



Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership Volunteer Policy

Scope

This policy gives information about volunteering as follows:

- Key terms and definitions
- Key responsibilities to volunteers
- Key expectations of volunteer
- Recruitment and selection of volunteers
- Other policies which apply – Data Protection and Confidentiality, Equal Opportunities and Diversity, Health & Safety
- Insurance
- Payment of expenses
- Safeguarding
- Copyright, Intellectual Property and Photography
- Volunteer's conduct

SEP Policies are available on [the website](#).

Who it applies to

This policy applies to anyone volunteering within the Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership.

Date of approval

By Trustees

Date 14th February 2025

Review date February 2028

1. Volunteer policy

This policy sets out our key responsibilities to, and expectations of, our volunteers and is intended to help ensure that anyone who volunteers in the Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership (SEP) is appropriately supported and managed in their role(s).

2. Volunteering

Volunteering is at the heart of Christian service and discipleship. As members of our churches and of the Partnership, we volunteer our times and talents to further our mission, to make Christ known.

Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

Romans 12 v6-8

Volunteers are subject to all relevant SEP policies and, in particular, policies and guidance relating to Safeguarding, Health and Safety and Data Protection. Key elements of these policies are referred to in this document and the full policies are available on [the website](#).

3. Key terms and definitions

For the purposes of this policy the following terms are taken to have the stated definitions.

accident – an event causing injury, harm or ill health

activity leader – the person identified by the church or Partnership as the leader of a particular activity that involves volunteers. If there is no clear activity leader for a volunteer's role, the activity leader is taken to be the church warden/church officer or, at Partnership level, the chair of SEC.

church property - the church building, outside areas or any other buildings or which the Congregational Leadership Team is responsible

hazard – anything with the potential to cause injury, harm or ill health

near-miss incidents - events not causing harm, but having the realistic potential to cause injury or ill health

risk - the likelihood that exposure to a hazard will lead to a negative consequence

volunteer – an unpaid person undertaking church work and/or involved in helping with church activities

4. Our key responsibilities to volunteers

Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership values the important contribution volunteers make to its ministry and mission and, therefore, seeks to:

- offer opportunities to anyone who wants to volunteer, adhering to the principles of an inclusive church such that no-one is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements that cannot be shown to be justifiable
- offer appropriate training, equipment and support for volunteers in their role(s)
- provide relevant information about the church's work, policies and procedures
- make necessary arrangements to ensure the health, safety and welfare of volunteers
- reimburse agreed out-of-pocket expenses promptly
- encourage a positive and friendly atmosphere
- celebrate success and recognise loyalty and dedication.

5. Our key expectations of volunteers

Volunteers are viewed as representatives of our churches and, as such, are asked to:

- act responsibly and within the law
- aim for high standards of efficiency, reliability and quality in fulfilling volunteering role(s)
- respect, support and adhere to SEP policies and management decisions – including all aspects of safeguarding, health and safety, and data protection
- work collaboratively with other volunteers
- treat all church property and equipment with care and consideration
- speak to the activity leader (or a churchwarden/church officer) promptly about any difficulties encountered with volunteering so that appropriate support may be offered
- consider and protect the church's good reputation in your actions and conduct
- have the best possible experience by getting involved and enjoying your volunteering

6. Recruitment and Selection of Volunteers

The SEP welcomes and respects the breadth of experience, skills, dedication and goodwill that volunteers bring. Informal interviews may be carried out to ensure that applicants are suitable for the role in question. Selection would then be based on the ability of each applicant to fulfil the role concerned, taking into account any effect the volunteer may have on the safety of all parties, the Church and its reputation.

Volunteers need to be over 16 years of age to volunteer independently, and under 18s will be asked for parental consent. Younger people may get involved in some aspects of volunteering with us if they are accompanied by a responsible adult. We do not have an upper age limit for volunteers.

There may be situations that require the SEP or individual church to undertake an individual risk assessment of a volunteer which may result in

asking someone to stop volunteering – for example when health issues are assessed as an unacceptably high risk to the person concerned or others around them.

For certain roles a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check will be required.

7. Data Protection and Confidentiality

In line with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) SEP takes care to protect volunteer information. Similarly, volunteers are expected to protect any personal or confidential information to which they may have access in the course of their volunteering. Our General Privacy Notice and Data Request Procedures policy contains further details and is available on [the website](#).

