

# JOINING THE JOURNEY 2019/20

Employment and Volunteering with Torch Trust

## Torch Ethos

Torch has a core belief - People with sight loss have an equal and valuable part to play in church and Christian communities.

Torch has a purpose - Working together to reach and enable people with sight loss to have fulfilling Christian lives.

To achieve our purpose we currently have three priorities:

Priority 1 - Changing lives - Enabling people with sight loss to grow in faith...

Priority 2 - Changing Communities - ...and thrive in Christian community.

Priority 3 - Changing Relationships - Enabling Torch to fulfil its purpose.

Torch also has a distinctive culture that reflects its Christian beliefs and has been shaped by its history of seeking to be faithful to God's guidance. Our values inform the choices made by Torch, what we do and the way we do it.

Our Values are: Christ-centred; People-focussed; Openness; Creativity

## Statement of Faith

We ask anyone joining us to respect our basis of faith, a copy of this is provided at the end of this document.

## Torch - The Story

In 1959 the conversion of one blind girl, Wendy, in the home of our founders, Ron and Stella Heath, led to a search for Christian literature in Braille for her. This was to prove largely unsuccessful, however the Lord seemed to be saying to them "YOU give them something to eat" (Matt 14:16).

Under the gracious hand of our God, the work has grown and developed beyond the Heath's wildest dreams.

The production of literature in audio, Braille, and giant print formats is now largely computer driven and a well-stocked lending library has been established with books available in a variety of accessible media for free loan. Torch magazines in accessible media go to readers all over the world. Torch is in touch with blind and partially sighted people in over 80 countries of the world and is producing scriptures in several languages. Torch also transcribes Bible reading notes in several media.

Many people have been helped and blessed through the ongoing programme of holidays, and Torch Fellowship Groups nationwide where blind and sighted people can support and minister to one another.

The work has extended internationally, with a partner in Malawi (Africa). Torch has other international partnerships and close links with many similar organisations in various parts of the world.

Today Torch is a vibrant and growing organisation. The original vision is being fulfilled through producing and providing Christian literature in a form that blind and partially

sighted people can read alongside the support we are able to encourage through Christian fellowship.

The present and future of Torch's programme of activity is increasingly driven and shaped by a vision of Christian community as the setting in which people with sight loss find wholeness. This has led us to our current major campaign initiative of Sight Loss Friendly Church to inform and encourage all churches of the importance of being aware of sight loss among their congregations and the support that Torch can offer.

Further detail about the current activities of Torch can be found on our website [www.torchtrust.org](http://www.torchtrust.org)

## **Working and Volunteering with Torch**

Torch places a high value on all Torch people and seeks to ensure that they are safe and working in an environment that is purposeful, pleasant, and cooperative and where teamwork, fellowship and mutual support are an everyday part of working life. We encourage people to 'join the journey' as we travel with God on an adventure of faith, as we seek always to do His will and to work His way.

Torch is a Christian mission that seeks at all times to express the example of Jesus Christ in all its work and actions. Torch therefore seeks to set the highest standards in personal and business conduct and in relationships. Torch is prepared to listen and empathise with individual's personal circumstances but does not seek to provide professional counselling or to replace pastoral care undertaken by an individual's Church.

People journey with Torch as employees or volunteers.

*Joining the Journey* is intended to give a basic overall picture of what joining Torch will be like. Specific details will be discussed as part of the recruitment process.

## **Christian Commitment**

There are opportunities for those who do not have a Christian faith to work with Torch; however all need to recognise that Torch is a Christian Mission and that the Christian ethos is part of the everyday life of Torch. Daily prayer and worship are an integral part of Torch. We start each day with prayer time. The majority of our staff and volunteers see their work as an expression of their Christian faith.

All staff and volunteers who have regular contact with the users of our services are required to be committed Christians. For these roles the role description will define this as an Occupational Requirement. Those applying for these will be required to confirm that they are able to respect the Torch Basis of Faith and live to generally accepted standards of Christian living.

Where the work involved is not defined as having an Occupational Requirement, applications are considered from those who do not have an active Christian faith.

