



# MERSEA ISLAND FESTIVAL 2019

Briefing and Training: Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> August

Week camp: Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> to Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> August

Weekend camp: Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> to Monday 26<sup>th</sup> August

## Information for New Volunteers

### What is the Mersea Island Festival?

The Mersea Island Festival is an annual event on the coast of Essex. Running since 1981, the Festival aims to bring together young people with or without a physical or learning disability and over 300 people attend the camps to try out new activities, make new friends and have loads of fun! Participants come to the 5 day camp, 3 day camp, or sometimes both.

### What do the volunteers do?

Your main role is to make sure that all our campers have a great time. For many of them this is their only stay away from home and an opportunity to try activities that they are not able to do elsewhere. Before the campers arrive you'll be helping set up the different areas. During the camp you'll be working with other volunteers to support the running of the Festival, primarily in one area of the camp, although you may be called on to help elsewhere if needed. For example you might be in the dining hall, art tent or entertainment team, but when not working in these areas you'll be helping in your village or possibly elsewhere on the camp. And finally at the end of camp you'll be helping to get things cleared up.

### What is expected of me?

Our volunteers work very hard but also have a great social time. You need to be able to work in a team, have energy and enthusiasm; to be reliable, use your initiative and be happy to muck in whenever needed - and to have the self-discipline to ensure you don't run out of steam before the end of camp! We're not necessarily looking for prior experience but if you've worked with young people or those with special needs before, it will be useful. We'd like to know about any experience, skills or interests that you have that might be relevant to the Festival and enhance the experience those attending will have. Please put details of these on the application form.

### When is it?

The dates for the Festival are above. **Regardless of which camp they are volunteering for, all volunteers are required to attend the briefing and training day (date above).** Here you'll get to know more about your role, meet the other volunteers and help with final preparations.

### What are the activities?

Both camps include a wide variety of activities that are fun and exciting but also challenge and stimulate, helping to build the confidence and feelings of self worth in participants. Each year the Festival has a different theme and some of the activities and entertainment will reflect this. Activities may include archery, judo, inflatable fun, zip wire, climbing, dancing,

drama and music workshops, circus skills, swimming, speedboat, fishing, art activities, discos, karaoke, live music and a big screen cinema.

### **Where do I eat and sleep?**

Your accommodation will be a tent - either your own or one of ours shared with other volunteers. Breakfast, lunch and dinner are served in the dining hall and we aim to meet individual dietary requirements. Other snacks and drinks are also available and a bar is open during the entertainment each evening.

### **Do I have to pay any money?**

The cost of accommodating and feeding the volunteers (approximately £190 per person) is supported through funds donated to the Mersea Island Festival Trust. We don't charge our volunteers to come to the Festival but ask that you try to raise some sponsorship. We'll include a sponsorship form with the confirmation of your place.

### **What do I get from it all?**

Many of our volunteers come back year after year because the Festival experience is so rewarding. You'll have the chance to make new friends, to make a difference to other people's lives and the satisfaction that you've helped others to build their self confidence and esteem. You'll probably learn something new about yourself at the same time. And if you're doing your Gold D of E Award, volunteering at the Festival may qualify for the residential section. Please mention this on your form and anyone else who may be volunteering with you from your Award group.

### **How do I become a volunteer?**

Fill out an application form and return it to the address below. If we think we may be able to offer you a volunteer place we will ask you to come in and see us. The Mersea Island Festival Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults, and expects all volunteers to share this commitment. Confirmation of a volunteer place will only be given after satisfactory checks have been completed.

If you've got any questions about volunteering this year, you can contact us using the details below.

We look forward to hearing from you soon!

### **Mersea Island Festival Trust**

Email: [volunteering@merseafestival.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@merseafestival.org.uk)

Address: Volunteering, Mersea Island Festival Trust c/o Essex Outdoors Mersea, Rewsalls Lane, East Mersea, Colchester, CO5 8SX

[www.merseafestival.org.uk](http://www.merseafestival.org.uk)

Due to the background checks we have to carry out, please return your form promptly if you would like to be considered for a place on the team!



# MERSEA ISLAND FESTIVAL TRUST VOLUNTEER FORM

Please type or write clearly USING BLACK INK in the white sections

Full Name			
Preferred name		Date of birth:	Gender:
Address including postcode:			
Tel number:		Mob Number:	
Email address:			
FOR WHICH CAMP WOULD YOU LIKE TO VOLUNTEER? Week, Weekend or Both			
Please note: Volunteers need to be available from the day before Festival (Saturday) for the briefing and training.			

Please tell us why you are applying to volunteer and what experience, skills or qualifications you think you will bring to the Festival e.g. work with children and young people, teamwork, minibus driving, First Aid, sport, art and craft, music, dance etc.

