

Adopted by Council on 12 November 2024

Minute Ref: 9.2., page 85-2024

For review in November 2025

Summary: *Ruskington Parish Council's (RPC's) Volunteer Policy provides guidelines to ensure safe, fair, and organised volunteer activities. RPC welcomes volunteers of all backgrounds and emphasizes equality and safety, requiring a general induction and activity-specific training. Volunteers must follow health and safety protocols, including wearing necessary protective gear and conducting pre-activity safety checks. Activities are limited to low-risk tasks, such as weeding and path maintenance, with risk assessments and insurance coverage in place. Volunteers need prior approval to start activities, and updates can be shared with the Council. Personal safety guidelines, including restrictions on attire, are outlined to prevent hazards.*

This policy applies to volunteers undertaking activities on behalf of, but not employed, by Ruskington Parish Council (RPC). Volunteers from all backgrounds may apply and must be treated equally, regardless of their gender, race, age, faith/religion, disability, or sexual orientation.

1. **General Induction Briefing.** Prior to the commencement of any activities, Volunteers will attend the RPC office for a general briefing. This briefing will be applicable to all volunteers for the duration of the assignment.

2. **Risk Assessments.** Before the commencement of any Volunteer activity, a risk assessment must be undertaken to identify risks and to detail how they will be safely and adequately managed. Responsibility for undertaking the risk assessment rests with the individual to whom authority has been provided by the Parish Council to undertake the activity. Risk assessments and their associated paperwork must comply with current Health and Safety at Work legislation. The Parish Council, through the office of its Clerk or other person(s) as advised, must receive a copy of such risk assessment (for their) records.

3. **Task-Specific Induction Training.** Volunteers must undergo induction training appropriate for the activity/activities being undertaken. This must include health and 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.

4. **Specific Induction Briefing.** Volunteers must be adequately trained to be able to carry out the specific role determined by:

- the activity
- the existing competency of volunteers
- the circumstances of the activity (e.g. the degree of supervision);
- the tools and/or equipment being used

- the need for PPE

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 reasonably practicable. Responsibility for providing training rests with the individual to whom authority has been provided by the Parish Council to undertake the activity.

5. Insurance. Volunteers engaged in authorised activities as outlined in this Policy will be insured under the Parish Council's Public Liability and Employers' Liability cover.

7. Scope of Duties. Volunteers may only carry out less hazardous activities involving non powered hand tools; for example, path maintenance, sand clearance, tree planting etc. PPE (suitable footwear, gloves, safety goggles etc.) identified in the risk assessment must be worn when undertaking such activities, as directed by the individual or group to whom authority has been provided by the Parish Council to undertake the activity. Prior to activity 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 or group to whom authority has been provided by the Parish Council to undertake the activity. Any required remedial action must be taken immediately, and such actions' along with reasons and justifications, are to be recorded.

8. Disclaimer. The Parish Council cannot be held liable for any injury caused by the use or misuse of tools or equipment. Only 'unaltered' domestic grade cleaning materials, agreed or issued by the RPC, may be used and always in accordance with manufacturers guidelines. No weed killers can be used in or around any Parish Council owned or managed properties.
Personal Safety

9. Volunteers must inform the Parish Council of the activities they intend to undertake before commencement; this can be done in two ways:

- a) At the beginning of a Council meeting
- b) In writing to the Parish Clerk

In both instances, written approval must be received prior to the undertaking of any work / activities on Parish property.

9.1. Volunteers wishing to provide the Parish Council with an update on their activities can do so during the informal public participation session of any Parish Council or relevant Committee meeting, or directly to the Clerk.

10. Jewellery, necklaces, watches or other adornments must not be worn if, in the opinion of the Authorised Supervisor, could compromise the safety of the volunteer whilst carrying out activities.

11. Only footwear and other items of Personal Protective Equipment, identified as suitable for the task within the risk assessment, may be worn.

12. Long hair must be tied up if it is deemed that it could compromise health and safety requirements.

13. All activities undertaken by volunteers shall have regard to the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and all other Health and Safety Legislation.

14. Out of Pocket expenses will not be authorised without prior permission and only on receipt of correctly completed paperwork supported by dated and legible receipts issued by the service provider.

Confirmation that this Volunteer Policy is understood, and the measures will be followed:

Please note: If you do not understand any part of this policy please speak to the Clerk of Council.

| Name of volunteer | Signature | Date |
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