

# Loughborough Junction Action Group Volunteer Handbook

Your guide to volunteering with the



**"Volunteering with LJAG is quite unique because as well as being able to develop my skills, I am also helping to develop my local area".**

**M Adero - LJAG Volunteer 2010**

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## **Welcome and introduction**

Welcome to the Volunteer Handbook of the Loughborough Junction Action Group (LJAG). The group is governed entirely by volunteers\* and therefore volunteering is an important and valued part of the group.

(\* we do have and will have paid support from time to time)

This Handbook has been developed to ensure that we all have a rewarding and enjoyable experience. This Handbook gives important information about LJAG and some of the volunteering opportunities available as well as providing useful contact details and information about our policies and procedures. This is a dynamic document and it will be updated to reflect changes and feedback which is welcomed. We hope that you will find the handbook useful and that you will enjoy working with us.

We look forward to working together with you to improve Loughborough Junction.

## **Loughborough Junction Action Group**

## Who are we and what are our aims?

The Loughborough Junction Action Group (LJAG) is made up of volunteers who live, work or have an interest in the Loughborough Junction area. The group was formed to bring about the improvement and regeneration of the area and any person or organisation which shares our objectives is welcome to participate\*. The goal of the Loughborough Junction Action Group is to improve the quality of life in Loughborough Junction.

### **The Loughborough Junction Action Group aims are:**

- positive action rather than complaints
- to put Loughborough Junction on the map, as a place in its own right, distinct from Brixton, Herne Hill and Camberwell
- to celebrate Loughborough Junction and its community
- to run social events and projects designed to increase community cohesion

\* To maintain the group's independence as a local voice, councillors and council officers are not eligible to join unless they are residents.

## Getting involved

The Loughborough Junction Action Group (LJAG) is involved in many different activities, from organising social events, to developing stronger links in the community, to campaigning to improve our local area. This means that there are several ways for you to get involved. LJAG is made up of a central committee and several sub committees who have a representative who is a member of the main committee. As a volunteer, you are welcome to join any and as many committees that you choose.

## LJAG Committees



***The 7 Bridges sub-committee*** aims to implement the 7 Bridges Project in line with the objectives set out in project documents.

***The Business & Employment sub-committee*** aims to set up a Business Forum for Loughborough Junction and work on projects to improve training, employment and enterprise opportunities within the area.

***The Communications, Events & Marketing sub-committee*** aims to raise the profile and understanding of the work of LJAG both locally and nationally and run events.

***The Education sub-committee*** aims to forge strong links with local schools and education projects and ascertain the need for supplementary education.

***The Greening Loughborough Junction sub-committee*** aims to improve the environment around Loughborough Junction by supporting and undertaking gardening and food projects and supporting local park friends' groups.

***The Planning sub-committee*** aims to comment on local planning applications, participate in the Local Development Framework and work towards producing a Local Plan under the Localism Act.

***The Public Realm sub-committee*** aims to work with local councils and other local community organisations on improving the public realm around Loughborough Junction.

***The Young Adults sub-committee*** aims to undertake projects, and support other community organisations such as youth clubs and colleges in order to improve the life chances of young adults living in and around Loughborough Junction.

***The Youth sub-committee*** aims to undertake projects, support families, schools, and other community organisations such as after-school clubs, youth clubs and colleges in order to improve the life changes of young people living in an around Loughborough Junction.

## Volunteering opportunities

<b>LJAG Committee volunteer role description</b>	<b>LJAG Sub Committee volunteer role description</b>	<b>Co-optee</b>	<b>One-off volunteering opportunity</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Steer the work of LJAG by taking part in the decision-making process at committee meetings, and in extraordinary circumstances by e-mail if urgent matters need to be voted on.</li> <li>• Help decide what projects should be run in the future, and how LJAG could fund-raise for the area.</li> <li>• Help decide how unrestricted funds should be spent for the benefit of the local community and to fulfil the mission of LJAG.</li> <li>• Monitor the outcomes of the sub-committees.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help decide what the sub-committee outcomes are, the timescales and how the sub-committee will meet and record its actions. Report back through LJAG Committee liaison person.</li> <li>• As a member of the sub-committee take part in the delivery of the agreed outcomes.</li> <li>• Identify funding needs and liaise through LJAG Committee liaison person regarding any funding requirements.</li> </ul>	<p>You may have an area of specialism that you would like to share with the group and help it to further its work. This can be either through the committee or sub committee.</p>	<p>We run a number of one-off events during the year. You may choose to volunteer with the group at events of interest to you at a time that fits in with your schedule.</p>
<p><b>Optional: be a Committee officer</b> (Co-chair, treasurer, secretary), please let a committee member know if you are interested in any of these options and they will give you more information.</p>			
<p><b>Optional: be a sub-committee liaison person</b> (e.g. for a Green or Events sub-committee): work with and support volunteers who are not on the committee to ensure their LJAG projects are vetted by the committee and are in line with LJAG's mission throughout.</p>			
<p><b>Minimum 3 hours per month</b></p>	<p><b>Minimum 1-3 hours per month on average</b></p>	<p><b>3 hours per month on average</b></p>	<p><b>optional attendance at event</b></p>

