

The Ancient Technology Centre Volunteer Policy 2014

1. Introduction

The purpose of this document is to outline the relationship between Dorset County Council and its volunteers.

Volunteering creates an opportunity for individuals to contribute to their local community, to be valued and recognised for their efforts and to learn new skills. Volunteers have a vital part to play in fostering a sense of local pride and involvement. In return, using volunteers enables the County Council to take advantage of the local knowledge and enthusiasm volunteers have for their community whilst continuing to provide and enhance services to local people.

2. The Aims of this document

This document provides a basic framework for the activities and expectations of both the Ancient Technology Centre and its volunteers to help ensure the relationship is positive for both parties. Like all guidelines, its overall aim is to ensure uniformity of process and good practice.

Further information can be found on the Dorset for You website at <http://www.dorsetforyou.com>

3. Vision and Aims of The Ancient Technology Centre

The Ancient Technology Centre’s vision is to provide outstanding educational experiences to children of all ages, create a focus for archaeological experimentation and develop the site as a lively “Open Air Museum” for the general public.

In order to deliver this vision, the ATC will:

- Develop and maintain a program of archaeologically accurate building projects.
- Innovate new educational activities that genuinely contribute to the development of the site and its buildings.
- Develop a core of well trained and knowledgeable volunteers to support the ATC’s vision.
- Ensure safe working practice in all aspects of our work.
- Work towards the launch of the ATC as an Open Air Museum in the coming years.

4. The relationship between volunteers and The Ancient Technology Centre

Working in partnership with volunteers enables ATC to make services and resources accessible and available to users in ways which could not be achieved without their support. Volunteers add value to the ATC by improving the range of experiences we can offer to our visitors while injecting local knowledge, enthusiasm and specific skills into the centre. Volunteers carry out much of the specialist authentic maintenance on site and have been responsible for many construction tasks that would otherwise not have happened. ATC Volunteers should complement the paid workforce but are not a substitute for employees and should not be asked to undertake work which would otherwise be paid (by covering sickness absence or staff vacancies for example).

The work of volunteers should focus on activities which enhance the services that are provided at the ATC to schools and the public.

5. Recruitment and selection of volunteers

This document is based on the DCC Policy “**Recruiting and Managing Volunteers**”. **Corporate Guidance, June 2012**

The ATC aims to recruit volunteers from all sections of the local community and with a range of skills, life experiences and knowledge. We welcome volunteers of all ages. Before determining that particular activities can be performed by volunteers, the activity should be subject to an appropriate level of risk assessment this will be maintained in a “Risk Assessment” folder held within the volunteer hut and should be consulted before undertaking unfamiliar tasks. A pro forma sheet will also be held in this folder for the addition of new tasks and must be filled out by the ATC volunteer coordinator responsible for that day’s work. It is essential that unfamiliar, unique or un-risk assessed activities are properly assessed before they are undertaken – an appropriate system for this will be contained in the volunteer induction process.

All prospective volunteers should be asked to:

1. Complete an expression of interest form – this will usually be via the volunteer application form on the ATC website which is linked to the ATC Facebook page. Informal enquiries on open days and site visits should be directed to the online application form to ensure a correct and traceable procedure is followed.
2. Visit the site on a volunteer day to talk to existing volunteers and get a realistic impression of what a volunteer role involves.
3. Read, agree the contents of this policy and sign it to confirm they’ve done so. A copy will be held in the volunteer hut with a signing sheet.
4. Complete a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check, if required (this will only be required for volunteers who express a desire to work with school groups regularly).
5. Complete a ‘Driver Risk Assessment Form - Volunteer Drivers’, if the role involves ‘on the job’ driving. This will only be required for frequent volunteers who may supervise day to day volunteer groups of site (for example winter coppicing).
6. Confirm acceptance by the ATC and agree a start date after the site visit.

The relevant Manager and volunteer liaison should assess the initial expression of interest form.

6. Training, induction, support and performance

All volunteers will be required to disclose criminal convictions, including spent convictions. This will not automatically disqualify an application. A CRB check is a standard requirement for all volunteers working directly with children and vulnerable people.

