



Lowestoft Town Hall Project

Volunteer Handbook

V1 – July 2024

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Lowestoft Town Hall Project – who are we

The Town Hall has been closed since 2015 having previously been occupied by the former Waveney District Council. The building now owned by Lowestoft Town Council (LTC), largely consists of civic facilities, such as the Council Chamber, and office accommodation. Due to lack of use, the historic fabric of the building is now in a precarious state, leading to the building being placed on the Buildings at Risk register.

Extensive consultation has demonstrated that the Town Hall retains a strong importance to the local community who overwhelmingly support the building having a community future. LTC aim is to deliver a multifunctional building housing a range of heritage, community, and commercial uses to ensure its long-term sustainability. This will act as a driver for economic growth and community pride, inclusion and wellbeing. By delivering heritage learning opportunities it will inspire local young people, raise aspiration and pride, making the area a more attractive place to live, work and invest in.

The building is a key strategic project within the North Lowestoft Heritage Quarter (a Historic England Heritage Action Zone until April 2023) and was identified as a building at risk within the NLHAZ delivery plan. Through the North Lowestoft HAZ, Historic England commissioned a feasibility study in 2019, into potential uses for the building. The study concluded that the optimum use would be as a mixed-use community, creative and commercial. A business plan (funded by Architectural Heritage Fund) developed these ideas and options further and helped support the preparation of a successful stage 1 National Lottery Heritage Fund Heritage Grant application.

In September 2021 Lowestoft Town Council was awarded a development grant by the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) to progress plans to a stage 2 delivery bid. Between August 2022 and May 2023, a programme of pilot community engagement activities was delivered. This has enabled the project to test and learn what works well, and what engages with our target and core audiences, in order to inform the Activity Plan for the delivery and operational stages of the project. In September 2023 Lowestoft Town Council was successful in gaining second stage funding from The National Lottery Heritage Fund. It is anticipated that the redeveloped Town Hall will open in spring 2026

The Project

The Town Hall project will transform the Town Hall into a multifunctioning building that will be in the heart of Lowestoft and the Harbour Ward. The Grade II listed Town Hall will have a permanent heritage gallery and information point, with adjacent community gallery/exhibition space/ arts and crafts spaces and co working space. The building will also become an events venue and office for the Town Council.

The Council Chamber will have a dual-use, including usage by Lowestoft Town Council. The building will also look to accommodate space for registrars and weddings to be held, which will generate revenue.



The Town Hall will also be a collaborative space – acting as a venue for outreach activities, showcasing artefacts from other heritage/ organisations in the town and signposting people to them.

A five-year activity programme has been devised to specifically target groups currently under served by heritage in partnership with organisations working locally.

Staff and Councillors

The project is managed by.....

Key Staff:

Council Officers

Heritage Officer

Councillors

Our Volunteering Promise

Volunteers play an invaluable part in helping the Town Hall project. We want to make sure all our volunteers have the skills and support they need to carry out their roles. To make your volunteer journey with us as enjoyable and rewarding as possible for both you and the organisation, we will:

- Provide a full induction for all new volunteers
- Offer training for all new volunteers as well as highlight any on-going training opportunities as you develop in your role
- Provide a named person with whom you can discuss your volunteering role
- Hold meetings and provide opportunities for you to feedback on your volunteer experience with us so we can continue to grow and improve
- Provide you with a name badge to identify you as a volunteer
- Ensure you have everything you need to carry out your role in a safe manner
- Reimburse any reasonable out of pocket expenses such as travel for training purposes
- Provide an environment which is free from unfair treatment
- Encourage social opportunities
- Recognise success and long service

In return, we ask volunteers to:

- Attend appropriate induction and training sessions
- Commit to LTC policies, vision and promises and abide by them
- Keep a record of your hours



Volunteers give their time freely to support the Town Hall project and are not paid. All volunteers are asked to read and adhere to the above Volunteering Service Promise and LTC Code of Conduct, which are binding in honour only and not intended to be a legally binding contract between Lowestoft Town Council and the volunteer. The volunteer commitment may be cancelled at any time at the discretion of either party and does not create an employment relationship either now or at any time in the future.

