their contribution.

## **17.0 Insurance**

1.50 All volunteers engaged in BEAM's activities are indemnified under East Herts District Councils public liability insurance.

1.51 We will ensure that volunteers are covered for insurance purposes in respect of personal injury. The insurance will not cover unauthorised actions or actions outside the volunteering agreement and role guidance.

## 18.0 Confidentiality and data

1.52 Volunteers are likely to become aware of confidential information about the BEAM, East Herts District Council, its staff, customers and suppliers. Volunteers should not disclose this information or use it for their own or another's benefit without the consent of the party concerned. This does not prevent disclosure once the information is in the public domain (unless it has been made public as a result of the volunteer's breach of confidentiality) or where the law permits or requires disclosure.

~~Volunteers will be advised of the need for confidentiality and are required to sign a confidentiality agreement.~~

1.53 Personal information recorded about volunteers will be stored electronically by the HR team and maintained with appropriate safeguards for confidentiality.

## 19.0 Resolving problems

1.54 BEAM aims to treat all volunteers fairly, objectively and consistently. The Hospitality and Operations Manager and Department Heads are responsible for handling any problems regarding volunteer conduct. ~~or complaints together and BEAM actively supports Staff by providing relevant training. They will seek to ensure that volunteers' views are heard, noted and acted upon promptly and will aim for positive and amicable solutions.~~

### **Leaving volunteers**

~~Whether a volunteer chooses to leave their volunteering or is asked to leave, BEAM will have appropriate procedures in place to ensure a volunteer's departure is handled with care.~~

## 20.0 BEAM Policies

19.1 The following BEAM policies are applicable to volunteers:

- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Volunteering Policy
- GDPR & Data Protection Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

19.2 There may be additional policies which apply to specific roles and these will be identified by the Staff Lead and included in any written guidance, induction and training delivered.