## **Christianity within the life of Torch**

Prayer is woven into the fabric of Torch. We engage the wider network of beneficiaries, supporters, volunteers and staff in daily prayer through a Daily Prayer Guide and Prayer Diary.

Many conversations with our clients will involve prayer or requests for prayer. Staff

and volunteers are encouraged to take time with the challenges and concerns that often become apparent during conversations.

Consistent with this value is a governance and leadership that seeks always to discern and apply God's leading. We test our choices against the teaching of the Bible, by prayer and by seeking unanimity after prayer.

## **Employment**

### **Recruitment Process**

The seeking of the Lord's will is essential in the selection and appointment of staff.

Torch Trust seeks to ensure that throughout this process ample time is given and good opportunities for dialogue provided, so that the Lord's will can be discerned in a way that is open, equal and fair. Our experience is that this process can take time. During this time we will be pleased to welcome you to Torch House and our Chief Executive and Leaders will be pleased to talk to you. We trust in this way you will be able to learn something of the special nature of Torch Trust and to share in the excitement of working in a Christian mission environment.

### **Employment Opportunities**

The following are the main areas of activity within Torch:

- Torch House at Market Harborough - Client Services; Editorial and Transcription; Production and Distribution; Technical, Administration, Financial; Regional Support; International Outreach.
- Home locations across the UK - Regional Workers and Representatives.

A team of Leaders lead these activities and within each department are technical staff, support staff and volunteers. Details of specific vacancies are made known through Torch publications, on our website and where appropriate by circulating to Churches local to our bases and in the press. However, our experience has shown that the Lord brings to us those called to the work and whose talents can be best used at a particular time rather than those that necessarily fit into a predefined job specification.

### **Salary**

As a faith-based mission we are extremely reliant upon the generosity of our supporters and are currently establishing a funding policy which fully explores how Torch appreciates this and engages in appropriate ways for developing ongoing sustainability.

Torch's staffing costs is the biggest single expenditure and as an expression of one of our values 'Christ-centred' we seek to always be faithful stewards of all that God provides. This will ensure we remain above legal minimum levels of wage, with salaries which whilst modest will reflect the level of responsibility; seniority of the position; and level of technical skill.

The salary for any particular role will be discussed as part of the recruitment process.

### **Taking Employment seriously**

Torch is assisted in its HR management by Peninsula Services to ensure we offer best

practise and maintain up to date and compliant employment. The Employee Handbook offers a comprehensive guide to working with Torch and is issued when being offered employment.

## **Volunteering**

### **Why Volunteer?**

Volunteers are an essential part of the work. As a volunteer at Torch you can expect:

- An opportunity to join an enthusiastic and committed team, working together to serve blind and partially sighted people.
- Support in your work as a volunteer. We will help you to develop your skills and talents within Torch, devote appropriate supervisory time to these tasks and do so in a professional, supportive and courteous work environment.
- Information and training to enable you to work more effectively.
- Specific training to help you work with visually impaired people.
- A 'Role Profile' to clarify the work you do at Torch.
- A partnership volunteer agreement which will affirm the importance we place on your willingness to serve.
- An invitation to certain Torch events, including training and the annual Torch Thanksgiving.
- Regular reviews with you to exchange ideas; explore ways in which you can develop your role and to provide feedback on your work for Torch.

### **What does Torch require from its Volunteers?**

- Ensure that all duties are undertaken with respect for people and equipment and display good manners at all times.
- Make clear to Torch when you are available and maintain the agreed level of commitment.
- Advise your supervisor promptly if you are unable to undertake your duties, including sickness, holidays etc.
- Attend training and support sessions as required.
- Respect confidentiality of information you come across during your volunteering, which is an increasingly expectation and legal requirement within our environment.
- Respect the need for the security of our premises and abide by signing in and out protocols at all times.
- Respect and comply with the Torch Christian Ethos and the Equality, Health & Safety and Safeguarding policies.
- Inform Torch about any health or disability concerns that might affect your volunteering with Torch.
- Not to undermine the name of Torch either within Torch or to outside

sources.

