

# LYME REGIS REPAIR CAFE

## VOLUNTEER POLICY

### **Mission Statement**

Lyme Regis Repair Cafe (LRRC) is committed to providing a high quality, dependable and honest advice and repair service to all its customers. Everyone is welcome and the organisers endeavour to ensure that all volunteers, visitors and customers enjoy the best possible Repair Café experience

This Volunteer Policy demonstrates our commitment to our volunteers, our consistency in our decision-making process and clarity on how volunteers can expect to be treated in their roles within Lyme Regis Repair Cafe (LRRC).

### **1. Introduction**

LRRC is a volunteer-led community project that offers a range of social, environmental and economic benefits to its local community. Its main aim is to highlight the merits of repairing a personal or household possession instead of throwing it away. It offers a social meeting place where people of all ages and backgrounds can bring their damaged, broken or torn possessions to be repaired. It recognises and values those who have a wide range of hands-on practical and inter-personal skills and relies on its committed team of volunteers to deliver and maintain a high-quality and reliable repair and advice service. There is no charge, but customers are encouraged to leave a donation.

### **2. Recruitment**

Volunteers are usually recruited by word of mouth or as the result of visiting LRRC as a customer. New volunteers are invited to meet one of the Committee for a very informal interview and asked to complete a Volunteer Application form giving their contact details, information on the skills they can offer and the reason why they wish to volunteer. They are also asked to disclose any serious health issues and to complete an Emergency Contact form. In accordance with GDPR legislation, volunteers now need to give permission for their personal details to be stored securely by LRRC.

LRRC does not carry out DBS checks or take up references. All volunteers are recruited on the basis of trust, honesty and friendship.

### **3. Induction and Training**

A full explanation of how a Repair Café session operates is given at the pre-Repair Café meeting. Non-repairers are given the opportunity to select a role to which they feel most suited, e.g. front-of house or café duties. Volunteers are encouraged to ask to move to another role if they so wish and should discuss this with a committee member in the first instance. Every effort is made to ensure that volunteers are happy and comfortable with what is being asked of them.

Repairers are not required to show proof of their professional qualifications and/or training, and they should only attempt repairs for which they have the necessary skills, competence and expertise. Repairers are encouraged to work together and learn from each other.

### **4. Equal Opportunities and Diversity**

LRRC is committed to equal opportunities. Those from different backgrounds, age groups, cultures, genders and outlooks are encouraged to volunteer to increase diversity and offer a fresh approach. Volunteers with a disability are also welcome.

## **5. Health and Safety**

LRRC accepts that it has a duty of care to avoid exposing its volunteers, visitors and customers to any risks which may affect their health, safety and well-being. The Emergency Contact form completed by all volunteers names a relative or friend who can be contacted in the event of an emergency. A Risk Assessment covering the normal activities undertaken at LRRC sessions was drawn up in 2025 and is available to all volunteers on request. This is reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

All volunteers are expected to take responsibility for their own health and safety whilst on the premises and follow the correct safety procedures when fulfilling their LRRC roles. Volunteers are also expected to take full responsibility for the security and safety of their personal possessions and equipment whilst attending a session.

## **6. Insurance**

In addition to the Public Liability insurance provided at the current venue, Boat Building Academy, Monmouth Beach, Lyme Regis DT7 3NJ, LRRC has additional public liability insurance. This covers all the higher risk activities listed in the Risk Assessment.

## **7. Confidentiality**

All volunteers are required to complete and sign the GDPR form which gives permission for their personal email addresses to be shared amongst the volunteer team. Details provided on the Volunteer Application Form and Emergency Contact Form are regarded as confidential and never shared with other volunteers or third parties.

Customers are asked to provide an email address when completing the LRRC registration form so they can be informed about future Repair Café events. These are confidential and added to the LRRC mailing list. When reminder messages about Repair Café events are sent to customers, they are always blind copied (bcc) to protect their privacy.

