

# **VOLUNTEER POLICY**

# **INTRODUCTION**

## **STATEMENT OF PURPOSE** **THE PRINCESS ROYAL CLASS LOCOMOTIVE TRUST (PRCLT)**

The Trust exists to promote interest in the Stanier Pacific steam locomotives of the London Midland and Scottish Railway and the Standard Class 4 Tank locomotives of British Railways. This will be achieved by collecting, recording, conserving, restoring to working order and curating evidence of these locomotives, and promoting interest in their heritage by making collections and associated information available to the public.

### **Our Key Aims**

- To ensure the responsible stewardship, conservation and development of the collection of locomotives and stock owned by, or in the care of the Trust.
- To acquire and retain artefacts, documents etc., pertaining to the period of history when the locomotives were built and operated in service.
- To encourage and develop participation and interest from individuals, interested parties and the public.
- To develop scholarship on, and around the subject of the collection.

## **INVOLVEMENT OF VOLUNTEERS**

The PRCLT is a Charitable Trust, managed by a board of 8 Trustees who are all volunteers. The Trust consists of a small number of paid full time staff - currently two Engineers, one Apprentice Engineer and one Museum Curator. The practical support of volunteers is a valuable part of the operation of the Trust. We always welcome new volunteers to help with the various areas of operation of the Trust including assisting with the maintenance of vehicles and special restoration projects, showing visitors around the West Shed Museum, special events, group visits, souvenir sales, and Stewards on our mainline train trips. The Trust aims to involve volunteers with a wide range of skills and knowledge. We welcome volunteers of all ages and from all communities.

## **GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

- The Trust will not introduce volunteers to replace paid staff. That is, volunteers will supplement and not supplant the work of employees.
- All volunteers will be encouraged to contribute to the organisation and development of the Trust. They can do this by expressing opinions to a Trustee or member of the Museum Committee, who will raise issues at meetings and to the Board of Trustees, where appropriate.
- Volunteers will be consulted on all matters that affect them directly.
- Volunteers will be encouraged to develop their own areas of interest and expertise. The Trust will seek opportunities for volunteers to attend training and networking events where appropriate.

## **Duty of care**

The PRCLT has a duty of care towards its volunteers, meaning that reasonable steps will be taken to ensure that the likelihood and potential seriousness of injury to volunteers is reduced. This includes giving volunteers adequate information, training, and the use of safety clothing and equipment.

## **Induction & Training**

- New volunteers will receive appropriate Health and Safety training in line with the PRCLT's 'Procedure for the Induction of Staff, Volunteers and Contractors'. All new volunteers will be required to undergo this briefing before the commencement of volunteering.
- On-train stewards will be required to undergo training specific to this task, which includes health and safety issues as prescribed by West Coast Railway and Network Rail.

## **The Volunteer Agreement**

- All volunteers are required to sign a 'Volunteer Agreement Form' when they join the PRCLT to confirm that they will follow all relevant policies and procedures. People interested in volunteering may attend the West Shed 4 times as a trial period before deciding whether they wish to become a volunteer, at which point they will need to sign the Agreement. This Agreement is not contractually binding on either the volunteer or the PRCLT and volunteers do not have an obligation to attend the West Shed or commit to a minimum number of hours. Similarly, the Trust does not have an obligation to engage the volunteer. This is in contrast to the obligations between employees and employers. However, for reasons of legality, organisation, safety and courtesy, the Trust does have policies and procedures in place that volunteers must adhere to.

## **POLICIES**

Volunteers are expected to adhere to the following PRCLT policies, which are in place for the safety of staff, volunteers and visitors and to comply with relevant legislation:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Drugs and Alcohol Policy

## **PROBLEM SOLVING PROCEDURES**

If there is a grievance between a volunteer and the Trust, or another member, appropriate problem solving procedures should be followed (please see the 'Volunteer Handbook').

## **PRACTICALITIES**

### **Recruitment of new volunteers:**

- Volunteers generally come to the Trust as a result of word of mouth, through contact with existing volunteers, or as a result of visiting the West Shed or travelling on a rail tour.
- For specific projects and tasks, the Trust may actively recruit new volunteers through advertising in local volunteer centres, newspapers, websites, community centres, libraries, etc. In this case, recruitment will take place in line with the Trust's 'Equal Opportunities Policy' and current legislation.

