

high

trees

community action

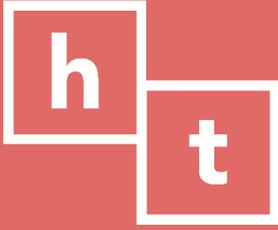
Volunteer Handbook

Welcome to High Trees

High Trees exists because of the brilliance, commitment and passion of local people. Thank you for gifting your time to volunteer with us!

This handbook should have all the information you need to be a volunteer here at High Trees. Please read through everything carefully. If you feel we have not been able to answer all your questions or if there is anything that you are not sure of, please contact Graham in the main office, who will be pleased to help.

If you need any more information, please give us a call on 020 8671 3132 or email the team at hub@high-trees.org



Meeting everyone as a person of great potential

Our work aims to ensure individuals have increased skills and a stronger voice; for life and work, and to build active, resilient communities.

Introduction to High Trees

High Trees Community Development Trust is located in what was once the Library for St Martin's estate. In the mid-1990s when the Local Authority sold off the St Martin's estates housing stock to Metropolitan, Optivo and Notting Hill housing associations, the Library building was left vacant. A Tenants and Resident's Association (TRA) was formed, led by local resident Janice Owens. This group of local people wanted to see the building stay in the hands of the community. The TRA managed to get ownership of the centre on a voluntary basis and set out to create High Trees. In 1998 this dream was realised with High Trees gaining charitable status. The TRA wanted a space that delivered services and provided support to people in Tulse Hill and beyond, to support them to realise their full potential.

Based in Tulse Hill (Lambeth) in South London, High Trees Community Development Trust is an established community anchor and hub. Registered charity as a charity in 1998, we have now been delivering projects and services to local people for 22 years. Adopting a holistic approach to community development, all the work we do is delivered in a collaborative manner; working with other local and national partners to enhance service delivery, avoid duplication of work and ensure we have an effective referral system.

Guided by the needs of the local community, we deliver and support a range of projects within these areas:

- **Education and Training;** community Learning and accredited training courses, employment support, volunteering opportunities and work placements schemes.
- **Employment and Careers;** employment support, welfare support and help with CVs, covering letters and interview skills
- **Children, Young People and Families;** working based on early intervention, we deliver youth clubs and forums, adventure play, wellbeing projects, self-development programmes, mentoring and youth leadership.
- **Community Action;** nurturing and capacity building individuals and community groups to empower them to take local action and develop advocacy skills.

Volunteering Essentials: What You Need to Know



Signing in

Whatever centre you are volunteering at, please ensure that you sign the register when you enter and leave the centre. At High Trees, the volunteer register is kept just inside the main office, by the fax machine. This is for fire safety and so that we can keep track of your volunteering. If you are volunteering at another site, your Role Supervisor will indicate where the register is placed.

Dress Code

High Trees delivers various services, so it is important to dress appropriately for the role. If you are volunteering with the youth or community engagement teams it would be appropriate for you to dress casually. If you are working within the Employability, adult education teams, or on reception, smart casual wear would be more appropriate. Please speak to your Role Supervisor during your induction for guidance on what dress code would be most appropriate for your role if unclear.

Training and Support

We provide training and support to volunteers, this includes:

- An Induction to High Trees and to the role you will be volunteering for.
- Ongoing training opportunities, both internal and external that will not only support your work at the centre but will also help enhance your personal and professional prospects.

- Ongoing telephone and email support from the Volunteer Coordinator who can be contacted between Monday and Friday between 10am-6pm.
- A reference for future employment or training.
- A termly social event and an annual volunteer celebration.
- As well as all the support listed above, you will also have the support of your specific Role Supervisor.

Computers and Printing

If you need to use a computer in the office, you can do so using the login details below.

Log in Name: Volunteer – Password: WelcomeV1

If you need to print something, please ask your Role Supervisor to assist you.

