



# **Volunteer Handbook**

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**We do hope that you enjoy your experience at BOST. We couldn't do what we do without the valuable efforts of all of our volunteers; we are really pleased that you want to volunteer with us!**

## **1. About Bankside Open Spaces Trust**

Bankside Open Spaces Trust (BOST) is an environmental and volunteering charity. In 2020 we celebrated 20 years of protecting, preserving and enhancing parks, gardens and other amenities in London's SE1 and surrounding areas. We were set up in 2000 by a group of local residents with the aim of improving people's health and wellbeing by making where they live and work greener and more beautiful.

We manage and maintain [open spaces](#), a community centre, [Living Space](#) and a smaller community hub, the Eco House. We welcome [volunteers](#) from both the community and the [corporate sector](#) to help look after these spaces. We run regular gardening groups, support park steering groups, organise and take part in public [events](#) and [educational projects](#), and offer advice to others. We collaborate closely with local residents and businesses to champion green spaces.

Thousands of people enjoy our open spaces every day. Each of our sites is unique, with its own atmosphere, identity and sense of place. Our spaces include [Red Cross Garden](#), [Marlborough Sports Garden](#), [Waterloo Millennium Green](#) and [Tate Community Garden](#).

Volunteers are an important part of our delivery in the local area. We wouldn't be able to do what we do without them.

## **2. Where might you volunteer?**

<b>Open Space</b>	<b>Address</b>
Red Cross Garden	50 Redcross Way, SE1 1HA
Waterloo Millennium Green	Baylis Road, SE1 7AA
Living Space Community Centre	1 Coral Street, SE1 7BE
Crossbones Garden	Union St, London SE1 1SD
Marlborough Sports Garden	11-25 Union St, London, SE1 1SD
Diversity Garden	5 King James Street, SE1 0RR
Christ Church Garden	27 Blackfriars Rd, SE1 8NY
Mint Street Park	Corner of Southwark Bridge Rd and Marshalsea Rd, SE1 1QP
Pattison House Garden	Off Redcross Way
Little Dorrit Park	Little Dorrit Place off Borough High Street

St George's Churchyard Gardens	Long Ln, London SE1 4PG
Community Garden at Tate Modern	East side of the front landscape, SE1 9TC
Winchester Palace Garden	Clink Street, SE1 9DG

We support and manage various parks, gardens and open spaces and where you volunteer depends on the days you are available, the role you applied for and where the tasks are. Most of our spaces have a steering group which is an open forum for anyone who wishes to influence the open space and the way it is run.

### 3. Important names and addresses

Our main office is close to Red Cross Garden at **56 Southwark Bridge Road, SE1 0AS. Phone number: 020 7403 3393.**

We have an additional office at the **Red Cross Garden, 50 Redcross Way, SE1 1HA** and our **Living Space Community Centre, 1 Coral Street, SE1 7BE.**

BOST has 17 members of staff:

Chief Executive Officer	Charlotte Gilsenan
Head of Parks	William Rallison
Volunteer Coordinator	Marta Pascual Argente
Community Engagement Facilitator	Mustafa Korel
Parks Manager	Consuelo Marcia
Head of Sport and Development	Jack Harrison
Activity Coordinator & Salesforce Admin	Amir Rodrigo
Green Hub Coordinator	Rocio Ayllon
Community Gardener	Matilda Mercer
Grants Fundraising Manager	Melissa Higgsmith
Future Gardeners Program Manager	Louisa Mansfield
Future Gardeners Program Coordinator	Shereen Chung- Blake
Head of Living Space and Operations	Nicola Desmond
Living Space Community Centre Manager	Vanessa Forbes
Living Space Duty Manager	Bardia Dehghan
Living Space Duty Manager	Nikki Kadzeya
Waterloo Millennium Green Park Warden	Dione Jackson

The staff team meets bi-monthly to discuss and take forward the work of BOST and future plans.

BOST has 10 trustees who meet 5 times a year to oversee the work of the organisation. The Board of Trustees is made up of local people and those with an interest or understanding of horticulture and community gardening.

#### **4. Why volunteer?**

The organisation is built on the efforts of our volunteers who make huge contributions to the activities of BOST. Local resident participation and the contribution of volunteers are two essential elements in BOST's vision and mission. Volunteering with BOST is a two-way relationship. There are things that both you as the volunteer and BOST as an organisation can gain from the relationship and we want our volunteers to get as much out of their time with us as possible.

