

Birmingham & Warwickshire Archeological Society Volunteer Policy

Introduction:

The Birmingham & Warwickshire Archeological Society aims to support and raise the profile of the region's history and archeology, providing a monthly lecture series, annual transactions and many other benefits to members. Each membership subscription contributes to supporting the heritage and archaeology of Birmingham and Warwickshire.

Our charitable objects are to promote the study of archaeology and history and the preservation, investigation, excavation and restoration of local antiquities and buildings of historical interest for the public benefit.

The Society was founded in 1870 and our first inaugural lecture was held on November 10th of that year. Since the outset, the Society has been affiliated to the Birmingham and Midland Institute. It later became the Birmingham Archaeological Society but with the publication of its centenary volume No. 84 (1967-70) it became known as the Birmingham and Warwickshire Archaeological Society (BWAS).

Key Points:

- Volunteers are a crucial and valued part of our small organisation
- The Society is fully volunteer run, it has no permanent staff, so we aim to ensure that volunteers are supported in their roles through buddying up with other BWAS volunteers who have more experience with the Society
- We define our volunteers as people giving their time, without payment, through their own free choice, to benefit the Birmingham and Warwickshire Archeological Society.

Commitments from BWAS:

- To provide volunteers with a clear role profile
- To provide a suitable induction
- To provide a named 'Buddy' to settle new volunteers into the Society
- To respect the skills, experiences and individual wishes of our volunteers and do our best to accommodate them
- To insure our volunteers in line with the parameters of our insurance through the British Association For Local History: <https://www.balh.org.uk/resources-balh-insurance-for-local-societies>
- To safeguard our volunteers in line with our safeguarding policy
- To resolve any issues raised by our volunteers in a timely manner
- To respect our volunteers and be courteous at all times

Hopes and expectations of our volunteers:

- To carry out all duties to the best of their abilities
- To read and understand their role description and all required paperwork
- To attend meetings or activities at the times agreed and to give as much warning as possible if they cannot attend when expected
- To follow all BWAS policies and procedures
- To let us know about any changes which may affect their suitability for the volunteering role they have undertaken
- To respect one another and be courteous at all times

Induction and Health & Safety:

- Health and safety for all is of paramount importance. Significant incidents must be reported to the Charity Commission, so we ask volunteers to inform their Buddy and a BWAS Trustee should anything occur or if they have any concerns whilst volunteering.
- All volunteers will be asked to risk assess the activity they are planning to undertake before undertaking it
 - A risk assessment template will be shared
 - Volunteers will be asked to collaborate with their 'Buddy' on this risk assessment and on ensuring risks are well managed
 - Volunteers are asked to share any concerns or requirements that will allow them to mitigate risk with a BWAS Trustee before undertaking any volunteer activities
- All risk assessments will be shared with BWAS Trustees via the electronic shared filing system. These are available to all volunteers.
- All volunteers will sign up to our Volunteer Agreement. This agreement is in honour only and is not intended to be a legally binding contract of employment in any way. Either party are free to withdraw at any time
- If volunteers are unhappy with their role or experience then they are encouraged to discuss this with their Buddy or a BWAS Trustee

Expenses:

- BWAS aim to ensure that volunteers are not left out of pocket as a result of volunteering with us, however, we work with very small budgets so any expenditure must be agreed by the Treasurer prior to any spend
- Expenses are limited to reasonable travel expenses, subsistence expenses and equipment that is required in order to volunteer
- Volunteers must provide the Treasurer with VAT receipts in order for BWAS to process any claims
- We aim to reimburse expenses within four weeks of receipts being submitted to the Treasurer