### **Safeguarding & Child Protection:**

By Law, anyone whose work involves frequent and/ or unsupervised contact with children which is specifically categorised as 'Regulated Activity', is required to undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. The PRCLT will review the nature of activities involving children carried out at the West Shed to ensure that correct procedures are followed. If activities are classed as 'Regulated Activity', the PRCLT will seek guidance as to whether volunteers are eligible and/ or required to undergo a DBS check. If so, they will be carried out following the current legal guidelines. For further information on this subject, please see the PRCLT's 'Safeguarding Policy'.

## **Who may volunteer for the PRCLT?**

### **Volunteers & the Law: Relevant Legislation**

#### **Age limits:**

- There is no maximum age limit for volunteers.
- The minimum age for unaccompanied volunteers at the West Shed is 16 years old. Parental consent will be sought for volunteers under the age of 18.
- Young people under 16 years old may become volunteers if they are accompanied by a parent/ guardian.
- The minimum age for volunteer on-train stewards is 21 years old, unless they have relevant experience in a similar environment or suitable qualification/s, which will be judged on an individual basis.

#### **People in Receipt of Government benefits:**

- People claiming **Job Seekers Allowance** are permitted to be volunteers and there is no maximum number of hours that they may spend volunteering as long as they remain available for work and are still 'actively seeking work'. It is the volunteer's responsibility to inform their supervisor (i.e. at the Job Centre or equivalent) about their voluntary work to ensure that their activities do not compromise their Allowance.<sup>i</sup>
- People receiving **Incapacity Benefit** are permitted to be volunteers and there is no maximum number of hours that they may spend volunteering. Whilst working would normally invalidate any claim to be incapable of work, there is a specific exemption for voluntary work<sup>ii</sup>. If necessary, the PRCLT can provide volunteers with a letter explaining

the nature of their voluntary work, distancing it from paid work. However, ultimately it is the volunteer's responsibility to ensure that the voluntary tasks undertaken do not affect their receipt of benefits.

- People receiving **Disability Living Allowance** are permitted to be volunteers and there is no maximum number of hours that they may spend volunteering. However, it is the volunteer's responsibility to ensure that the voluntary tasks undertaken do not affect their receipt of benefits.
- **Refugees and asylum seekers** are permitted to be volunteers, provided that it is a not-for-profit organisation and the volunteering is not a job substitution.
- **People from outside the UK** may volunteer provided that they are still doing the work or study named on their visa.

### **CRIMINAL RECORDS:**

- Under the 'Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974' a volunteer with a criminal record is not required to reveal past convictions unless the role they are applying for is listed as an exception to the Act. Some roles involving work with children are classed as Regulated Activity (see 'Safeguarding and Child Protection' above) and are exempt from the Act, meaning that if a volunteer applies to be involved in such a role they will be asked to undergo a DBS check. If the check reveals previous convictions or reprimands, the PRCLT will decide whether this history prevents the individual from taking the role. Individuals will be reviewed relating to the tasks to be undertaken and the associated risks. Just because someone has a conviction it does not mean that they are automatically unsuitable and they will not be automatically precluded from volunteering. *Further details on this subject can be found in the PRCLT's 'Safeguarding Policy'.*

### **Personnel Records**

On joining the Trust, volunteers will be asked to complete a simple form with key contact information. Records of personal details will be securely stored by the Trust in line with Data Protection legislation.

### **Insurance**

Volunteers are covered by the Trust's 'Employer's Liability' insurance policy, subject to limitations and exclusions.

### **Expenses**

The Trust is unable to reimburse expenses incurred by volunteers in attending the West Shed or mainline train trips. This includes travel expenses, car parking charges, refreshments, etc. However, there may be specific circumstances when volunteers are asked to do a task that incurs an out-of-pocket expense, which will be reimbursed by the Trust. This needs to be agreed between the volunteer and a Trustee before any such expense is incurred. The Trust reserves the right not to reimburse any expenses that have not been previously agreed. If a volunteer needs to purchase products/ goods for a specific task, this must be agreed with a Trustee before the purchase takes place. If agreed, expenses will only be reimbursed on production of valid receipts, invoices, etc. All expense claims should be submitted in the first instance to the Museum Curator who will forward it to the Treasurer on behalf of the volunteer. A cheque will then be sent directly to the volunteer, or be reimbursed from petty cash.

## **Tax and national insurance**

The basic position of HM Customs and Revenue is that if volunteers receive nothing more than out-of pocket expenses then this reimbursement will not have tax implications. This is in contrast to volunteers receiving some form of payment above genuine reimbursement, which would be treated as taxable income and therefore subject to the same income tax and national insurance regulations as any other earnings.

## **REFERENCES**

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<sup>i</sup> Mark Restall (2005), *Volunteers and the Law* (Volunteering England), p.19.

<sup>ii</sup> Ibid, p.23