By volunteering at BOST you could benefit by:

- Contributing positively to change in the area
- Being involved in a local activity
- Developing skills, knowledge and experience of plants and gardening
- Developing and sharing knowledge of the fascinating history of the area
- Taking on increasing levels of responsibility
- Getting involved in direct decision-making about the local area
- Improving your physical fitness and mental health
- Improving your job opportunities
- Getting experience working as part of a team
- Meeting new people
- Helping local groups to progress their activities with support from BOST

#### **5. Volunteer roles at BOST**

There are several ways that you could be involved such as:

- Joining a steering group and helping with decisions about our parks
- Getting involved with practical gardening within a corporate group or as an individual either at our parks or on your own estate
- Helping the local community in greening the area
- Becoming a volunteer warden at Crossbones Garden
- Helping at the Eco House managing the Rainbow Gardening Library

- Helping at the Grow Room in the Eco House supporting our experimental nursery
- Helping at Living Space with maintenance task so that our community centre is safe and welcoming to the local children, families and community.
- Helping with consultation on changes to the green spaces in the area
- Taking part in a fundraising challenge event
- Helping different businesses in the local community get involved with BOST
- Helping out in the office
- Helping at our events
- Becoming a trustee

Volunteer role descriptions are available from the Volunteer Coordinator.

## **6. Volunteer coordinator/lead staff member**

We have a dedicated Volunteer Coordinator in place who oversees volunteering at BOST. This person is in direct contact with staff members who facilitate gardening groups, Crossbones Garden and volunteering and is the direct point of contact for all volunteers. The Volunteer Coordinator at BOST is Marta Pascual Argente, she can be contacted on [volunteer@bost.org.uk](mailto:volunteer@bost.org.uk) or on 020 7403 3393.

When you start volunteering at BOST regularly you will have a member of staff assigned to you as your manager, this is usually the gardening group leader or Crossbones Team Member. If you have any questions or problems, then this is the member of staff that you should go to for help. If your manager is not around and you encounter a problem or have a question, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator or another member of BOST staff for help.

You will be informed of the name of your group leader or project manager when you are sent a welcome email.

## **7. Recruitment Process**

If you are aiming to be a regular volunteer, you will first fill in a Volunteer Application Form and then you will be invited in for an informal chat or for a phone or Zoom conversation with the Volunteer Coordinator. This is the time where we can work out whether volunteering for BOST is right for you and which role or session is most suitable.

After this short meeting the Volunteer Coordinator will contact your references. You will also be asked to sign our Volunteer Agreement. Our Agreement covers the following:

- Health and Safety
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
- Respecting boundaries
- Confidentiality
- Safeguarding

You will receive a copy of the relevant risk assessment, and, if applicable to your role, the Tips for Safe Gardening leaflet, information on Safe Wardening, along with any other necessary documents.

Subject to satisfactory reference(s), signing the Volunteer Agreement and there being a place available on a suitable role/group you will be offered a place to volunteer. This would involve 2 trial sessions, which means that the Volunteer Coordinator will check with the group leader and the new volunteer if everything went well and if they are happy to continue.

At your first trial session your group leader or project manager will do a short induction covering further Health and Safety points, including safe lifting techniques, emergency exits and procedures, safe tool use and storage, toilets, importance of breaks, location of drinking water. For gardening roles this will also include glove wearing, hand washing and sharps and poo procedure (all covered below). For Crossbones Garden an onsite induction will take place and include all relevant information and instruction for this role. There might be additional information depending on your role.

## **8. Reviews**

Every six months your manager or the Volunteer Coordinator will have an informal chat or carry out a survey with you and review the volunteering you have undertaken. You will be asked about how things are going for you and if you are gaining the experience that you want. You will also be told about any changes or new projects at BOST and asked if there are any other volunteering opportunities that you are interested in.

## **9. Recognition and social events**

The contribution of volunteers to BOST'S mission is highly valued and BOST endeavours to ensure volunteers are recognised for it. We will mark the national event 'National Volunteers Week', a Volunteer Celebration and Forum and other events and award schemes e.g. the Volunteers Christmas Lunch or the Southwark Stars Awards.