Providing appropriate induction and training will help equip the volunteer with the tools they’ll need to champion the ATC and County Council and deliver a high quality service.

Volunteers should be given a role description outlining their role and areas of work to be undertaken, the skills and experience required to perform this role as well as training that is relevant and appropriate to the role. The Council owes the same duty of care to its volunteers as it does to its own employees.

New volunteers should be made aware of the ATC’s role as part of the DCC Outdoor Education Service as part of their induction.

Volunteers should have access to effective supervision and any necessary support mechanisms, which may include learning and development opportunities. Training opportunities will be available throughout the year and volunteers will be informed of these via e-mail, Facebook and the web page.

The contact point within the Council should be made clear, in the event that any particular issues need to be declared or escalated. A “chain of command” sheet will be displayed in the volunteer hut with contact numbers to enable volunteer contact with ATC staff and managers.

This document is based on the DCC Policy “**Recruiting and Managing Volunteers**”. **Corporate Guidance, June 2012**

Appraisals can be requested volunteers to review the working arrangements, role description, job satisfaction, achievements and areas for further training and improvement. Performance monitoring will be ongoing and “on the spot” training or health and safety advice will be given by ATC staff when deemed necessary.

7. Promoting diversity

The County Council is committed to ensuring that the recruitment and treatment of its volunteers is carried out without prejudice regarding gender, sexual orientation, marital status, race, colour, nationality or other ethnic or national origin, age, disability, social class, religion or belief or criminal background. Volunteers must adhere to this commitment.

8. Expenses

Volunteers should be offered reimbursement of reasonable travel expenses (with receipts) from their usual volunteering location (the ATC) to outreach locations or off site volunteering. Any expenses must be agreed with the volunteer’s line manager in advance and should only be agreed if ATC vehicles cannot be used for the task.

9. Insurance

Individual volunteers will be indemnified against third party claims under the County Council’s Public Liability Policy while volunteering for the ATC *if* the volunteers are considered to be ‘under the supervision and control’ of DCC and undertaking business that would otherwise be undertaken by Council staff.

Any offsite volunteering on behalf of the ATC (outreach or public displays etc) must be discussed fully with ATC staff (Luke Winter/Paul Grigsby) before a commitment is made. Any offsite volunteer work must be clearly branded as “The Ancient Technology Centre - Dorset County Council” using an appropriate banner.

The greater the level of supervision, the more likely it is that volunteers would be deemed to be covered by the Council's insurance arrangements in the event of a challenge. This means that all volunteers should:

- Have clear guidelines on what activities they are expected to undertake and the manner in which they should be undertaken (decided in a planning discussion with ATC staff).
- Be provided with appropriate and sufficient training in undertaking the relevant activities/tasks.
- Be provided with the relevant equipment and materials.
- Have a system of periodic monitoring in place, with relevant records of monitoring maintained. (every off site ATCVA project must be adequately debriefed with ATC staff to improve and refine future events).
- Be provided with relevant Health and Safety advice/training and equipment. The ATC will provide steel toecap wellies for volunteers to use and these will be maintained on site along with other PPE such as gloves, hardhats and knee pads
- Have a support officer or team in place that can assisted them in terms of advice on issues/difficulties encountered. Paul Grigsby is the ATC Volunteer Liaison and will be responsible for assisting the ATC volunteer team.

All officers who manage volunteers are required to satisfy themselves that appropriate supervision and ‘control’ arrangements are in place.

The County Council’s insurance arrangements indemnify individual volunteers.

This document is based on the DCC Policy “**Recruiting and Managing Volunteers**”. **Corporate Guidance, June 2012**

Any significant change to service delivery that may result in a greater use of volunteers should be declared to the Insurance Team.

10. Health and safety

The ATC must not place volunteers in situations that will put their health and safety, or that of others, at risk. An introduction to Health and Safety should form part of the ATC induction that all volunteers will be subject to. Appropriate personal protective equipment for the identified role should be provided. Volunteers must disclose any information which relates to their own health and safety, and take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others.

