



# Marsden Community Trust Volunteer Policy

November 2024

Review date: November 2027

Marsden Community Trust is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity.  
Company Number 09392970 Charity Number 1168910

## **Marsden Community Trust Trustee, Employee and Volunteer Policy**

This volunteer policy sets out the principles and practice by which we involve volunteers and is relevant to staff, volunteers and trustees within Marsden Community Trust (hereinafter referred to as the Trust). It aims to create a common understanding and to clarify roles and responsibilities to ensure the highest standards are maintained in relation to the management of volunteers.

Marsden Community Trust Ltd (MCT) is a group of volunteers who work together for the benefit of the community. The trust is an umbrella organisation whose activities include:

- ensuring the future of Marsden Mechanics building, as the main community centre in the village,
- organising the design and installation of Christmas lights in the village,
- assisting in managing and maintaining Marsden Park,
- working to promote the enhancement of the built environment in the village, and
- organising a programme of activities and events in the Mechanics and Marsden Park.

In relation to Marsden Mechanics, the Trust's aim is to work to fulfil the original purpose of the Mechanics institute as a centre providing educational, cultural, social, and leisure activities for the village community. The building also houses Marsden library.

The Trustees are a group of individuals from the village who have a range of different but complementary skills. They work to set the organisational vision and strategy for the Trust and ensure the fabric of the Mechanics building and Marsden park is maintained and improved. A major challenge is ensuring the trust is financially viable. This policy sets out how we aim to work together with volunteers

### **Why are volunteers important to us?**

We recognise volunteers as an integral part of the Trust. Their contribution supports our mission and strategic aims, and complements the role of paid staff. We aim to encourage and support volunteer involvement to ensure that volunteering benefits the Trust, the local community, and the volunteers themselves.

Appropriate steps will be taken to ensure that paid staff are clear about the role of volunteers, and to foster good working relationships between paid staff and volunteers. Volunteers will not be used to replace staff.

We are committed to offering a flexible range of opportunities and to encouraging a diversity of people to volunteer with us, including those from under-represented groups such as youth, people with a disability, older people and people from black and minority ethnic communities.

We recognise that there are costs associated with volunteer involvement and will seek to ensure adequate financial and staffing resources are available for the development and support of volunteering. We recognise that people have a right to participate in the life of their communities through volunteering and can contribute in many ways. We recognise our responsibility to organise volunteering efficiently and sensitively so that the valuable gift of the volunteer's time is best used to the mutual advantage of all concerned.

In order to fulfil these duties, the trustees rely on support from other groups and individuals who give freely of their time to support the work of the Trust. We work closely with the library service and 'Friends of Marsden Library' voluntary group as well of many of the other voluntary organisations we are lucky to have in Marsden and beyond.

### **Who is a volunteer?**

Volunteers are individuals who undertake activity on behalf of the Trust, unpaid and of their own free choice.

Volunteers may be involved on a one – off, short term or on a longer term, regular basis. They may be involved:

- in the direct delivery of our services
- on our board of management as trustees
- in community engagement to raise awareness of our work
- in one off events and promotional activities
- in our offices or in the community hall

Volunteers are valued for:

- bringing additional skills and new perspectives to the Trust
- enabling us to be more responsive and flexible in our approach
- championing our cause within the wider community
- enhancing the quality of our work and of client experience
- promoting the wellbeing of users of services, staff, local communities and themselves.

### How do we support volunteers?

The Trust has the necessary policies for Health and safety, Safeguarding, Fire safety, and Equal opportunities. When necessary, these will be shared with volunteers. Public liability insurance is in place and covers volunteers within the Trust.

Volunteers will be offered support and supervision as appropriate and this is discussed during induction. Arrangements vary according to the volunteer and the role undertaken, and may include telephone support, group meetings or one to one reviews.

### Roles and responsibilities

The volunteer role is based on trust and mutual understanding. There is no enforceable obligation, contractual or otherwise, for the volunteer to attend or to undertake particular tasks or for the Trust to provide continuing opportunities for voluntary involvement, provision of training or benefits.

However, there is a presumption of mutual support and reliability. Reciprocal expectations are acknowledged – both of what the Trust expects of volunteers and what volunteers expect of the Trust.

The Trust expects volunteers:

- to be reliable and honest
- to uphold the Trust's values and comply with Trust policies
- to make the most of opportunities given, for example taking up training opportunities
- to contribute positively to the aims of the Trust and avoid bringing the Trust into disrepute
- to carry out tasks within agreed guidelines

Volunteers can expect:

- to have clear information about what is and is not expected of them
- to receive adequate support and training
- to be insured and to volunteer in a safe environment
- to be treated with respect and in a non-discriminatory manner
- to receive out of pocket expenses
- to have opportunities for personal development
- to be recognised and appreciated
- to be able to say 'no' to anything which they consider to be unrealistic or unreasonable
- to know what to do if something goes wrong

### Dealing with problems

The Trust aims to treat all volunteers fairly, objectively and consistently. It seeks to ensure that volunteers' views are heard, noted and acted upon promptly.

We will attempt to deal with any problems informally and at the earliest opportunity. All volunteers will have a named person to whom they can turn in the case of any difficulty.

Volunteers will be made aware of how inappropriate behaviour by volunteers will be addressed by the Trust.

### Who will be responsible for implementing this policy and ensuring it is regularly reviewed?

This will come under the remit of MCT. Named individuals are Felicity Fuller (Building Coordinator) and Diane Ellis (Trustee)