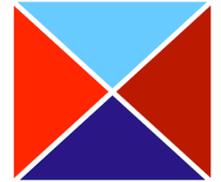


Volunteer Policy



Volunteering with Belfast Harlequins Club

About us

Belfast Harlequins Club is a cross community, multi-sports club situated on 15 acres of magnificent pitches in the heart of South Belfast, playing rugby, hockey, squash and bowls. St Brigid's, our local GAC, has a licence to train and play on our grounds. Each year our facilities are used extensively with an annual footfall in excess of 80,000 making Belfast Harlequins the premier, cross community sports club in Belfast.

Belfast Harlequins was formed in November 1999 with the merger of Collegians and North of Ireland Cricket and Football Clubs – the founding Clubs were two of the oldest and most distinguished in Ireland. North sold its famous ground at Ormeau, one of the oldest international venues in Ireland to help finance the redevelopment of the former Collegians ground at Deramore Park. The new Clubhouse was opened in June 2002 with the Club incorporating some of the colours of the respective founding clubs, navy, sky blue, red and maroon in a logo based upon the Maltese Cross that Methodist College Belfast uses as its sports logo.

Belfast Harlequins has high quality facilities which include three rugby pitches – one with a stand/arena, a hockey pitch /arena, a squash court, a bowling green owned and used by Belfast bowling Club, an extensive Clubhouse incorporating bar, function rooms and changing rooms.

In the time since its formation, Belfast Harlequins rugby has made a very considerable contribution to Ulster and Irish rugby exemplified by the number of its players who have represented the Provincial and International teams. There are currently four men's teams with the first XV currently playing in Division 2B of the All Ireland League with the second XV, third XV and fourth XVs playing in the Junior and Minor leagues respectively; the Club caters for all levels of player. The Mini rugby section is thriving and an U18s team will be established from September 2018. The Women's Rugby section is vibrant and continues to grow reflecting the popularity of rugby as a sport among women and the legacy of the Ireland hosting the most recent Women's Rugby World Cup. We welcome all genders from all sections of the community.

Belfast Harlequins rugby also works in partnership with the IRFU and Ulster rugby to host the annual IRFU Tag and Touch rugby competitions, Ulster Inter provincial fixtures and Centra Ulster rugby summer camps. Charities and other groups also make use of the facilities to run Tag rugby and other team building events.

Purpose of our volunteer policy

Our volunteer policy has been created to show our volunteers and potential volunteers that we have spent time and care in planning how volunteers will be welcomed at **Belfast Harlequins Club**. It also outlines that all volunteers will be treated in a fair and consistent way. It should also help our volunteers understand what support is available to them and what they can expect from us.

Our vision and mission for volunteering

Volunteering is a great way to share your enthusiasm, skills and ideas whilst having fun and meeting like-minded people. By volunteering for **Belfast Harlequins Club**, you will be making a positive contribution to community development in our area. Volunteers are vital to our work.

Attracting volunteers and volunteer agreement

We have a range of opportunities for volunteers to get involved in. We will, from time to time, advertise volunteering opportunities on the Club website and other appropriate forums. All you need to do then is to complete our very short Volunteer Registration Form. Alternatively, you can come along in person and enquire about becoming a volunteer.

Once we receive a copy of your completed registration form, a member of our team will get in touch with more information on specific opportunities and we can decide together which option best matches your interests and time availability and our needs. Your help will be greatly appreciated and really will make a difference.

Access NI Checks

Some volunteer roles will require an Access NI check to inform **Belfast Harlequins Club** of any criminal convictions that a person wishing to volunteer may have. For example, any volunteer position which involves regulated activity with children or vulnerable adults will be subject to an Access NI check.

Induction and training

It does not matter how much you already know, as there will be opportunities to learn, and we have roles to suit every level of expertise.

There will be an induction prepared and delivered by one of our members. This will include:

- Some information about **Belfast Harlequins Club**, our vision, mission and our future plans;
- the role of the volunteer;
- Introduction to some volunteers;
- tour around our facilities and see some of our initiatives;
- copy of all the relevant policies including this volunteer policy and our Health and Safety, Social Media and Equality and Diversity;
- essential procedures such as timekeeping, rotas;
- information about training and ongoing learning opportunities

There will be a trial period of four weeks to give **Belfast Harlequins Club** and you time to discover if you are suited to each other. A review will be made midway through the trial period and also at the end. This is not an assessment, it is just so that we can be sure that you benefit the most from the volunteering experience and maximise the time you are giving freely.

Support

Our Volunteer Co-Ordinator will offer support to you. They will remain your key contact throughout your volunteering with us. This will include regular meetings with you to discuss how you are getting on, discuss any training needs and deal with issues arising. This will also ensure that **Belfast Harlequins Club** are doing all we can to make your volunteering experience an enjoyable and meaningful one.

Recognition and reward

We could not do the work we do without our volunteers. To acknowledge this, we will always say thank you and show appreciation for a job well done. There will always be a listening ear or shoulder to lean on. We would aim to recognize our volunteers through praise of their achievements at our Annual General Meeting, on our website, Facebook and Instagram platforms and invitations to social events hosted by Ulster Rugby where they will get an opportunity to meet other volunteers and like-minded supporters of domestic rugby in Ulster.

Expenses

We value our volunteers and want to ensure that there are no barriers to volunteer involvement. While we don't envisage our volunteers incurring expenses in the performance of their role, we will reimburse all reasonable out of pocket expenses, if required.

Insurance, health and safety, accidents and risk assessment

Belfast Harlequins Club has a valid insurance policy so that volunteers are covered by public liability insurance, which you are advised to read. It covers the volunteering activities you will be doing. We will keep reminding you of our Health and Safety Policy and give simple instructions on how to perform each task safely. We have clear procedures for accidents and emergencies and will always have a first aider on field sites.

Resolving problems

We hope that you will have a very enjoyable experience volunteering with us. However, if your role as a volunteer does not meet with your expectations or with the commitments we have made to you, we want you to feel comfortable about letting us know. First, talk to the person who leads the team where you volunteer and he or she should be able to sort it out with you before it becomes a problem. If you do not feel this will resolve things you can speak to the Volunteer Co-Ordinator.

Confidentiality

We expect all volunteers to adhere to confidentiality guidelines which will be explained to you before you begin volunteering with us and this also includes use of social media and contact with any press.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Belfast Harlequins Club is committed to embracing diversity and promoting equality and inclusion. When representing **Belfast Harlequins Club** as a volunteer we expect you to support our commitment to promoting equality.

Volunteering whilst on benefit

You can still volunteer with us if you are receiving benefits provided that we follow the legal guidelines. We have information from the Jobs and Benefits Department which we can talk through with you regarding the hours you can do and what you can claim for expenses incurred through volunteering.

This is the Volunteer Policy of **Belfast Harlequins Club**

It will be reviewed every _____ months

Date of next review _____

Signed _____

Position _____

Signed _____

Position _____