As you can see, there a number of ways that you can volunteer with LJAG. All that we would ask is that if you agree to take on a role or responsibility (either on a committee or at one of our events) or are asked to carry out a task on behalf of the group and are no longer available that you notify a member of the group by telephone or email as early as possible so that alternative arrangements can be made.

## **Communications**

The Loughborough Junction Action Group (LJAG) has two main methods of communicating with the Loughborough Junction area, the LJAG website (and associated yahoo message board) and the community notice board which is located outside of the Loughborough Junction rail station.

The website was established as an online message board and community hub for the promotion and regeneration of the area. We use the website to publicise and gain support for our projects and recruit new volunteers. LJAG documentation, project updates and information about what is going on in the area can be found on the website and so if you have access to the World Wide Web visit the website at [www.loughboroughjunction.co.uk](http://www.loughboroughjunction.co.uk). If you cannot find the information that you require feel free to email [loughboroughjunction@yahoo.com](mailto:loughboroughjunction@yahoo.com). Alternatively Anthea Masey our group contact is available on **020 7733 1744/07799 621 582** or [antheamasey@btinternet.com](mailto:antheamasey@btinternet.com)

The community notice board is used to publicise local events and carries details of how the group can be contacted as well as community safety notices. If you have any community-based information that you would like to feature on either the website or the notice board please let us know. Feel free to direct anyone who is interested in the work of the group to our website or to our main group contact.

## **Policies and procedures**

The group has put in place several policies and procedures, which help to look after us all as volunteers. Not all policies and procedures will be relevant to all volunteers; this will depend on the role or activity in which you are involved. The committee will make sure you are aware of all policies and procedures relevant to you at your induction. If you would like further information or guidance on any of our policies and procedures, a committee member will be happy to discuss them with you.

## **Volunteer induction**

As part of your volunteer induction you will be asked to read and once you have understood, sign the LJAG Volunteer agreement. The agreement must be signed and agreed by all volunteers. The form is available on the LJAG website alternatively ask the head of your sub-committee or a member of the main committee.

## **Expenses**

LJAG reimburses all reasonable out-of-pocket expenses (travel, lunch). Volunteering should be accessible to all and we do not wish financial concerns to affect whether someone can volunteer with us or not. Expenses do not constitute a payment, so you can receive reimbursement of reasonable out-of-pocket expenses that occur through volunteering, on *production of receipts*. It is always a good idea to check with the head of your sub-committee, a member of the LJAG committee or committee treasurer before making a purchase.

## **Code of conduct**

Please bear in mind when carrying out the work of LJAG that you are representing the group and we would ask you to do so in a professional manner. The LJAG reputation is one that has been built up over time, we have become the public voice for the area and the work that we do is very important to us. If you make a commitment in the name of the group please carry it through, if you are unsure or unable please notify a committee

member as soon as possible. The action group has promotional material which will be available to support volunteers.

### **Child protection & vulnerable adults**

Loughborough Junction Action Group (LJAG) is committed to the principle that the welfare of children and vulnerable adults is paramount, and as such is committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children and vulnerable adults entrusted to their care and protecting them where necessary. LJAG believes that all children and vulnerable adults have at all times and in all situations a right to feel safe and protected from any situation or practice that results in a child or vulnerable adult being physically or psychologically damaged. In our organisation, if we have suspicions about a child or vulnerable adult's physical, sexual or emotional well being, we will take action. Child and vulnerable adult protection is the responsibility of every adult who has involvement with them. Depending on the nature of the project we may ask you to give permission to carry out a Criminal Records Bureau check (also known as Disclosure). We will discuss this with you first. Please contact the head of your sub-committee or a member of the LJAG committee if you have any questions or concerns.

### **Volunteer Health and Safety**

Your health and safety are important and we have to make sure there are systems in place to ensure the health and safety of all of us as volunteers. Volunteers also have a duty of care to look after themselves and those with whom they come into contact. We can all work together to promote a healthy and safe working environment. Project venues vary and so risk assessments will need to be carried out whenever our activities take us into new territory. The head of the committee that you are volunteering with is there to support you. Get in touch as soon as possible if you have any concerns about general health and safety, or if you are worried about your own role.

If you are a first aider, fire marshal or member of the medical profession and you are willing to use your skills in an LJAG setting, please let us know.

