



Volunteer Policy

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Policy reference sheet - Volunteer Policy

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Policy component	Description	Check
1 Policy statement	<p>This document is British Horse Society's policy for Volunteering</p> <p>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 BHS.</p>	
2 Policy audience	Volunteers	
3 Review programme	<p>Next review date is 31/03/2027</p> <p>Policy will be reviewed and approved by the Policy Review Group</p>	

Sign off	
Signed by	
Signature	
Date	

1. 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 our volunteer relationship and provides the key information and expectations for volunteering with BHS.
- 1.2 Volunteers freely give their time and skills to support our charitable objectives. Volunteering is based on trust and mutual respect and does not involve the obligations associated with employment or financial reward, beyond reimbursement of authorised expenses.
- 1.3 If volunteers are unsure about any part of this policy or related policies, they should contact their Regional/National Manager or the Volunteer Support Team.

2. Principles

- 2.1 Volunteers are vital to 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 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 BHS with their time, skills, experience and enthusiasm and 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.

3. Intentions

BHS aims to:

- 3.1 Provide a positive, inclusive and supportive volunteering environment.
- 3.2 Make sure volunteers understand their team structure, responsibilities, and communication routes.
- 3.3 Offer training and guidance that supports volunteers to carry out their role safely and effectively.
- 3.4 Provide clarity about the boundaries between volunteering and formal employment.

3.5 Promote consistent, safe and ethical standards in all volunteering activities.

4. Scope

This policy applies to:

- 4.1 All individuals volunteering with BHS (e.g., Access, Welfare, Safety, Events)
- 4.2 All volunteers acting on behalf of BHS, carrying out BHS activity, using BHS systems or representing BHS publicly.
- 4.3 Activities undertaken both in person and remotely, including digital engagement, meetings and events.
- 4.4 All BHS locations, events and interactions with members of the public, partners, stakeholders or other volunteers.

5. Responsibility

What you can expect from us

- 5.1 To offer equal opportunities for all who wish to volunteer.
- 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 in.
- 5.5 Appropriate training opportunities, support, resources, and information for your 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.
- 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, harassment or discrimination.

What we expect from you

- 5.15 Follow BHS policies, guidance and decisions, including equality, health and safety, data protection and use of BHS brand.
- 5.16 Bring a positive attitude and do your best to be reliable and effective in your role.
- 5.17 Act professionally and courteously, treating others with respect.
- 5.18 Work well with other volunteers, staff, stakeholders and the public as part of a team.
- 5.19 Read/engage with BHS communications and respond when needed.
- 5.20 Attend meetings or provide updates as your role requires.
- 5.21 Support your team's events and activities where possible.
- 5.22 Take part in training to help you feel confident and informed in your role.
- 5.23 Let us know if you have any concerns so we can support you.
- 5.24 Tell us about any changes that affect your volunteering, or if you wish to stop volunteering.
- 5.25 Use your [BHS volunteer email address](#), where provided, for all volunteering communications.
- 5.26 Declare any [conflicts of interest](#) connected to BHS.
- 5.27 Do not smoke or vape at BHS venues or when representing the charity.
- 5.28 Do not volunteer while under the influence of alcohol or non-prescribed drugs.
- 5.29 Put horse welfare first; upheld welfare concerns against you will mean stepping down from the role.

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5.30 If expectations are not met, BHS may need review or cease the volunteering arrangement.

6. Recruitment

- 6.1. BHS welcomes volunteers from all backgrounds and will discuss roles informally to make sure there is a good match.
- 6.2. Volunteers must be aged 16 or over. Parental or guardian consent is required for those under 18.
- 6.3. There is no upper age limit. Adjustments or role changes may be needed to support health, safety or welfare.

7. Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

- 7.1. BHS is committed to Diversity, Equity & Inclusion and ensuring all volunteers feel welcome (“[Everyone Welcome](#)”).
- 7.2. We aim to remove barriers wherever possible; reasonable adjustments will be considered for all volunteer roles.
- 7.3. Where a role cannot safely or appropriately be carried out by an individual, alternatives will be discussed.

8. Expenses

- 8.1. Volunteers are encouraged to claim reasonable out-of-pocket expenses, such as travel or subsistence, so that volunteering with BHS does not cost you personally. Expenses should be agreed in advance and claimed in line with [BHS Volunteer Expenses Policy](#).

9. Fundraising

- 9.1 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 first.

10. Health & Safety

All volunteers must:

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- 10.1 Take reasonable care for their own health & safety and that of others.
- 10.2 Avoid unnecessary risks while volunteering.
- 10.3 Follow [BHS Health & Safety Policy](#) and local safety measures.
- 10.4 Report accidents, incidents or unsafe circumstances immediately.
- 10.5 Know what to do in an emergency and who to contact for support.
- 10.6 Notify BHS if they feel unwell while volunteering.
- 10.7 Inform BHS of any changes in circumstances affecting their ability to perform the role; reasonable adjustments will be considered.

11. Data Protection, Privacy and Confidentiality

- 11.1 Volunteers must protect personal and confidential information they may access, including contact data, financial information or welfare-related details. Further information is available in [BHS Privacy Notice](#).

12. Photography

- 12.1 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.
- 12.2 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

- 13.1 The rights to any work or assets that you create as part of your volunteering role will belong to BHS, 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 & Social Media

- 14.1 Volunteers must not speak to the press or media on behalf of BHS.
- 14.2 All enquiries must be directed to BHS Communications Department (24/7 service). The contact number is 02476 840521 and the email is pressenquiry@bhs.org.uk.
- 14.3 Volunteers should follow the [Volunteer Communications Policy](#).

15. Insurance

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- 15.1 BHS provides [Employers Liability and Public Liability insurance](#) to cover volunteers acting on behalf of the charity.
- 15.2 BHS does not provide motor insurance. Volunteers must ensure their vehicle is roadworthy and appropriately insured.
- 15.3 Where we agree to reimburse your expenses for travelling using your own vehicle, we use BHS mileage claim rates which includes an allowance for insurance as well as fuel, maintenance, tax etc.

16. Raising a Concern

- 16.1 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 or refer to our [raising a concern](#) policy.

17. Whistleblowing

- 17.1 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.
- 17.2 Anyone witnessing behaviour that could bring BHS into disrepute or cause financial loss should report it immediately.
- 17.3 The Board of Trustees and the Chief Executive Officer have determined that no volunteer will experience disadvantage for raising a legitimate concern in good faith, in line with the [Whistleblowing Policy](#).