Managing Behaviour

All volunteers have personal responsibility for their own behaviour and to ensure that they act within high trees core values. In instances where you experience behaviour from beneficiaries outside that fall outside our core values in the workplace there are several things that you can do to help prevent these and deescalate violence with users.

Offer good customer service and be aware of site users' needs.

Recognise the potential for work related violence and take action to resolve it early on. Volunteers should take positive action and, for example, contact a manager if they think a customer or member of the public might cause problems.

Don't except instances of work-related violence directed towards you or others. volunteers should report instances of violence, threats or abuse, including any details about what happened, who was involved and any relevant circumstances that may have contributed to the incident. Serious incidents should be reported in the incident book which is kept by the Facilities Manager. Minor incidents of verbal abuse should be reported to your Role Supervisor as they occur.

Be supportive of colleagues who are victims or witnessed work related violence.

Suggest additional measures to managers which might help to prevent and manage work related violence.

Volunteers have a responsibility to act in a way that does not incite or increase the likelihood of violence.

Time Commitment and Reliability

We ask of all our volunteers to commit to a certain period relevant to the project in which you support. It is important for our users to know that they are consistently going to be working with the same people, as this provides the foundations for them to feel comfortable in the centre and maximise their learning and personal progression.

If you are unable to attend:

If you can't make it to a session for whatever reason, please let your Role Supervisor know as soon as possible so that cover can be arranged.

If you need to leave your volunteer role before the end of the project you support:

We appreciate that personal circumstances may change and that you may not always be able to continue to volunteer for the entire life of the project that you support. If your circumstances change and you can no longer continue in your voluntary role, please be aware that we need at least 2 weeks' notice. This gives us the opportunity to recruit a new volunteer to replace you. If you do not give us notice it can impact the service provision.



Claiming Expenses

We appreciate and greatly value the time that our volunteers give freely to support our service users. In return High Trees does its best to cover volunteer expenses. Claims over £50 will be paid by BACS or cheque. Claims under £50 shall be paid in cash. We will do our best to make sure your claims get paid as soon as possible.

Travel

We will reimburse the cost of your travel to and from High Trees, up to £5 per day. The cost of a taxi to High Trees will only be reimbursed in exceptional circumstances, and this should be agreed with your Role Supervisor before you make the journey.

Food and Drink

If you are volunteering for more than five hours, your meal expenses will be reimbursed to the value of £3. All High Trees premises are equipped with tea/coffee making facilities, and all volunteers are welcome to help themselves to hot drinks and water while they are volunteering.

How to claim?

- Complete an expenses form
- Attach matching receipts (the date of your receipt will need to clearly match your volunteering date)
- Sign your form!
- Hand the claims form to your Role Supervisor who will process the form
- Please note that an expenses form will need to be submitted within 90 days of the incurred expense

Forms submitted by the 17th of each month will be paid on or before 27th of each month. Your expenses will be available for collection from your Role Supervisor. Please talk to our Volunteer Coordinator (Graham) if you are volunteering on an ad-hoc basis for different arrangements.

How to obtain receipts?

- Oyster and contactless cards

Short Journey statement: You can present your Oyster or contactless card at a London Underground station ticket office and ask for a statement. This statement only records your travel information for the last 7 days.

Registered Oyster or contactless card: If you haven't already done so you can register your Oyster or contactless card by creating a contactless and Oyster account on the www.tfl.gov.uk website. This will allow you to access your journey and payment history for up to 12 months, clearly showing which tube stations or bus routes were used and whether the journey was paid for with pre-pay or covered by a travel card.

Please highlight any details relating to journeys to and from High Trees and attach this to your Expenses Claim Form. Please note that if you have a bus pass, we will reimburse you up to £3 per day. Please attach your bus pass receipt to your expenses form.

- Own Transport

Car: 40p per mile. Motorbike/scooter: 24p per mile.

Please provide a receipt for petrol. The receipt does not need to be for the exact amount but must be for the date you volunteer. Please include the details of your commute including starting and finishing addresses and the total mileage on your Expenses Claim Form to claim expenses for your own vehicle. Free parking is available in St Martins Estate and Tulse Hill Estate.