We will also organise workshops and trips that will be an opportunity to learn new skills, broaden knowledge and interests and socialise with other volunteers and like-minded people.

***When volunteering with BOST please remember the following.***

### **10. Breaks and refreshments**

Please make sure you take breaks whenever you need them. If you are feeling tired, out of breath or fatigued, take a break and inform your group leader. Do not spend too long at a computer or working outdoors when it is very hot or very cold. You are welcome to make drinks throughout the day using the kitchen located at either of the BOST offices and the small kitchen at Living Space. Tea, coffee and sugar are stored near to the kettle, milk is available in the fridge. Please bring your own reusable bottle of water.

### **11. Smoking**

Smoking is not allowed in any BOST building. Smoking is allowed outdoors in public spaces but we ask you not to smoke when there are children present, whilst undertaking any work or whilst wearing a BOST tabard or T-shirt. Please pick up and dispose of your cigarette stubs safely.

### **12. Toilets and Handwashing**

Always wash hands after gardening, DIY and pond activities, before eating or smoking. Toilets are located at the Red Cross Garden office and Living Space and are available for you to use; please ask for the toilet key at Red Cross office. If we have run out of soap, toilet paper or hand towels, please inform a member of staff. If you are working at another park in the local area, ask your manager who will direct you to the nearest toilet. Hand gel is available onsite where there are no toilets.

### **13. Alcohol and drugs**

It is not acceptable to be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs whilst volunteering or training with BOST. If you are suspected to be under the influence, we will ask you to go home and return another day when you are no longer under the influence. We discourage the public from drinking alcohol in our parks and open spaces.

Please let us know on your application form if you take prescription medication that may affect your abilities.

### **14. Prescription medication**

Please let us know on your application form if you take prescription medication that may affect your abilities.

### **15. What to wear**

When gardening or roles that involve maintenance tasks you should wear old clothes or clothes that you don't mind getting dirty. We recommend you wear clothes that cover your arms and legs to avoid scratches. Please do not wear clothing too revealing or with slogans that may be offensive to others. Check the weather beforehand and bring extra layers and/or waterproof clothing as needed if gardening or volunteering outdoors. In the eventuality of wet weather we have some water proof trousers and jackets that you can borrow. If it is hot and sunny, please wear a hat and sunscreen as we cannot provide these.

When gardening or doing maintenance please wear closed-toe, sturdy shoes such as walking boots or trainers. Do not wear flip-flops or sandals. Where high risk activities are taking place we will provide steel-toe capped boots or waders for pond activities.

Gloves must be worn when gardening and when working in or around ponds. We provide these as well as any PPE needed for the task at hand.

If you are taking part in an office based session you can wear casual clothing.

### **16. Sharps (needles, knives, broken glass)**

Although very rare, be cautious when reaching low down as sometimes sharps are pushed in bushes or thick growth. Avoid putting hands and arms into piles of

leaves, rubbish or flower or shrub beds. Always use tools instead of hands. If you find needles, knives or broken glass do not touch them and report it to the group leader who will deal with it.

## **17. Tool stores**

BOST has tool stores at most of the sites. Please do not enter the tool store without a BOST member of staff unless you have been fully inducted into the tool store area. Do not allow children to enter the tool store under any circumstances.

## **18. Infectious diseases**

Please do not attend volunteering if you feel unwell or have symptoms of an infectious illness such as a high temperature, persistent cough, sore throat, diarrhoea, vomiting, or any other symptoms that could indicate flu, norovirus, COVID-19, or similar conditions.

- Stay home until you are fully recovered and, for illnesses like diarrhoea or vomiting, wait at least 48 hours after symptoms have stopped before returning.
- If you test positive for COVID-19, avoid volunteering for at least 5 days after the test date and until you feel well.
- For flu-like symptoms, allow around 5 days from onset before returning.
- Always inform your group leader or coordinator if you are unable to attend, as this helps us manage any potential spread.

We ask all volunteers to continue practicing good hand hygiene, use tissues when coughing or sneezing, and dispose of them safely. Tools and surfaces will be cleaned regularly, but please also take personal precautions such as washing hands thoroughly and using hand sanitiser when needed.

