

MBACT Volunteering Policy

The Monmouthshire, Brecon and Abergavenny Canals Trust (MBACT) is a local charity in South East Wales actively working with local councils, Glandwr Cymru (the Canal and River Trust in Wales) and other partners to improve and sustainably restore the Mon & Brec Canal for the benefit of the local community.

Volunteering for the Monmouthshire, Brecon and Abergavenny Canals Trust (MBACT)

MBACT only exists and functions because of the dedication of its volunteers. We welcome volunteers of all ages, backgrounds and abilities from across the community. We value and recognise the huge contribution our volunteers make to the canals' upkeep and ongoing restoration.

Roles for volunteers

We welcome offers of assistance whether it be to work on the canals cleaning up rubbish, cutting back undergrowth, organising events, undertaking administrative work, helping to run our Community Trip Boats based at Goytre Wharf, assisting in looking after visitors to the Fourteen Locks Canal Information Centre in Newport, or being on our board of directors and trustees. Volunteering opportunities can be found on our website

<https://mbact.org.uk>



Purpose of this document

This document is aimed at existing and potential MBACT volunteers, MBACT employees and Directors. It has two main sections - what our volunteers can expect from MBACT, and what MBACT expects from its volunteers.

Document Control

Document number: MBACT-Policy-001

Document Type: Google Doc

Document Name: MBACT Volunteering Policy - MBACT-Policy-001

Issue Date: 1st December 2022

Approved by: MBACT Directors

Owner: MBACT Volunteer Officer

Review period: Yearly

Version number: 1.1

Updated: 10th April 2023, minor update

Latest Review Date:

Reviewed by:

Our volunteer policy – what our volunteers can expect from MBACT

Recruitment

- We will work with you to find a volunteering opportunity to fit with your availability, skills and preferences. If we are unable to find a suitable role for you, or your allocated role subsequently doesn't meet your needs, we will work with you to find another suitable volunteering opportunity.
- MBACT is committed to equal opportunities for all.
- References and a DBS check may be required for some roles.
- We welcome all volunteers who approach us.
- We advertise specific vacancies on our website <https://mbact.org.uk>

Diversity

- MBACT actively welcomes volunteers from every part of the community.
- Volunteering opportunities exist for all ages, genders, ethnic groups, religions, disabilities, educational backgrounds and sexual orientations.
- MBACT is committed to ensuring equal opportunities, fairness of treatment and providing an environment in which people feel comfortable and confident that they will be treated with respect and dignity.
- In the interests of safety, MBACT, may require under 18s or certain vulnerable volunteers to be accompanied by a carer or guardian. We will discuss this with the volunteer when they apply.

Health and Safety

- MBACT is committed to providing a healthy, safe setting for all its volunteer activities.
- All MBACT registered volunteers are covered by MBACT insurance.
- All volunteers receive an induction, and we will provide sufficient training and equipment to carry out your role.
- Certain roles and tasks (such as working by water, or working on our boats) are governed by additional MBACT Policies and Risk Assessments. We will advise you of this and provide information, equipment and training where required. Volunteers should not work alone and you will be given advice and instructions on this.
- You may be asked to wear safety appropriate clothing, gloves and footwear. Where other personal protection equipment is required, this will usually be provided. Some tasks can only be carried out by suitably qualified volunteers. If necessary appropriate training will be provided.

Skills and Training

- MBACT is committed to supporting our volunteers to gain new skills or build on existing skill sets.
- Training is provided when needed. Most training will be provided free of charge but some training may require a contribution from the volunteer, or a commitment in advance to pay back training costs if the volunteer doesn't utilise the training for MBACT over a certain

period of time. We will make it clear in advance as to whether the training is free of charge or not. We will normally cover accommodation and travel costs if appropriate.

- We will assist you with all aspects of your own personal development by providing professional training where this is a necessary and appropriate part of your activities with us.

