

# **NOTTINGHAMSHIRE ARCHIVES**

## **VOLUNTEER POLICY**

**2011**



**Nottinghamshire  
County Council**

## Background

1. Volunteers are recruited by Nottinghamshire Archives for specific tasks which staff do not have the capacity to deliver and where the use of volunteers provides added value to the Archives.
2. Individuals volunteer for a variety of reasons:
  - Users who want to give something back to the service
  - Interest in history
  - To improve access and assist with the preservation of the county's archival heritage
  - To develop skills and knowledge
  - To improve their CV
  - For social reasons
3. Nottinghamshire Archives recruits, trains and manages volunteers according to NCC *Guidelines for Managing and Working with Volunteers*. This will include:
  - Completion of an application form
  - Interview
  - Taking up of references
  - Induction pack and induction
  - Task description
  - Payment of expenses if required
4. All volunteers sign an attendance sheet and are given a volunteer badge so that a record is kept of their time contribution
5. Volunteers are not provided with keys or allowed unsupervised access to the strong rooms.
6. Volunteers are provided access to IT systems, if required, by provision of a generic logon with limited access rights or through the public access PC's
7. The contribution of volunteers is acknowledged through periodic celebratory events and on an individual basis through the provision of references if required.

## **Current volunteer programme**

8. Currently volunteers are used for the following:

- Group work (usually on Thursdays in the Meetings room) for cataloguing and preservation tasks and supervised by a member of staff eg cataloguing bishops' transcripts; numbering and packaging Southwell Minster archives
- Individuals in the searchroom on indexing and database tasks eg indexing Quarter sessions records; creation of a data base of wills
- Assistance with readers who have a visual impairment and so difficulty in reading archives or microfiche
- Assistance with outreach events eg serving refreshments; providing family history advice

9. In addition school pupils (two per term) and individuals wishing to enter the archives profession (two at a time, as can be accommodated) are accepted on one week work experience placements. As many of these then progress to take on voluntary work, NCC Guidelines will also be followed for these individuals.

## **Extension of Volunteer programme**

10. The use of volunteers will be extended by recruiting a pool of volunteers to assist with the following tasks:

- Extension of the use of volunteers for outreach activities eg assistance with group visits of over 15 people where a second member of staff is unavailable; selling publications; taking photographs
- 'Searchroom buddies': supplementary assistance on a rota basis in the searchroom to be called upon by staff members where a member of the public requires more intensive one to one assistance than it is practical for the staff to provide especially family history
- Homeworking or by using PC's in libraries on the retro- conversion of paper catalogues, indexing and transcription work
- Creation of a youth project to encourage greater use of archives by young people

11. The role of Volunteer co-ordinator will be created within an existing staff role or as a voluntary position

12. The National Association of Decorative and Fine Arts Societies, the Friends of Nottinghamshire Archives and any Youth, Families and Culture Divisional procedure will be used to recruit volunteers

13. Consideration will be given as to whether volunteers should be CRB checked according to the work they are recruited to carry out
14. Volunteers will be asked for a minimum commitment to Nottinghamshire Archives to justify the input of staff time
15. Nottinghamshire Archives will support the recommendations of the National Council on Archives report *Volunteering in Archives, 2009*
  1. NCA to work with key organisations within the sector to support volunteering in archives
  2. Engage with the All Party Group on Archives and Opinion Formers
  3. Encourage national recognition of volunteers contribution to archives
  4. Share good practice within the archive sector
  5. Encourage work experience opportunities through volunteering in archives
  6. Promote diversification of archive volunteers
  7. Provide training opportunities within the sector to promote good practice
  8. Improve evidence gathering and evaluation in relation to the use of volunteers in the archive sector

**Date**

16. The policy was approved by the Libraries, Archives, Information and Learning Management Team on 25 May 2011 and will be reviewed after 3 years