Code of Behaviour

The Town Hall team operate within Lowestoft Town Council's [Code of Conduct](#). As an adult volunteering for the Lowestoft Town Hall project you have a responsibility to attending Town Hall activities, particularly children, young people and vulnerable adults, are protected from harm, as set out in our [Safeguarding policy](#), and supporting policies. All policies can be downloaded from the website

<https://www.lowestofttowncouncil.gov.uk/about-the-council/important-documents/>

It is the responsibility of each adult volunteering with Lowestoft Town Hall project to ensure that:

- your behaviour is appropriate, acting with integrity and honestly within the law
- you observe the rules established for the safety and security of children, young people and vulnerable adults
- you follow the procedures following suspicion, disclosure or allegation of child abuse
- you recognise the position of trust in which you have been placed and treat all persons fairly with respect
- in every respect, the relationships you form with the children, young people and vulnerable adults in your care are appropriate.

Anyone who wishes to volunteer with the Lowestoft Town Hall project must accept, understand and put into practice our key policies, including safeguarding and data protection.

Dos and Don'ts

To give positive guidance the Code of Behaviour (below) provides a list of 'do's and 'don'ts to help you ensure that:

- the welfare of the children and/or young people and/or vulnerable adults for whom you may have a duty of care is safeguarded
- you avoid placing yourself in a compromising situation or creating opportunities for misunderstandings or allegations.



Code of behaviour

- ✓ **DO** put this code into practice at all times
 - ✓ **DO** treat everyone with dignity and respect
 - ✓ **DO** set an example you would wish others to follow
 - ✓ **DO** treat all people equally - show no favouritism
 - ✓ **DO** respect the right to personal privacy of a child, young person or vulnerable adult
 - ✓ **DO** avoid unacceptable situations within a relationship of trust, *eg*: a sexual relationship with a young person, or vulnerable adult over the age of consent
 - ✓ **DO** remember this code even at sensitive moments *eg* when responding to bullying, bereavement or abuse
 - ✓ **DO** keep other members of staff/volunteers informed of where you are and what you are doing
 - ✓ **DO** remember someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well-intentioned
 - ✓ **DO** take any allegations or concerns of abuse seriously and refer immediately.
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- **DO NOT** trivialise abuse
 - **DO NOT** form a relationship with a child, young person or vulnerable adult that is an abuse of trust
 - **DO NOT** permit abusive peer activities *eg*: initiation ceremonies, bullying
 - **DO NOT** engage in inappropriate behaviour or contact - physical, verbal, sexual
 - **DO NOT** play physical contact games with children, young people or vulnerable adults
 - **DO NOT** make suggestive remarks or threats to a young person, even in fun
 - **DO NOT** use inappropriate language - writing, phoning, email or internet
 - **DO NOT** let allegations, suspicions, or concerns about abuse go unreported
 - **DO NOT** just rely on your good name to protect you

Frequently Asked Questions

Absence

If you are unable to undertake your volunteer shift please contact your main point of contact as discussed in your induction. If you volunteer as part of a team, please do your best to liaise with fellow volunteers to arrange cover.

Ending volunteering

You are of course free to stop volunteering at any time. However, it would be very helpful to your colleagues and to the Lowestoft Town Hall project if you could complete the exit survey so we can make any necessary improvements for the future.

Problem solving

If at any point you have concerns over your volunteering with Lowestoft Town Hall project, you should discuss this with your main point of contact as discussed in your induction. If your problem relates to this person, you can discuss this with the Town Clark. You can see our full problem solving procedure on the website at [Protocols for Public Participation \(lowestofttowncouncil.gov.uk\)](https://www.lowestofttowncouncil.gov.uk).

