



Knaresborough
Town Council

VOLUNTEER POLICY

INTRODUCTION:

Knaresborough Town Council (KTC) recognises the valuable contribution that volunteers can make to the work it does in the community and how vital volunteers can be for projects and events to be successful. KTC defines volunteering as 'the commitment of time and energy for the benefit of society and the community, the environment or individuals outside one's immediate family. It is unpaid and undertaken freely and by choice'.

The aim of this policy is to ensure volunteers are safe and appreciated when volunteering with the council. It is designed to provide a framework for how the council will manage volunteers and what volunteers can expect from the council; it sets out the principles and practice by which the council will involve volunteers.

This policy applies to all volunteers undertaking work or duties on behalf of the council in a voluntary capacity. It does not apply to those who are directly employed or contracted by the council or to councillors.

PRINCIPLES:

KTC will encourage and enable, rather than restrict, the involvement of volunteers.

All employees will be expected to work positively with any volunteers and, where appropriate, will actively seek to involve them in the work.

The Council will not introduce volunteers to replace paid staff.

For all volunteering roles there will be an appointed volunteer coordinator who has responsibility for the volunteer(s).

RECRUITMENT:

The Council is committed to providing equal opportunities for all volunteers and recruitment will be in line with the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy. Appropriate targeting may be used.

The Council may recruit volunteers using a range of methods, including word of mouth, advertising, talking with other organisations and may also directly approach people who have previously volunteered with the Council.

Whilst not applicable for the majority of volunteering opportunities with the Council, for certain voluntary roles prospective volunteers may be interviewed by the volunteer coordinator to assess their suitability and it may also be necessary to obtain references or a DBS check.

All volunteers will be asked to sign a volunteer agreement which details the role they are agreeing to undertake. This requirement may be disapplied where volunteers are working through a partner organisation which has a similar agreement in place for its volunteers.

TRAINING AND SUPPORT:

Volunteers should only carry out tasks that have the prior approval of the Town Clerk.

Volunteers must be adequately trained to enable them to carry out the role required. The Council may offer training and development opportunities where it helps fulfil the volunteer's role. The exact nature of the training will depend on that role and the findings from the required Risk Assessment which will be undertaken to identify any risks that might be faced and how they will be managed.

The training standard must be sufficient to ensure the health and safety of volunteers and any people who might be affected by the work.

Volunteers will be consulted in decisions which affect them.

HEALTH AND SAFETY:

All volunteers are covered by the same health and safety policies and provisions as employed staff and must always follow the Council's Health and Safety Policies and procedures. They have a duty of care to themselves and to others who might be affected by their actions. Volunteers may also need to disclose any medical conditions which affect their ability to undertake certain activities.

Volunteers must report any accidents to the volunteer coordinator

Volunteers are covered by the Council's insurance policies whilst undertaking official duties on behalf of the Council.

Only volunteer work that has been authorised by the Town Clerk is covered by the Town Council's insurance. The Council does not insure volunteer's personal possessions.

EXPENSES:

Volunteers will be reimbursed for any out of pocket expenses incurred on behalf of the Council where this has been approved, in advance. Receipts must be provided.

VOLUNTEER CONDUCT:

Volunteers represent the Council and whilst they are not employees there are certain expectations the Council has for its volunteers. Volunteers are expected to:

- a) Undertake their volunteering duties to the best of their ability
- b) Treat all volunteers, staff, contractors and members of the public fairly and courteously
- c) Respect decisions taken by staff or the volunteer coordinator and follow all reasonable instructions
- d) Follow safety procedures and wear any PPE provided
- e) Wear appropriate clothing (including suitable footwear), provide identification (if required) and take necessary steps to protect themselves in the environment they are working in (eg protection from UV rays through the use of sunscreen and a hat)
- f) Not behave in a way which could bring the Council into disrepute

The Council recognises that volunteers give their time freely and are under no obligation to give notice. However it is greatly appreciated if volunteers can provide advance notice if they are either unable to attend their volunteer role, or wish to end their volunteering arrangement with the Council. In the event of ending their volunteering arrangement they should return any equipment/clothing which has been supplied.

Approved by full council: Monday 16 December 2024

Review dated: December 2026