Problem Solving

Volunteer Service

All volunteers will be given a probation period of three months. At any point during the first three months the Volunteer Service may ask you to stop volunteering. This may be because we have too many volunteers on a certain project or we think another volunteer opportunity outside High Trees may be more appropriate for you.

We hope that there will never be a need to use the following procedures. However, we would aim to resolve any problems quickly and fairly. If you feel there has been a challenge which you consider as grounds for complaint or something which has caused you distress, please follow these 3 steps:

- Always try to resolve the problem informally by speaking to the people involved first.
- The next step is to write your concerns down and send a letter to the Volunteer Coordinator, Graham. They will respond to your concerns within five working days. If the grievance concerns the Volunteer Coordinator you can write to your Role Supervisor instead.
- If you remain dissatisfied you can write to the High Trees management team, who will consider your grievance.

There may come a time when we need to discuss an aspect of your behaviour or volunteer role. We have devised four clear stages for this discussion. At any stage you are welcome to bring along an advocate or friend for support.

The four stages are as follows:

1. Informal discussion with Project Lead or Volunteer Coordinator.
2. A verbal meeting with the Volunteer Coordinator.
3. A written warning stating desired actions necessary to resolve the situation.
4. Finally, the Volunteer Coordinator will ask you to leave your voluntary position at High Trees.

You may appeal at any time by writing to the management team. This appeal must be received by them within five working days of the disciplinary action. The decision of the management team will be final.

Policies



Equality and Discrimination

The High Trees volunteer service values the diversity of its volunteers and does not discriminate against any person from volunteering with High Trees on the grounds of race, creed colour, ethnic origin, marital status, disability, age, sexual orientation or being pregnant.

High Trees accepts its responsibility to protect the dignity of its volunteers and specifically to ensure there is no harassment on the grounds of gender, race or sexual orientation. If at any time a volunteer feels that they are discriminated against or harassed they should not suffer in silence.

Where appropriate an approach should be made to the Volunteer Coordinator who will support you and ensure that the issue is dealt with in accordance with High Trees procedures and guidelines. If it is not appropriate the volunteer should go to their Role Supervisor.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality means that details about other people should only be disclosed on a need to know basis. Any details of a personal nature will only be disclosed with the consent of the person involved.

This means that as a volunteer:

You should not discuss personal information given to you by service users attending the centre, volunteers, or staff with anyone unless it is vital that the information is passed on for safety reasons.

It is classed as misconduct to behave in a discriminatory way, which may cause another person to feel threatened, humiliated or harassed. Anyone found to have committed such an action will be asked to end their volunteering for High Trees.

Volunteers must not engage in, encourage or collude in harassment and they should be vigilant in identifying and helping to prevent behaviour which damages an individual's dignity.

Any information that you give to High Trees staff, will not be discussed with others without your consent and knowledge. The only exception to this is if there is an immediate safety issue for users of High Trees, volunteers, staff, or the public. The details noted in your registration file will be inputted onto a database only accessible by the Volunteer Service and the Project Leads.

Consult the Volunteer Coordinator or a member of staff immediately if you consider there may be good reason to break this rule.

Confidentiality does not extend to cases of abuse or situations where an individual's life is, or may be, in danger or at risk. In these cases, the volunteer has a duty under the law to report such cases to their role supervisor and or the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Health and Safety

High Trees Community Development Trust recognises that it has responsibilities for the health and safety of our workforce whilst at work and others who could be affected by our work activities. At High Trees all staff and volunteers have a duty to ensure that the centre is a safe environment for both ourselves and our service users. To ensure everyone knows what is expected of them we provide health and safety policies and training that you must abide by in order to protect your health as well as that of others in the centre.

