

Halton Libraries



Event Volunteers Handbook

Welcome to Halton Libraries

Welcome Event Volunteer!

We are thrilled that you have chosen to volunteer with Halton Libraries. We hope that event volunteers become a vital part of helping us to achieve our key priorities of offering welcoming, vibrant spaces for people to meet and offering access to inspiring cultural activity. We value your commitment to supporting us to do this.

We hope that you find the duties of your volunteer opportunity to be fulfilling and that your volunteer experience with us is rewarding and positive.

The following information package includes details about our library service and the responsibilities of our event volunteers.

Once again, welcome and thank you!

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Who we are

Introduction to Halton Library Service

Our mission is to achieve the best outcomes for the people of Halton through access to knowledge and creative activity.

Our priorities are:

- We will inspire a community of readers
- We will support the health and wellbeing of the community
- We will offer welcoming, vibrant spaces for people to meet
- We will support learning at all ages
- We will offer access to inspiring cultural activity
- We will reach out to the community and expand activity across the Borough

We aim to adhere to a core set of values that state that we are:

- Innovative
- Welcoming
- Community focussed
- Passionate
- Inclusive

Background

Halton Library Service is delivered through four public libraries:

- Halton Lea Library
- Widnes Library
- Runcorn Library
- Ditton Library

We also deliver an outreach service across Runcorn and Widnes; this includes the Community Library Service our bespoke offer to care and residential homes, and the Home Library Service, delivered in partnership to provide services to those unable to access our static buildings.

The Service is an early adopter of new technologies including open source software solutions, embracing innovation to improve customer experiences and financial efficiency.

The library service is a key resource for our community, providing access to books, learning opportunities, cultural activity, and information. The buildings are important meeting spaces which offer a welcoming, neutral environment and host a range of events and opportunities for the whole community.

We are proud of our expanding events programmes and aim to develop them further through imaginative and creative programming.

Examples of events

We aim to deliver a broad range of events. Past events have included:

- Cake and Crime Evening with author Cath Staincliffe
- Local history talks presented by Runcorn and District Historical Society
- CSI Evening with author Ashley Dyer
- Garry Jotter and the Magical Murders: A evening of murder mystery presented by Highly Suspect
- Storytime with Mama G
- Halton MakeFest
- Live music presented by Get It Loud In Libraries

Event volunteer role description

What's involved?

- Providing a warm, friendly welcome to audiences and event attendees
- Directing event attendees to seats/rooms, providing information on event timings and content, being the first point of contact for enquiries during events.
- Asking audience members/event attendees to feedback on the event by filling out questionnaires
- Promoting future Halton Libraries events to audience members
- Photography – taking photographs during events, obtaining permissions where necessary
- Helping to set up before and clear away after an event – this may involve stacking up chairs, clearing away refreshment provisions
- Becoming familiar with Halton Libraries' health and safety procedures
- Becoming familiar with Halton Libraries' 'values' document

What's in it for you?

- Becoming part of a friendly and dedicated team of event volunteers
- Volunteering in Halton's vibrant libraries
- Meeting people and making new friends
- Improving your communication skills
- Enjoying new experiences, including new cultural opportunities
- Developing new skills and enhancing your CV
- Personal satisfaction, having the opportunity to make a difference to our audience's experience

What skills are required?

- Welcoming and friendly manner towards event attendees
- Reliability and excellent time keeping skills
- Willingness to help with a variety of tasks
- Willingness to work as part of a team
- An interest in arts and culture
- Confidence in a customer-facing environment
- Willingness to support Halton Libraries' values

What is the potential time commitment?

As an Event Volunteer, you may commit to helping as much as you are able to by responding to as many or as few opportunities as you like from those sent out by our Events Volunteer Co-ordinator.

Where and when are events held?

We host events at Halton Lea, Widnes, Runcorn and Ditton Libraries and other community venues within Halton e.g. the stadium. Events are at various times including evenings and weekends.

Volunteer Policy

Introduction and Scope

We recognise the significant and valuable role that volunteers play in supporting us to deliver our event programmes. This policy reflects our commitment to ensuring that you, the volunteer, are integrated into the heart of Halton Libraries, that volunteering with us is a constructive and rewarding experience and that all our volunteers are treated in an equal, fair and just manner.

This policy will outline procedures and support mechanisms available to you as a volunteer. It defines the term “volunteer” and provides a framework of best practice which we will endeavour to follow when appointing, managing and supporting our volunteers.

Definition of an Event Volunteer

Event Volunteers are individuals who offer their time, experience, knowledge and skills without financial gain; helping us to achieve our aims.

There is no contract of employment between Halton Libraries and its volunteers and volunteers are not considered employees of Halton Libraries.

Halton Libraries’ Commitment to the Volunteer

Halton Libraries considers the input and effort given by volunteers as a valuable contribution to its events programming.

We support volunteers through the provision of resources necessary to complete their duties; induction and appropriate training and a supervision commitment.

We will recognise your contributions through providing written references (where appropriate), invitation to special events and opportunities to feedback to the development of volunteer management at Halton Libraries.

