

## **Gwent Archives Volunteer Policy**

### **Why do we involve volunteers?**

Volunteers perform a valuable and much needed service which helps to advance the three strands of Gwent Archives' mission – to collect, to preserve and to make accessible archives relating to the area it serves.

In return we offer the opportunity for volunteers to learn new skills, increase their level of work experience and interact with unique historical archives.

The principal areas in which volunteers are involved are:

- Cataloguing and indexing of records
- Cleaning and packaging of records

Gwent Archives will aim to identify worthwhile and satisfying opportunities for volunteers appropriate to their skills and aspirations. It will also aim to help overcome barriers that may make it difficult for them to volunteer.

Gwent Archives will operate in line with equal opportunities at all times in relation to both recruitment and support of volunteers.

This policy deals specifically with volunteers on site at Gwent Archives. The service also recognises the role which can be played by volunteers working remotely and the benefits this can bring to both parties.

### **Recruitment and Induction of Volunteers**

Volunteers will be asked to complete an application prior to taking up a volunteers post.

Discussions will be held with all prospective volunteers to ensure that their skills and interests are best served by the volunteering opportunity. References may be taken up.

Gwent Archives may refuse places, or withdraw opportunities from existing volunteers, where they are deemed unsuitable for the work.

Volunteers will be assessed to determine the level of supervision they require and the level of access to Gwent Archives they are allowed. This assessment will be on a task basis.

Volunteers will be given an induction prior to commencing their activities. This will cover procedures and general health and safety information prior to their starting their activities. It will include: -

- emergency/fire evacuation procedures, fire exits, fire assembly points, fire wardens and any additional emergency arrangements
- information on risk assessments and safe systems of work
- workplace specific hazards
- accident reporting procedures

- first aiders and location of first aid box/room
- welfare facilities – canteen, toilets, drinking water
- who to contact in the event of a problem
- details of the departmental health and safety co-ordinator and the corporate health and safety adviser
- any residual risks associated with their work and their responsibility towards others.

At the end of the induction volunteers will sign a checklist to show that all aspects have been covered.

Gwent Archives recognises the volunteer's right to withdraw at any time without prejudice. The volunteer will be offered an exit interview upon leaving.

### **Security and Confidential Information**

Collections which volunteers work on will be those which would normally be accessible to the public in the Research Room in terms of sensitivity of data.

Volunteers will receive the appropriate level of supervision and will not be allowed unaccompanied access to areas where documents are stored.

### **Health and Safety**

Volunteers must be provided with the necessary training to enable them to perform their tasks safely without putting themselves or others at risk. Volunteers must adopt safe working practices with proper attention paid to their Health and Safety and their responsibility to others. Raising awareness of this will form part of the induction.

Risk Assessments will also be undertaken on the work activities and work place of volunteers engaged. Any residual risks identified will be taken into account in the training of volunteers.

### **Monitoring and Review**

It will be the responsibility of Gwent Archives to regularly review the operation of this Volunteer Policy and to make sure that it is always in accordance with the Equal Opportunity Policy and current volunteering best practice.