8. Equal Opportunities and Diversity

SEP is an open, inclusive community which believes that God loves everyone no matter who they are. In this spirit, volunteers are expected to affirm every person as a creation of God and to treat them with dignity and respect.

9. Health and Safety

Volunteers are expected to act responsibly at all times and to have due regard for their own safety. Volunteers should read the Health and Safety Policy on [the SEP website](#).

Volunteers who are activity leaders may be asked to undertake a risk assessment¹ for their activity, particularly if it involves children and young people, vulnerable adults or the general public.

Volunteers should read any completed risk assessments which relate to the activity in which they are volunteering and should ask the activity leader if there is anything in the risk assessment they do not understand.

Volunteers should report promptly to their relevant activity leader (or churchwarden/church officer)

- any Health and Safety hazard, defect or damage they notice during their volunteering activity.
- any accident or near-miss incidents which occur during their volunteering activity.

10. Insurance

The individual churches/SEP should have appropriate types of insurance in place to cover volunteers. These include employers' liability insurance and

¹ See Model Activity Risk Assessment Template at <https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/policy-practice-guidance/templates-and-resources>

public liability insurance in the event of a volunteer being harmed due to the negligence of the church or SEP, or a third party being injured as a result of the actions of a volunteer whilst performing church duties.

Insurance may not cover volunteers' personal belongings.

The SEP does not provide motor insurance for volunteers. Volunteers who use their own vehicles as part of their volunteering are recommended to check with their insurer that they are appropriately covered to do so.

Note: Driving in connection with charitable volunteering is normally classified by insurers as "social, domestic and pleasure" which is part of standard cover. There is unlikely to be any additional cost, but some insurers require the policy holder to notify them. Useful information may be found about insurance for volunteer drivers on the ABI website and in their very helpful document: VOLUNTEER DRIVING – THE MOTOR INSURANCE COMMITMENT², the latest version of which can be downloaded from their website.

11. Payment of expenses

No payments are made to volunteers, other than the reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses which are accompanied by receipts and agreed in advance by the Treasurer via the relevant activity leader.

If it is agreed to reimburse a volunteer's expenses for travelling in their own vehicle, the HMRC approved standard mileage rates, which include an allowance for insurance as well as fuel, maintenance, tax etc. will be used.

12. Safeguarding

The SEP has adopted the House of Bishops Safeguarding Policy Statement together with the supporting safeguarding policies and practice guidance. The Policy Statement can be viewed online on the Church of England website.

If a volunteer has any concerns around the welfare of a child or vulnerable adult, please immediately contact **Maggie Prisk**, our **SEP Safeguarding Lead**.

Her contact details are:

Tel: 01908 605815

Email: maggie.a.prisk@gmail.com

If the SEP Safeguarding Lead is not available, please speak directly to the **Buckingham area Safeguarding Adviser**, Tsungai Muchegwa on 07435 550

² <https://www.abi.org.uk/globalassets/files/publications/public/motor/2019/abi-guide-to-volunteer-driving---the-motor-insurance-commitment.pdf>

685 or contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Team on 01865 208 295 or email safeguardingreferrals@oxford.anglican.org

13. Copyright, Intellectual Property and Photography

The rights to any original works that a volunteer may produce in the course of volunteering will belong to the church or Partnership, unless otherwise agreed in writing. Examples include photography, artwork, graphic design and written work.

Photographs of volunteers carrying out their roles may be used for promotional purposes, such as in a leaflet, poster or online. Volunteers who do not wish their photograph to be used for such purposes, should notify the activity leader.

14. Volunteer's conduct

All volunteers are expected to fulfil their role to the best of their ability, adhering to any rota that is prepared and to act with integrity and honesty in all that they engage in. Should any concerns be raised with regard to the volunteer's conduct and action, in the first instance this is to be addressed directly with the volunteer by the activity leader. If the issue cannot be satisfactorily resolved or concluded then the activity leader is to refer the matter to the Congregational Leadership Team for further instruction. In the event that a volunteer is found to be acting dishonestly or not working in line with the ethos and values of SEP they will be asked to stand down from their voluntary role. Pastoral support will be provided.