
Volunteer Policy

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Policy Reference Sheet

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2. Policy Statement

- 1.1 This policy is for British Horse Society (BHS) volunteers who have accepted a volunteering role with us. It outlines the principles of the relationship and provides key information about volunteering with the BHS.
- 1.2 Volunteers are those who choose to commit their time and skills to the charity and its objectives. This relationship is based on trust and does not involve the obligations associated with employment or financial reward, other than the reimbursement of agreed expenses.
- 1.3 If volunteers are unsure about any part of this or the associated policies, they should seek advice from their Regional/National Manager or the Volunteer Support Team.

3. Committed to Volunteering

- 2.1 Volunteers are vital to the BHS and are a core part of our team. We recognise how important their contribution is to our work.
- 2.2 Volunteers are integrated into the broader structure and operations of the BHS, and are our link to the local equestrian community, the partners we work with and those we look to engage with in the future.
- 2.3 We recognise that volunteering is a two-way relationship: volunteers providing the BHS with their time, skills, experience and enthusiasm and the BHS providing volunteers with the opportunity to support us, enhance or develop skills, make social contacts, have new experiences, and have fun.
- 2.4 Our mission, values, policies and procedures are in place for the benefit and protection of everyone and every horse.

4. Recruitment

- 3.1 The BHS welcomes the involvement of all potential volunteers. Informal discussions are held to make sure that applicants and the role they are applying for are a good match. We will provide the capacity, resources, and systems to give volunteers a safe and enjoyable volunteering experience.
- 3.2 The BHS accepts volunteers from the age of 16. Anyone under 18 years old will be asked for parent/guardian consent. We do not have an upper age limit, but there may be health or safety situations that require us to make adjustments or ask someone to cease volunteering – see 9.3.

5. Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

- 4.1 The BHS is committed to Diversity, Equity & Inclusion. This commitment is reflected throughout our policies and practices. We want all of our volunteers to be Everyone Welcome. Whatever an individual's ability, background, culture or identity they are welcome to be part of our equestrian community.
- 4.2 We want volunteers to be able to carry out the role of their choosing; however, due to the nature of our work, this may not always be possible. We will always try to make reasonable adjustments, but where it would not be safe or appropriate for a volunteer to carry out a specific role, we will aim to offer them an alternative option.

6. What you can expect from the British Horse Society

- 5.1 To offer equal opportunities for all who want to volunteer with us.
- 5.2 A clear definition of your volunteer role.
- 5.3 To match your interests, skills, and experience with the right role for you wherever possible.
- 5.4 A clear communication structure so that you understand how you fit into the wider work of the BHS.
- 5.5 Appropriate training opportunities, support, resources, and information for your volunteer role.
- 5.6 Access to trained members of staff to support, guide and advise you.
- 5.7 Insurance when you are acting on our behalf (see Section 14).
- 5.8 Reimbursement of agreed out of pocket expenses.
- 5.9 To fulfil our responsibilities regarding your health, safety, and welfare as a volunteer.
- 5.10 Respect, courtesy, and appreciation.
- 5.11 Celebration of your successes and recognition for your loyalty and dedication.
- 5.12 Appreciation of what you have to say, consistently encouraging two-way communication.
- 5.13 A positive and friendly atmosphere.
- 5.14 Decisive action against bullying and harassment.

7. What the British Horse Society expects from you

- 6.1 To support respect and adhere to our governance, organisational policies, guidelines, and management decisions – including all aspects of equity, health & safety, data protection and the use of our brand. These are in place for the benefit and protection of everyone.
- 6.2 A positive and enthusiastic approach to your role where you are effective and reliable to the best of your ability.
- 6.3 To enhance the good reputation of the BHS by acting in a professional and courteous manner and dealing with people as you would like to be dealt with yourself.
- 6.4 To work in partnership with other volunteers, employees, stakeholders and the wider public. Our roles require teamwork and collaboration.
- 6.5 To engage with communications from the BHS and respond/action as required.
- 6.6 To attend meetings or provide reports, as your role requires.
- 6.7 To support events and activities organised by your team/committee. These are vital to promote our charitable objectives.
- 6.8 A willingness to attend necessary training so that we can equip you with correct and current information that will help you fulfil your role.
- 6.10 To talk to us if you have any problems, so that we can find a solution together.
- 6.11 To inform us of any changes to your personal circumstances that may affect your volunteering, or if you no longer wish to volunteer with us.
- 6.12 To use your dedicated BHS volunteer **email address**ⁱⁱ (where issued) in the course of your volunteering.
- 6.13 To declare all **conflict of interests**ⁱⁱⁱ between any of your personal, professional or business interests and the BHS.
- 6.14 All BHS premises and events are smoke free. Volunteers are asked not to smoke or vape when wearing a badge, branded clothing or anything that would identify them with the charity.
- 6.15 Not to undertake any volunteering activities whilst under the influence of alcohol or non-prescription drugs.
- 6.16 The horse is at the heart of all we do. Any volunteer who is subject to an upheld horse care/welfare concern will be asked to leave their role.
- 6.17 If a volunteer fails to act in accordance with the expectations above in their performance or behaviours whilst volunteering, then the BHS has the right to review or cease the volunteering relationship.

