



VOLUNTEER POLICY

Adopted: 24th May 2022

Review: May 2023

1. INTRODUCTION

Datchworth Parish Council is committed to working with volunteers, when appropriate, for the benefit of the community. This can cover support in the Parish of Datchworth and any other aspects of the Council's work.

This policy will be available to all Datchworth Parish Council volunteers and staff and can be found on the website. It will be reviewed every two years by volunteers and staff.

2. OVERVIEW

Anyone can be a volunteer – whether it is on a planned project, work experience or specific arrangement. Volunteers bring time, experience, knowledge and skills.

Any volunteer under the age of 16 must be closely supervised by an appropriate, DBS checked, adult volunteer who will be responsible for the young person's safety.

Engagement of volunteers must not be taken lightly; procedures are in place to ensure volunteers receive the best possible recognition, management support and guidance, appreciation and valuing from staff, and where necessary training, and that consequently the Parish Council will receive maximum benefit from a volunteer's contribution.

3. RISK ASSESSMENT

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 office of its Clerk 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.

The Parish Council accepts no responsibility or liability for volunteers or the work they undertake.

4. ENGAGEMENT OF VOLUNTEERS

What is expected from the volunteer should be clearly outlined (e.g. performing the required duties/tasks adequately) as should what the volunteer will gain from the experience (e.g. increased knowledge, experience).

Engagement of volunteers should be regularly reviewed to ensure the best working practices are in place on both sides.

Engagement of volunteers is covered by the Parish Council's insurance whilst working on projects initiated and supervised by Parish Council Councillors or staff. All volunteers are required to fill in a 'Volunteer Application Form'.

The engagement of volunteers should be:

- Encouraged;
- Planned in advance for sufficient notification;
- Offered as widely as possible;
- Clearly and specifically identified and defined;
- Supervised
- Appreciated and values

5. THE BENEFITS OF VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering provides the opportunity to use current skills and develop new ones, acquire new interests, meet people, become active in bringing about social change, and to get involved and contribute to the community.

Undertaking voluntary work provides:

- Enjoyment and personal satisfaction;
- A chance to meet people, make new friends and associates and get involved in the community;
- Gain valuable work experience and training;
- A chance to use and learn new skills;
- A change from the normal routine;
- Recognition and a chance to build up confidence.

Volunteering can also improve the wellbeing by:

- Improving health and fitness, particularly with outdoor activities;
- Reducing depression and combating stress;
- Build on self-esteem;

6. WHAT VOLUNTEERS SHOULD EXPECT FROM THE COUNCIL

To be:

- Welcomed
- Valued and supported;
- Fully supervised;
- Treated as a co-worker, part of the team, and not just free help, in doing so ensuring they are part of the process, free to make suggestion, and respected for their views and opinions;
- Provided with any required training;
- Provided with adequate PPE, tools and equipment to undertake their duties/tasks;
- Covered by health and safety legislation, which is in place and enforced;
- Recognised and thanked for their support and achievements.

7. WHAT THE COUNCIL EXPECTS FROM VOLUNTEERS

To:

- Be reliable and honest
- Respect confidentiality
- Comply with our policies and procedures
- Update the Clerk regarding any changes to their personal circumstances, which may inhibit their ability to volunteer.
- Make the most of training and support opportunities
- Carry out their volunteering tasks as agreed and in a way that reflects our values and aims
- Respect the work of our organisation and not bring it into disrepute.

8. DATA PROTECTION

Any data collected about a volunteer will be limited to date of commencement, contact details for the volunteer, emergency contact details, task volunteered for, support and management notes, any correspondence between the Parish Council and the volunteer, and any other relevant information. All information kept will comply with the current Data Protection legislation.

9. EXPENSES

Agreed expenses will be paid upon the production of a receipt.

This policy will be reviewed every year or earlier if so required by legislation or additional material.

Date of policy: May 2022
Approving committee: Full Council
Date of committee meeting: 24th May 2022
Policy version reference: V3
Supersedes: January 2022
Policy effective from: 24/5/22
Date for next review: May 2023



VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT FORM

I _____ [Print name], volunteering for Datchworth Parish Council, acknowledge that I have read, accept and adhere to the Volunteer Policy.

Signed: - _____

Dated: - _____