

YARNTON PARISH COUNCIL

VOLUNTEER POLICY

1. Introduction

1.1 We recognise the valuable contribution that volunteers can make to Yarnton Parish Council. They can bring a diverse range of skills and experience, and can often provide a bridge to community involvement that it is sometimes difficult for paid staff to achieve. We recognise that volunteers are motivated because it is their choice to volunteer and give of their time freely; in return, we want to provide volunteers with opportunities that will help them to develop new skills and experiences.

1.2 This volunteer policy sets out the principles and practice by which we involve volunteers.

2. Status of Volunteers

2.1 A volunteer is not an employee and will not have a contract of employment. The Clerk will discuss the role with the volunteer and there will be an expectation that the volunteer will meet the requirements of the role.

2.2 Discussion will take place with volunteers on the amount of time that they are willing to commit, the frequency of their availability and how this will fit in with the Council's needs.

2.3 Volunteers are encouraged to let the Council know as soon as possible if they are not available so that a substitute can be found, or different arrangements can be made.

2.4 Volunteers wishing to withdraw from their voluntary role are asked to give their named contact as much notice as possible.

3. Principles

3.1 Our organisation:

- Recognises that voluntary work brings benefits to volunteers themselves, to the community and to paid staff.
- Will ensure that volunteers are properly integrated into the organisational structure and that mechanisms are in place for them to contribute to the volunteer centre's work.
- Will not introduce volunteers to replace paid staff.
- Expects that staff at all levels will work positively with volunteers and, will seek to involve them in their work.
- Recognises that volunteers require satisfying work and personal development and will seek to help volunteers meet these needs, as well as providing the training for them to do their work effectively.
- Will endeavour to identify and cover the costs of involving volunteers.
- Recognises that the management of volunteers requires designated responsibilities within specific posts.
- Will endeavour to involve volunteers from a wide range of backgrounds and abilities to ensure volunteering opportunities are as accessible and inclusive as possible.

4. Recruitment

4.1 The Council will recruit volunteers through a range of methods, including advertising, talking to other agencies and making contact with local volunteering organisations such as Community First.

4.2 The Council will endeavour to help any volunteer overcome barriers that may make it difficult for them to volunteer at Yarnton Parish Council.

4.3 The Council will ensure that the recruitment process is accessible and inclusive.

4.4 All volunteers will be asked to sign a Volunteer Agreement, which requires them to abide by the policies and procedures of the Parish Council.

4.5 DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks and references will only be required where regular 1:1 contact with children is necessary. A volunteer will be informed of the need to apply for DBS checks. DBS checks are not a reflection on the individual, but a legal requirement in certain circumstances.

5. Health and Safety

5.1 The Council has responsibility for the health and safety of volunteers. Volunteers should at all times follow the Health and Safety policies and procedures. Volunteers have a duty to take care of themselves and others who might be affected by their actions. Volunteers should not act outside their authorised area of work. Volunteers should report all accidents to the appropriate person and should be recorded in the accident book.

6. Safeguarding

6.1 Yarnton Parish Council takes their role in the safeguarding of volunteers, staff and other members of the public seriously and as such, has a Safeguarding policy to be followed at all times; it outlines the responsibility of volunteers and the Council in safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults.

7. Insurance

7.1 The Council will ensure that volunteers are covered for insurance purposes in respect of personal injury. We will also ensure that volunteers are provided with professional and public liability insurance. The insurance will not cover unauthorised actions or actions outside the volunteering agreement.

8. Induction and Training

8.1 All volunteers will receive an induction, to familiarise them with the work of the Council in general and their own particular area of work. Training will be offered where it helps to fulfil the role.

9. Support and Supervision

9.1 All volunteers will have a named person as their main contact. They will be given regular feedback and provided with an opportunity to discuss how things are going and air any problems.

9.2 Networking meetings between volunteers will be developed to encourage peer support and share experiences.

10. Expenses

10.1 Volunteers will be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses incurred on behalf of the Council as long as this has been approved in advance. Receipts will be required.

11. Grievance

11.1 The relationship between Yarnton Parish Council and its volunteers is entirely voluntary, and it does not imply any contract. However, it is important that the Council can maintain its agreed standards of service to those who visit the premises, and it is also important that volunteers should enjoy making their contribution to this service. If, in their role volunteering for us, a volunteer does not meet our standards, their case will be dealt with in the same manner as paid staff.

11.2 If a volunteer has any concerns regarding our treatment of them and this has been fully discussed with their named contact, but they are still not satisfied, any complaint may be taken to the Project Manager or their manager.

YARNTON PARISH COUNCIL VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

This volunteer agreement describes the arrangement between Yarnton Parish Council and you. We wish to assure you of our appreciation of your volunteering with us, and we will do the best we can to make your volunteer experience enjoyable and rewarding.

Purpose of role:

Possible Tasks:

Part 1: The Organisation

What you can expect from Yarnton Parish Council:

1. Induction and training.

The Council will provide you with:

- An introduction to the Project and your volunteering role within it.
- Training related to your responsibilities as a volunteer. We hope that you will take advantage of this to improve your skills.

- A named contact who will supervise your volunteering and with whom you can discuss your work.
- Personal liability insurance to cover you while you are fulfilling authorised work.
- Injury insurance for injuries incurred while fulfilling your authorised volunteer work.
- Reimbursement of any specific expenses incurred for Yarnton Parish Council, which have been agreed in advance. Receipts will be required at all times.

2. Supervision, support and flexibility.

- To explain what will be required and to encourage and support you in your work.
- To provide a named person who will meet with you regularly to discuss your volunteering role, your successes, and problems you may have.
- To help develop your volunteering role with us.

3. Health and safety

- To provide adequate training in support of our health and safety policy.

4. Complaints or issues affecting your volunteering

- To try to resolve fairly any problems, complaints and difficulties you may have while you volunteer with us. If you run into problems when performing your duties, please discuss any complaints or problems with your name contact in the first instance or the Parish Clerk.

Part 2: The Volunteer

What we expect from you:

We will discuss with you the amount of time that you are willing to commit to volunteering, the frequency of your availability and how this will fit in with our needs. If, for any reason, you will not be attending a previously agreed volunteering session, we would be grateful if you could let other volunteers and the volunteer coordinator know via telephone or email so that a substitute can be found, or different arrangements can be made. If we have no work for you, we will let you know as soon as possible.

We expect you:

- To perform your volunteering role to the best of your ability.
- To follow the organisation's policies & procedures and standards, including Health and Safety and Equality and Diversity, in relation to its staff, volunteers and customers.
- To maintain the confidential information of the organisation and of its users as appropriate. During your volunteering, you may come across confidential information about the project, its staff, and its customers. You must respect this confidentiality and not disclose this information except where required to do so by law.
- To be aware of the importance of safeguarding policies and procedures and to always discuss with a colleague any safeguarding concerns.
- To meet the time commitments and standards which have been mutually agreed with you and to give reasonable notice so that other arrangements can be made when this is not possible.

Ideas:

You may have ideas for the better performance of your duties or for ways in which we can meet our objectives as an organisation. Please discuss these with the volunteer co-ordinator.

Termination:

Either you or the organisation can terminate this agreement with or without notice at any time.

This agreement is binding in honour only. It is not a legally binding agreement nor is it intended to create an employment relationship between us now or at any time in the future. It may be cancelled at any time at the discretion of either party.

Signed by: (Volunteer)

Date:

Signed by: (Authorised representative of Yarnton Parish Council)

Date: