

# **General Volunteer Policy**

## **Volunteering with the Parish Council**

### **About us:**

The Parish Council values the help and support of volunteers with various tasks and work around the Parish.

### **What is our Aim:**

We encourage public participation in many areas of our work.

We value the support and assistance from all volunteers.

### **Purpose of our Volunteer Policy**

Our volunteer policy has been created to show our volunteers, and potential volunteers, that we are committed to supporting all volunteers and that we value their help and support. We will ensure that they are adequately insured and receive appropriate support, equipment and training where necessary.

### **Volunteering**

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

In addition, we will work with other likeminded agencies who may wish to place volunteers with us.

### **Induction**

A general induction will take place, this includes areas such as

- Health & Safety
- Safeguarding
- Accident Procedures

### **Attracting Volunteers and Volunteer Agreement**

We have a range of opportunities for volunteers to get involved with. We are committed to equal opportunities and believe that volunteering should be open to all regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, ability, religion or political beliefs. As such, volunteering activities will be open to all and there will be no interview or selection process. If you decide to become a volunteer your help will be greatly appreciated and really will make a difference.

### **Children and Young People**

Volunteers aged between 16 and 18 will be asked to supply a letter of parental consent before taking part in any activity, unless the activity is provided to a particular group (e.g. a youth club) that already has a consent system in place. Under 16s must be accompanied by a responsible adult at all times.

### **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks**

Some volunteer roles will require a **DBS** check to inform the Parish Council 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 enhanced **DBS** check. Unfortunately, we are not able to accept volunteers who do not have a clean enhanced DBS check when working with or around children or vulnerable adults.

### **Recognition and Reward**

We could not do all 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 will hold social events each year to celebrate our achievements; this might be a certificate presentation for volunteers or a celebration at Christmas. During these events you will get an opportunity to meet other volunteers and supporters of our work and share in our plans for the future.

We will take opportunities on our website and Facebook page, meetings, and local and national press to praise the achievements of our volunteers.

## **Insurance, Health and Safety, Accidents and Risk Assessment**

Our Parish Council has a valid insurance policy so that volunteers are covered by employer's and 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. Each event will have a relevant risk assessment in place.

## **Support and Supervision**

Volunteers will be supported and supervised by trained leaders in volunteering activities whilst undertaking volunteer work within the Parish. With the permission of the volunteer Leader, however, volunteers may be allowed to undertake low-risk volunteering activities without supervision provided the volunteer leader has deemed them suitably competent. Volunteer leaders will receive additional support as and when required.

## **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.

## **Confidentiality and Data Protection**

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. Any contact details and / or other relevant personal information will be subject to the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998. Volunteers' permission will be sought prior to taking their photographs and Volunteers will be informed that these photographs may be used in publicity materials. Volunteers' personal contact details will be used to send further information to them about the volunteering programme, other Parish Council activities and relevant opportunities until the volunteer requests otherwise. Volunteers' personal contact details will not be shared with other organisations.

**Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

The Parish Council is committed to embracing diversity and promoting equality and inclusion. When representing the Parish Council 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.

**General Volunteer Policy Review**

It will be monitored and reviewed regularly.

Signed: .....***Katirna Baker*** .....

Position: .....Clerk and RFO.....