Ongoing Support

- We wish to ensure you are happy when giving your time to volunteering.
- MBACT is committed to open and frequent communication. We will give you access to various communication tool chat groups such as specific WhatsApp groups. We expect all communications to be supportive, friendly and should avoid inappropriate language. We will discuss with, and warn, volunteers if it is felt that their communications are inappropriate. As a last resort the volunteer may be removed from the chat group.
- We expect all volunteers to comply with existing policies and procedures, and we will provide all applicable policies, procedures and risk assessments.
- MBACT will ensure that any successes in which you have participated will be recognised and celebrated.
- Tea, coffee and drinking water are provided. Our volunteers usually bring along their own drinks/packed lunches.
- Our volunteers usually make their own way to the volunteering location – if you are experiencing travel difficulties, or cannot cover travel costs, please speak to us.
- You will be given a named contact on your first day who will provide continuous support during your volunteering with MBACT.
- MBACT will make you aware of any training opportunities that might be relevant or of interest to you.
- You will be invited to our volunteer get togethers which will give you an opportunity to meet other volunteers from our different locations.

Dealing with issues that may arise

- MBACT aims to treat all volunteers fairly, objectively and consistently. We seek to ensure that volunteers' views are heard, noted and acted upon promptly.
- We will try to deal with any problems informally and at the earliest opportunity. All volunteers will have a named person to whom they can turn in the case of any difficulty. Where informal resolution is not possible, the Trust's Complaints Procedure will be followed.
- Volunteers will be made aware of the Trust's Complaints Procedure and how to use it. They will also be made aware of how inappropriate behaviour by volunteers will be addressed by the organisation.

Personal Data

When you register with us we ask you for certain personal data and an emergency contact. This information will be stored online. We are governed by UK GDPR legislation and will take all reasonable precautions to ensure the protection of any personal information held about you. We will use this data to manage your volunteering effectively with us, and we will not share any information with third parties unless you give specific permission. We work with certain partners such as local councils and the Canal and River Trust and certain roles and tasks may require sharing of your personal data with them. We will make this clear to you before we share your personal data with them.

The only people who have access to your data are specific MBACT volunteers and MBACT employees who require access to perform their volunteer management duties. Their access is controlled by the MBACT Volunteer Officer.

You can ask anytime as to what data we hold about you and we will correct this if it is incorrect. You can ask for your data to be deleted at any time but we have a compliance requirement to hold specific data about you whilst volunteering. If you request your data to be deleted then you will not be able to volunteer with us subsequently unless you re-register.

You may be asked to record how many hours you have volunteered over a period of time. We may anonymously aggregate this data to report to third parties such as funding bodies.

Our volunteer policy – what is expected from our volunteers

Representing us

- You will be well presented, polite and appropriately dressed.
- You can inform the general public to the best of your knowledge and guide them to further sources of information where you are unsure of any facts.
- We expect you to avoid using inappropriate language when volunteering with MBACT.
- We expect you to be honest and reliable.
- When customer facing i.e. at the Fourteen Locks Centre or as a boat crew member you should wear the approved T-shirt or branded PPE that you have been provided with.
- Do not speak on behalf of MBACT particularly on social media unless you have been given specific authority. You are of course entitled to your own opinion on social media, provided it is not in conflict with the Trust's aims and objectives. Be aware that within the canal community you may be recognised as being an MBACT volunteer and hence your views may be considered as being those of MBACT.

Keep us informed

- We are aware that volunteers must put their own health, family and personal commitments first. However, please contact your team leader or supervisor as soon as possible if you are unable to attend a planned task or activity. This is to allow MBACT to assign another person if required.
- Let us know of your successes and achievements so we can share the news with other volunteers, or via social media if appropriate.

Good practice

- Your volunteer coordinator and team leaders will have assessed any risks associated with activities that you are likely to perform. You should also take your own sensible precautions at all times with regard to everyone's health and safety.
- Please ensure that you listen, take on board and familiarise yourself with any relevant instructions and formal procedures given to you to follow.
- If you are unsure of any instruction, policy or guidance please ask for clarity. This is for your own safety, your colleague's safety and general public protection and benefit.

- If you feel that any task or activity is unsafe please raise it immediately with your task supervisor. If you feel that your concern is not being taken seriously please contact the Volunteer Officer or any MBACT Director.

Dealing with issues that may arise

- MBACT aims to treat all volunteers fairly, objectively and consistently. You should treat your fellow volunteers fairly and with respect. If you feel that you or any other volunteer are not being treated fairly or with respect then you should raise your concerns with your task supervisor or an MBACT Director.

Moving on

- If you intend to give up volunteering with MBACT please let us know so that we can celebrate your achievements or support you if volunteering with MBACT wasn't right for you.
- Volunteers who have remained with MBACT for at least 3 months will have the right to request a reference.