

VOLUNTEER POLICY

Approved at a meeting of the council Monday 12 September 2022

Wingham Parish Council acknowledges and values the support that volunteers provide to the local community. This policy sets out the broad principles for voluntary involvement in activities overseen by Wingham Parish Council. It will be reviewed annually to ensure that it is relevant to the needs of Wingham Parish Council and its volunteers.

- This policy applies to volunteers working on behalf of, but not employed or contracted by, the Parish Council. Volunteers are unpaid and of their own free will contribute their time, energy and skills to benefit the community.
- Parish Council volunteer opportunities are advertised through Parish media, including Wingham Community News, Parish Council notice boards and the Parish Council website, plus village social media sites.
- Volunteers will be given a written description of the role to be undertaken by the clerk.
- Other volunteering opportunities that arise from the community must be authorised by the Parish Council. Volunteers should inform the Parish Council of the work they intend to undertake before commencing such work by contacting the Clerk.
- Volunteers are requested to respect neighbours and residents when carrying out voluntary work. If the nature of the work is such that it is potentially disruptive to others, it should only be carried out during sociable daylight hours, unless agreed with the council.
- Volunteers can expect to be treated equally, regardless of their gender, race, age, faith, disability or sexual orientation and in turn are expected to treat others they come into contact with in the same way.
- Volunteers must be adequately trained to be able to carry out the role. It must be sufficient to ensure their health and safety and, as far as reasonably practicable, that of any people who might be affected by the work. The Parish Council will work with the individual authorised to undertake the work to assess training needs and provide appropriate training as required.
- Volunteers must undergo an induction appropriate for the task being undertaken. This should include health and safety, what to do if there is a problem and an introduction to other relevant individuals. The Parish Council will work with the individual authorised to undertake the work to ensure appropriate induction takes place.

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- A risk assessment must be undertaken in order to identify risks that might be faced and how they will be managed. The Clerk must receive a copy of such risk assessment records. The Parish Council will work with the individual authorised to undertake the work to ensure appropriate risk assessments are undertaken.
- On condition that volunteers are working on behalf of the Parish Council and at their direct request, then they will be insured under the Parish Council's Public Liability and Employer's Liability cover for the specified role. However, the Council does not insure the volunteer's personal possessions against loss or damage and if volunteers use their own tools or equipment the Parish Council cannot be held liable for any injury, loss or damage arising from a fault or defect with these.
- Protective equipment appropriate to the role should be worn. This may include safety goggles and high visibility vests. Volunteers should carry out less hazardous work involving use of non-powered tools where possible. However, if using powered lawn mowers or other grass cutting equipment, stout footwear must be worn.
- Expenses will be paid only with the prior approval of the Parish Council and after receipt by the Parish Council of paper receipts in respect of same. Provision of any safety equipment or clothing needs that are identified during the risk assessment process must be authorised in advance by the Parish Council.
- If volunteers are dissatisfied with any aspect of their work, the way they are treated, or wish to resolve a problem, contact should be made in the first instance with the Clerk or Chairman. The Parish Council reserves the right to ask an individual to cease carrying out a voluntary role with or without notice. The volunteer would be notified in writing.

COMMUNITY CARETAKER: Dover District Council runs this scheme where volunteers have access to a Community Store housing tools, materials, equipment and protective clothing to carry out anything which helps the local community, eg: litter picking, planting, sweeping, repairs, clearing snow. Once registered Community Caretakers will receive a welcome pack containing a project guide and a map of the community stores – we have one in Wingham. To find out how to register and submit any projects, please visit:

<https://www.dover.gov.uk/Community/Community-Caretakers.aspx>