



VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK



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I. WELCOME TO VOLUNTEERING

Welcome to East Ayrshire Leisure Trust, and thank you for your interest in volunteering with us.

East Ayrshire Leisure Trust is committed to providing a valuable and rewarding volunteering experience and we acknowledge the vital contribution which volunteers make to our organisation, the wider community, and the many benefits to volunteers themselves.

The purpose of this handbook is to:

- provide you with all the information you need to volunteer with East Ayrshire Leisure Trust
- offer practical advice to ensure that anyone who wants to volunteer can do so readily
- provide support and guidance to help break down any barriers to volunteering
- ensure that East Ayrshire Leisure Trust can continue to operate a volunteer programme that embraces diversity and promotes equality and inclusiveness

If you do choose to volunteer with us, we are confident you will find it to be a worthwhile and rewarding experience that will benefit you, and many others.

2. BENEFITS OF VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering has a positive impact on individuals, organisations and the wider community. You may be thinking about volunteering for personal reasons or to benefit others. Whatever your reason, volunteering usually achieves both.

Some of the many benefits which can be gained through volunteering include:

- keeping fit and healthy
- meeting new people with similar interests
- reducing feelings of isolation
- increasing motivation
- boosting confidence and self-esteem
- providing structure to your day
- helping you to make positive life choices
- allowing you to try something that you have always wanted to do
- use your existing skills and knowledge
- integrating into a new community
- gaining valuable work experience
- enhancing your CV
- improving your chances of accessing further education
- improving your chances of accessing paid employment
- helping towards a change of career

We will regularly ask for feedback to ensure that the role is of benefit to you and to identify any improvements we can make. We will also measure the impacts of volunteering on the services we provide to the community and give you feedback on the difference your role has made.

3. INTRODUCTION TO EAST AYRSHIRE LEISURE TRUST

In the simplest of terms, East Ayrshire Leisure Trust is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (Charity No: SCO43987). We were established on the 1st July 2013, to operate and manage a range of cultural, countryside and sports facilities and services on behalf of East Ayrshire Council. However, in real terms, we are an organisation with over 600 members of staff and volunteers with a diverse range of skills, talents and experiences who collectively offer valuable leisure services across East Ayrshire.

We are governed by a Board of Trustees responsible for providing strategic direction for the organisation. The 13 Trustees comprise:

- Independent Trustees, one of whom is a Trade Union nominee
- Partner Trustees, nominated by East Ayrshire Council
- Council Officer Trustees nominated by East Ayrshire Council to act as Trustees, but without voting rights.

We manage community venues such as libraries, museums, town halls, sport facilities and leisure centres as well as some of the main tourist attractions within the area including The Dick Institute, Ayrshire Athletics Arena, The Palace Theatre & Grand Hall, Annanhill Golf Course, Dean Castle Country Park, all in Kilmarnock, Baird Institute in Cumnock, Burns House Museum, Mauchline, Cumnock Town Hall, and the River Ayr Way, Lugar, Doon & Irvine Valley Path Networks.

Our Vision:

“Always with a focus on continuous improvement, we will deliver inclusive, sustainable and accessible services to enable our communities and visitors to live their best life”

In order to better plan, resource and deliver quality services that meet the needs of people who live and work in East Ayrshire, we are committed to working in partnership with other public sector agencies, voluntary organisations, local businesses, local people and communities to provide and improve the leisure offer in East Ayrshire. We want everyone who works and volunteers with us to help us succeed in our mission and demonstrate our values in whatever they do.



4. VOLUNTEERING WITHIN EAST AYRSHIRE LEISURE TRUST

The Scottish Government's definition of a volunteer is:

“The giving of time and energy through a third party, which can bring measurable benefits to the volunteer, individual beneficiaries, groups or organisations, communities, environment and society at large. It is a choice undertaken by one's own free will, and is not motivated primarily for financial gain or for a wage or salary.”

Within The Trust, volunteers are considered to be 'managed volunteers' as defined by East Ayrshire Council's Volunteer Framework. This term refers to individuals who are recruited, supervised and supported by a named Trust employee and who have been issued with a Volunteer Role Summary outlining their specific tasks and responsibilities.