## **19. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

At BOST, we recognise the importance of embracing diversity and banning discrimination. Staff and volunteers have a mutual responsibility to make sure that all feel welcome. When participating at BOST we must be non-judgmental of different lifestyles, gender, abilities, disabilities, ethnicity, religious beliefs or sexual orientation.

We will not tolerate discrimination or harassment in any form. We have a diverse group of individuals working, volunteering and training with us and with different

issues that include mental health issues, learning disabilities, homelessness, isolation and others. We ask that you are sensitive to these issues when volunteering with us. Prejudice or inappropriate behaviour towards volunteers, staff, other team members or the public will not be tolerated.

If you feel this has happened while you are participating and you feel able to, you should challenge the person respectfully and acknowledge that the person might not realise they've offended anyone. Be prepared to challenge your own beliefs as well as the beliefs of others – this includes BOST staff. If this is difficult to discuss or badly received then tell your manager, Volunteer Coordinator, Future Gardeners Program Manager, or the CEO, if your manager is involved in an issue. If you feel there is a safeguarding issue connected to the garden or your role, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator.

BOST promotes equity, diversity and inclusion for all in every area of its work, service delivery, employment and management and will encourage its members, participants and volunteers to do the same.

BOST has a full Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy. Please contact the Volunteer Coordinator or Future Gardeners Program Manager if you wish to see a copy.

## **20. Respecting boundaries**

We encourage staff and volunteers to build strong and supportive relationships with each other; however, we ask everyone to respect each other's personal boundaries. This includes respecting a person's right to privacy, holding views or beliefs that others may not agree with and working without fear of harassment. If you have any concerns about the behaviour of a BOST volunteer or employee, or if you feel that you have been affected by this behaviour, let a member of BOST staff know. Staff and volunteers are asked to keep their involvement with each other on a professional level which means staff are not allowed to see volunteers outside of the work hours or share personal phone numbers.

BOST's policy requires that volunteers do not to approach staff or other volunteers for money, loans or gifts as it puts everyone in a potentially unpleasant position and BOST cannot guarantee repayment. If you are approached and asked for money, loans or gifts, please say that BOST does not allow it and discretely inform a member of staff of the incident. We recognise that people go through difficult personal or financial situations and want to help where possible. If you need additional support please speak to a member of staff who will try to signpost you

to the best available service. If you feel there is a safeguarding issue connected to the garden or your role, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator.

## **21. Confidentiality and Data Protection**

The information you give when you register will be used to assess your suitability as a potential volunteer and match you to the most appropriate roles and sessions available at the time of application. BOST will use this information to contact you with information about the days, times and locations of your volunteering or training sessions. We will use the method of communication (usually phone and/or email) that you give permission for. You can choose to opt in to our newsletter and you can then unsubscribe from this mailing list at any time by contacting the Volunteer Coordinator or Future Gardeners Program Manager. We may share results of research that we carry out into the use of our services with third parties but this information will always be anonymised and will not contain your personal information.

If you start participating with BOST we will keep your information for 3 years after you leave. If you don't start participating we will destroy this information after 6 months. We take looking after your information very seriously. We've implemented appropriate physical, technical and organisational measures to protect the personal information we have under our control, both on and off-line, from improper access, use, alteration, destruction and loss. BOST's privacy policy is available to read online here: <https://www.bost.org.uk/privacy-notice>. Please ask if you wish to see a printed copy. Our Data Protection Officer is Charlotte Gilsenan, [charlotte@bost.org.uk](mailto:charlotte@bost.org.uk), 020 7403 3393.

We want to provide you with the best experience we can by accommodating your needs and providing suitable tasks. In order to do this we will ask your permission to share physical and mental health support needs with the leader of your volunteer group.

We expect volunteers and to respect the confidentiality of other volunteers and and only share information with others where necessary for safety or safeguarding reasons.

If you are volunteering in BOST offices you will be asked to sign a Confidentiality Agreement.

## **22. Social Media and WhatsApp Considerations**

We ask volunteers to please be mindful if making their volunteer role with BOST part of their social media identity, as this can cause a conflict of interest. We kindly ask that if you are mentioning your volunteering role through these channels, to please make it clear that your personal social media accounts reflect your own views and not those of BOST.

Please only share images of other volunteers if you have permission to do so. Talk to your fellow volunteers about where you will share your images and what you might say about them. Any queries, feel free to email BOST Marketing Manager.

