



Serving the community

Blaby Parish Council

GENERAL POLICY NO.20

VOLUNTEER POLICY

POLICY

This policy sets out the principles for voluntary involvement in activities authorised by Blaby Parish Council, who acknowledges that volunteers contribute in many ways, and that volunteering can benefit the council, local communities and the volunteers themselves.

This policy applies to volunteers working on behalf of the Parish Council, not those employed by the Parish Council.

Only volunteer work that has been authorised by the Council will be covered by the Parish Council's insurance, however the council does not insure volunteer's personal possessions.

1. Volunteers must be adequately trained to be able to carry out the role. The exact nature of the training will depend on the role. It is not possible to detail what constitutes 'adequacy' as requirements will vary according to:

- a. The job or activity
- b. The existing competency of volunteers
- c. The circumstances of the work (e.g.: the degree of supervision)
- d. The tools and/or equipment being used

The training standard, however, must be sufficient to ensure the health and safety of volunteers and any people who might be affected by the work, as far as reasonable practicable. Responsibility for providing training rests with the individual to whom authority has been provided by the Parish Council to undertake the work.

2. Volunteers, if working for only a few hours to help at an event or similar, must still be informed about the task and its purpose, health & safety and supervision arrangements. Responsibility for this rests with the individual to whom authority has been provided by the Parish Council to undertake the work.
3. 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.

4. Volunteers must undergo an induction appropriate for the task(s) being undertaken. This must include Health & Safety, what to do if there is a problem and an introduction to other relevant individuals. Responsibility for the induction rests with the individual to whom authority has been provided by the Parish Council to undertake the work.
5. A Risk Assessment must be undertaken in order to identify risks that might be faced and how they will be managed. If an area of activity presents a significant risk, consideration must be given to reducing or stopping the activity which gives rise to the risk.
The Parish Council, through the offices of its Manager or other person(s) as advised, must receive a copy of such risk assessment records. Responsibility for undertaking the risk assessment rests with the individual to whom authority has been provided by the Parish Council to undertake the work. Risk assessments and their associated paperwork must comply with current Health & Safety at Work legislation.
6. So far as insurance is concerned, on condition that volunteers are working at the sole request of and under the sole control of the Parish Council, then they will be insured under the Parish Council's Public Liability and Employers Liability cover. Reporting to the Parish Council in respect of work which is of an ongoing nature is necessary on each occasion and will require formal approval of the Parish Council.
7. 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 strimmer's, when stout footwear must be worn and safety goggles in the case of strimmer's. 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.
8. 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 with of household grade. Personal protection equipment must be worn appropriate to the task being carried out. High visibility vests or other appropriate clothing must be worn where appropriate.

9. Jewellery, necklaces, watches and the like must not be worn if they might compromise the safe working environment for the volunteer. Long hair must be tied up if it is long enough to compromise Health & Safety requirements. 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.
10. All work undertaken by volunteers shall have regard to the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and all other Health & Safety legislation.
11. All volunteers must have due regard to the fact that they are carrying out authorised work on behalf of Blaby Parish Council and as such are representing the Council, both in quality of work and possible interaction with the public.
12. If applicable, volunteers will be assigned a named contact person. Group meetings will provide the opportunity for an ongoing dialogue about the volunteering role and any advice and guidance as needed.
13. Volunteers wishing to provide the Parish Council with an update on their activities can do so during the public participation session of the relevant Parish Council meeting.
14. Minimum details will be kept on volunteers. This will include name, address/email, telephone number, crisis contact details and any other relevant information in accordance with Blaby Parish Council's confidential policy. The crisis contact details will be in the possession of the person to whom authority has been provided by the Parish Council to undertake the works.
15. A copy of this policy must be given to all volunteers.
16. We aim to identify and solve problems at the earliest stage. A procedure is available for dealing with complaints either by or about volunteers.

Adopted February 2018

Reviewed Yearly, Last Updated November 2019