

## **VOLUNTEER POLICY**

**Date Adopted:** 27 January 2026

**Review Date:** 27 January 2027

### **1. Introduction**

This volunteer policy sets out the principles and practice by which volunteers contribute to the planning and operation of the Gower Walking Festival. It aims to ensure the highest standards are maintained in relation to the management of volunteers.

### **2. Our commitments**

Gower Walking Festival is run on a not-for-profit basis by a small, enthusiastic group of volunteers. Volunteers also lead, back mark and steward our walks. We aim to encourage and support volunteers to ensure that volunteering benefits both the organisation and the volunteers themselves.

We are committed 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 ethnically diverse communities.

We recognise our responsibility to organise volunteering so that the valuable gift of the volunteer's time is best used to the mutual advantage of all concerned.

### **3. What is a volunteer?**

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

The Welsh Government Volunteering Policy (2015) defines volunteering as activity which

- is undertaken freely, by choice
- is undertaken to be of public/ community benefit
- is not undertaken for financial gain

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

- in the organisation of the Walking Festival; in leading, back marking or stewarding walks; providing walkers with specialist knowledge; or in other ways
- by being on the Walking Festival organising committee
- in undertaking community engagement to raise awareness of the Walking Festival
- in one off events and promotional activities.

Volunteers are valued for:

- bringing additional and diverse and new skills and perspectives to the Walking Festival
- enabling us to be more responsive and flexible in our approach
- championing our cause within the wider community
- enhancing the quality of the Walking Festival
- promoting the wellbeing of participants in the Walking Festival, local communities and themselves.

#### **4. Roles and responsibilities**

The Gower Walking Festival organising committee (which is made up of volunteers) has responsibility for the management and co-ordination of voluntary activity, including volunteering policies and procedures.

Volunteering 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 organisation 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 Walking Festival expects of volunteers and what volunteers expect of the organisation.

#### **The Walking Festival expects volunteers:**

- To be reliable and honest
- To uphold our values and comply with our policies
- To contribute positively to the aims of the Walking Festival and avoid bringing it 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 relevant to role
- To be insured when appropriate 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 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.

## **5. Recruitment and selection**

Equal opportunities principles will be adhered to in recruiting volunteers. Opportunities will be widely promoted so as to attract interest from different sectors of the community. Online and non-digital methods of application are available.

Written role descriptions which set out the nature and purpose of the volunteering role, key tasks and skills required will be provided. Where appropriate, a risk assessment will be undertaken and identified risks and steps to mitigate risks will be shared with the volunteer.

Recruitment will usually involve an informal interview and the taking of references.

Where applicants are not able to be placed in their preferred role, they will be provided with feedback and given the opportunity to discuss alternative volunteering roles, or signposted to the local volunteer centre or the <http://www.volunteering-wales.net/> website.

## **6. Induction**

Volunteers will be given induction appropriate to the specific tasks to be undertaken.

## **7. Support and supervision**

Volunteers will be offered appropriate support and this is discussed during induction. Arrangements vary according to the volunteer and the role undertaken.

## **8. Dealing with problems**

The Walking Festival 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 are free to raise any difficulties with any member of the organising committee.

Volunteers found to have behaved inappropriately by the committee will be asked to leave the organisation.

## **9. Expenses**

Volunteers will be given clear information about what expenses can be claimed and how to make a claim.

## **10. Moving on**

When volunteers move on from volunteering with us, they will be asked to provide feedback on the volunteering experience.

Volunteers who have remained with the Walking Festival for at least 3 months will have the right to request a reference.