A full copy of our Social Media Policy for Volunteers is available upon request.

When you sign up to volunteer you can opt in to be contacted via WhatsApp. Some of our gardening groups and Crossbones wardens have WhatsApp group chats that are regulated by a member of BOST staff.

These group chats are a place to discuss volunteer activities, share stories or experiences of your time volunteering and other information that may be relevant to your volunteer role.

They are to be a welcoming and safe and communication must remain friendly and positive. We ask volunteers to please act in a respectful and polite manner when using the WhatsApp groups and to not use them to report any issues with their roles, other volunteers or staff members.

If any volunteers feel that they are having any issues surrounding their volunteering, they should contact their project manager or Volunteer Coordinator, where the Volunteer Problem Solving Policy will be followed.

If you feel there is a safeguarding issue connected to the garden or your role, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator.

Copies of the WhatsApp Code of Conduct and Volunteer Problem Solving Policy are available, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator if you would like to see them.

## 23. Practical health and safety

During your induction process you will be able to access copies of the Risk Assessments relevant to your role, our Safe Tips for Gardening leaflet and the Safe Wardening document. We will ask you to read these before you come to your first session.

You will also be given guidelines about participating on other BOST sites and the potential dangers at each site at the beginning of each session. Please follow all health and safety instructions you are given. In addition to the above, more health and safety considerations are as follows:

In the event of fire:

- Dial 999
- Notify staff and other volunteers of the threat
- Leave the building via the quickest, safest route – do not go back for personal belongings
- Do not return to the building or site until given permission to do so

**Fire assembly point at Red Cross Garden:** at the Sundial inside the main entrance gates

**Fire assembly point at the Diversity Garden:** assemble at Library Street or follow instructions given by the emergency services

**Fire assembly point at Crossbones Graveyard:** at the bike stands on Union Street next to Borough High Street

**Fire assembly point on other BOST sites:** In the event of fire you should take instruction from a BOST member of staff, who will advise you on where to assemble.

### First Aid

A first aid box is kept in our tool sheds, in the Red Cross Garden office and in Living Space. A first aid kit will be taken to gardening sessions outside of these locations. If you are hurt, please tell the group leader immediately and they will assess whether you can be treated from the first aid kit or whether you need to be seen by a medical professional. All our group leaders are first aid trained.

### Manual Handling

Please familiarise yourself with the Health & Safety Executive Guide on Manual Handling at <https://www.hse.gov.uk/msd/manual-handling/print.htm>. Remember to bend your knees and keep your back straight when lifting.

## **Mobile Phones**

If you need to use your phone please take a break and remove your BOST tabard. Please do not make calls or use headphones whilst participating with us.

## **Gloves**

We will provide gardening gloves, which you should wear while gardening. There are different types of bacteria which can affect you if your hands are unprotected. All equipment will be provided and please do use anything that the group leader asks you to. Please cover any open wounds with a plaster.

## **Ponds**

When taking part in activities in or around ponds gloves must be worn.

## **Tools and tidy site**

Your group leader will brief you on health and safety and how to use the gardening or any DIY tools. Please ensure tools are stored safely so as not to cause a tripping hazard. Always leave paths and passages free from rubbish as the park or centre will still be open to the public.

## **Volunteering in the sun**

Make sure you wear sunscreen (bring your own), wear a hat and bring a bottle of water.

## **Dog poo**

Please report to the group leader who will deal with it. Please do not touch.

## **Tetanus**

Tetanus cover is not a requirement of volunteering or training with BOST but it is recommended for those participating outdoors. Speak to your GP to find out more.

## **Lone working**

We do not encourage lone working situations for volunteers. If you want to work alone then speak to your manager about this. When working outdoors, please always work in pairs if far from the main group.

For Crossbones garden wardens a 'buddy' system is used where there will always be more than one volunteer (or staff member) on site at a time. All shifts will be in daylight hours, volunteers must clear and leave the garden by sunset and only be there at times stated on the Team Up Calendar. Emergency procedures for

Crossbones will be explained to you at your induction, details are also on the wall in the Crossbones hut.

### **Health and Safety Policy**

Please contact the Volunteer Coordinator if you wish to see a copy of the BOST Health and Safety Policy.