## **Insurance**

As a volunteer, you are covered by the LJAG's Public liability insurance which covers injury to third parties and damage to property while engaged in approved volunteering activities for the group.

The head of your sub-committee or a committee member will make it clear to you what is considered to be 'an approved volunteering activity'. It is always a good idea to check with the head of your sub-committee or a committee member if a new or unusual activity is covered by our insurance before you get started.

## **Training**

The Loughborough Junction Action Group (LJAG) is a member of the Lambeth Voluntary Action Council (LVAC) who provide a wide range of training courses. Please let us know about any training needs that you have. Volunteers can attend training provided by training providers within the voluntary sector as long as it relates to their volunteering role, subject to agreement. Please speak to the head of your sub-committee or contact a LJAG committee member.

## **Equal opportunities and diversity**

The Loughborough Junction Action Group (LJAG) is an equal opportunities organisation. We aim to ensure that no volunteer is discriminated against on grounds such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, disability, age, HIV status, marital status, family status, or trade union membership or non-membership. Discrimination or harassment in any form is unacceptable. LJAG believes that life is positively enriched for all of us by the diversity of individuals in society and that all have a contribution to make. LJAG in its work ensures to the best of its ability that no group or individual is discriminated against on the grounds of race, colour, ethnic origin, nationality, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, responsibility for dependents, age, health, disability, employment status, religion, beliefs, learning ability, size, social class or caste. LJAG seeks to promote a positive understanding of the plural society in which we live. In our work we aim to effectively challenge all forms of discrimination.

## **Importance of confidentiality**

Everyone involved in the group has the right to confidentiality. The group is committed to confidentiality and to integrating the principles of confidentiality throughout the organisation. However, the group is also committed to working in an open and transparent way where this does not conflict with the confidentiality we guarantee our volunteers.

## **Data protection**

The group holds information about its volunteers (in most cases contact details in the form of mailing lists). If you are responsible for collecting or holding personal data as part of your volunteer role, please make sure you are aware of the rules for processing data (the information must only be used for the purpose that it was collected) and should not be passed to anyone or used for any purpose outside of LJAG.

## **Dealing with concerns and problems**

It is good to hear when things are going well and we encourage you to let us know when we are getting it right. It is even more important that you let us know if you have a concern or problem that needs to be addressed. We have policies and procedures in place to ensure that all problems and concerns are dealt with swiftly and sensitively. Please contact the head of your sub-committee or a member of the main LJAG committee.

## **References**

We are aware that some volunteers may want to use their activities with LJAG as evidence when applying for paid employment. Due to the varying nature of our work and the number of volunteers that we work with on the different projects we are only able to provide a very basic reference detailing projects that you may have taken part in and for how long. We will not be able to provide a detailed character reference that a future employer could use to decide on your suitability for paid employment.

## Useful Contacts

### Group contact

Anthea Masey **020 7733 1744 or 07799 621 582** [antheamasey@btinternet.com](mailto:antheamasey@btinternet.com)  
LJAG email [loughboroughjunction@yahoo.com](mailto:loughboroughjunction@yahoo.com)  
LJAG Website [www.loughboroughjunction.co.uk](http://www.loughboroughjunction.co.uk)

### Other useful contacts

**Lambeth Voluntary Action Council 95 Acre Lane Brixton London SW2 5TU**  
Email: [aco@lambethvac.org.uk](mailto:aco@lambethvac.org.uk)

**Volunteer Centre Lambeth 35 Brixton Station Road, London, SW9 8PB**  
Telephone: **020 7 737 9471**  
Email: [volunteering@lambethvac.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@lambethvac.org.uk) Website: [www.lambethvac.org.uk](http://www.lambethvac.org.uk)

**Volunteer Centre Southwark**  
**Unit 215/216, Elephant and Castle Shopping Centre, London SE1 6TE**  
FREEPHONE: **0800 018 5692** Tel: **020 7703 4205** Fax: **020 7358 6198**  
Email: [info@volunteercentres.org.uk](mailto:info@volunteercentres.org.uk)

**Volunteering England Regents Wharf 8 All Saints Street London N1 9RL**  
Tel: **0845 305 6979**  
Email: [volunteering@volunteeringengland.org](mailto:volunteering@volunteeringengland.org) Website [www.volunteering.org.uk](http://www.volunteering.org.uk)

### Moving on

Some of the activities that you will get involved with in the group may be short term and we would like to get feed-back from you on what your volunteering experience has been whatever the length of the project. We would therefore ask you to send us an email or complete any of our surveys that we invite you take part in. This will help us to improve the work of LJAG over time and as always your responses will be kept confidential unless you agree to your identity being made public.

After any key volunteering event we aim to undertake a feedback review – coordinating comments and prioritising or acting on them as appropriate.





