

Volunteer Policy

This statement describes the Society's Volunteer Policy.

The Society benefits from the voluntary services of a great many individuals each of whom contributes in different ways. The use of volunteers is a fundamental part of the ethos of the Society in engaging all sectors of the community in nautical archaeology. The Society believes that it is important to treat volunteers with respect and to recognise their effort and contributions in a consistent and fair way.

Principles:

1. The Society will conduct its affairs in accordance with its constitution and relevant charity and company legislation
2. The Society will protect the welfare, health and safety of volunteers and others.
3. The Society will recognise the contribution of volunteers in a fair and equitable manner.
4. The Society is committed to advancing education and training in nautical archaeology and actively supports volunteers to develop their skills and experience through volunteering.
5. The Society's equal opportunity policy applies to volunteers. Volunteering opportunities are open to all and the Society does not discriminate against adults based on age, gender, sexual preference or orientation, religion, race or disabilities (except where an ability is necessary for the task and reasonable adjustments cannot be made).
6. Volunteers are supervised by the Society's manager with responsibility for operational aspects of the Society or the person delegated to manage the activity. Volunteers who participating in the committees of the Society are the responsibility of the chair of that committee.
7. Volunteers will be supported and encouraged to develop their volunteering by the person responsible for managing their volunteer contribution.
8. The Society requires that volunteers operate in accordance with the Society's statement of principles and carry out activities in accordance with the standards and policies of the Society. Failure to abide by the policies, principles and standards of the Society, or behaviour likely to harm others or the Society may lead to action being taken against the individual concerned, including, but not limited to that individual being denied the opportunity to volunteer.
9. Should a volunteer have a problem with how they have been treated they have recourse to the Society's grievance and complaints process.

This policy applies to persons aged 18 or over. Young persons under the age of 18 are encouraged to participate in the Society with their parent or carer or to join activities especially for young persons where the activity can be designed to safeguard their welfare.

Signed:

Date: 1st May 2007



George Lambrick, Chair of Executive Committee

Guidance

How we involve volunteers

Encouraging involvement with maritime cultural heritage

The ethos of the Society is that the involvement of volunteers is central to the concept of cultural heritage. The Society's charitable aims are to further research through advancing education and training and to publish. Through the Society's training courses, through outreach activity and through making information available through publication, the Society helps to engage the interest of people and give them the skills so that they can directly contribute to protecting, monitoring and researching the maritime cultural heritage. Many of the people that the Society has trained will use their skills simply by being more aware of the maritime cultural heritage. This may mean that they are more careful to protect that environment or that they notice and report something that might be significant. Others will go on to do their own voluntary projects and research, either as individuals or within a local club. These activities need not involve the Society at all – but the Society is always there to provide guidance, encouragement and support. Diving with a Purpose and the Adopt-a-Wreck scheme are examples of how the Society encourages individuals and clubs to undertake their own research and heritage monitoring projects. Individuals can also carry out their own research projects and submit a research report to the Society in the course of gaining their NAS Part 2 certificate. The Society will also advertise through its newsletter and website opportunities for volunteers to get involved in research projects with other organisations. The combined contribution of all of the individual efforts of all of the people that the Society has trained is much bigger than the research that the Society can directly organise and manage. Information on training courses and on projects is available on the Society's website and through the newsletter.

Providing opportunities to participate in research

The Society directly organises research projects where volunteers can develop their archaeological skills. Where projects are directly organised by the Society, there will be a competent archaeological supervisor present at all times, to provide guidance to the volunteers. If the project involves diving, the Society will ensure that there is a diving supervisor to ensure the health and safety of all diving operations. These projects provide an ideal opportunity to gain real experience while having access to an archaeological tutor, and in some cases a diving tutor as well, who will help the participants develop relevant skills. Volunteer participants are normally expected to cover their own travel and subsistence costs and to make a contribution towards the costs of providing tutors and equipment. Some projects may require minimum training standards (typically NAS Part 1) and those who wish to participate in diving activities will be required to be competent for the diving task and conditions (typically a minimum standard of CMAS 2* - BSAC sports diver or PADI advanced open water). All field schools and projects are advertised through the newsletter and website.