Many illnesses are spread through unhygienic practices:

- The cleanliness of your surroundings is crucial to your health. Please do not litter or leave rubbish on tables or floors.
- Always wash your hands after using the toilets and before consuming food.
- Do not come to High Trees if you are not well, call or email your Role Supervisor or the Volunteer Coordinator if they are not available.

- There is a no smoking policy at the High Trees Centre, you should not smoke at the front of the building. You will be shown the designated smoking area during your induction.
- If you do feel unwell or are injured in any way you must report to a first aid officer. Ask the Volunteer Coordinator should you need one.

Do not lift any heavy or bulky items unless you have received Manual Handling Training. Always seek assistance.

Safety, First Aid & Fire

You should use all equipment in the way you have been instructed. Do not eat or drink near equipment and report any faults. You should always report any damage to electrical or mechanical equipment that you see to your role supervisor. In the event of an accident, please inform your Role Supervisor, if they are not available please inform the Volunteer Coordinator.

First aid boxes are located at High Trees on reception, at the Scout Hut in the office and at the Adventure Playground (APG) in the office. You will be shown where the first aid points are by your role supervisor if you are volunteering at the Scout Hut or APG and during your induction if you are going to be based at the main building by the Volunteer coordinator. All accidents, incidents and near misses need to be noted in the Accident book, which you will find at the first aid point at reception at High Trees main building or at the office at the Scout Hut and Adventure Playground sites.

In the event of a fire, the manager, reception team or other designated person in charge of the building will instruct all people to leave the building, using the nearest available exits and will also call the fire brigade. If there is no time to inform the person on reception, leave your volunteer position in a calm and controlled manner ensuring that everyone around you does the same. Do not stop for personal belongings and do not allow anyone else to stop for theirs.

People should then assemble at the fire assembly point, which you will be shown during your induction at High Trees and during your first session if based at the Adventure Playground or Scout Hut, where a register will be taken by the designated Fire Marshal to make sure everyone is accounted for.

Do not re-enter the building to collect personal possession or for any other reason unless the Fire Marshal informs you that it is safe to do so.



Child Protection, Safeguarding Children and DBS

High Trees is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people and vulnerable adults. We expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) criminal background check

Volunteers are required to complete a criminal background check known as a DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) as part of their induction process. This may be done as frequently as deemed appropriate. This is because the centre has young children and vulnerable people attending and we take safeguarding seriously. The DBS application takes approximately 1-2 weeks to process and you will be sent a certificate to your home address once this process is completed. Upon receipt, you can register your certificate online with the certificate number via this link:

<https://secure.crbonline.gov.uk/crsc/apply?execution=e1s1>

Registering your certificate online will allow you to use the certificate for any other voluntary position and will save you as well as the organisation a substantial amount of time and hassle.

All volunteer positions at High Trees are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

Child & Vulnerable Adult Protection and Safeguarding

We see you as a role model for service users that attend the centre. Please remember to maintain boundaries and don't initiate physical contact with the children, young people or adult users of the centre.

Please make sure you adhere to the rules below to ensure the safeguarding of our beneficiaries:

- Please don't confuse the children, young people or adult users of High Trees by giving personal gifts
- Please keep doors to rooms open if you are alone in a room with a child or adult
- Please don't exchange phone numbers with the children, young people or adult users of High Trees – all contact should go via a parent, guardian or High Trees staff
- Please don't meet up with any children, young people or vulnerable adults you support outside of High Trees
- Please don't take or store any pictures of beneficiaries on your personal phones or devices

If you have any questions about safeguarding children, please ask our Child Protection Officer and Children and Young People's Manager, Elen Evans. If you have any questions about vulnerable adult safeguarding, please ask our Adult Safeguarding Officer and Adult Education and Training Manager, Morgana Zuccoli.

E-learning Child Protection Training

New volunteers are obliged to complete an online level 1 child safeguarding training within 4 weeks of their induction. This course will give you the basic knowledge of how to spot signs of abuse and neglect, how to keep yourself and our beneficiaries safe and what to do if a beneficiary discloses a safeguarding concern with you.

