



Volunteering Policy

Introduction

Coed Talylan Land Trust is a co-operative community benefit society.

Coed Talylan is committed to a working environment that offers equal opportunities and where all employees and volunteers have the right to be treated fairly and with dignity and respect.

Volunteering at Coed Talylan

This Volunteering Policy sets out the broad principles for volunteering for Coed Talylan. It is relevant to all current and potential volunteers, as well as any individuals concerned with recruiting, supporting, developing and managing volunteers.

Volunteering, community participation and social inclusion are matters that are important to us and we see ourselves as a key part of the community. We wish to provide opportunities for members of the community to play their part in helping Coed Talylan achieve its objectives by encouraging them to offer themselves as volunteers to work on beneficial tasks that:

- a) complement and support the work of employed staff; or
- b) employed staff do not have the capacity to deliver.

Volunteers would assist Coed Talylan's staff to achieve basic tasks associated with our work supervised by specific staff members, and offer 'additional value' to our current services. Coed Talylan would not, under any circumstances, use the services of volunteers as a replacement for qualified staff.

General Principles

- Volunteers are people who, unpaid and of their own free will, contribute their time, energy and skills to benefit Coed Talylan.

- Volunteering is a legitimate and valued activity that is supported and encouraged by Coed Talylan and is not intended to be a substitute for paid employment. The role of volunteers complements but does not replace or undermine the role of paid staff.
- Although no enforceable obligation, contractual or otherwise, can be imposed on volunteers to attend, give or be set a minimum amount of time to carry out the tasks involved in their voluntary activity, a mutual understanding of the needs and arrangements of both the volunteer and Coed Talylan must exist. Likewise, Coed Talylan cannot be compelled to provide regular work, payment or other benefit for any activity undertaken by the volunteer. Both Coed Talylan and volunteer are free to terminate the arrangement at any time.
- Although volunteers offer time freely and willingly without binding obligation, there is a presumption of mutual support and reliability. Reciprocal expectations are acknowledged – both of what Coed Talylan expects of volunteers and what volunteers expect of Coed Talylan.

In return, volunteers may expect from Coed Talylan:

- The opportunity to undertake meaningful and constructive tasks of real value to Coed Talylan.
- The opportunity to develop their skills/competences.
- The opportunity to volunteer with a community organisation.
- Appropriate and safe volunteering conditions with the right supervision.
- Training and the possibility of being provided with tools for the tasks assigned.
- Tasks that match the needs of Coed Talylan and where possible with the competencies and interests of the volunteers.
- Reimbursement of reasonable and receipted expenses incurred.
- Direct communication with their task managers
- To be treated in accordance with our Equality and Diversity Policy

Volunteers' Charter

Coed Talylan expects volunteers to:

- Work with us to achieve our aims and objectives to the best of their ability
- Work independently and without supervision when necessary
- Be reliable
- Carry out their role to the best of their ability
- Treat volunteering as a mutually beneficial activity to both parties
- Give reasonable notice, wherever possible, if unable to undertake agreed activities
- Respect confidentiality, equality and diversity, and heCoed Talylanh and safety requirements
- Act under the direction of the volunteer co-ordinator
- Attend relevant induction, training, feedback and support sessions

- Tell Coed Talylan in advance if they want to stop volunteering
- Share any concerns that involves their work as soon as possible with the appropriate person
- Enjoy themselves!

Coed Talylan recognises the rights of volunteers to:

- Know what is (and is not) expected of them
- Be given tasks that they are capable of and that are of benefit to Coed Talylan
- Be treated fairly and equally
- Receive useful and appropriate induction and training
- Receive support and supervision with a point of contact at all times
- Received relevant, agreed out of pocket expenses
- Be given the opportunity to give and receive feedback
- Feel a sense of belonging to Coed Talylan, free from discrimination and to feel valued
- Volunteer within a safe environment.

Equality and diversity

Coed Talylan is committed to equal opportunities and believes that volunteering should be open to all, 16 years and over, regardless of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), sexual orientation, religion or belief, or because someone is married or in a civil partnership. The acceptance of a volunteer for a particular role is made on merit, the sole selection criterion being the individual's suitability to carry out agreed tasks. Information about the volunteer not relevant to their ability to carry out their role will be disregarded by Coed Talylan in terms of recruitment and selection.

Recruitment and selection of volunteers

Coed Talylan has a fair and consistent process for recruiting and selecting volunteers that is relevant and appropriate to each role. It recruits volunteers on a needs-led but mutually beneficial basis to match desirable projects and activities with volunteers' competencies, skills, knowledge, experience and motivation. The volunteer coordinator will also discuss individual volunteer requirements to ensure volunteers feel happy and properly supported in their role throughout their time as a volunteer.

A combined approach of application forms, references and informal interviews form the basis of our volunteer recruitment and selection.

All potential volunteers will have a clear understanding of the requirements of the volunteer roles to support them in selecting a position appropriate to their individual wishes. This is in the form of a concise and current role description, prepared by the volunteer coordinator.

Demand for volunteering vacancies may be high and not all applications will necessarily be successful. However, we do ensure that all applications are treated equally and will be submitted for consideration. Applicants who do not get placed may wish to be put on a waiting list for that role or other opportunities.

Benefits claimants and overseas volunteers

Coed Talylan follows best practice guidelines produced by the Wales Council for Voluntary Action on involving volunteers receiving welfare benefits, job seekers allowance, asylum seekers and volunteers from overseas. Please note that it is the responsibility of the individual concerned to seek and follow advice from benefits advisors and Coed Talylan will not accept responsibility for this.

Learning and development

Coed Talylan will ensure that all new volunteers are made to feel welcome and informed that an informal induction and core training are required for all roles. This may take place before or on the first day of volunteering or as soon as possible thereafter; it will cover all essential information, policies and procedures in order to equip volunteers with the necessary information and skills to carry out their role competently and safely. Depending on the project, training can be done on an on-the-job basis or via a group training day/programme.

Coed Talylan recognises that volunteers require satisfying work and the opportunity for progression and personal development. Volunteers may want to develop new skills while helping Coed Talylan and, where appropriate, will be encouraged to take on new roles or assume greater levels of responsibility.

Expenses

Coed Talylan volunteers are able to claim reasonable, pre-agreed, out of pocket expenses. Concern for expenses should not limit the contribution that a volunteer can offer. The volunteer coordinator can provide more details of claiming travel and other role related expenses.

Health and Safety

Coed Talylan is committed to providing and maintaining a safe environment for its volunteers while volunteering within its designated premises. Volunteers will receive appropriate health and safety training as part of their induction and training, and suitable equipment and protective clothing will be provided where necessary. The volunteer coordinator will carry out risk assessments on all activities undertaken by volunteers. Volunteers also have a duty of care for themselves and others around them.

Coed Talylan cannot be responsible for the health and safety of volunteers beyond its site.

Data Protection

Personal information recorded about volunteers will be stored and maintained with the appropriate safeguards for confidentiality and the General Data Protection Regulation 2018.

Settling differences and finishing as a volunteer

Coed Talylan aims to treat all volunteers fairly, equally, objectively and consistently.

Volunteers can expect their views to be heard, noted and acted upon promptly, with the aim of a positive and amicable solution.

Coed Talylan recognises that volunteers are free to end their involvement at any time. Volunteers are invited to complete an informal exit interview for future benefit to the volunteering programme. Any Coed Talylan equipment, property etc must be returned.

Coed Talylan can also end the volunteering arrangement at any time should the need for the particular role come to an end or if the arrangement is no longer deemed to be mutually beneficial.