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# Volunteering Policy

## **BBCT Volunteering Policy**

A volunteering policy is the framework for a volunteer's involvement in BBCT, this document defines the role of volunteers within BBCT, how volunteers can expect to be treated and BBCT's expectations of volunteers. The document includes BBCT's Volunteer Agreement, which is available as a separate document.

This document complements the BBCT Volunteering Handbook, which should also be read by all volunteers and provides details on the specific procedures related to volunteering with BBCT.

### **Volunteering with BBCT**

Volunteers play a vital role in helping BBCT to achieve our aims. As a small team we do not have the geographic reach to communicate our important message across the UK but volunteers can help us within their local communities.

Volunteering can take many forms. Most commonly volunteers are helping raise awareness of bumblebees and their importance through talks, guided walks and holding information stalls at events. We also have a large number of BeeWalkers, who are walking transects to collect data on bumblebee populations across Britain.

Volunteer roles are developed and advertised as and when required, with volunteering activities complementing the work of paid staff. All volunteers will be provided with a role profile which outlines the purpose, tasks and commitment expectations of the role.

In return it is our hope that volunteers will enjoy volunteering with us, meet likeminded people and develop new skills.

### **Recruitment**

We will recruit for volunteers as the need arises within the organisation to support the work we are undertaking. For each new role a role profile will be developed which provides specific details on the role, including tasks, skills required, time commitment and training and support. We will use appropriate means to advertise for volunteers locally, taking into account the principles of our Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policies, this may include advertising with local volunteer centres, universities and relevant organisations such as local field clubs. We will also advertise all opportunities within the volunteering section of the website. All volunteers will be requested to complete a registration form when registering for a role.

Certain roles will require a more detailed recruitment procedure including completion of an application form and an informal interview process. This will be highlighted when the role is advertised. This process aims to allow both parties to give and receive sufficient information to assess whether the volunteer role matches the potential volunteer's skills, qualities and interest.

### **Induction and volunteer support**

Upon joining BBCT, volunteers are allocated a named contact within our team, who will act as their supervisor, the staff member this will be will depend on the location of the volunteer. This individual will be the volunteer's key contact and can be contacted to provide resources, advice and support.

It is this individual that the volunteer should keep updated with planned volunteering activities and post-activity feedback.

All volunteers will be provided with online induction material (and/or paper copies where required) on registration. This will include:

- Volunteer Agreement which outlines what a volunteer can expect from BBCT and what BBCT expects of the volunteer.
- Role description.
- Volunteer Handbook which includes details of essential procedures etc.
- BBCT Volunteering Policy.
- Other information as appropriate.

Depending on the frequency and type of volunteering<sup>1</sup>, the named contact may suggest an annual review of the volunteer's activities to identify any training that might assist in the volunteer's future development.

### **Out of pocket expenses**

If volunteers are requested by BBCT staff to attend events on behalf of BBCT, volunteers may claim reasonable expenses for pre-agreed travel and materials. All expenses must be agreed with the main BBCT contact **prior** to the date of expenditure. An expenses claim form must be completed and must include receipts for all claims, or if mileage is being claimed the start and end postcodes must be provided.

Due to limited resources, if volunteers wish to claim expenses for events organised themselves, this must be discussed with the BBCT contact in advance of arranging the event.

Unfortunately BBCT cannot reimburse BeeWalk volunteers for travel expenses to and from their recording sites.

### **Insurance and Health and Safety**

Registered volunteers are covered by BBCT's insurance whilst they are engaged in activities alongside BBCT staff. If a volunteer is running an event on behalf of BBCT the activity will be covered by BBCT's insurance if a Risk Assessment has been completed for the event (usually by the volunteer). Any incidents that occur during the volunteering activity should be reported to BBCT on the Accident Reporting Form within one week of the incident taking place.

In instances where a volunteer has suffered injury due to explicitly ignoring safety advice given by BBCT or through unreasonable behaviour, BBCT will not accept liability. Similarly, in instances where an event attendee has suffered injury due to explicitly ignoring safety advice given by BBCT or a BBCT volunteer, or through unreasonable behaviour, BBCT will not accept liability.

It is the responsibility of volunteers to inform their motor insurance company that they are using their car in the act of volunteering.

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<sup>1</sup> Some volunteers may only wish to participate in ad hoc activities in which case a review would not be appropriate.

## **Activity recording**

Volunteers should keep their main BBCT contact informed of activities (other than BeeWalk), by completing an activity recording sheet. This is important for health and safety purposes and for recording the important contribution volunteers make to the organisation.

## **Volunteer behaviour and representing BBCT**

All volunteers when engaging in BBCT related activities are representatives of the organisation and should behave accordingly. Volunteers should not discriminate against any person for any reason and treat all people fairly and equally, with respect. Volunteers should allow others to express themselves and understand that all views are important even if they are not the same as their own - as long as no offence is caused even if unintentionally.

