

# Volunteer Policy

## Introduction

Energise Sussex Coast (ESC) is a community benefit society. Our mission is to act co-operatively to tackle the climate crisis and energy injustice through community owned renewable power and energy saving schemes.

Energise Sussex Coast's work focuses on:

- Energy advice – helping residents lower their bills and save energy through quality, impartial energy advice provided by both volunteers and professional Energy Advisors.
- Community decarbonisation – working with communities to create decarbonisation plans and implement community energy schemes.
- Locally owned solar – through our sister Co-op Energise South, we fund and install solar on community buildings.

## How we work with volunteers

ESC has many highly enthusiastic, knowledgeable and skilled volunteers who help us achieve our ambitious aims. Volunteers support ESC's work and also are supported to develop their own project ideas. We firmly believe in grassroots action and are developing our volunteering scheme in order that we have lots of local people with the skills and knowledge to take action on issues around energy in our local area.

ESC is so grateful for the time and energy that volunteers give us. In return we are working hard to develop quality training, opportunities for networking and being inspired, and interesting and varied volunteering opportunities. Our aim is that by volunteering with us you feel part of the friendly local energy network and feel that you can develop new skills in the areas you are interested in.

## Recruitment

Volunteers will be recruited through the website, advertising through networks, local posters and leaflets and by talking to people at events.

We welcome the breadth and diversity of experience that volunteers bring. Some volunteers have years of relevant experience whilst others lots of enthusiasm and a willingness to learn. We will recruit according to the volunteer role and offer training and support so that volunteers are able to carry out their role. We will carry out informal interviews to ensure the role is right for both parties. Volunteers who work with the public will be DBS checked.

All volunteers will need to fill in our volunteer form and sign up to ESC's code of conduct before they start volunteering.

## Equal Opportunities & Diversity

You will be volunteering in a place that is respectful and values differences. We will not condone, tolerate or ignore any form of discrimination or unacceptable behaviour.

We want to make our volunteering programme as welcoming and inclusive as we can. If there's anything that's preventing you from getting involved that we can help with then let us know.

## **Induction & Training**

All volunteers will have the ESC induction. This will ensure that you have a good base of knowledge about ESC the organisation, the way we work and the policies and procedures we work under, this includes safeguarding and data protection.

Ongoing training will be offered. If you have a particular training need then let us know as we are developing and adding to our current training programme.

## **Ongoing Support**

You will have a volunteer manager who will support you. This will include regular in person support, as well as contact as needed on the phone or by email plus supervisions, volunteer social events and ongoing training. We will do our best to make the most of opportunities into work for those that are interested, ensuring that volunteers are aware of any paid opportunities in ESC or our partner organisations, and working with volunteers where possible to build their CV.

## **Representing ESC**

We want you to enjoy volunteering with us and take our responsibility to you seriously. As an ESC volunteer you will be acting as a representative for us and we ask that you act accordingly. In particular ensuring that people know you are a volunteer and that you are careful there is no conflict of interest, for example any commercial crossovers. If you are aware of a potential conflict of interest then let us know.

## **Expenses**

Volunteers can claim out of pocket expenses as follows:

- Travel expenses to and from the volunteering location and ESC training (including public transport, bike travel @ 20p a mile, car travel @ 45p a mile. We ask that you don't use taxis unless pre-agreed with ESC).
- Lunch expenses for a full day volunteering: up to £10, please keep your receipts. Alcoholic drinks cannot be claimed (sorry!)
- Other out of pocket expenses – there may be the odd thing that you buy as a volunteer, for example stationary, which can be claimed back. Please keep receipts and get approval in advance for any larger costs.

You will be given a volunteer expenses claim form which should be submitted each month to your manager. We will aim to reimburse expenses within a week of returning your form by bank transfer.

## **Insurance**

You will be covered by ESC's professional endemity insurance and our public liability insurance for events with the public. However your personal belongings are not covered.

## **Health & Safety**

We want to make sure that your wellbeing and safety is protected while you are volunteering for us, and we ask that you also help to ensure that your working environment is kept safe for others. Please let us know straight away if you have any concerns around health and safety and your volunteer placement.

Please read the Health and Safety policy.

## **Data protection and Confidentiality**

We will take care of your data by limiting access to it on a needs to know basis only. It will be stored safely in a locked file in the office and on the ESC computer system.

Some volunteers will be handling sensitive and private data and it's really important that everyone prioritises keeping it safe and confidential. We ask that you familiarise yourself with ESC's data protection policy and ensure that you work under the guidance. You will be supported by your manager to do this. If you have any questions or concerns about data protection then please report to your manager immediately.

Please read the Data Protection Policy

## **Safeguarding**

Some volunteers, especially those giving energy advice, may come into contact with vulnerable people. If you have any concerns over someone's safety then please report them straight away to your manager.

Please read ESC's Safeguarding policy.

## **Problem Solving Procedure**

We aim for our volunteers to have a positive experience volunteering for us. However if you have a problem or difficulty then the first stop is to report it to your volunteer manager. If this is not possible then please report to Kate Meakin. We will work with you to try and resolve the problem as quickly and amicably as possible.

## **Our expectations of volunteers**

The ESC code of conducts asks that you will...

- Always consider and respect ESC's reputation in your actions and conduct, acting responsibly and within the law.
- Be polite, friendly and helpful in all interactions with the public.
- Work in partnership and respect with staff and fellow volunteers. We are a cooperative and cooperating is at our core!
- Support and act in accordance with our organisational policies and procedures, paying special attention to data protection and confidentiality.
- Be accountable and open to feedback.
- Let us know if you are having any problems or have any concerns.

- Keep us in the loop if your circumstances change or you need to stop or pause volunteering.

**Signed**

**Volunteer Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_