### **Tips for Safe Gardening leaflet / Safe Wardening document**

You get a copy of this during your induction process.

## **24. Safeguarding / Disclosure and Barring Service Check**

If your role is with children or vulnerable adults on a regular and unsupervised basis, you may need to undertake a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. BOST will let you know if your role requires this. The majority of BOST participants do not need a DBS check and no current, regular gardening volunteers, wardens, repair rangers, Rainbow Library or Grow Room volunteers are required to undertake one.

Most of our roles don't involve participating with children or young people, however there will often be children or young people in the vicinity. Please mind your language and behaviour and do not put yourself in a position where you are alone with a child. BOST has a Child Safeguarding and Vulnerable Adults Policy. Please contact the Volunteer Coordinator if you wish to see a copy.

## **25. References**

All BOST volunteers are required to provide at least one satisfactory reference.

## **26. If you are on benefits**

If you are on benefits you will need to speak to your Jobcentre Plus (JCP) advisor about how participating with BOST may affect you. For example, if you are on jobseekers allowance, there is no limit to the amount of time you can volunteer but you must be still be actively seeking a full-time job, able to go to job interviews at 48 hours' notice and be available to work at one week's notice. If you are receiving benefits please check with JCP as the guidelines are always changing and it's dependent on your personal circumstances.

## **27. Your time – volunteers**

It is up to you how much of your time you want to give to the work of BOST and how often or how regularly you want to volunteer. We ask that you do not spend more than 16 hours per week volunteering and take part in a maximum of two volunteer sessions per week. To manage our parks and gardens, if you are planning on changing your days or how often you volunteer, please let the Volunteer Coordinator know.

Our Monday and Wednesday gardening sessions usually last 5 hours from 10am to 3pm, our Tuesday and Thursday gardening sessions are 3 hours long from 10am to 1pm. The Friday gardening session at Crossbones takes place from 12pm to 2.30pm and the last Saturday of the month gardening session at Red Cross Garden takes place from 10am to 12.30pm.

At Crossbones, to provide a service to the community, we would like to keep the opening hours as regular as possible. Once you have committed to a shift, please try to ensure you keep the appointment unless unavoidable. Opening hours and shifts tend to be 12-2pm, Wednesday to Friday, although other hours may be available at other times. You will be sent the link to the online calendar on which you can book your shifts.

For the Eco-House Grow Room and Library volunteer roles the times are 9.30am to 1.30pm. We ask you to be regular as much as possible and stay for the duration of the shift. If you need adjustments to this or at not able to commit to this, please speak with the project leader or the Volunteer Coordinator.

For Living Space Repair Rangers, volunteering takes place on Wednesdays for a minimum of 3 hours. If you would like to volunteer for longer or outside of these times, please speak to your project leader.

## **28. Insurance**

Volunteering with BOST is covered by our Public Liability and Employer's Liability Insurance. Ask the Volunteer Coordinator if you would like to see the certificate(s).

## **29. Lunch expenses**

If you volunteer for a minimum of 5 hours in one day then BOST will provide you with a meal deal. This is to provide you with lunch and a drink for consumption during your volunteering hours. Your group leader will provide this for you.

## **30. Travel expenses**

BOST has limited funds available to help cover travel costs for volunteers who are on benefits, homeless, unemployed, or facing financial hardship where paying for travel would prevent them from taking part. If you feel you may be eligible, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator in confidence. BOST has a Volunteer Expenses Policy, please ask the Volunteer Coordinator for a copy. Please also find our Volunteer Travel Expenses Form as Appendix A to this Handbook.

## **31. Liability for belongings**

BOST takes no responsibility for participants' personal belongings. Whilst belongings can be left in offices, we take no liability for items going missing.

## **32. Bikes**

If you cycle to your session, you may leave your bicycle locked up on site at your own risk. At Red Cross Garden the best place to lock your bike is the bike railings outside of Pattison House. There are also bike racks just outside Living Space.

## **33. Using the phone**

You may need to use the office phone whilst participating. Please only do so in an emergency or if there is something urgent that you need to tell someone, such as changes to childcare arrangements or emergency family issues. Please ask permission to use the phone before you make the call.

## **34. What to do if you are sick on a volunteering day**

If you are sick or unable to attend, we would appreciate you informing us, but you are not obliged to tell us on every occasion. If you think you will be off for several weeks, please do let us know if and when you hope to return either by contacting your group leader and/or the Volunteer Coordinator via email or phone.  
BOST office number: 020 7403 3393.