Volunteers must understand that all forms of discrimination, including bullying and harassment are unacceptable and contravene BBCT's equal opportunities policy.

If a volunteer has any concerns regarding any conduct they have come across or with the role/activities they are undertaking, or the policies, procedures or decisions of BBCT, they should contact their main BBCT contact to discuss.

Formal representation of BBCT with other organisations or within the media may require authorisation from a BBCT senior level and must be discussed by the volunteer with their main BBCT contact prior to any engagements.

## **Equal Opportunities**

BBCT operates an equal opportunities policy in respect of both paid staff and volunteers. All volunteers will be treated equally with respect to opportunities to volunteer, or the type of work allocated to them. However, where heavy physical work or working in an isolated location is required, we reserve the right to advise volunteers if, in our judgement, their efforts would be better and more safely directed in other areas. BBCT aims to integrate diversity and equal opportunity into all of our activities, from key decisions on our mission and strategic objectives through to day-to-day operations. BBCT does not tolerate discrimination on the grounds of gender, race, disability, age, religion and belief, sexual orientation or other irrelevant distinction and we are committed to working with diversity in a wholly positive way to promote understanding, equality and inclusiveness.

All paid staff and volunteers will be expected to have an understanding of and commitment to this, our equal opportunities policy. They must employ it in their dealings with co-workers and co-volunteers and any other individuals that they interact with during the course of their work with BBCT.

## **Problems**

Volunteers have the right to discuss any concerns they may have with the Volunteer Officer or their main BBCT contact. If a complaint is received about a volunteer or a volunteer is found to not be adhering to BBCT policies and procedures, the volunteer's named contact will first discuss the issue and the surrounding circumstances. If an amicable solution cannot be found, the complaint may be referred to a managerial level. In extreme cases, if the volunteer's behaviour is deemed to be in

conflict with BBCT's policies and procedures, the volunteer may be removed from the BBCT volunteering database.

### **Confidentiality**

Volunteers will be bound by the same requirements for confidentiality as paid staff. Where a volunteer is privy to confidential information through their work with BBCT, the need for confidentiality will be highlighted. When the volunteer role includes involvement with sensitive information and data they will be required to complete a data policy agreement.

### **Communication**

Volunteers will be provided with a main point of contact upon joining the trust as volunteer. It is this staff contact that a volunteer should keep informed of their activities, and contact for advice and support. We will also send out volunteer newsletters to keep volunteers updated on policies and procedures, volunteer achievements and to seek feedback. Volunteers may be asked to complete feedback questionnaires to help BBCT monitor and evaluate volunteer activities. Volunteers are welcome at any time to contact BBCT to provide feedback on their volunteer experience.

### **Leaving BBCT**

When volunteers move on from their role they will be asked to provide feedback on their volunteering experience by way of an exit questionnaire. They will also be given the opportunity to discuss their responses to the questionnaire with the Volunteer Officer.

On the basis of their voluntary work, volunteers have the right to request a reference and we would be happy to discuss this.

## Volunteer Agreement

### Relationship between the BBCT and a Volunteer

BBCT recognises and fully appreciates that you as a Volunteer are giving up your free time to support our activities and there are responsibilities on both sides that should be adhered to. It is important for our Volunteers to understand what you can expect from BBCT and what will be expected of you as a Volunteer.

You can expect BBCT:

- To provide you with a main point of contact so you know who to get in touch with for support, with queries, comments etc.
- To provide you with induction information, including how the organisation works and the relevant forms you will need to complete.
- To provide a clear role profile explaining what you will be doing and why.
- To provide you with appropriate resources and support for your activities.
- To reimburse out of pocket expenses where pre-approved by your BBCT contact.
- To insure you against accidents during the course of your volunteering activities which are not your fault (on completion of a Risk Assessment).
- To apply our equal opportunities policy so volunteering is open to all.
- To keep you informed of possible changes to volunteering activities.
- To update you on how your activities are making a difference.

As a BBCT volunteer we expect you:

- To be reliable and responsible.
- To meet the commitments as detailed in the role profile, other than in exceptional circumstances, and provide reasonable notice so that alternative arrangement can be made.
- To develop and maintain good relationships with other volunteers, staff and members.
- To adhere to all BBCT policies, decisions and procedures, as detailed in the Volunteering Policy and Volunteering Handbook.
- To inform your main point of contact of activities you are undertaking (other than BeeWalk).
- To complete and return recording forms as required such as risk assessments and activity recording forms records.
- Be mindful of your role as an ambassador to BBCT in your local community.

**Note: this agreement is in honour only and is not intended to be a legally binding contract of employment.**