Is this for a Gold DofE Residential? (Yes or No)

If yes, who else do you know that is applying?

To help with the allocation of volunteers to the different roles and teams at Festival, which specific area would you like to be in? e.g. Art Tent, Dining Hall, Entertainment, Media, Village Leader. Please note that we cannot guarantee that you will get your preferred choice.

Do you have any medical conditions? If yes please give details  
(this will not prevent you from being considered for a place):

Specific dietary requirements including allergies/vegetarian etc?

Please enter your t-shirt size from below:

	XS	S	M	L	XL	XXL	3XL
To fit chest (guide only):	32/34	34/36	38/40	42/44	46	48	50/52

Tent: Using your **OWN** or do you need a **FESTIVAL** one?

I will be sharing with...

**Disclosure of Criminal Convictions:** The Mersea Island Festival Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults, and expects all volunteers to share this commitment.

**Do you have / have you ever had, any criminal or civil convictions, or cautions? (Yes or No)**

**Are you awaiting trial? (Yes or No)**

**If your answer to either question is 'yes' please give details on a separate sheet.** Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working with us.

**Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check ~ previous check (if applicable enter NONE below)**

DBS Certificate Number

Date of certificate

Issuer

**\*\* DO NOT SEND ANY CERTIFICATE WITH YOUR APPLICATION \*\***

**Are you registered with the DBS Update service? (Yes or No)**

If yes, by submitting this form you give permission for the Mersea Island Festival Trust to carry out a status check with the DBS online update service. New applicants with a previous DBS check will need to provide their original certificate, a copy of which will be taken and held on file with this form.

### Declaration

By submitting this form, I certify that the information included is complete and accurate. I understand that any false information or failure to disclose criminal convictions is likely to result in dismissal as a volunteer. I authorise the Mersea Island Festival Trust to make all necessary enquiries to verify this information including, but not limited to, requesting a Disclosure and Barring Service check.

**Signature:**

**Date:**

Mersea Island Festival Trust collects your details and/or personal information to process your application, send updates on its activities and to check the quality and improve the delivery of the Festival. This information will not be shared with any other third party unless the law requires us to do so. Your information will be held on our systems. If you wish to amend, update or remove your details at any time, or opt out of any of the above, please email us at [info@merseafestival.org.uk](mailto:info@merseafestival.org.uk)

Applicant's Name:			
<b>Referee to support your application</b>			
Your application should be countersigned by someone who has <b>known you for a minimum of two years, is not a member of your family or connected to the festival, but who knows you in a professional capacity</b> e.g. employer, teacher, youth club leader. We may contact them for a reference if needed.			
Counter signatory's Full Name			
Address including postcode			
Telephone number		Email address	
How long have you known the applicant?		In what professional capacity?	
<b>Declaration by counter signatory:</b> I confirm that I have read this application and the volunteer information provided below. To the best of my belief, the information provided is true and accurate and I have no concerns about the candidate's suitability for fulfilling the role of volunteer at the Mersea Island Festival and working with children and vulnerable adults. I am happy to be contacted by the Festival organiser's if necessary.			
Signed:			Date:

### The role of the volunteer

The Mersea Island Festival is a 9 day camping residential on the coast of Essex bringing together young people and adults with or without a physical or learning disability. It provides an opportunity to try out new activities, make new friends and have loads of fun. During the Festival there can be over 300 people on site with campers, carers and volunteer staff.

The main role of the volunteer is to make sure that all our campers have a great time. For many of our campers this is their only time away from home during the year and an opportunity to try activities that they are not able to do elsewhere. During the camp, volunteers work in teams with other volunteers led by an experienced Team Leader to support the running of the Festival. This is primarily in one area, although they may be called on to help elsewhere if needed. The areas can be Art Tent (assist with art and craft activities), Dining Hall (setting out tables, serving food and clearing away), Entertainments (preparing areas and helping with activities) and Village Leading.

All our volunteers are expected to interact with the campers to make sure they get the most from their stay. The volunteers work very hard but also have a great social life. They need energy; enthusiasm; to be reliable, happy to muck in whenever needed and the self-discipline to ensure they don't run out of steam before the end of camp.

All our volunteers are required to attend a training day at the start of the camp, where the different aspects of the camp will be explained further, we address the different disabilities that volunteers may encounter and we look at the appropriate ways of supporting those who are disabled.

Many of our volunteers come back year after year because the Festival experience is so rewarding. They have the chance to make new friends, to make a difference to other people's lives and to have the satisfaction that they've helped others to build their self-confidence and esteem.

**Please return this completed form to: Volunteering, Mersea Island Festival, c/o Essex Outdoors Mersea, Rewalls Lane, East Mersea, Colchester, CO5 8SX**