In addition to the Volunteer Handbook and Volunteer Policy, we have adopted East Ayrshire Council's Volunteer Framework which informs our organisation's commitment to involving and supporting volunteers. This document can be viewed at www.eac.eu/volunteering.

We are committed to supporting, promoting and encouraging the involvement of Trustees and employees in volunteering activities within community or voluntary organisations based within East Ayrshire or national voluntary organisations delivering services within East Ayrshire. This is known as Employer Supported Volunteering.

5. WHO CAN VOLUNTEER?

Within The Trust, volunteering is open to all, regardless of disability, gender, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, age, religion, background or economic circumstances. It is recognised that everyone has something to offer and some individuals may require additional support to realise their full potential. Further information and advice can be provided to assist anyone who may require extra support to volunteer and to help identify the roles which would be most suitable.

You can become a volunteer with us from the age of 14, however some volunteering roles have a minimum age of either 16 or 18. Further information on this is contained within the Role Summary for each volunteering role.

We have opportunities available from one-off events to those which require a more regular, longer-term commitment. There are opportunities available at different times of the day, as well as in the evenings and at weekends, so you should be able to find something that suits your needs.

We recommend that you think carefully about the amount of time you are able to give before choosing a volunteering role. Once recruited you will be expected to undertake your role at the agreed dates and times, and inform your volunteering supervisor as soon as possible if you are unable to attend. This is particularly important as some activities cannot go ahead if a volunteer does not turn up.

It is important that volunteering fits your needs as well as those of East Ayrshire Leisure Trust. We understand that you may have other responsibilities, commitments or interests and as such, may require flexibility in your volunteering role. Examples may include paid employment, caring for others or time off to pursue other activities. As far as is reasonably practicable, your volunteering supervisor will work with you to build flexibility into your volunteering role where required.

Our organisation benefits from the skills and experience which a wide and diverse range of volunteers bring. As such, we are committed to addressing the barriers which prevent some individuals from applying for a volunteering role such as low levels of literacy, concern about how volunteering could affect benefits claims, a criminal record, issues with providing appropriate references or forms of identification for a PVG check, a drug or alcohol addiction or a mental health illness.

Having a criminal record does not necessarily mean that you will be unable to become a volunteer with us. Depending on the nature of your criminal record, you may not be able to take up some volunteering roles but a variety of others will still be open to you. Further information and advice can be provided prior to you applying for a specific volunteering role by emailing EALvolunteering@eastayrshireleisure.com

6. EXPECTATIONS OF VOLUNTEERS

East Ayrshire Leisure Trust has defined the values and behaviours that we expect all our staff and volunteers to demonstrate when working with us; we call these B.E.S.T.

We also expect you to;

- Comply with East Ayrshire Leisure Trust policies and procedures relevant to your volunteering role – you can find these in the Policies section of this document
- Participate in induction sessions and training relevant to your volunteering role
- Undertake your volunteering role at agreed times
- Give adequate notice if you are unable to continue with your volunteering role
- Raise any issues or concerns relating to your volunteering role with your volunteering supervisor

All our volunteers are issued with a Volunteer Agreement which outlines what you can expect from the organisation and what the organisation expects from you. In addition, a Volunteer Role Summary has been devised which clearly defines the associated duties and responsibilities for each role. There is a clear distinction between the roles of volunteers and those of paid staff, to ensure that volunteering is not seen as a substitute for paid work.

EAST AYRSHIRE LEISURE

Our Values and Behaviours

B

Being honest and demonstrating integrity at all times

- I am open and honest and able to admit when I am wrong
- I am always honest in my communications with colleagues and customers
- I am helpful and polite and treat customers and colleagues fairly and with respect
- I reflect honestly on my work practices and behaviours

E

Engaging and inclusive with our people, partners and communities

- I actively listen to customers, colleagues and partners
- I show empathy and am able to put myself in other people's shoes
- I demonstrate a positive attitude towards diversity
- I care about employees' and colleagues' achievements

S

Striving for continuous improvement by being ambitious and aspirational in all that we do

- I actively seek new ideas and approaches and share them with colleagues
- I work pro-actively and take initiative in all tasks
- I embrace new technologies to improve services
- I take pride in my role and strive to be the best that I can be