### **35. If we cancel a session**

Although it is rare, we may need to cancel a session if a staff member is ill and we can't arrange cover or in the case of extreme weather conditions. We will always do our best to let you know in advance of a cancelled session. Do let us know if you plan to attend a different session than usual so we know to contact you.

### **36. What to do if things are not working out**

If you are not enjoying being a volunteer, speak with your group leader or the Volunteer Coordinator. We will aim to change things to make participating a happier experience for you. If you are not happy with the way you have been treated, you are entitled to make a complaint following the BOST Volunteer Problem Solving Procedure. Please contact the Volunteer Coordinator for a copy.

You may find that BOST isn't the place for you. If this happens, you should let your manager know and they will ask to have a chat with you so that we can understand your reasons for leaving. You may want to get a different experience within BOST or with another organisation; we may be able to put you in touch with other organisations.

**We hope that you enjoy your time with us. If you have any other questions about BOST, volunteering then please don't hesitate to ask.**

*Please note: BOST has a separate volunteer policy other than this document. Please ask the Volunteer Coordinator if you wish to see this policy (Marta Pascual Argente, Volunteer Coordinator, [volunteer@bost.org.uk](mailto:volunteer@bost.org.uk), 020 7403 3393).*

## Appendix A

### Volunteer Travel Expenses Form

Name:

Date Submitted:

Signed:

Bank Account Number:

Bank Sort Code:

Authorised by:

**Please number each journey or item for reimbursement on the table below and attach and number each receipt to match each numbered journey or item. You will be paid by bank transfer.**

No.	Journey / Item Description	Date	Cost
01.			
02.			
03.			
04.			
05.			
06.			
07.			
08.			
	<b>Total</b>		

## Travel Expense Form Example

You must register your oyster or contactless bank card online with Transport for London (TFL) at <https://tfl.gov.uk/fares/contactless-and-oyster-account>. Once registered you need to log in to get your journey history for the trips you are claiming expenses for.

Add these trips one line per day to the expense form and number accordingly. See example below:

01/06/2021		£10.60	—
Hither Green to Morden 08:31 - 09:23		£6.10	>
Morden to Borough 15:51 - 16:24		£2.90	>
London Bridge (National Rail) to Hither Green 18:36 - 18:55		£1.60	>

No.	Journey Description	Date	Cost
1	Return trip to Morden	01.06.21	£10.60

Continue with one line per journey and then total the cost at the bottom. Make sure you add in your bank account and sort code details as you will be transferred the money into your account. Email the document along with all the corresponding journey history (you can download these from the TFL website) to [marta@bost.org.uk](mailto:marta@bost.org.uk).

Please note that there are two payment runs per month made by the BOST finance team in order to process these requests so it may take up to a fortnight for you to be paid.

For more information about claiming volunteer expenses please ask for a copy of the BOST Volunteer Expenses Policy or contact [volunteer@bost.org.uk](mailto:volunteer@bost.org.uk).

## **Appendix B**

### **Volunteer Agreement**

Volunteers are a very important and valued part of Bankside Open Spaces Trust (BOST). We appreciate that you have chosen to volunteer with us and we are committed to doing the best we can to make your volunteer experience enjoyable, productive and rewarding.

This Volunteer Agreement is a guide for both volunteers and BOST and sets out what we intend to do and the support that we intend to provide one another during the course of your volunteering.

Please feel free to discuss the content of the agreement with your group supervisor, or Volunteer Coordinator at any time.

#### **Bankside Open Spaces Trust expects to:**

1. Introduce you to how the organisation works and your role within it.
2. Provide the necessary information, training and assistance for you to fulfil your volunteer role.
3. Provide good levels of support and feedback.
4. Provide insurance cover.
5. Provide a safe place for you to volunteer, in line with our Health and Safety policy and as detailed in our Gardening and Wardening Risk Assessments.
6. Treat all volunteers in line with our Equality, Safeguarding and Confidentiality Policies (as below and further detailed in the Volunteer Handbook)
7. Respect your skills and individual needs and to do our best to respond to these.
8. Record the hours you volunteer and recognise your contribution to the organisation and the community.
9. Welcome comments and suggestions from you regarding the ways in which we might improve how we perform our respective tasks.

