



Volunteer Policy
Adopted 6th December 2022 Minute Reference 22.11.06iii

Volunteer Policy

Introduction

Tisbury Parish Council (TPC) acknowledges and values the support volunteers provide to the community. This policy sets out the broad principles for voluntary involvement in activities overseen by the Council.

Many of the Council's activities involve working in partnership with community and voluntary groups and volunteers who also work directly with the Council for a number of reasons:

- To encourage involvement and increase our engagement with the local community;
- To help ensure our services reflect the needs of our community; and
- To increase skills, experience, perspectives and diversity in the workplace.

This policy applies to volunteers working on behalf of TPC, not those employed by TPC, nor members of the Council. It aims to ensure that all volunteers can work with the Council in a safe and supported environment. Volunteer roles will complement paid staff. TPC will not introduce volunteers to replace paid staff. It expects all staff to work positively with any volunteers and, where appropriate, to actively seek to involve them in their work. A copy of this policy must be given to all volunteers.

Aims

TPC aims to encourage voluntary activity by:

- Matching time and skills to volunteering opportunities;
- Ensuring volunteers receive adequate and appropriate training and support;
- Fostering a friendly and supportive atmosphere;
- Ensuring good working relationships between volunteers, staff, councillors and other stakeholders;
- Recognising the benefits volunteers bring;
- Endeavouring to involve volunteers from a range of backgrounds and abilities;
- Ensuring volunteering opportunities are as accessible as possible;
- Resolving any complaint made by a volunteer in a timely manner.

Management of Volunteering Projects

- The scope of the project must be agreed with the Council and Clerk.
- A Project Leader will be assigned to each project.
- The Clerk will provide a project brief for the Project Leader to complete.
- The Clerk will review feasibility and obtain the relevant permissions.
- A Risk Assessment (RA) must be completed by the Clerk or Project Leader prior to work being started.
- A register of volunteers will be held in the project brief for each project.
- On completion of the work the Project Leader will provide a brief summary of the work completed and any updates to the RA.

Who is a volunteer?

A volunteer is any individual who undertakes unpaid activities on behalf of the Council of their own free choice.

Roles and Responsibilities

The volunteer role is based on trust and mutual understanding. There is no contractual obligation for the volunteer to attend or to undertake particular tasks. However, there is a presumption of mutual support and reliability and a reciprocal set of expectations:

Volunteers can expect:

- To have clear information about what is and is not expected of them;
- To be insured and to volunteer in a safe environment;
- To be treated with respect and in a non-discriminatory manner;
- To receive reimbursement for reasonable expenses;
- To be recognised and appreciated;
- To be able to say 'no' to anything which they consider to be unrealistic or unreasonable;
- To know what to do if something goes wrong.

Tisbury Parish Council expects volunteers:

- To be reliable, open and honest.
- To comply with TPC policies and risk assessments.
- To contribute positively to projects and avoid bringing the organisation into disrepute.
- To carry out tasks within agreed instructions and in accordance with the project brief.

Induction and Training

Volunteers must be adequately trained and briefed or be provided with instructions on how to carry out the task for which they have volunteered.

Data Protection and Confidentiality

TPC is bound by Data Protection Regulations. Only staff who need to see information for purposes related to volunteer involvement will be able to access it. The Council will not pass information on without permission. Personal information will be kept for the duration of a volunteer's time with TPC and for a further three years.

Volunteers will be bound by the requirements for confidentiality as set out in the project brief.

Health and Safety

TPC appreciates that volunteers have the right to volunteer in a safe environment. Therefore, all volunteers must carry out their duties in line with TPC's Health and Safety Policy whilst engaged in their volunteering activity.

Volunteers are covered by TPC's Public Liability Insurance only when carrying out volunteer work set out in the project brief which has been agreed by TPC. However, the Council does not insure a volunteer's personal possessions.

Volunteers will not be authorised to carry out work that the Council considers hazardous or would contravene the principles of the Health and Safety at Work Act, taking into account the competence of the volunteer(s) carrying out the proposed work.

Expenses

Reasonable expenses will be paid on the production of receipts and with the prior agreement of the Project Leader.

Problem-solving Procedure

TPC acknowledges that sometimes problems do arise. Any volunteer with a complaint or concern should bring it up with the Project Leader or Clerk who will aim to resolve the issue informally. If the issue cannot be resolved by informal discussion, then it can be taken up formally through the grievance procedure.

Moving on

When a volunteer leaves, they will be asked for feedback on their volunteering experience.

Policy Next Review: December 2024

VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

Name:.....

Address:

Telephone No: Email Address:

Thank you for agreeing to volunteer with Tisbury Parish Council. For your information and safety we ask you to read and sign this agreement before commencing duties.

Volunteering is undertaken freely and not in return for any remuneration. We hope that your voluntary work will give you a sense of achievement, work experience, a chance to build on your skills and learn new ones, as well as a chance to strengthen your confidence and make new friends.

As a volunteer you will not do the work of paid staff, but complement the services offered by Tisbury Parish Council.

You will be supervised by the Parish Clerk who will issue you with a role description which specifies what your contribution is expected to be. You will be expected to fulfil your agreed commitment and should inform the Clerk as soon as possible should you not be able to do so.

You will be expected to follow the policies and procedures of the Council, including health and safety.

Tisbury Council reserves the right to ask a volunteer to withdraw their services. Any disciplinary or grievance situation will be dealt with in accordance with the Council's policies.

I agree to abide by this agreement:

Signed: Date:

Signed: Date:

..... On behalf of Tisbury Town Council