Volunteer managers must ensure that volunteers do not undertake any activity which presents a risk to their health. Volunteers must not operate tools or equipment where they have not been trained in their use, or are professionally qualified to use it. Where specialist equipment is being used, evidence of relevant training/qualifications must be provided and a copy kept by the County Council officer.

A risk assessment for volunteer activities should be maintained that is commensurate with the level of risk involved in the activities undertaken. A risk Assessment file containing common activities will be maintained in the volunteer hut with additional pro forma sheets for carrying out unforeseen risk assessments as and when they arise. The creation of new risk assessments will form part of the induction process to enable all volunteers to actively take responsibility for their own actions and the safety of those around. A tick sheet will be maintained to record when individual volunteers have gained experience and safe working knowledge of specific tasks and skills and this will be updated by the ATC Volunteer liaison responsible for that working day.

11. Confidentiality

The County Council must regard all volunteers’ personal data as confidential and should not share it with external agencies without prior consent. Equally, volunteers must treat any official or personal information gained during their work as a volunteer as confidential.

12. Grievances and complaints

Any problems arising from either side should be resolved through informal Discussion with those involved or via discussion with ATC management (A “chain of command list” posted in the volunteer hut gives the contact details for the volunteer liaison, the ATC manager and the DCC service manager. If the issues prove to be irreconcilable, either side has the option to terminate the arrangement.

Recipients of County Council services have the right to expect high standards of service delivery and professionalism in all their dealings with the Council. Volunteers may no longer be offered duties where conduct or performance falls below that required.

13. Roles and expectations

It is important to set clear guidelines and expectations in order that the needs of the volunteer and the needs of the ATC are both met.

Volunteers for any County Council service should be encouraged to expect:

- A supportive, welcoming and positive environment that encourages them to get the most out of volunteering.
- An induction training programme and opportunities to undertake appropriate training.
- Relevant and up to date information and advice (Newsletters and updates on the ATC webpage and Facebook page).
- Adequate public liability insurance whilst undertaking voluntary work

This document is based on the DCC Policy “**Recruiting and Managing Volunteers**”. **Corporate Guidance, June 2012**

approved and authorised by us.

To be treated fairly regardless of gender, sexual orientation, marital status, race, colour, nationality or other ethnic or national origin, age, disability, social class, religion or belief or criminal background.

In return we should ask volunteers:

- To be a positive representative of the ATC and County Council.
- To support and champion the ATC’s aims and values.
- To adhere to their role, responsibilities and commitment, as agreed.
- To follow any procedures and standards explained by their manager, including those relating to health and safety and equal opportunities/diversity;
- To escalate any issues of concern to the ATC and County Council using the contact list posted in the volunteer hut..

ATC Volunteer.

A volunteer will be someone who wishes to help the ATC through a physical time commitment each year. Volunteers below the age of 16 **MUST** be accompanied by an adult during volunteer days. All volunteers will be expected to make the ATC volunteer leader (Paul Grigsby) aware of any specific medical conditions that may impact on volunteer tasks or raise general health and safety concerns.

A volunteer will be willing to lend a hand in any task that supports the day to day activities of the ATC and declare a preference for one or more of the specific volunteering opportunities described below...

1. Education (specific interest in working alongside ATC staff with visiting educational groups during the week and occasionally at weekends/holidays).
 2. Maintenance (specific interest in carrying out all types of maintenance tasks on site with an emphasis on traditional techniques and tools).
 3. Public (specific interest or enjoyment of staffing the box office, tea room, burger stand, shop and volunteer tent).
 4. Living History (specific interest in demonstrating ancient skills, costume, tools, culture).
- Take part in an ATC induction that involves all aspects of site operation and especially the health and safety considerations of an educational working farmstead. This will include filling out a Volunteer Medical Questionnaire that will be kept in the Volunteer First Aid Kit.
 - Receive training in skills specific to their volunteer role.
 - Be welcome to attend the ATC A.G.M to have their say in the future development of the centre.
 - Agree to work in accordance with the ATC volunteer policy.