

DYFED ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST
VOLUNTEERING POLICY



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DYFED ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST ('DAT')

VOLUNTEERING POLICY

Commitment

DAT is committed to ensuring that opportunities exist for public involvement in archaeology and recognises the valuable contribution that volunteers make.

DAT recognises the right that people have to participate in the life of their communities through volunteering. DAT also acknowledges that volunteers contribute in many ways, that their contribution is unique and that volunteering can benefit users of services, staff, local communities and the volunteers themselves. DAT values the contribution made by volunteers and is committed to involving volunteers in appropriate positions and in ways which are encouraging, supportive and which develop volunteering. DAT recognises its responsibility to arrange its volunteering efficiently and sensitively so that the valuable gift of the volunteer's time is best used to the mutual advantage of all concerned.

Definition

Volunteering is an important expression of citizenship as well as an important component of democracy. Volunteers are people who, unpaid and of their own free will, contribute their time, energy and skills to benefit the community.

Statement of values and principles

Volunteering is a legitimate and crucial activity that is supported and encouraged by DAT and is not intended to be a substitute for paid employment. The role of volunteers complements but does not replace the role of paid staff.

As a Registered Organisation of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA), DAT will ensure that the use of volunteers is in line with the CIfA's Code of Conduct and published standards for archaeological work. The Code of Conduct states:

CIfA wishes to encourage the participation of as many people as possible in archaeology and recognises the need to give students practical experience in fieldwork. However, this cannot be done at the expense of professional standards or risk to the limited archaeological resource.

Appropriate steps will be taken to ensure that paid members of staff are informed about the role of volunteers, and to foster good working relationships between paid staff and volunteers.

The volunteer role is a gift relationship, binding only in honour, trust and mutual understanding. No enforceable obligation, contractual or otherwise, can be imposed on volunteers to attend, give or be set a minimum amount of time to carry out the tasks involved in their voluntary activity. The corollary is that the organisation cannot be compelled to provide either regular work or payment or other benefit for any activity undertaken by the volunteer.

Although volunteers offer time freely and willingly without binding obligation, there is a presumption of mutual support and reliability. Reciprocal expectations are acknowledged – both of what the organisation expects of volunteers and what volunteers expect of the organisation.

The use of volunteers in commercial archaeological work

Where the opportunity arises, and with the agreement of the site owner, developer and curator, volunteers and/or students may be allowed to participate in commercial archaeological work. DAT will not bid for commercial work if there is the intention that staff used will not be paid a proper wage or be inappropriately contracted. DAT will not use volunteers and students in place of employed staff when funding is agreed for the latter.

On every occasion when volunteers or students are to be used, and especially when competitive tenders are sought, the full extent of the activities of such persons will be declared and included in the submitted project proposals. The implications for finance, timescale, insurance and competence will be fully explained.

All archaeological work will be adequately supervised to ensure that professional standards are met. The relevant curators will monitor and control archaeological work to ensure that professional standards are maintained.

Volunteer Co-ordination

DAT's Community Archaeologists have overall responsibility for the development of voluntary activities. All volunteers will have a nominated member of staff or volunteer to offer guidance and advice to help the volunteer carry out tasks effectively. Volunteers will be informed of who to contact to receive support and supervision.

Recruitment and Selection

DAT is committed to equal opportunities and believes that volunteering should be open to all and that no-one should receive less favourable treatment because of their race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, disability, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership or age. The acceptance of volunteer assistance for a particular role is made on merit, the sole selection criterion being the individual's suitability to carry out agreed tasks.

DAT does not set an upper age limit for volunteering because the potential contribution made by all volunteers is recognised. However, some volunteering opportunities require a degree of physical fitness and it would be irresponsible for DAT to permit volunteers to continue beyond a point where they could endanger their health and/or the safety of others. DAT does not set a minimum age limit for volunteering, but would normally expect a volunteer under 16 to be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

Having a criminal conviction does not necessarily prevent someone from volunteering with DAT, but it will be taken into consideration when assessing an individual's suitability and the roles they might play.

Volunteering opportunities will be widely promoted in ways that make them accessible to all members of the community.