Encouraging publication

The Society is committed to furthering research and publication. Achievement of NAS Part 2 and Part 4 certificates require the candidate to have prepared project reports. Volunteers are encouraged to write articles for the newsletter and to develop their research skills to be able to submit formal papers for IJNA, the Society's international research journal. The Society's editors and tutors will provide guidance to help volunteers develop publishing skills. Volunteers can also submit news and content to the members' forum of the Society's website.

Providing work experience opportunities

For those who want to follow a career in archaeology, or want to find out if this would be right for them, and for those who have some free time, perhaps as part of a student's holiday, gap year or career break, the Society can provide work experience opportunities. Work experience takes place in the

Society's offices at Fort Cumberland, but work experience placements often include the opportunity to accompany tutors and project managers to courses, projects, meetings and conferences. Work experience will include a variety of administrative as well as archaeological tasks. Volunteers do not need to have any particular skills or training – the work experience can be tailored to include suitable opportunities. The Society does not discriminate based on age or background: for new graduates, students (of whatever age), people changing career (perhaps after a break for parenthood or after retiring), working with the Society can help develop confidence as well as skills. The Society is happy to provide references to future employers when requested. The possibility of work experience is sometimes advertised in the newsletter or website, but applications are always welcome. Volunteers are requested to contact any of the staff at the Society's office.

Supporting outreach activities

From time to time, requests are sent out for volunteers to help with particular events, such as Dive Shows, National Archaeology Days, conferences and other shows. Being part of the NAS team at an event is a rewarding social experience and volunteers get free entry to the event and will be allowed time for themselves to enjoy the event. Potential volunteers do not need to wait for a specific call for volunteers – an email, letter or phone call to the office to express interest in helping out will mean that the office team can identify suitable opportunities. Volunteers can also help spread the word in their own clubs and communities – the Society's staff will be happy to provide guidance and resources.

Working with the Society in a volunteer role

Much of what the Society does, including all of its governance, is undertaken by volunteers who freely give their time. Volunteer roles can be tailored depending on the amount of time the volunteer can commit and the skills they want to contribute. The Society welcomes the contribution of those who want to represent groups affected by maritime cultural heritage, people with publishing or editorial skills, photographers, videographers, tutors, fund-raisers, marketers, IT specialists, web-designers, archaeologists and conservators or all types... the list is almost endless. Some of our volunteers also work with us in a vocational role as sub-contractors. Potential volunteers do not need to worry about whether they have the right skills to be useful, such is the range of activities, the Society will find a way to value the contribution of all of its volunteers. Volunteers who can commit to work with the Society over a period of time will find it a rewarding social experience as well as having the satisfaction of achieving something worthwhile. In addition, the Society is committed to encouraging and supporting volunteers and helping them to develop their experience and skills. The Society generally refunds out of pocket expenses for volunteers and can provide development opportunities to help volunteers get more out of their volunteering. Anyone interested in volunteer roles should contact the office at any time of the year by email, letter or phone to express interest. Members are also invited to stand for election to the Executive Committee by a notice sent out prior to the AGM.

Managing Volunteers

All volunteers are managed by someone. Volunteers who participate in committees are managed by the chair of that committee. Other volunteers who participate in the operational activities of the society are managed by the manager responsible for that activity. The manager of the volunteer has the responsibility for ensuring that the volunteer is clear about what is expected of him or her and that the volunteer has the skills, resources and time available to do what is wanted.

Volunteers are encouraged to talk with their manager about how they would like to develop their volunteer role. It is the Society's aim to ensure that the management of volunteers provides effective support and encouragement so that volunteers can effectively do what is asked for them – and find it a rewarding experience. Of course, voluntary activity is voluntary. If the volunteer finds they are unable to carry out the activity they volunteered for, there is no sanction against them.

Volunteers will normally be reimbursed for out of pocket expenses actually incurred in carrying out their volunteer role. The person responsible for managing the volunteer will make it clear whether or not expenses will be reimbursed and on what basis these can be claimed. All such expenses are considered to be an operational cost of the Society and must be agreed in advance by the Society's manager having responsibility for operational matters.

Volunteers will be excluded from receiving prizes from participation in competitions organised by the Society, (excluding raffles), where the volunteer might gain an advantage by virtue of their volunteering.

Volunteers acting on behalf of the Society in a formal volunteer role or as part of an activity formally organised the Society are covered by the Society's insurance policy. This provides third party liability cover. This cover does not extend to individuals or groups who are not being managed by the Society (such as Adopt-a-wreck groups and personal Part 2 projects).

Volunteers are expected to act in accordance with the Society's statement of principles and in accordance with the policies, procedures and standards of the Society. The manager of the volunteer has the responsibility for ensuring that the volunteer understands what is required. The manager also has responsibility for monitoring how the activity is carried out.

If things go wrong

The Society aims to deal with any complaints promptly and fairly. Most problems can be dealt with informally by a chat between the volunteer and the person managing the activity.

If a volunteer has a problem with the way they have been treated and it hasn't been possible to resolve it with the person managing the activity, then they can use the Society's complaints procedure to raise the issue with the management committee.

If someone has a problem with a volunteer, again it will normally be dealt with informally. Most such problems arise from misunderstandings or can be resolved by extra training or support. If the problem can't be resolved informally, the person responsible for the volunteer will raise it with the Society's management committee. In serious cases where the conduct of the volunteer has actually or potentially harmed others or the Society, it may be necessary to terminate the volunteering relationship.

Rewards for volunteers

The contribution of volunteers is normally recognised in a non-tangible way, such as recognition by special mention or the opportunity to participate in some special activity and this is organised by the person managing the volunteer.

The Society has a responsibility to expend its resources for the benefit of the public in carrying out its charitable aims. Rewarding volunteers is a legitimate operational cost where such rewards aid in supporting, encouraging and motivating volunteering, however good practice is to ensure that the value to the individual is not derived from the financial value of a reward but is from recognition of achievement / contribution, from the opportunity for self-development and from the satisfaction of achieving something worthwhile.

Legally, the Society may recognise and reward the contributions of volunteers but it is necessary to ensure that any benefit received by volunteers is not such as to create issues:

- Where the volunteer is in receipt of social security benefits
- Where the reward could be construed as constituting income or employment
- Where a reward pertains to diving activities and hence causes the volunteer to be regarded as being 'at work' when diving, for the purposes of health and Safety legislation.

Volunteers who are elected members of the executive committee (who form the decision making quorum) are company directors and charity trustees. The interaction of the Society's constitution and charitable status with company law means that elected members must not receive benefits from their

position. For this reason the Society cannot employ the services of an elected member of the executive committee if the services are required to be paid.

Decisions about tributes and activities to recognise the contribution of volunteers and whether a volunteer should receive a free or a discounted price for goods or services to help them carry out their role are considered to be an operational matter of the Society and such decisions are at the discretion of the Society's manager. However, the decision of whether an executive member should not be charged or should be offered a discounted price for goods or services in order to help them to carry out their role on the executive is the responsibility of the Society's management committee.

Volunteers may receive goods or services from the Society to aid them in carrying out their volunteer role and supporting the Society. Goods might typically include NAS branded clothing especially if this is to be worn at promotional events and NAS publications especially if these aid understanding of the Society and its work. Services include NAS membership, NAS courses, conference, qualifications and projects or free entry to an event as part of the NAS team. The volunteer will often be giving further service as well as benefiting from the service e.g. by having free attendance but serving as the NAS host or manning a NAS promotional stand. Members of the executive committee are expected to act as ambassadors of the Society and will not be charged a fee for attending an NAS tutors course.

A volunteer may receive ex-gratia free membership or a discount on membership or other goods or services in recognition of their contribution to the Society. A volunteer may receive a tribute in recognition of an exceptional contribution but typically such tribute will be non-financial and not of significant intrinsic value. Typical examples of such tributes include bouquet of flowers, engraved ornament or award, specially endorsed edition of a Society publication etc. Such recognition is not an automatic right and is given in exceptional circumstances.

Volunteers may also receive complimentary dinners or other hospitality from the Society either as recognition for their contribution or where the hospitality is part of an event organised by the Society for another purpose. Examples include fund-raising events, a dinner organised to recognise the contribution of staff or volunteers and training events or meetings, where catering is provided to assist in the effective running of the event.

In exceptional cases a volunteer may receive recognition for their contribution in the form of honorary life membership of the Society and/or being asked to become a vice-president of the Society. This decision can only be made by a quorum of the executive committee.