To access your course please follow the instructions below.

- Go to the Foundation Online Learning website <https://www.lambethscb.org.uk/training/e-learning> where you will find an overview of the course content.
- To register for the course scroll down the page and click the register here link or go to https://lambeth.melearning.university/user/self_register

Fill out your details, create a username and select the following for the mandatory fields, Sector: Voluntary Agency, Service: Other, Location: Greenleaf Close, Group: Other

Once you have submitted your registration information the site administrator should provide you with a sign in link and a password which you should reset when you first login. Once you have logged into your account, register for part 1 and 2 of the level 1 child safeguarding course and complete both sections. The website provides a guide for the length of time the survey will take to complete. Once complete you will have the ability to download a PDF of your certificates, download these for your reference and email a copy of them to the volunteer coordinator: graham.weston@high-trees.org



General Procedure

DO:

- Listen very carefully to what the child or vulnerable adult tells you, treat any allegations extremely seriously and always act towards the child or vulnerable adult as if you believe what they are saying.
- Tell the child or vulnerable adult they are right to tell you. Reassure them that they are not to blame. Be honest about your own position, who you have to tell and why.
- Tell the child or vulnerable adult what you are doing and when, and keep them up to date with what is happening.
- Take further action – you may be the only person in a position to prevent future abuse, contact the designated Child Protection Officer or Adult Safeguarding officer (contact details at the back). If that person is not available inform a member of management.
- Write down everything said and take note of any action taken.

DON'T:

- Make promises you can't keep.
- Interrogate the child – it is not your job to carry out an investigation – this will be up to the police and social services, who have experience in this.
- Do nothing – make sure you tell the Child or Adult Protection Officer as soon as possible– they will know how to follow this up and where to go for further advice.
- Cast doubt on what the child has told you, don't interrupt or change the subject.
- Say anything that makes the child feel responsible for the abuse

If you would like to read any High Trees policy in full, please ask at reception to see the Volunteer Policies Book. If any policy is missing or you would like further information, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator.

Please follow us on our social media outlets and help us spread the word about High Trees!

Facebook: www.Facebook.com/HighTreesCommunityDevelopmentTrust

Twitter: [@HighTreesCDT](https://twitter.com/HighTreesCDT)

Instagram: [@high_treescdt](https://www.instagram.com/high_treescdt)

We are here to support you and your wellbeing is important to us, so should you ever need us, please get in touch!

High Trees CDT
220 Upper Tulse Hill
London
SW2 2NS
0208 671 3132

High Trees Volunteer Coordinator

Graham Weston: graham.weston@high-trees.org

We hope you find your volunteering role here at High Trees enjoyable and satisfying, welcome to the team!



Volunteer Agreement

Every volunteer signs the Volunteer Agreement before starting their role at the centre. Here is a copy for your information.

This Volunteer Agreement does not in any way form a contract of employment. There is no obligation for you to continue volunteering and High Trees has no obligation to provide a role.

High Trees relies greatly on its volunteers who give their time, knowledge and enthusiasm, making it possible to run our services and projects. The objective of our Volunteer Scheme is to provide volunteers with valuable work experience in order to step into London's competitive job market and help them to develop a wide range of skills by interacting within a multicultural, cooperative and inspiring environment. We appreciate you volunteering with us and our aim is to make this experience enjoyable and rewarding for you.

You have a right to:

- Support and training from the Volunteer Service
- Additional specific role support and training from your role supervisor
- Your travel expenses to be paid timely
- Support and encouragement
- Be appreciated and feel part of the centre
- Voice your concerns and be listened to
- Develop both personally and professionally and have evidence of such development
- Withdraw from the activity without a sense of guilt
- Confidentiality, with all personal records and data kept securely (See Privacy Notice for Volunteers)

You have a responsibility to:

- Commit to at least 12 weeks of your time or until the end of the specific project that you are supporting
- Be reliable. If you are unable to attend the session email your Role Supervisor as soon as possible
- Attend relevant training sessions
- Follow our ethos and dress code
- Read and follow High Tree's Safeguarding Policy as well as all other policies set out in the Volunteer Handbook.
- Look after your own safety and report any safety concerns to the Volunteer Coordinator
- Respect the confidentiality of services users and staff at High Trees
- Sign in when entering the centre, in the folder just inside the office

Declaration:

I understand my rights and responsibilities as a High Trees Volunteer as stated in this agreement. I have been provided with the Child and Adult protection policies and procedures, I know where I can access all the relevant High Trees policies in full, have received the volunteer handbook and know who to contact should I have any outstanding questions.

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

Volunteer Health and Safety agreement

Health and Safety training is a legal requirement for all new volunteers. It is, therefore, company policy to ensure that all new volunteers are given enough information, instruction and training to enable them to carry out their role in safety and with minimum risk to themselves and others who may be affected by their or our activities. Go through each item on the list and tick box if completed. If a subject area has not been dealt with, enter 'No' in the box and be sure to return to it later!

| Fire Safety | | Notes |
|---|--|-------|
| Has the fire warning system been explained to you (location of call points, sound of alarm etc.)? | | |
| Has the means of escape been demonstrated to you from the areas in which you will work? | | |
| Have you been shown the location of the fire assembly point where you must report in the event of a fire or emergency evacuation? | | |
| Has the action to be taken in the event of a fire been made clear? | | |
| Has the location of the nearest firefighting equipment been shown? | | |
| Has the periodic fire drill been explained? | | |
| Has the necessity for keeping fire doors closed been emphasised? | | |
| Has the relevant Fire, First Aid & Emergency arrangements been explained to you? | | |
| First Aid | | Notes |
| Have the emergency first aid procedures been explained? | | |
| Has the location of the nearest first aid kit been shown? | | |
| Do you know who to contact if you or someone else needs first aid? | | |
| Have the procedures for reporting accidents and incidents been explained? | | |
| Is the Accident Book readily available to you? | | |

| Welfare Facilities | | Notes |
|---|--|-------|
| Have the facilities for taking rest breaks been explained to you? | | |
| Have you been made aware of where you may eat and drink? | | |
| Have you been shown the location of toilet facilities? | | |
| Have you been shown the location of hand-washing facilities? | | |
| Have you been shown where personal clothing is left whilst at work? | | |

Think safely. Do not do anything that you are not trained to do. Workplaces can be dangerous places. Slips, trips and falls are a major accident cause. Ensure that your work area is always kept clean and tidy.

IF IN DOUBT – ASK YOUR ROLE SUPERVISOR OR VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

INDUCTION CARRIED OUT BY: on

.....

A printed copy of this checklist will be retained in your personnel file. Please sign here to acknowledge that you have received and understood this induction training.

Volunteer Name (PRINTED):.....

Volunteer Role:.....

Volunteer signature:

Date

| General Safety Issues | | Notes |
|---|--|-------|
| Has it been explained to you where to go, who to call, who to ask for help and advice regarding safety issues? | | |
| Have you undertaken a tour of the workplace? | | |
| Do you know what to do to report defective equipment? | | |
| Has the hazard reporting procedure been explained to you? | | |
| Have you been made aware of the risks associated with work tasks that you are expected to carry out? | | |
| Have any 'safe methods of working' been communicated to you? | | |
| Has it been made clear that gangways, exits etc. must always be kept clear of obstructions? | | |
| Have those areas that have restricted access (if any) been explained? | | |
| Has the meaning of any safety signs (if relevant) been explained? | | |
| Have the rules on smoking been explained to you? | | |
| Has the necessity for wearing any protective clothing been made clear (if relevant)? Have you signed for receipt of this equipment? | | |
| Has attention been drawn to lifting and handling assessments and procedures where relevant? | | |
| Have you been made aware of the company Health and Safety policy? | | |
| Have you read and understood the organisation's Health and Safety Policy and signed to verify understanding of it? | | |