T

Taking responsibility and being accountable

- I have a positive attitude to work and challenge negative attitudes
- I am aware of, and take responsibility for, how my emotions affect other people
- I always display responsible behaviour
- I am an ambassador for East Ayrshire Leisure Trust

7. APPLYING FOR A VOLUNTEERING ROLE

Applying for, and starting, a new role can be the most daunting part of becoming a volunteer. Within the Trust, staff are able to support you through the entire process, so please feel free to ask for help if required at any point, but speaking to your volunteering supervisor or emailing EALvolunteering@eastayrshireleisure.com

For most of our volunteering roles we are looking for individuals who can demonstrate a range of personal qualities such as motivation, enthusiasm, honesty, reliability and commitment. Some volunteering roles may require you to have specific skills or a qualification, however we can often provide any training which is required. Where specific skills or a qualification is required, this information will be clearly stated on the Role Summary. Volunteers can be involved in a range of opportunities within the Trust including:

- One-off volunteer task days or events
- Regular volunteer roles
- Work experience and placements
- Volunteering through an external organisation

You can view a full list of the volunteering opportunities available within East Ayrshire Leisure Trust at www.eastayrshireleisure.com/volunteering.

'Shadowing sessions' may be able to be set up to allow you to decide if a specific role is the right one for you. If you are offered shadowing sessions you will be required to complete a Criminal Convictions Declaration Form prior to attending the first session.

When you have decided which volunteering role is the right one for you, the application process is as follows:

- Complete an enquiry form on eastayrshireleisure.com/volunteering or email EALvolunteering@eastayrshireleisure.com
- Attend an informal interview and complete a Criminal Convictions Declaration.
- If you and your volunteer contact decide the role is right for you, you will complete an application form and provide names and contact details of two referees.
- If required, you will then complete a PVG Scheme Record Check or Disclosure Scotland Check.

Don't be put off by these procedures – they are in place to help ensure that you are fully informed of all aspects of the volunteering role that you are interested in. When applying for a volunteering role you will have your application dealt with as quickly as possible, however please be aware that obtaining references and PVG/Disclosure Scotland checks can sometimes take a few weeks. If East Ayrshire Leisure Trust is unable to accept you for a volunteering role, a full explanation will be provided.

8. REFERENCES

Wherever possible you will be asked to provide the names and contact details for two reference requests, however in certain circumstances one reference request will be acceptable. Your referees should not be members of your family but may include a health professional, education provider,

previous/current employer or similar. We provide a list of acceptable referees to choose from. If you are unsure as to who to use as a referee further information can be provided; please email EALvolunteering@eastayrshireleisure.com

9. PVG AND DISCLOSURE SCOTLAND CHECKS

Volunteers who carry out regulated work with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults as part of their normal volunteering role will be required to complete a Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme Record Check. Individuals who are asked to use the Trust's computer systems as part of their volunteering role and are not a PVG scheme member will be required to complete a Basic Disclosure Scotland Check. These checks provide details of your criminal convictions, or state that you have none, and are used to enable us to make safer and fairer recruitment decisions.

Results of these checks will be treated confidentially and procedures are in place to ensure that the information is known only to specific members of East Ayrshire Leisure Trust.

You do not have to agree to a PVG or Disclosure Scotland check however refusal will affect your suitability to undertake certain volunteering roles. We cannot run a PVG or Disclosure Scotland check without your permission. If you are worried about any information which may appear on your PVG or Disclosure Scotland check, it is a good idea to speak to someone prior to completing the form. Any individual who is barred from doing regulated work with children or adults must not apply for a role which requires this type of work.

We will cover all costs associated with PVG Scheme Record Checks and Disclosure Scotland Checks if either are required for your volunteering role.

10. VOLUNTEER EXPENSES

East Ayrshire Leisure Trust is committed to identifying and meeting the costs of involving volunteers and as such there is a process in place for you to claim back travel expenses relating to your volunteer role.

