

## Agreeing a volunteer policy

### An illustrative case study for a church setting

**Holy Nativity Church set up a Drop-in Centre and wanted to recruit volunteers from the church and the community. The Drop-in is run by Esther, a member of the congregation but not on the PCC (Holy Nativity's governing body).**

Esther met with the churchwardens and advised them that a volunteer policy would be a good idea. As the Drop-in Centre was set up by the parish, they decided that the PCC (church council) needed to pass any policy but didn't have the expertise to write it.

Esther drafted a policy, using a suitable template, with the support of one of the churchwardens. They agreed a date for it to go onto the PCC agenda, when Esther would introduce the draft and answer questions.

Esther went through the template and drafted the sections that were straightforward. For issues like insurance, expenses and DBS check where she needed to know the existing church systems she asked the churchwarden for guidance.

Esther and the churchwarden went through the draft policy together and realised that the issue of expenses was likely to provoke most discussion, since many members of the congregation volunteered without getting any expenses.

The draft policy went to PCC members in advance of the meeting to allow them time to consider it.

Most of the policy was easily agreed but there were questions about expenses. Esther explained that by offering to reimburse volunteers' travel expenses the church was opening itself up to volunteers who might otherwise not be able to volunteer. There was discussion around this point but the support of the churchwarden helped Esther make her case.

After the meeting, Esther produced a final copy of the policy. This was circulated to the whole PCC by email but final sign off was delegated to Esther, the churchwarden and the vicar. Esther returned to the PCC six months after the Drop-in opened to report back on progress and to contribute to a review of the policy, including how the expenses system was working in practice.

The agreed policy was circulated to the PCC, made available in the church office and used as the source of information about what volunteers can expect in terms of training, expenses, insurance etc. The key information from the policy is shared with each Drop-in volunteer during their induction.