Volunteers who are considered unsuitable for a particular task will either be offered alternative voluntary involvement with DAT or referred to the nearest Volunteer Centre.

New volunteers will be properly inducted into the organisation. Volunteers will be briefed about the activities to be undertaken and given all the necessary information to enable them to perform with confidence.

DAT welcomes volunteering by its trustees to whom, however, the criteria in this Policy (where relevant) will apply equally.

Induction, Training and Personal Development

Volunteers will be asked to fill in a Volunteer Registration Form before they start, and will be given a short induction, which includes health and safety guidance. For an excavation or other fieldwork project a briefing on the project's health and safety risk assessment will be provided.

All volunteers will be made aware of, and have access to, all the organisation's relevant policies and documents, including those relating to health & safety, child protection, vulnerable adults, equal opportunities and volunteer job descriptions.

DAT recognises that volunteers require satisfying work and to be prepared appropriately, including support and training. Some volunteers may want to develop new skills to help DAT, or to take on new roles, or greater involvement. DAT will use its best endeavours to meet such aspirations.

Training in the management of volunteers will be provided for those staff with direct responsibility for volunteers.

Support, Supervision and Recognition

Volunteers will have a named person to whom they can take their volunteering concerns and seek guidance and support. Volunteers will have access to regular support and supervision. This will enable both the volunteer and the supervisor to identify, monitor and evaluate the volunteer's involvement, recognise achievements and identify individual training needs, including that relevant to their particular volunteering role and to their wider personal development.

Volunteers will be given the opportunity, where relevant, to share their views and opinions with the organisation's wider staff, at staff meetings etc.

DAT will give recognition of the contribution of volunteers (for example in internal reports, articles in newspapers and newsletters, thank you letters etc.).

Expenses

DAT recognises that the reimbursement of expenses incurred in travelling to and from the place of volunteering, or in the course of volunteering, is important from an equal opportunities point of view. This is necessary to ensure that all individuals have access to voluntary opportunities. Where it is costed into the project, volunteers will be reimbursed for reasonable out-of-pocket expenses at rates agreed by the trustees, and reviewed periodically.

Insurance

DAT's liability insurance policies cover the activities of volunteers and liability towards them. DAT does not insure the volunteer's personal possessions against loss or damage

Information Protection

DAT is committed to safeguarding personal information in accordance with current data protection legislation.

Welsh Language

Although DAT has a Welsh language policy the organisation's working language is English. Every effort will, however, be made to ensure that volunteers are able to communicate in Welsh. However, as not all DAT members of staff are Welsh speakers English may on occasion be the only choice of spoken language.

Dealing with Problems and Concerns

DAT aims to treat all volunteers fairly, objectively and consistently and will seek to ensure that volunteers' concerns are heard, noted and acted upon promptly with the aim of achieving a positive and amicable solution.

The volunteer's supervisor is responsible for handling problems regarding volunteer complaints or concerns. If their supervisor is unable to deal with the problem, then the relevant head of department should be informed. If an informal resolution proves impossible then the DAT's positive work environment policy and grievance procedure will apply.

Rights and Responsibilities

DAT will:

- Provide volunteers with a description of their role
- Provide them with an induction and training to enable them to carry out their tasks
- Provide a safe working environment
- Provide them with a supervisor who will guide and support them in their role
- Explain the standards that DAT expects and encourage them to maintain them
- Try and resolve fairly any problems or difficulties they may have while volunteering
- Welcome feedback so that DAT can improve what it does

DAT expects volunteers to:

- Respect the DAT's standards and values
- Perform their volunteering role to the best of their ability
- Work safely for their own sake and others
- Maintain good relations with other volunteers, staff and others
- Adhere to policies and procedures brought to their attention
- Provide reasonable notice if they are not able to attend

Relevant DAT Policies and Documents

Employee Handbook

Working with Young People Policy

Child Protection Policy

Vulnerable Adults Policy

Diversity Policy

Health and Safety Policy and supporting documents

Welsh Language Policy

Recruitment of Ex-offenders Policy

Personal Data Protection Policy