## **8. Expenses**

The Repair Café will fund any consumables or small spare parts. Larger spare parts should be purchased by the customer. Volunteers will be refunded for any consumables or small spare parts they provide. Certain key tools may be funded, but this would need approval first. Reimbursement of any purchases will always be made promptly. Volunteers are asked to produce a receipt if possible or if purchase is made via the internet, a copy of the e-invoice. These should be passed to the Treasurer at [lymeregisrepaircafe@gmail.com](mailto:lymeregisrepaircafe@gmail.com).

## **9. Problem-Solving**

In the event of a problem or concern, volunteers are asked to speak to one of the Committee.

## **10. Roles and Responsibilities of the Repairers / Sewing Team**

a. All repairers are reminded that LRRC acts as a 'clinic' and not a 'hospital'. Repairers are asked to make as quick a diagnosis of a problem as possible and a decision on whether to proceed with the repair. If a repair requires a spare part and the repairer can obtain the part, it will be at the Customer's expense, and they may bring it back to the next session. Customers are required to give their permission by signing the registration form.

b. Repairers have the right to refuse any item for repair that:

- is likely to take too long to fix at a normal session
- requires replacement of a part that the customer has not provided
- requires specialist skills and/or equipment and tools that are not available at the session
- is considered to be a potential danger to the repairer
- is in so bad a state of disrepair/damage that a repair is unlikely to be successful and could be a potential hazard to the repairer and the customer

The sewing team is never expected to accept a dirty, soiled or smelly garment for repair. A customer should be asked to wash the item and bring it to the next session. Items unlikely to benefit from a repair should also be refused.

c. If a repairer is unable or does not wish to attempt a repair for any reason, they are not required to justify this decision but should offer as much advice as possible to the customer.

d. Repairers are expected to involve the customer in the repair of the item as much as is safely and practically possible. They are also expected to share their skills with the customer.

e. Customers are not allowed to leave an item with a repairer and collect it later in the morning.

## **11. Roles and Responsibilities of Reception / Front of House**

As the first points of contact, FOH volunteers should greet all visitors and customers with a welcoming smile. Reception and FOH work together closely as a team, constantly liaising with each other to ensure every customer enjoys a smooth transition from reception to the repair zone. Customers with more than one item must prioritise which is dealt with first. They must return to reception to register their next item.

FOH volunteers have a responsibility to:

- Treat everyone fairly and with respect and always be polite
- Clearly explain the registration and repair zone procedures to all first-time customers
- Assist customers with completion of the registration form if necessary
- Check customers' items brought for repair so that the correct details are recorded on the registration form
- Offer assistance to members of the public who have mobility or other issues
- Deal calmly, firmly and politely with any complaint or difficult situation that arises with a member of the public
- In the event of a delay due to high demand, keep customers in the waiting area regularly informed
- Ensure that customers' items for repair are stored safely and do not present a trip hazard in the café or reception area

## **12. Role and Responsibilities of the Organisers**

- To keep all volunteers safe and secure during each session

- To ensure that volunteers feel comfortable and contented in their roles
- To ensure that every new volunteer is welcomed and works alongside a regular to help them get used to the system
- To provide free refreshments to all volunteers throughout the session. Volunteers are asked to notify the caterer if they have any special dietary requirements.
- To encourage volunteers to ask for any replacement or additional stock needed and promptly fulfil requests for tools and/or consumables
- To consult all volunteers in the event of any planned changes and to treat all comments and opinions equally and with respect. However, the organisers reserve the right to make the final decision when a consensus cannot be reached. The future viability of LRRC is always the top priority in any decision
- To respect and value everyone's contribution to the project and do their best to meet the individual wishes of each volunteer
- To ensure that all customers and volunteers are welcomed and treated politely and fairly

The organisers welcome suggestions and ideas from the volunteer team on how to improve the Repair Cafe experience for volunteers, customers and visitors. Volunteers are always encouraged to provide feedback and/or make suggestions.

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