



Friends of Windmill Gardens

Volunteer Policy

July 2020, revised September 2022

Background

Brixton Windmill is a unique 200-year-old mill in the heart of London, owned by Lambeth Council and run by the Friends of Windmill Gardens. FoWG was set up in 2003 with the aims of restoring and maintaining Brixton Windmill as a heritage attraction, creating and maintaining a park to benefit local residents, and running an education programme on local history and heritage for schools and local residents. The next phase in the development of the organisation began in 2020 with the opening of the Brixton Windmill Centre - a specially designed multi-functional space which accommodates school workshops and visitors to the mill and is available for community groups to hire.

FoWG is a volunteer-led organisation, made up of volunteers who give freely of their time to support the aims and principles of the organisation, with the support of two part-time staff members. We value and celebrate all volunteers, however large or small their contribution. In return, volunteers gain benefits including the opportunity to develop new skills and experiences, meet new people, work in a friendly and committed team and make a difference to their local community.

Our values

All FoWG volunteers, trustees and staff commit to the following values

- FoWG is inclusive and encourages diversity
- We provide an enriching and inspiring experience for visitors and volunteers
- We are committed to environmental sustainability and the wellbeing of our local area

We do this by being

- Friendly, open, cooperative and accountable
- Rooted in the community
- Resilient, reflecting Brixton Windmill's history since 1816
- Creative, pragmatic and supportive
- Ambitious for excellence in everything we do

Volunteer roles

FoWG offers many different types of volunteer role. They are not mutually exclusive, and where possible we aim to offer flexible arrangements regarding hours and type of contribution.

Typical roles include: Tour guiding, reception, stewarding the Windmill Centre, selling merchandise, baking, refreshments, first aid, milling, flour delivery, gardening and landscape management, driving, windmill maintenance, admin/organisation, events planning, information stalls, fundraising, income generation, marketing and communications, archiving and historical research, committee membership, trusteeship, IT, website, working with children or young people and delivering community activities

Our commitment to volunteers

All FoWG volunteers are entitled to be treated with dignity and respect, regardless of gender, race, colour, disability, religion, age or sexual orientation.

Volunteers have a right to:

- Accurate information on FoWG policies and volunteer procedures, delivered in an accessible way
- A clear description of the tasks that are expected to be undertaken and the skills needed
- Support and constructive feedback to develop their skills
- A safe working environment
- Agreed travel and food expenses
- A negotiated choice of roles and task
- A 'named person' to give advice and support
- The ability to say no without feeling guilty
- Protection from exploitation by other volunteers and members of the public
- A clear chain of complaint management if disputes cannot be resolved amicably between the parties concerned
- Appropriate insurance
- Respect for their contribution from all sections of the organisation, including other volunteers, trustees and members of staff

Volunteer responsibilities

- Treat everyone associated with the organisation with courtesy and respect, according to FoWG values
- Be reliable with agreed arrangements
- Co-operate with other volunteers and respect their roles
- Undertake relevant induction and training
- Follow all regulations regarding the health and safety and safeguarding of visitors and other volunteers
- Exchange information and feedback
- Ask for support if it is needed
- Carry out agreed roles and tasks
- Respect the confidentiality of other volunteers, members and the public
- Notify the appropriate person if you are unable to fulfil your volunteer role
- Be aware of and comply with FoWG policies and procedures

Recruitment and retention

FoWG is committed to diversity in all areas of its work. We aim to recruit volunteers from all ethnic and cultural backgrounds, abilities and disabilities, all genders and all ages. To this end, we use as many recruitment pathways as possible, including online recruitment sites, FoWG website and members' newsletter, social media, local fairs, markets and community groups.

All volunteers and prospective volunteers will be

- provided with information on the aims and principles of FoWG
- given an opportunity through their application form and general induction to express their reasons for volunteering and the skills and experience they can contribute
- given a contact name to explore issues around their volunteer role
- provided with clear information about what is expected of them and any training and instruction they will need
- given an opportunity to review their role

Induction and training

Volunteers will be given training and support to carry out their role and maintain their interest. This will include appropriate training to ensure the health and safety of visitors and other volunteers, and protection of equipment, in all parts of the premises, including the park, Windmill Centre and windmill itself.

Training for guides, stewards and other public-facing volunteers (including those requiring 'refresher' sessions) includes:

- history of the windmill
- information about historic mills
- presentation skills
- windmill tour
- health and safety and safeguarding
- working with children
- equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) awareness

Millers will be taught on the job and supported until they are ready to work independently as a full member.

Further volunteer support includes

- mentoring support on introductory sessions
- informal advice and information sharing
- having work reviews from time to time

Volunteers will be required to familiarise themselves with FoWG's policies, copies of which are available on request and online

- This volunteer policy
- Equality, diversity and inclusion
- Health and safety
- Safeguarding
- Volunteer expenses
- Complaints

Some volunteers (including those working with children) may be required to be DBS checked.

Supervision and support

One of the Executive members of the FOWG will be the volunteer co-ordinator. In association with the FoWG Volunteers Sub-Group he/she will be responsible for liaising with activity leaders to ensure that volunteers are recruited, trained and supervised, and that FoWG values and policies are maintained.

Expenses

All volunteers will be reimbursed for meal expenses and travel (within M25) on production of receipts. Other expenses may be paid by arrangement. Expenses forms are available. Full details are provided in FoWG's expenses policy.

Insurance

All our volunteers are insured by FoWG.

In case of disagreement

It is important that volunteers enjoy their experience as a volunteer and that their needs and expectations are met. Feedback about the volunteer experience is always welcome. If a volunteer has a problem or complaint that cannot be resolved through reasonable and friendly discussion with peers, the first person to talk to is the volunteer co-ordinator or activity leader. If the problem is not resolved, the volunteer co-ordinator will refer it to the Chair of FOWG. FoWG's Complaints Policy outlines general procedures in case of dispute.

Data protection

All data on volunteers will be kept confidential. Contact details will not be shared beyond the administration of FoWG.

Policy revision

This policy will be regularly reviewed in the light of feedback from volunteers.