We will reimburse travel expenses using the following rules:

- Mileage is calculated at 45p per mile for cars, vans and motorcycles
- The cheapest bus and rail tickets should be purchased.
- Taxi fares cannot be reimbursed except by prior agreement with the Volunteering Development Officer.
- Mileage is capped at 30 miles return trip per volunteering activity.
- Expenses must be claimed by submitting a Volunteer Expenses Claim Form
- Expenses claims MUST be submitted monthly-and within three months of incurring the expense.
- Travel expenses will not be paid in advance.

Payment of expenses will normally be paid by direct bank transfer into your bank account. You must submit your bank details to us on a Volunteer Bank Details form, which is stored securely by our Finance department. Other expenses can be claimed ONLY if you have agreed the amount with your volunteering supervisor in advance.

11. CLAIMING BENEFITS WHEN VOLUNTEERING

It is unlikely that volunteering will affect your benefits however there are some rules that anyone in receipt of benefits should follow before going ahead with voluntary work. As such we would strongly recommend that if you are in receipt of any benefits you should inform your advisor of your intention to volunteer and keep them up to date with any changes in your circumstances. Further information can be found on the [UK government website](#).

12. INDUCTION AND TRAINING

Due to the diverse range of volunteering opportunities available across East Ayrshire Leisure Trust, the induction and training provided for volunteers will vary depending on the nature of the role. As a minimum there is a commitment that you will be provided with:

- A comprehensive induction programme which will be completed prior to commencing your volunteering role
- A name badge and, where appropriate, a uniform that you should wear when undertaking your volunteering role
- Relevant mandatory training and associated refresher courses, as and when required, either online or in person
- Access to the [Learn Pro website](#) which will allow you to complete online training courses.
- Access to optional learning and development opportunities.

13. SUPPORT AND SUPERVISION

As a volunteer with East Ayrshire Leisure Trust you will be provided with a volunteering supervisor who will act as your supervisor for the duration of your volunteering experience. Your contact will keep in touch with you in a number of ways including telephone, email and face to face meetings. It is important that you save the contact details of your supervisor, so that you can get in touch with them when required, for example, if you are unable to come in on a day you are expected to attend.

Support and supervision ensures that communication between you and your volunteering supervisor takes place on a regular basis, that you will have the opportunity to express your views, your training and development needs are identified and any issues are dealt with quickly. It can also highlight personal issues which you may be experiencing for example, stress, anxiety, depression or bereavement and where appropriate you can be made aware of the support services available to you.

14. HEALTH AND SAFETY

East Ayrshire Leisure Trust is committed to its responsibilities in regard to the health, safety and welfare of volunteers and other persons who may be affected by the activities, operations or undertakings of volunteers. In relation to health & safety, you will be required to:

- familiarise yourself with the contents of the risk assessment which has been completed for your volunteering role and sign to confirm you have read and understood
- undertake mandatory and refresher training online or in person
- report any incidents, accidents and 'near misses' to your volunteering supervisor

Whilst undertaking your volunteering role, you will be covered under East Ayrshire Council's Public Liability Insurance. It is important to note that if you carry out any duties that are not part of your volunteering role you will not be covered under this insurance policy and also that your personal belongings, possessions and vehicles are not covered.

15. RECOGNISING AND VALUING VOLUNTEERS' CONTRIBUTIONS

Although no financial reward is given, there are a number of other ways in which we are able to demonstrate both formally and informally that your input is appreciated and valued including:

- saying 'thank you' and providing positive feedback
- ensuring you have the opportunity to express your views and ideas about your volunteering experience and contribute to decision-making processes
- celebrating your achievements at recognition events, in the local press, on our website eastayrshireleisure.com, in our staff and customer newsletter and through social media channels
- planning social events
- nominating you for local and national awards

You will also be made aware of the various award schemes which your volunteer hours may count towards e.g. the Saltire Awards.

16. MEDIA CONSENT AND GDPR

From time to time, we may want to take photographs of you carrying out your volunteering role. This could be for a number of reasons including for press releases, our social media accounts and for our funders. When you become a volunteer with us, we will ask you to complete a Media Marketing Consent form, which will give you choices on how your image can be used. You can change your preferences at any time by emailing EALvolunteering@eastayrshireleisure.com

17. MEETING EXPECTATIONS

We value our volunteers and aim to ensure that the volunteering experience remains mutually beneficial to both the volunteer and the Trust.

