

I, Dianne Margolis BA (Hons), JP, am a victim of neglect from the management of Oxford People's Trust, and I believe that the facts stated herein are true to the best of my knowledge.

I was appointed to the manager role at the Hilltop Centre branch on the 17th August 2015, after the death of Derek Chambers, the former manager. I had worked as a volunteer under Mr. Chambers for three years, two of which he was frequently absent due to his illness. Upon his death I was offered a full managerial probation from Mr. C Clayton of OPT. I completed this probation and began managing the site proper, from the 8th November, 2015.

It soon became apparent that though Mr. C Clayton was my line manager, neither he nor the Human Resources Department would provide any managerial oversight or support, and any requests for assistance sourcing a replacement volunteer for my former role would go unanswered.

I finally resorted to personally preparing, printing and posting A4 flyers around the Hilltop Centre in the hopes of attracting local volunteers already familiar with the site. (I secured permission from the custodians prior.)

It was on 13th November 2015 that I received a walk-in application from an individual seeking the position. I understand my inability to recall his name or find it in the relevant paperwork or emails may affect the credibility of my account, but the fact remains he applied. The young man's interview was not exceptional as he had no experience in charity work, no driving license nor any demonstrable experience in retail. He claimed, however, to know the Hilltop Centre better than anyone, and as he was the only applicant in the role, I elected to give him a try.

He began his two-week probation on 14th November 2015. I notified Mr. C Clayton and HR of the appointment, and Mr. C Clayton replied that I should, "chill," and it was "all good."

The new volunteer had a number of issues with his probation and struggled with basic inventory, stocking, till management, and cleaning duties. However, he was punctual, hardworking, and had an extremely positive disposition. He even personally donated a rather large false plant in a somewhat disconcerting ceramic pot modelled on a shouting human face.

Towards the end of his probation he told me that he was having a good time, since it was "all for a good cause," and that he had a friend who also wished to volunteer. I was somewhat dubious as to how helpful an associate of this young man would be, but given that the site still needed at least 5 more staff members and Mr. C Clayton was no longer replying to my messages, I had little choice but to interview them.

The young woman (whose name also escapes me at this time) began on 26th November 2015 and had a similar level of experience, offset by an equally enthusiastic work ethic and demeanor. I did have to give them an informal warning to stop laughing so much whilst on the main floor, but they insisted "it's all for a good cause," and there were no customers at the time.

The second volunteer also made a donation in the form of a large bearskin rug. I attempted to contact Mr. C Clayton to enquire about our policy regarding real fur items, especially ones of such size, but was informed that he was on a "personal development sabbatical" and thus unreachable. I elected to store this in the back room, especially given the sharpness of its teeth.

Three days after this second probation began, she told me she *also* had some friends who also wished to volunteer. As I was still technically understaffed, I agreed to meet with them. I normally would not have

accepted so many new starters at once, but with the Christmas period approaching and still no reply from Mr. C Clayton, I feel I made a managerial decision that was clearly within my jurisdiction.

The next two volunteers started on the 28th November 2015. They also made donations of a large chandelier of dark glass and an oversized gramophone with a collection of records of what I believe to be religious plainsong. I was surprised that young adults would donate such exotic items and explained it was not necessary, but they insisted, claiming it was “all for a good cause.”

The previous volunteers began to onboard the new starters whilst I updated the branch’s ledgers, documentation, and the other paperwork that has since been lost. I attempted to submit standard monthly reports during this time but Mr. C Clayton had not yet returned from his sabbatical, which I had by then learned was with full pay in the Seychelles. I’m sure he had a lovely time.

On the 30th November, I was introduced to four more “volunteers.” It seemed that my instructions had been misconstrued and all of them had already been offered a position. I explained that this was contrary to the Oxford People’s Trust’s normal hiring policies, but I elected to nonetheless offer them a probation in order to fully fill the volunteer roster for the Christmas period.

