



## *British Deaf History Society*

2nd Floor, Empire Court

30-40 Museum Street

Warrington

WA1 1HU

### **Volunteer Policy**

#### **Reason for Policy:**

The BDHS acknowledges the contribution and impact volunteers have on society through their involvement in organisations. The BDHS recognises the historic and on-going role that volunteers play in the development of the Deaf community sector. We acknowledge that our sector would not exist without the dedication and commitment of volunteers.

The BDHS is committed to involving volunteers in all aspects of its activity. This volunteering policy and programme has been developed to provide a framework for the involvement of volunteers in our work and in meeting our aims.

The BDHS is committed to continuous improvement and working within recognised good practice framework, as far as our capacity reasonably allows.

#### **Policy Statement:**

The BDHS values the contribution that volunteers can make to our organisation. They help reflect the diverse interests, needs and resources of the communities we aim to serve and bring a unique perspective to our work. We recognise volunteers as a core part of our team, with a distinctive but complementary role alongside paid staff.

The BDHS recognises that volunteering is a two-way process that provides us with the benefits of the skills, experience and enthusiasm that volunteers bring and provides volunteers with opportunities to further enhance or develop skills, gain experience of new working environments and gain personal benefits from the volunteering experience. We are committed to managing and supporting volunteers in a way that ensures that the needs of both parties are met, as far as our capacity reasonably allows.

The BDHS strives to create a diverse and inclusive organisation; we are therefore committed to ensuring equality of access to high quality volunteer opportunities and equality of treatment for our volunteers in all our policies and practices.

#### **Principles Statement:**

The BDHS recognises four principles fundamental to volunteering. These are Choice, Diversity, Mutual Benefit and Recognition. These inform every aspect of The BDHS's volunteer policy and programme.

**Choice** – volunteering must be a choice freely made by each individual. Freedom to volunteer implies freedom not to become involved.

**Diversity** – volunteering should be open to all, no matter what their background, race, colour, nationality, religion, ethnic or national origins, age, gender, marital/partnership status, sexual orientation or disability.

**Mutual Benefit** – volunteers offer their contribution and skills unwaged but should benefit in other ways in return for their contribution. Giving time voluntarily must be recognised as establishing a reciprocal relationship in which the volunteer also benefits and feels that his or her contribution is personally fulfilling.

**Recognition** – explicit recognition that valuing the contribution of volunteers is fundamental to a fair relationship between volunteers and the Consortium. This includes recognising the contribution to the organisation, the community, the social economy and wider social objectives.

### **Responsibilities:**

The BDHS recognises that the success of its volunteer policy and programme is dependent on the active support of all parts of the organisation.

**Board** – the Board of The BDHS has overall responsibility for ensuring that the Volunteering Policy and programme meet the needs of The BDHS, are implemented effectively and reviewed at appropriate intervals.

**Staff** – all staff are responsible for ensuring that this policy, related procedures and other aspects of the volunteering programme are implemented effectively within their projects/services, with any volunteers they supervise and in any other areas of their work.

**Volunteers** – all volunteers are responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented effectively within the volunteering roles they are undertaking.

### **Training, Supervision & Support**

The BDHS will ensure that appropriate training is offered to volunteers whenever possible, and that all volunteers will be provided with supervision and support appropriate for their role. All volunteers will have a named person to report to.

### **Expenses and Insurance**

Volunteers are not paid any form of remuneration for the work that they do, but shall be entitled to reasonable expenses incurred in their volunteer role, including mileage and other forms of travel reimbursements.

Volunteers are covered under the Society's public and employer's liability insurance policy.

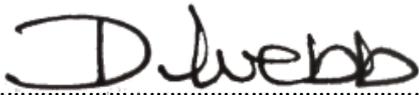
### **Confidentiality**

Volunteers are bound by the same requirements of confidentiality as paid staff and the Board of Trustees, and should not divulge without authority any information that they may come across during their work with the Society.

**Exclusions:**

The BDHS recognises that its Board members are volunteers. However, where a Board member is acting purely within that role description they are covered by separate Board policies in recognition of that unique role and the statutory obligations placed on them by Charity and Company law. When Board members are undertaking other voluntary activity within the BDHS their involvement is covered by this policy.

This policy is reviewed periodically to ensure it still meets the priorities of the Board of Trustees and the needs of our users.



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May 2017

(Signed by the Chair of the Board of Trustees)