



COLSTERWORTH AND DISTRICT PARISH COUNCIL

VOLUNTEER POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

This policy sets out the broad principles for voluntary involvement in Colsterworth and District Parish Council

Although volunteers offer time freely and willingly without binding obligation, there is a presumption of mutual support and reliability. Reciprocal expectations are acknowledged – both what the Parish Council expects of volunteers and what volunteers expect of the Parish Council.

2. PRINCIPLES

Colsterworth and District Parish Council is the first tier of local government run by volunteers who have been elected as unpaid Councillors. We rely on other volunteers to help us carry out new initiatives to improve the well-being of parishioners. These range from such things as Community Speedwatch, In Touch delivery, community events, working on the nature trail to projects such as the Neighbourhood Plan and developing services and amenities.

The Parish Council believes that volunteering offers mutual benefits to all parties involved and provides the opportunity for people to make a valuable contribution to their community in a practical way. In return, the Parish Council asks the following of volunteers to:

- maintain and uphold the good name and reputation of the Parish Council
- treat all Councillors, Parish Council staff, service users and members of the public with respect and dignity
- adhere to the Parish Council's policies and procedures.

3. POLICY

3.1. All Parish Council employees will be expected to work positively with any volunteers and where appropriate, will actively seek to involve them in their work.

3.2. There will be no expenses paid to volunteers

3.3. Volunteers will be bound by the same requirements for confidentiality as paid staff and Councillors

3.4. Data Protection: Information on volunteers will be kept in a confidential file. Data collected will include date of commencement, emergency contact, position held and duties agreed and support provided.

3.5. Health and Safety: The Parish Council has a comprehensive Health and Safety Policy which will be explained to volunteers which is specific to their role. Volunteers will be expected to adhere to this policy and the Council will ensure that they provide a safe environment for them to work in.

3.6. Appropriate risk assessments will be undertaken by the Clerk.

- Volunteers must carry out only less hazardous work involving, for example, path maintenance and grass cutting with the use of non-powered tools only, other than lawnmowers/grass cutting equipment and trimmers, when stout footwear must be worn and safety goggles in the case of trimmers.
- If there are serious issues with regards to trees, this work must be carried out by a qualified tree surgeon with their own public liability cover of no less than £5,000,000.
- Prior to work commencing, a visual inspection must be carried out to ensure that there are no obvious hazards such as litter, glass or stones.
- Responsibility for undertaking the inspection rests with the individual to whom authority has been provided by the Parish Council to undertake the work.
- Remedial action must be taken immediately, and these inspections are to be recorded.

- If volunteers use their own tools, then the Parish Council cannot be held liable for any injury caused by them through the use of faulty equipment/tools.
- Cleaning materials must not be stronger than those available on shop shelves.
- High visibility vests or other appropriate clothing must be worn where appropriate.
- Jewellery, necklaces, watches and the like must not be worn if they might compromise the safe working environment for the volunteer.
- Generally trainers, open-toed shoes, heeled shoes or sandals must not be worn if by so doing the safe working environment for the volunteer is compromised.
- Long hair must be tied up if it is long enough to compromise Health & Safety requirements.
- All work undertaken by volunteers shall have regard to the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and all other Health & Safety legislation.

3.7. Insurance: Volunteers will be covered by insurance while carrying out agreed duties. Volunteers must behave responsibly, but beyond any acts, omissions or negligence on their part, their activities are insured. Volunteers have a responsibility to follow guidance and not act in a negligent manner.

3.8. The Parish Council's liability insurance policies include the activities of volunteers and liability towards them. However, it is the volunteer's responsibility to make their own insurance arrangements for their travel to the site of volunteering

3.9. Equal Opportunities and Diversity: The Parish Council has an equal opportunities policy which is available to all volunteers. Volunteers expect to be treated equally, regardless of their gender, race, age, faith/religion, disability or sexual orientation. Volunteers must be accommodated from all walks of life

3.10. Volunteers will have a named contact and will receive regular support. The Clerk will also offer support, information and advice

3.10 Volunteers wishing to provide the Parish Council with an update on their activities can do so during the informal public participation session of any Parish Council meeting.

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