- To sign and adhere to your Torch Partnership Volunteer Agreement as required and to inform your supervisor immediately you believe you are unable to comply with its commitment.

## **Volunteer Recruitment Process**

It is important that we take time to ensure that both volunteer and Torch fit well together, that the volunteer role is well suited to the volunteer and that they gain a real sense of fulfilment in undertaking these duties.

New volunteer applicants will therefore be invited to speak with a supervisor and as appropriate to visit Torch House to learn something about the work we do. During this visit we will explore the various opportunities available and discuss the possibilities that we believe you may be suitable for. For some roles we may visit you in your home to discuss the opportunity of volunteering.

## **Volunteering Opportunities**

Within three categories there are the following areas of volunteer activity within Torch:

- **Torch House** - at Market Harborough - Hospitality; Audio Editing and Transcription; Production and Distribution.
- **National** - Home based - Audio Transcription; Telephone support and services; Sight Loss Friendly Church; Retreat and Event assistance and Regional support for Torch Fellowship Groups throughout the UK.

All volunteers are expected to complete some initial induction and appropriate training sessions.

Different roles will require different types of equipment and support. If you undertake tasks that require you to have I.T. access and a Torch email this will be provided with the sole purpose of Torch purposes. We reserve the right to monitor all e-mail/internet activity by you for the purposes of ensuring compliance with Torch Trust policies and procedures and of ensuring compliance with the relevant regulatory requirements and you hereby consent to such monitoring.

Whatever tasks you will be volunteering for you will work under the management of a nominated Supervisor who will be a Torch staff member.

## **Hours of Work**

Our volunteers work a very flexible working pattern:-

At Torch House volunteers often work a day or half day a week, between Mondays to Thursday.

Working from home is very flexible but normally would involve a minimum of three to four hours per week. Or if at a holiday or event dependent upon the particular one.

## **Safeguarding**

As the work with Torch may bring you into contact with vulnerable adults or children you may be required to apply for a Safeguarding Certificate from the equivalent of the Disclosure & Barring Service where you are based. For all roles within Torch you will

be required to disclose details of any criminal records.

## **Health and Safety**

Copies of the Health and Safety handbook will be provided for people working at Torch House. Whether at home, away or on Torch property you are to work safely, taking care of yourself and others. Any concerns about health and safety are to be reported to the Chief Operating Officer as Health and Safety Officer.

Joining the Journey 2019 v2

Michael Heaney  
Chief Operating Officer  
October 2019

## **BASIS OF FAITH**

As defined in the Trust's governing documents the Torch Trust's objectives are the relief and support of blind and partially sighted people in accordance with the following basis of faith:

- Christians accept the revelation of the true God given in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments and confess the historic faith of the Gospel therein set forth. They here assert doctrines which they regard as crucial to the understanding of the faith, and which should issue in mutual love, practical Christian service and evangelistic concern.
- The sovereignty and grace of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit in creation, providence, revelation, redemption and final judgment.
- The divine inspiration of the Holy Scripture and its consequent entire trustworthiness and supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct.
- The universal sinfulness and guilt of fallen man, making him subject to God's wrath and condemnation.
- The substitutionary sacrifice of the incarnate Son of God as the sole and all sufficient ground of redemption from the guilt and power of sin, and from its eternal consequences.
- The justification of the sinner solely by the grace of God through faith in Christ crucified and risen from the dead.
- The illuminating, regenerating, indwelling and sanctifying work of God the Holy Spirit.
- The priesthood of all believers, who form the universal Church, the Body of which Christ is the Head, and which is committed by His command to the proclamation of the Gospel throughout the world
- The expectation of the personal, visible return of the Lord Jesus Christ, in power and glory.

### **TORCH TRUST FOR THE BLIND**

Registered Office  
TORCH HOUSE  
TORCH WAY  
MARKET HARBOROUGH  
LEICS LE16 9HL

Registered Charity No. 1095904

Company Number 4616526

Registered in England

Website: [www.torchtrust.org](http://www.torchtrust.org)

Email: [info@torchtrust.org](mailto:info@torchtrust.org)