8. Expenses^{iv}

- 7.1 Volunteers may request reimbursement of reasonable out of pocket expenses, such as travel, subsistence and other costs incurred whilst volunteering. Expense claims for reasonable expenses must be authorised.

9. Fundraising

- 8.1 We actively encourage volunteers to raise funds towards our charitable work. If this includes writing a bid for funding from an external fund provider, we ask that you contact our Fundraising department on fundraising@bhs.org.uk prior to any bid being submitted.

10. Health & Safety

- 9.1 The BHS is committed to Health and Safety good practice, and we expect our volunteers to contribute to maintaining a safe working environment. This may include training and information such as lone working, first aid and risk assessments.
- 9.2 In accordance with the relevant BHS Policies, all volunteers must: -
- Take reasonable care for the Health & Safety of themselves and others who may be affected by their actions or omissions and avoid taking unnecessary risks whilst volunteering.
 - Follow our **Health & Safety Policy**^v and measures put in place by the BHS or any other organisation whose premises you may be volunteering at.
 - Report accidents, incidents, or dangerous circumstances to a member of staff.
 - Be aware of actions to take when an emergency arises and who, from BHS, to contact for support.
 - Immediately notify a member of staff or another volunteer if they feel unwell whilst carrying out their volunteering activity.
- 9.3 If a change occurs in a volunteer's circumstances that compromises their ability or wellbeing in a way that affects their voluntary duties, we will engage with the volunteer to discuss this. If a solution, by way of reasonable adjustment, cannot be found to allow the volunteer to continue, we may ask them to consider an alternative role or decide it is in the best interests of both parties to cease the volunteering relationship.

11. Data Protection, privacy & confidentiality

- 10.1 We take great care to protect your information as part of our data protection responsibilities. As a volunteer, we expect you to protect any personal or confidential information to which you may have access. This might include, but is not limited to, financial or membership data, or details relating to a horse care & welfare concern. More information can be found in our **privacy notice**^{vi}.

12. Photography

- 11.1 We may use photographs of volunteers carrying out their roles for promotional purposes, such as in a leaflet or online. Any images used will be with the consent of the individual/s and this consent may be withdrawn at any time.
- 11.2 Any photography or images taken or used by a volunteer in the course of their role must be in line with GDPR regulations.

13. Copyright & Intellectual Property

- 12.1 The rights to any work or assets that you create as part of your volunteering role for The BHS will belong to the Charity, unless otherwise agreed. Examples of such work includes original photography, artwork, graphic design and written work, including the results of research.

14. External Press, Media and Social Media

- 13.1 Volunteers must not speak on behalf of the BHS with external press and media. If volunteers are contacted by external press and media, they should direct them to our Communications Department which is open 24 hours a day 7 days a week. The contact number is 02476 840521 and the email is pressenquiry@bhs.org.uk.
- 13.2 Volunteers should refer to the **Volunteer Communications Policy**^{viii} for full information.

15. Insurance^{viii}

- 14.1 The BHS has appropriate insurance in place to cover its volunteers. These include Employers Liability Insurance in the event of a volunteer being harmed and Public Liability Insurance if a third-party is injured because of the actions of a volunteer in the course of their role.
- 14.2 The BHS does not provide motor insurance for volunteers. Where a vehicle is used for volunteering purposes it is for you to ensure that the vehicle is fit for purpose, insured and roadworthy. Where we agree to reimburse your expenses for travelling using your own vehicle, we use the BHS mileage claim rates which includes an allowance for insurance as well as fuel, maintenance, tax etc.

16. Raising a Concern^x

- 15.1 The BHS takes the concerns of volunteers very seriously and will make every reasonable effort to resolve any difficulties. If you have any problems or complaints about your volunteering, please talk to us immediately.

17. Whistleblowing*

- 16.1 The BHS is accountable to the Charity Commission and to the public who support us so generously. We have a responsibility to make sure our activities maintain our reputation as a well-respected and trusted charity.
- 16.2 If you find that any member of staff or volunteer is behaving in a way that could bring the BHS into disrepute, or cause financial loss, you should let us know immediately.
- 16.3 The Chairman of the Board of Trustees and the Chief Executive Officer have determined that no person, whatever their position, will suffer any disadvantages whatsoever as a result of raising a legitimate concern about the lawfulness or appropriateness of any action of the BHS.

i	Everyone Welcome Policy
ii	Volunteer Email Acceptable Use
iii	Conflict of Interest Policy
iv	Volunteer Expenses Policy
v	Health & Safety Policy
vi	Privacy notice
vii	Volunteer Communications Policy
viii	Insurance
ix	Raising a concern
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