

Volunteer Policy and Agreement

Introduction

Volunteers offer a valuable resource by giving their time and dedication without pay. It is important to ensure that we protect volunteers by making sure that volunteers are well looked after and that they are fit to work. It is important that volunteers are treated with respect and dignity.

Purpose

The aim of this policy is to produce a clear framework for the use of volunteers working on communal gardening projects. A volunteer is someone who is working in an unpaid capacity as part of a planned programme of activity. This would include any friends and relatives who may offer their services of working with gardening team members from time to time.

The policy is intended to help promote a constructive partnership between volunteers and garden owners. People volunteer for a variety of reasons and can contribute in a range of ways according to individual needs and talents that they bring. Volunteers will need to abide by the values, principles and policies which form the framework of the organisation.

Equal Opportunities

xxx are committed to the development of equal opportunities and believe that opportunities should be open to all regardless of social class, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, religion, colour, race or ethnic or national origin. Teamwork promotes mutual interests, harmony, respect, co-operation and understanding between volunteers from diverse backgrounds.

Recruitment and Selection

Volunteers will be recruited and selected according to their suitability in helping meet the needs of planned activities. Volunteers should normally be over 18. If an applicant is under 18, the application should be discussed by members of the co-ordinating committee to ensure that sufficient guidance and support are in place. All prospective volunteers will be asked to make a declaration and sign an agreement document (see attached appendix). They will be interviewed by members of the co-ordinating committee and then approved volunteers will be inducted into the work.

Volunteer Agreement

All new volunteers should sign an agreement which lays out general and specific expectations. This does not amount to a contract of employment, but clearly sets out what either party can expect from the other.

General Expectations

Volunteers should:

1. Have the right to be made welcome and to feel involved and valued.
2. Be expected at all times to promote and a spirit of co-operation with other team members and the garden owner. They are expected to acquaint themselves with and work in accordance with all appropriate policies, guidelines and procedures. These will be covered as part of the induction procedure.
3. Receive regular supervision and support during induction.
4. Undertake only those tasks and responsibilities as arranged and agreed.
5. Respect confidentiality at all times.
6. Take responsibility for providing feedback and information to team members and garden owners.
7. Report all accidents, serious incidents or damage to equipment immediately to a member of the project co-ordinating committee.
8. Have the right to representation on the project co-ordinating committee provided an active part is taken in the project.
9. Have the right to withdraw volunteering services without notice.

Specific Expectations

The term of agreement will specify, without being inflexible:

1. The timetable during which the volunteering will take place.
2. The name and contact details of the experienced volunteer responsible for their induction.

Expenses

Subject to prior agreement and the project budget, any eligible costs incurred during volunteering will be reimbursed. Contributions to costs may be requested from volunteers for purchases which are ineligible for project funding on the understanding that such payments will be offset in the long term by a share of food produce grown.

Insurance

Public Liability cover is in force to protect the project's legal liability for third party injury or property damage arising in connection with the work.

Volunteer Agreement

<p>The project will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Provide the details of the person who is the volunteer's point of contact ii) Induct the volunteer in the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Explain the values and aims of the project b. Health and Safety c. Accident reporting d. Any other relevant information iii) Provide regular supervision iv) Involve the volunteer in any relevant meetings or communications 	<p>The volunteer will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Have the right to be made welcome and to feel involved and valued ii) Be expected to acquaint themselves with and work in accordance with all appropriate policies, guidelines and procedures which will be covered in the induction procedure iii) Undertake only those tasks and responsibilities as arranged and agreed iv) Respect confidentiality at all times v) Take responsibility for providing feedback and information to relevant team members vi) Report all accidents, serious incidents or damage to property and equipment immediately
<p>The project expects that the volunteer will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) By arrangement in advance work << >>hours a week, or Monday/Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday/Friday/Saturday/Sunday‡ when the volunteering will take place. ii) The name of the volunteer's support for induction is (Contact details) iii) The volunteer's responsibilities are set out in the document above 	
<p>Signed:..... (on behalf of the project)</p>	<p>Signed:..... (The Volunteer)</p>
<p>In signing this document, both parties understand that this does not constitute a contract of employment and that there was no intention of forming such at the time of signing</p>	
<p>Date:</p>	

‡ Please delete as applicable.

Volunteer Agreement – Example

This Volunteer Agreement describes the arrangement between The South West Counties Allotment Association CIC (SWCAA.cic) and you. We wish to assure you of our appreciation of your volunteering with us and will do the best we can to make your volunteer experience with us enjoyable and rewarding.

Part 1: The organisation

Your role as a volunteer is _____ and starts on _____ (date). This volunteering role is designed to assist SWCAA by _____

You can expect the SWCAA:

1. Induction and training

To provide a thorough induction on the work of SWCAA, its staff, your volunteering role and the induction and/or training you need to meet the responsibilities of this role. The Secretary can explain the structure of the organisation.

2. Supervision, support and flexibility

To explain the standards we expect for our services and to encourage and support you to achieve and maintain them;

To provide a named person who will meet with you regularly to discuss your volunteering and any successes and problems;

To do our best to help you develop your volunteering role with us.

3. Expenses

To reimburse these expenses following the Volunteer claim form procedures:

- Travel to and from home and during your work. Any costs of travel or car mileage allowances must be agreed beforehand
- Meal expenses to a maximum of £3. (Expenses should be incurred through volunteering so to be eligible you should volunteer around meal times or for at least 3 hours a day)
- Specialist clothing or equipment where this is required and provided by you
- Actual cost of dependant costs incurred by you in order to be able to volunteer, if previously agreed with SWCAA in writing
- Please keep all your receipts to give to us when we reimburse your expenses.

4. Health and safety

To provide adequate training and feedback in support of our health and safety policy.

5. Insurance

To provide adequate Employee cover for volunteers whilst carrying out their volunteering roles which have been approved and authorised by us

6. Equal opportunities

To ensure that all volunteers are dealt with in accordance with our equal opportunities policy, a copy of which is available on request

7. Problems

- To try to resolve fairly any problems, complaints and difficulties you may have while you volunteer with us
- In the event of an unresolved problem, to offer an opportunity to bring a friend with you and to discuss the issues with the Officers

Part 2: The volunteer

We expect you:

1. To help swcaa fulfil its role/function/services which you will be helping with
2. To perform your volunteering role to the best of your ability
3. To follow the organisation's procedures and standards, including health and safety and equal opportunities, in relation to its staff, volunteers and clients
4. To **maintain as absolutely confidential** the information of the organisation and of its clients
5. To meet the time commitments and standards which have been mutually agreed to and to give reasonable notice so other arrangements can be made when this is not possible
6. To provide referees as agreed who may be contacted, and to agree to a Criminal Records Bureau check being carried out where necessary

This agreement is binding in honour only, is not intended to be a legally binding contract between us and may be cancelled at any time at the discretion of either party.

Neither of us intend any employment relationship to be created either now or at any time in the future.