10. Provide opportunities for volunteers to socialise together.

11. Provide a Meal Deal (sandwich and drink) for people volunteering for longer than five hours in one day.

**Bankside Open Spaces Trust expects volunteers to:**

1. Arrive on time for your session and attend regularly, letting us know when possible in advance if you are unable to attend a planned session.

2. Perform your volunteer role to the best of your ability.

3. Familiarise yourself with all relevant Health and Safety information by listening to the onsite Health and Safety induction and instructions and reading the Volunteer Handbook, Tips for Safe Gardening leaflet/Safe Wardening document (if appropriate for your role) and relevant risk assessment as appropriate. It is the responsibility of all employees and volunteers to act in a safe and responsible manner and not to put themselves or others at risk.

4. Look after your own possessions; we take no liability for your belongings. Please don't bring valuables on site.

5. Adhere to our policies, procedures and guidance whilst volunteering with us, including the following. More information can be found in our Volunteer Handbook.

- **Equality** - It is the policy of BOST to treat all employees, participants, contractors and job applicants fairly and equally, regardless of their age, disability, race, religion and belief, gender and sexual orientation. All employees and volunteers have a personal responsibility to adhere to the principals of equal opportunity and maintaining harmony. Prejudice or inappropriate behaviour toward volunteers, staff or the public will not be tolerated. Please report any inappropriate behaviour to your team leader or the Volunteer Coordinator
- **Safeguarding Children** – no volunteers participate directly with children however be aware that there may be children and young people in the vicinity with their parents or as a school group. All volunteers to be reminded there should be no inappropriate language or behaviour.
- **Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults** – please be aware that we have a diverse group of individuals working and volunteering with us with different issues which could include mental health issues, learning disabilities,

homelessness and isolation. We ask you are sensitive to these issues when volunteering with us.

- **Gifts and money** - no staff or volunteers are to lend each other money or ask for loans or gifts. We can't guarantee the arrangement and would like to avoid for volunteers to find themselves in awkward situations.
- **Professional relationships** - staff and volunteers must remain on a professional level and should not have a relationship or meet on a 1:1 basis outside of work or volunteering. Staff will not give out their personal numbers.
- **Confidentiality** – all information we collect is held securely, locked away and password protected. We will only pass on any information that is necessary for safety or safeguarding reasons; likewise volunteers should respect confidentiality of other volunteers unless there is a safety or safeguarding risk.
- **Social Media and WhatsApp** – Volunteers are to be mindful if making their volunteer role with BOST part of their social media identity, as this can cause a conflict of interest. We kindly ask that if you are mentioning your Volunteering role through these channels to please make it clear that your personal social media accounts reflect your own views and not that of BOST.

Volunteering WhatsApp groups are always monitored by BOST staff. These WhatsApp groups are to be a welcoming and safe group and communications must remain friendly and positive. We ask Volunteers to please act in a respectful and polite manner when using the WhatsApp groups.

6. Inform us of any unspent criminal convictions both on the Volunteer Application Form and at any time anything changes.

7. Inform us of any physical or mental health conditions you have that you feel you may need help from us with, in order to carry out this role. Please let us know on the Volunteer Application Form and at any time anything changes.

8. You cannot consume or be under the influence of drugs or alcohol while you are volunteering with us. If you are seen consuming or appear to be under the influence you will be asked to leave the volunteering session.

9. Please be aware of the affect any changes in medication may have on your ability to volunteer, do not attend volunteering if medication is making you feel drowsy. If you start to feel ill for any reason during volunteering please take a break and inform the group leader or contact the Volunteer Coordinator.

10. Do discuss any problems with your group leader or Volunteer Coordinator and ask any questions that arise.

11. Out of courtesy please let us know if you wish to stop volunteering.

*I have received and understood the Volunteer Handbook, Tips for Safe Gardening leaflet/Safe Wardening document and the relevant Risk Assessment for my role. These documents can be found at <https://www.bost.org.uk/volunteering-resources> and downloaded for your future reference.*

*This agreement is not a legally binding contract or an employment offer.*

*I agree to abide by these and the above points, to volunteer safely and fairly and to inform relevant staff if I am aware of any breach of these practices.*