



# **Rickmansworth Waterways Trust**

## **Volunteer Handbook**

**Document Number V01**

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## From the Chair of the Trust Welcome to Rickmansworth Waterways Trust

The Trust has been in existence since 1993.

The main purpose of the Handbook is to explain what the Trust does, supported by its volunteers: how we do it, and how we work with others to get it done. You'll find here a set of notes to fill in the gaps in the Trust's formal documentation, and to show how you can take part in the various things we do.

It is important that everyone feels welcome and feels able to make whatever input they can, and if that's just a few hours a year then that's absolutely fine. We highly value the time and efforts of all our volunteers without whom Rickmansworth Waterways Trust would not exist.

We encourage everyone to take a front-line role in support of the work of the Trust. The Handbook exists to help you do that in whatever role you want to play.

## SECTION 1 – About the Trust

### **Our charitable objectives**

We are a Heritage Education Charity based at Batchworth Lock in Rickmansworth.

The Trust has an important role in education both formally as in our Key Stage 1 and 2 schools education programme “Learning at the Lock” and also in training volunteers to learn new skills.

There are many volunteering opportunities within the Trust, for example: -

- Looking after and maintaining the general area between Stockers Lock and Batchworth Lock under an ‘adoption’ agreement that the Trust has with the Canal & River Trust
- Volunteering in the Batchworth Lock Canal Centre
- Carrying out maintenance jobs on our 1936 historic narrow boat ‘Roger’ and the Trust’s trip boat ‘Pride of Batchworth’
- Skippering our trip boat, undertaking return ferry trips between Batchworth and Stockers Lock and longer ‘charters’ of up to 6 hours in duration. All skippers & crew have to undertake formal training and qualifications to undertake these duties overseen by an independent Royal Yachting Association examiner.
- Assisting with educational visits under the guidance of our Education Programme Manager
- Assisting with the running and organisation of the annual Rickmansworth Festival held on the third weekend of May every year. (This is our main fundraising event)

### **How the Trust is governed**

We are a Company Limited by Guarantee, a registered Charity and we are “governed” by our Articles of Association.

- The Trustees are also Directors of the Company and are elected at the AGM. Each year a third of the Trustees stand down and are either replaced or can stand again for re-election. Trustees may be “co-opted” onto the Board outside the AGM if necessary and their appointment is formally ratified at the AGM. The Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary, as well as any other Officers, are appointed by the Board of Trustees. There are various other rules for committee and General Meetings, including Special Meetings, which you can see in the Articles themselves. The Trustee Board generally meets about every 8 weeks.
- We have an ‘Operations Group’ made up of the General Manager plus a small number of Trustees and three volunteers who oversee the running of the Trust on a day-to-day basis and report to the Trustee Board. The Operations Group usually meets once a month.
- We may, from time to time establish various sub-committees, appointed to take on particular jobs or projects and usually standing down when that’s been done. It’s not necessary to be a Trustee, to be on a sub-committee.
- AGMs and other meetings
  - Our Annual General Meeting is held in our Education Centre. We encourage everyone to come along to this as it provides a real opportunity to discuss where the Trust is going. There are also drinks and the opportunity to socialise once the business side of the evening is completed.

- We'll also take the chance to have social events during the year, where we can all meet up informally
- We'll also hold Special meetings as required, and the rules for this are in the Articles.

- The Social side

We see it as important that our volunteers get to know each other outside their volunteering roles so we aim to have at least one significant social event each year. This is usually our annual garden party.

We also try to have a range of smaller varied events at intervals during the year as well such as a coffee morning at the end of our annual season. We also organise other fund-raising social events.

- Communication with our Volunteers

Most of our communication is done via email and phone. Our detailed volunteering rotas are organised by our General Manager, Education Programme Manager and the volunteer responsible for running our Charter operation. A Trustee oversees these detailed rotas and provides a high level summary to all volunteers which looks 1 month ahead and this is updated every week. We also use a newsletter (the Batchworth Telegraph), issued by e-mail twice a year to communicate to our volunteers, friends and other contacts.