We recognise that there may be times when the performance or conduct of a volunteer falls below what is expected, or a volunteer has an issue to raise with regards to their volunteering activity.

We are committed to resolving such problems openly, fairly and quickly in order to:

- protect volunteers and staff
- minimise any disruption to staff, service users and other volunteers
- demonstrate that East Ayrshire Leisure Trust respects its volunteers
- protect the reputation of East Ayrshire Leisure Trust

If a volunteer is not meeting the standards expected of them during their role, their volunteering supervisor will seek to identify goals that will help the volunteer fulfil their role and to offer extra support, supervision and training where necessary. A deadline should be agreed for reviewing the situation. If the volunteer has still not met the standards expected of them, their volunteering supervisor will follow East Ayrshire Leisure Trust's Performance Management Policy, which sets further deadlines for improvement.

We value all feedback from our volunteers. If a volunteer wishes to raise an issue regarding their volunteering role or a member of staff, they should first discuss this with their volunteering supervisor to try to resolve their problem quickly and easily. If the volunteer is not comfortable raising the issue directly with their volunteering supervisor, or feels that the issue is very serious, they should contact the relevant Development Officer responsible for the service, or by emailing EALvolunteering@eastayrshirelesisure.com.

17. WITHDRAWING FROM A VOLUNTEERING ROLE

If for any reason you find that you no longer wish to, or are unable to continue with your volunteering role, please let your volunteering supervisor know by letter or email, giving as much notice as possible of your intention to leave.

The Volunteer Development Officer will be notified of your decision and may wish to discuss your reasons for leaving and to determine if there is anything which would encourage you to continue volunteering e.g. more flexibility in your volunteering role, advice on childcare issues or volunteering whilst on benefits, additional training, more regular supervision or support with a personal issue. If your decision is still to withdraw from the volunteering role, your volunteering supervisor will ask for some feedback regarding your volunteering experience and any ideas you have on how volunteering within our organisation could be improved. You will also be asked about any help or support which we could provide for the future e.g. references or advice on how to move into another volunteering role, training or employment.

18. PARTNERSHIP WORKING

We work closely with the Volunteer Centre and the Council for Voluntary Organisations (CVO) within East Ayrshire to ensure that there is a consistent approach to volunteer development across the authority.

Volunteer Centre East Ayrshire

The Volunteer Centre East Ayrshire can provide information for voluntary groups in the area who are looking for volunteers or for individuals who wish to volunteer. Services include:

- access to local and national databases of volunteering opportunities
- drop-in centre in Kilmarnock and Cumnock for people wishing to volunteer
- advice and training sessions on PVG and Disclosure Scotland checks for individuals and groups
- hints and tips on recruiting and retaining volunteers

Council for Voluntary Organisations East Ayrshire (CVOEA)

CVOEA can provide information for voluntary groups in East Ayrshire or for individuals who wish to volunteer. The services provided include:

- assistance with funding applications
- assistance with development of constitutions
- access to trust fund information and fund finder
- access to typing services and photocopying facilities
- training for management committee and volunteers

Volunteer Centre East Ayrshire

28-30 Grange Street

Kilmarnock

KAI 2DD

Tel: 01563 544765

Email: volunteer@eav.org.uk

Website: www.volunteerscotland.net (click on the East Ayrshire link to find out what volunteering opportunities are available locally)

East Ayrshire Council for Voluntary Organisations (CVOEA)

Belford Mill

16 Brewery Road

Kilmarnock

KAI 3GZ

Tel: 01563 574000

Email: info@cvoea.co.uk

Website: www.cvoea.co.uk

19 OUR POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Everything we do in East Ayrshire Leisure Trust is governed by our policies and procedures. This ensures that we treat our staff and volunteers fairly and resolve any problems using standard guidance. You will be expected to act in accordance with relevant policies and procedures, especially our Code of Conduct. Key policies relating to volunteering are summarised below. All of the Trust's Policies are available on our website at <https://eastayrshireleisure.com/about-us/document-library/> for staff, volunteers and members of the public to read. Paper copies of any policy can be made available to volunteers by emailing EALvolunteering@eastayrshireleisure.com