As a volunteer, you have the right to refuse any volunteer request made by us and you are not bound by contract, but are obliged to volunteer in line with this handbook, the Volunteer Policy and the Volunteer Agreement.

Commitment of the Volunteer

Halton Libraries expects volunteers to behave in accordance with the Code of Conduct and in a manner which reflects positively on our library service and to promote the key library service values and priorities where possible. We expect volunteers to execute agreed duties, unless otherwise informed, and request that volunteers carry out only those tasks approved by supervising staff.

We expect volunteers to be supportive of staff, other volunteers and of Halton Libraries priorities and values.

If you cannot attend your allocated event then we ask that you let the Event Volunteer Co-ordinator know as soon as possible via email or telephone.

Code of Conduct

Volunteers must:

- Have read and be familiar with the content of the Volunteer Handbook
- Carry out your volunteer role activities with due care and diligence.
- Be present at the agreed times and tell us if you are not able to volunteer
- Carry out duties and responsibilities in a safe, efficient and competent way
- Follow all reasonable requests by staff who support and manage your volunteer role activities.
- Maintain the trust and confidence and uphold the reputation of Halton Libraries at all times.
- Be aware of health and safety responsibilities, seeking clarification if necessary from the Event Volunteer Coordinator
- Immediately report all injuries/accidents/problems occurring whilst volunteering for Halton Libraries to the Event Volunteer Coordinator
- Wear the Halton Libraries' volunteer t-shirt provided to you for your volunteer role in order to represent Halton Libraries in a smart and professional manner
- Comply with Halton Borough Council's no smoking policy when on council owned property.
- Be courteous towards all library users and event attendees

Volunteers must not:

- Participate in any form of inappropriate behaviour or activity when volunteering or act in any way that brings Halton Libraries into disrepute (including use of email, social media and other internet sites, engaging with media etc).
- Bully, harass or unlawfully discriminate against anyone.
- Carry out volunteer duties when in an unfit state due to the influence of alcohol, or other drugs or substances.

Breaches of the Code of Conduct Breaches of the Code of Conduct may lead to a notification of unacceptable behaviour and a warning or the immediate end to your services as a volunteer. Repeated breaches of the Code of Conduct will lead to the immediate end of your services as a volunteer.

Recruitment and selection of event volunteers

Our recruitment process is designed to ensure that we recruit event volunteers who are suitable for the role. To do this we will:

- Provide an event volunteer role description which outlines tasks and skills requirements
- Prior to appointment, conduct a short telephone or face to face conversation about the role and its requirements and expectations with a view to assessing mutual suitability
- Provide suitable induction and training

Event support opportunities will be allocated by the Event Volunteer Co-ordinator based on volunteers' availability and venue preference. This will usually be via email or telephone and we aim to give at least a week's notice. We will endeavour to allocate opportunities in an equal and fair manner.

Equal Opportunities and Diversity

Halton Libraries is committed to promoting equal opportunities. Event volunteering opportunities at Halton Libraries are open to all regardless of age, race, disability, ethnic origin, gender, marital status, nationality, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity. We recognise the positive benefits a diverse volunteer pool can bring to our service and we are committed to ensuring our recruitment and selection procedure reflects this.

Induction and Training

Our event volunteers will receive a general orientation on the nature and purpose of the organisation as well as task specific guidance and instructions to ensure you feel confident and able to carry out your role effectively and efficiently.

Support and Recognition

All event volunteers will report to our Event Volunteer Co-ordinator who will be responsible for the management of your work and who will provide guidance and assistance.

We will review the volunteering role as often as required, with the aim of ensuring that tasks keep pace with role development and the needs of the event programme..

Volunteers may be invited to "thank you" events and consulted, where possible, on the development of the volunteer strategy.

Volunteer Expenses

Travel to and from event venues is the responsibility of the event volunteer. We do not envision any reimbursement of expenses to be necessary for the role.

Health and Safety

All event volunteers volunteering in Halton Libraries' buildings, or on the premises where a Halton Libraries' event is being held, are to be given a Health and Safety induction. We endeavour to ensure that any events which volunteers are asked to attend on behalf of Halton Libraries are safe and accessible. This is achieved through the prior completion of risk assessments at Halton Libraries' organised events.

If you have any questions about Health and Safety, please speak to the Event Volunteer Co-ordinator in the first instance.

Concerns and Complaints

We are committed to the welfare of our event volunteers and we believe that any concerns brought to light at an early stage can be dealt with in an informal manner between event volunteer and Event Volunteer Co-ordinator.

In the unlikely event that a dispute cannot be resolved in this manner, the Area Manager for Libraries can be involved. All volunteers have the opportunity to feedback to the Event Volunteer Co-ordinator through evaluation forms /meetings / email / telephone.

Key contacts

Halton Lea Library 0151 511 7744

Widnes Library 0151 907 8383

Runcorn Library 0151 511 7666

Ditton Library 0151 424 2459

Email:

Haltonlea.library@halton.gov.uk

Event Volunteer Co-ordinators – Rachel Tickle or Daisy Hogarth

Rachel.tickle@halton.gov.uk

Daisy.hogarth@halton.gov.uk

Alison.hoolihan@halton.gov.uk