I expressly notified the young man I had hired first, however, that he should not imply any further volunteer roles were available. All four of them started the same day and despite me being *very clear* that it was not necessary, they had also brought personal donations in the form of a crudely-carved rocking horse, a grandfather clock that leaked some sort of dark oil, a heavily vandalized set of the Encyclopedia Britannica, and an extensive collection of abstract canvas artworks, respectively. I told them these were not fit for sale, but my instructions to remove them were disregarded. It was at this point I began to sense that I was starting to lose control of the situation.

On the 1st of December I arrived to find that the new hires had already opened the shop. To be clear, I had not provided any keys and remain unsure how they obtained a set. I intended to pursue the matter immediately but was initially unable to locate them behind all the additional donations they appeared to have accepted.

None of the items were fit for sale. I specifically recall two large, soiled crinoline dresses, a chaise longue with cushions filled with some sort of coarse sand, a taxidermied vulture, a rusty antique printing press, and a collection of old medical equipment that had seemingly been recently used. There were many, many additional items, but I was unable to take a full inventory as the shopfloor was overfull.

With great difficulty I found the young man I had originally hired towards the back of the shop, laughing with a large group of young adults, including the previous volunteers and multiple others I did not recognize. I told them that social gatherings were not permitted during work hours, but he insisted they were all volunteers, and when I attempted to tell them all to leave the premises, they laughed and continued bringing in additional items.

It was clear by this time that the situation required intervention from head office and so I began to push my way through to the landline. But as I did so, I saw yet more people entering the shop with donations: some sort of leather kite, an oddly curved brass telescope, a *wheelbarrow* full of shifting fossils, an armload of swords, lengths of rope... and they were all laughing and calling out to one another, “It’s all for a good cause!”

As more and more people arrived, pressing into the shop, the central shelving was toppled and items were being damaged underfoot. A tin bathtub filled with moldy food, a stack of old dental retainers, a brace of

half-butchered pheasants, *jars* of what appeared to be pickled hands; I could no longer see the exits and still more volunteers pushed themselves inwards.

The pressure grew unbearable and I was pinned on all sides, my shoulders crushed against an ancient diving suit filled with sawdust, with my neck wrenched under a broken picnic hamper whilst bloodstained china was ground beneath my feet. There wasn't even enough space to fall now.

I tried to scream, but could only manage a wheeze as I began to black out. My limbs were contorted and gouged by unseen edges, my mouth filled with the copper taste of imperial coins pouring down on me from a jar above.

That's when the gunshots started.

The volunteers didn't stop laughing, but I could feel the deadened thud of impacts, and I could see spatters of gore through what gaps there were in the items all around me. Again and again, there was a rapid *thud-thud-thud*, and the laughing voices began to be drowned out by the growing crackle of flames.

Without warning, the pressure lessened and I dropped into a small hollow beneath an upturned bookcase. There was a path ahead of me, jagged with shards of wood and glass were constantly shifting with the press of the crowd. I dragged myself forward over the broken detritus, occasionally getting caught, but pressing onwards until I tumbled out of the emergency exit – and onto the tarmac outside.

Dazed, I tried to get to my feet, only to be shoved to the ground by a heavyset man in black clothing, who demanded I identify myself, while pressing a gun against the back of my head.

I screamed. Then I wept, great heaving sobs of terror with broken ribs. This somehow seemed to satisfy him, and he threw me roughly over his shoulder and walked away from the Hilltop Centre, as the charity shop blazed behind us. I swear I could still hear them laughing, over the thudding of machine guns and the roar of unchecked fire...

It has been made very clear to me that I am not to identify the security firm that took this action, so I shall not do so here. Nor am I aware of which individual or organisation hired them, except in as far as I know for a fact they were not working for the Oxford People's Trust.

They have also expressed in no uncertain terms that the fire is to be treated as an accident, with no further investigation by OPT. If you wish to discuss this further with them, I can provide you contact information, but I heavily advise against it.

Unless you send Mr. C Clayton, of course. I rather think he *deserves* to be fully debriefed by them.

Do not contact me again, unless it is to discuss additional compensation.