



KINGSGATE VOLUNTEER POLICY

Created: May 2025

Review: June 2027

INTRODUCTION

This policy sets out the broad principles for voluntary involvement in KingsGate Church (hereinafter referred to as 'KingsGate'). It is of relevance to all within the church, including volunteers, staff, members, and those elected or appointed to positions of responsibility.

This policy is endorsed by the Elders of KingsGate and will be reviewed annually, to ensure that it remains appropriate to the needs of the organisation and its volunteers.

COMMITMENT

KingsGate acknowledges that volunteers contribute in many ways, that their contribution is unique, and that volunteering can benefit users of services, staff, local communities and the volunteers themselves.

KingsGate values the contribution made by volunteers and is committed to involving volunteers in appropriate positions and in ways which are encouraging, supportive and which develop volunteering.

We recognise our responsibility to arrange our volunteering efficiently and sensitively so that the valuable gift of the volunteer's time is best used to the mutual advantage of all concerned.

DEFINITION

Volunteering is an important expression of society as well as an important component of democracy. Volunteers are unpaid and of their own free will, contribute their time, energy and skills to benefit the community.

STATEMENT OF VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

Volunteering is a legitimate and crucial activity that is supported and encouraged by the church and is not intended to be a substitute for paid employment. The role of volunteers complements but does not replace the role of paid staff.

Appropriate steps will be taken to ensure that paid staff are clear about the role of volunteers, and to foster good working relationships between paid staff and volunteers.

The volunteer role is a gift relationship, binding only in honour, trust and mutual understanding. No enforceable obligation, contractual or otherwise, can be imposed on volunteers to attend, give or be set a minimum amount of time to carry out the tasks involved in their voluntary activity. Likewise, the church cannot be compelled to provide either regular tasks, payment or other benefit for any activity undertaken by the volunteer.

Although volunteers offer time freely and willingly without binding obligation, there is a presumption of mutual support and reliability. Reciprocal expectations are acknowledged – both of what KingsGate expects of volunteers and what volunteers expect of KingsGate.

VOLUNTEER COORDINATION

All volunteers will have a nominated member of staff to offer guidance and advice to help the volunteer carry out tasks effectively. Volunteers will be informed of who to contact to receive support and supervision.

The nominated post holder with overall responsibility for the development of voluntary activities within KingsGate is Jacqueline Asl t. This person is responsible for the overseeing the management and welfare of KingsGate's volunteers.

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

KingsGate is committed to equal opportunities and believes that volunteering should be open to all regardless of race, gender or religion. The acceptance of volunteer assistance for a particular role is made on merit, the sole selection criterion being the individual's

suitability to carry out agreed tasks. Information about the volunteer not relevant to the performance of the volunteering tasks concerned will be disregarded by KingsGate in terms of recruitment and selection.

Volunteering opportunities will be widely promoted in ways that make them accessible to all members of the community.

Volunteers who are considered unsuitable for a particular task will be offered alternative voluntary involvement, if available.

All volunteers will be asked to produce two references and will be invited to attend an informal interview. If the volunteer will be carrying out activities with vulnerable groups (children and/or adults) there may be other safer recruitment procedures carried out including asking a volunteer to undergo an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) check. More detailed information will be made available specific to legislative requirements and to the volunteer position.

Volunteers will have a clear and concise task description, which will be subsequently reviewed every year.

New volunteers will be properly inducted into KingsGate.

Volunteers will be properly briefed about the activities to be undertaken and given all the necessary information to enable them to perform with confidence.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

All volunteers will be made aware of and have access to all of KingsGate's relevant policies, including those relating to volunteering, health & safety, safeguarding vulnerable groups and equal opportunities.

The development of training and support for volunteers is a priority for the church to equip them with the necessary information and skills to carry out their tasks. It will be the responsibility of the designated person referred to above to see that this training is provided. It is the responsibility of the volunteer to attend relevant training.

SUPPORT, SUPERVISION AND RECOGNITION

Volunteers will have a named person to whom they can take their volunteering concerns and seek guidance and support.

They will have access to regular support and supervision. This will enable both the volunteer and the supervisor to identify, monitor and evaluate the volunteer's involvement, recognise achievements and identify individual training needs, including that relevant to their volunteering role and to their wider personal development.

The frequency, duration and format of these sessions will be negotiated between the volunteer and the designated officer referred to above.

Volunteers will be given the opportunity, where relevant, to share their views and opinions with KingsGate's wider staff.

A process will be developed to give formal recognition of the contribution of KingsGate volunteers e.g. thank you letters etc.

EXPENSES

KingsGate recognises that the reimbursement of expenses incurred while volunteering is important.

Our volunteers can claim reasonable out of pocket expenses, subject to the production of receipts as evidence of the expenditure. What can be reclaimed from KingsGate and the calculation of expenses will be explained to the volunteer before they start any activity likely to give rise to expenses.

KingsGate has a consistent approach to the reimbursement of expenses which are the same for volunteers, staff, etc. and are as approved by the Inland Revenue.

It is the responsibility of the designated person referred to above to make volunteers aware of the procedure for the reimbursement of expenses, where applicable.

INSURANCE

KingsGate's liability insurance policy includes the activities of volunteers and liability towards them.

KingsGate does not insure the volunteer's personal possessions against loss or damage

CONFIDENTIALITY

KingsGate will advise volunteers on its confidentiality policy and procedures, where relevant. This would include those relating to personal volunteer information held by KingsGate.

SETTLING DIFFERENCES

KingsGate aims to treat all volunteers fairly, objectively and consistently. Kingsgate seeks to ensure that volunteers' views are heard, noted and acted upon promptly and aim for a positive and amicable solution based on our guidelines for settling differences.

The designated officer referred to above is responsible for handling problems regarding volunteer complaints or conduct and these should be referred to him/her. In the event of a problem, all relevant facts should be obtained as quickly as possible. Support will be provided by KingsGate to the volunteer while it endeavours to resolve the problem in an informal manner. If an informal resolution proves impossible, the organisation's wider grievance or complaints policies and procedures (which include volunteers) will be referred to. If a volunteer's behaviour is repeatedly or seriously unacceptable, they may be asked to change their role, or to leave KingsGate.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

KingsGate recognises the rights of volunteers to:

- know what is (and what is not) expected of them
- have adequate support in their volunteering
- receive appreciation
- volunteer in a safe environment
- be insured
- know their rights and responsibilities if something goes wrong
- receive relevant out-of-pocket expenses
- receive appropriate training
- be free from discrimination
- be offered the opportunity for personal development

KingsGate expects volunteers to:

- be reliable
- be honest
- respect confidentiality
- make the most of training and support opportunities
- carry out tasks in a way that reflects the aims and values of the church
- carry out tasks within agreed guidelines
- respect the work of KingsGate and not bring it into disrepute
- comply with the church's policies