

ANWICK PARISH COUNCIL VOLUNTEER POLICY

This policy sets out the broad principles for voluntary involvement in activities overseen, or undertaken within the Parish.

1 Introduction

1.1 Anwick Parish Council (the Council) acknowledges and values the support that volunteers provide to the local community. Volunteers bring a range of expertise to individual tasks and/or group projects. The Council regards volunteering as an unpaid activity, where someone freely contributes their time, energy, and skills to benefit the community. Volunteers are not paid employees or workers and do not have a legally binding contractual relationship with the Council.

1.2 There are many voluntary activities in the village and the Council has not sought to exercise any control over them. Where the Council does sponsor an event for the benefit of the village or community, it has no influence over the activities of the volunteers. However, the Council does cover volunteers under their insurance policy (detailed at 6.1) and would seek accounts/receipts for any public money it gives in support of any community activities

2 Volunteers.

2.1 Volunteers must be over the age of 18. Under 18's may volunteer provided they are supervised by a parent or guardian and have the permission of the supervisor of the activity. The Council are fully committed to our Equality & Diversity policy and any reasonable adjustments to help volunteers will be made.

2.2 Any requests for approval of a volunteer task, should be approved and endorsed by resolution of the Parish Council.

3 Risk Assessment

3.1 Where necessary and if appropriate, Risk Assessments should be carried out prior to activities.

3.2 Should a Risk Assessment be carried out it should cover the tasks involved and the environment in which they will be conducted. In addition, where a volunteer makes us aware of a pre-existing medical condition or disability, an individual Risk Assessment may be necessary.

3.3 The Council will work with the individual volunteer, or group, authorised to undertake the work to ensure appropriate Risk Assessments are undertaken where necessary and these will be placed on file (these should be revisited and reviewed at least every two years on continuous projects).

4 Health and Safety

4.1 Volunteers have no obligation under health and safety law but are subject to Civil Law which is a matter for the courts. Volunteers should be made aware that the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 is criminal law aimed at protecting employees, not those taking part in voluntary activities. Voluntary organisations and individual volunteers have a duty of care to themselves, each other and others who may be affected by their activities

4.2 The Council has a duty of care to avoid exposing volunteers to health and safety risks. All volunteers will be made aware of any health and safety procedures and any practical safety concerns as part of their induction.

4.3 The provision of any safety equipment or clothing needs (safety glasses, ear plugs and High Viz vests) if identified during a risk assessment, should be authorised, and where applicable provided, in advance by the Council.

4.4 Supervisors should ensure volunteers should wear the appropriate PPE outlined in the Risk Assessment. If using powered lawn mowers or other grass cutting or clean-up equipment, stout footwear must be worn. If volunteers do not wish to wear the appropriate PPE they do so at their own risk.

5 Training & Supervision

5.1 It will be expected that volunteers will already possess the necessary skills to be able to carry out their role or activity. The Council will not ask a volunteer to do any task that they are not confident of doing well. Specific training may be required for certain tools and/or equipment and if this is the case training will be provided.

5.2 All work undertaken by volunteers shall have regard to Health & Safety legislation.

5.3 If carrying out a group activity, volunteers may have a nominated volunteer supervisor who they can have regular access to if problems arise or they need help and support.

6 Public Liability

6.1 Provided that the volunteers are providing a service that is for the benefit of the community or its parishioners, and this activity has been approved and endorsed by the Council, then the volunteers will be covered by the Council's Public Liability Insurance and are endorsed to use any equipment listed in the Parish Council's Assets Register as long as suitable training has been given.

6.2 The Council does not insure the volunteer's personal possessions against loss or damage.

6.3 If volunteers use their own tools or equipment, the Council will not be held liable for any injury, loss or damage arising from the use of faulty or defective tools or equipment.

7 Vehicles

7.1 Where volunteers drive as part of their voluntary activity, and use their own vehicle, it is a requirement that they possess a valid driving license and the relevant insurance.

8 Expenses

8.1 Expenses incurred with respect to volunteer activities will only be paid with the prior approval of the Council and after receipt by the Council of VAT receipts/invoices in respect of the expense incurred.

8.2 Where a supplier is used to provide parts 'on account' then the name of the requestor must be used as the purchase order identification – failure to comply with this may leave the responsibility of paying for the item(s) requested with that volunteer.

9 Feedback & Complaints

9.1 The Parish Council welcomes feedback and encourage volunteers to offer ideas for improvements.

9.2 Volunteers should feel able to make a complaint and should be assured that everything they say will be treated in confidence and will have no impact on the continuation of their activity.

9.3 If volunteers are dissatisfied with any aspect of their work or wish to resolve a problem, they should raise issues or complaints in the first instance with their volunteer supervisor, where one exists. Where appropriate, the complaint will be investigated fully by their supervisor, and dealt with informally where possible. Where no supervisor exists the Parish Council Clerk should deal with the complaint.

9.4 Should a complaint not be resolved through informal action, then a formal complaint can be made and the Anwick Parish Council Complaints Procedure should be followed.

10 Review

10.1 The Council will review this policy at least 2 yearly to ensure that it is relevant to the needs of the Council and its volunteers.