We have a website ([rwt.org.uk](http://rwt.org.uk)) which has details on all aspects of the Trusts work and is the public face of our charity. We also have a Twitter account @rickywatertrust and a Facebook account for both the Trust and the Rickmansworth Festival.

### **Where our money comes from**

The Trust's income comes from several sources. Where necessary, we will also make applications for grants for specific projects but these do not cover our running costs.

The Batchworth Lock Canal Centre sales provide an important income stream as does the money from our ferry trip and charter operation.

The hiring out of the Education Centre also provides us with an income stream once running costs for the building have been taken into account.

The Rickmansworth Festival is another major source of income and funds raised via this route have allowed us to build the Batchworth Lock Education Centre.

We also use our status as a Charity to claim Gift Aid where possible.

### **How the Trust uses the money it raises**

The Trust has a reasonably low cost base. The salaries of both the General Manager and Education Programme Manager are some of our major expenses as are the running costs for the Batchworth Lock Canal Centre, Batchworth Lock Education Centre and running the Pride of Batchworth and the ongoing conservation of our historic wooden boat Roger.

Full details of how the Trusts money is used, including its general and specified reserves are detailed in our annual reports and presented by the Finance Director at the AGM.



## Section 2: Working in the Trust

### Responsibilities of Volunteers and the Trust

#### **What you contribute:**

You contribute your time to the Trust and provide the help we need to run our key operations to meet our charitable objectives. We will try and find a suitable role that meets your needs in terms of what you would wish to do, the time you can offer and provide any training required to allow you to fulfil this role. To this end we will ask you to complete a Volunteer details form – see V02, Volunteer details form.

#### **What you get:**

We seek to ensure that all of our Volunteers are able to undertake any of the tasks that they want to. We provide full training on all of the aspects of the Trust, provide a vibrant and happy place to volunteer and we appreciate everyone's contribution however large or small. Our skippers can gain nationally recognised qualifications on boat handling, gain an insight into the retail business, or become one of our education programme presenters.

#### **Safety when we work**

We follow the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 (“HSAWA”) and the various Regulations which flow from it. They apply to the Trust, and it is our responsibility to ensure all our activities are safe for the visitors to our premises.

The policy of the Trust is that we will work within the provisions of the HSAWA. This will require us to have a comprehensive series of risk assessments and working methods that govern how we operate. These risk documents govern the briefings and training referred to below, and also in the Safety Management System for our boats and crewing handbooks.

In particular, we seek to give everyone the information which makes sure that they know what we do and what the basic rules are for working with us. They cover the differing requirements for our various activities, and these are listed in the Appendices below and what you need to be familiar with will depend on your area of volunteering.

A knowledge or ability in First Aid is not a pre-requisite for volunteering, but people with skills in First Aid or would like to train in First Aid would help our Trust greatly.

## **General Safety Instructions to Staff and Volunteers**

We expect our volunteers to do the following to ensure a safe environment for our volunteers and visitors: -

1. Everyone should be aware of, and respect and adhere to, the rules and procedures outlined in our Health and Safety Policy statement, and other supporting documentation relevant to their volunteering role.
2. Any person under the influence of alcohol or any other intoxicating drug that might impair skills or judgement, whether prescribed or otherwise, shall not be allowed on the job.
3. Horseplay, practical joking or any other acts, which might jeopardise the health and safety of any other person, are forbidden and must be prevented.
4. Any person whose levels of alertness and / or ability are reduced due to illness or fatigue will not be allowed on the job if this might jeopardise the health and safety of that person or any other person.
5. All waste materials must be disposed of carefully and in such a way that they do not constitute a hazard to others.
6. No one should undertake a job that appears to be unsafe.
7. Staff and volunteers should take care to ensure that all protective guards and other safety devices are properly fitted and in good working order and shall immediately report any deficiencies to the General Manager or the Chair of Trustees.
8. Suitable clothing and footwear will be worn at all times. Volunteers and staff engaged in Learning at the Lock (LatL) should be identifiable by wearing the LatL badge.
9. Working areas must be kept clean and tidy, and waste materials and rubbish must be removed routinely.
10. Walkways and passageways must be kept clear from obstructions at all times.
11. Trailing cables are a trip hazard and should not be left unattended in any walkway or passageway.

If there are any complaints about the words or actions of any volunteers in the first instance it must be reported to the General Manager who may seek advice and guidance from members of the Trustee Board.

Complaints about the words or actions of the General Manager must in the first instance be reported to the line manager of the General Manager and / or to the Chair of the Trustees.



## Our Volunteer Code of Conduct

- **Act in the best interest of RWT when volunteering** - consider what is best for the organisation and its beneficiaries and avoid bringing RWT into disrepute. RWT issues branded polo shirts to all volunteers and asks them to wear theirs when volunteering to promote the organisation.
- **Have a sound and up-to-date knowledge of RWT and its environment** – understand the volunteering task they are undertaking and ensure they are capable of carrying it out. If in any doubt of their ability, they must seek assistance from the General Manager or Education Programme Manager to get training in any operation required for the role.
- **Wear the appropriate Personal Protective Equipment required for the activity** - for some volunteering roles protective apparel is required e.g. life jackets when operating the Trip Boat or gloves and appropriate footwear when manual handling. Please follow the guidance of the person directing the volunteering activity.
- **Always let the manager of any rota know well in advance if they are unable to volunteer for a previously committed slot with as much notice as possible** - RWT fully understands that volunteers occasionally are unable to honour commitments.
- **Attend volunteer meetings as required** – volunteer meetings are a good way of communicating information on the Trust's activities and keeping up to date with any changes in their volunteering role. The meetings engender a feeling of belonging to a worthwhile organisation. Volunteers are encouraged to attend these if possible.
- **Carry out any training required for their volunteer role** – this is particularly important for roles involving operating RWT's boats and supporting the Trust's education work with young children, including having DBS checks.
- **Actively engage in any discussion on RWT's volunteering roles** – volunteers' contributions to improving the activities of the Trust are important.
- **Work considerately and respectfully with all** - respect diversity, different roles and boundaries and avoid giving offence. Treat all other volunteers and employees of the Trust, as well as school children, accompanying adults and any other visitors, in the way that they would wish to be treated.

### **Section 3: Documents governing how the Trust is run**

Knowledge of these is not essential for all volunteering roles but they may govern a specific aspect of your role within the Trust and so some of the relevant documents are listed for reference.

#### **Policies**

Health and Safety Policy Summary  
Risk Assessment and Safety Framework  
Safeguarding Policy  
Equality and Diversity Policy Statement  
Complaints Procedure  
Volunteer Policy  
Information Protection Policy  
Volunteer Code of Conduct

#### **Risk Assessments**

General Safety Plan for the Canal and Education Centres  
Batchworth Fire Risk Assessment  
Learning at the Lock Safety Management Plan  
Safe Boating System  
Rickmansworth Festival – Standing Safety Management Plan  
Rickmansworth Festival – Standing Security Management Plan  
COVID Risk Assessment  
COVID Risk Assessment for Education Centre Hire

#### **Boat Training and Safety**

Pride of Batchworth Crewing Manual  
Pride of Batchworth Course notes and checklists  
Roger Engine Room Manual  
Roger Skipper Checklist

#### **Roger Service Manuals**

Engine winterisation  
Changing the engine oil  
Changing the fuel filter  
Changing the reduction gearbox oil  
Propulsion Train  
Engine Ancillaries

#### **Learning at the Lock**

Learning at the Lock Handbook