



GILLINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

The Town Hall, School Road, Gillingham, Dorset SP8 4QR

VOLUNTEER POLICY

1. Scope of the Policy

This Policy is written to recognise the contribution made by volunteers and to provide a framework for how Gillingham Town Council (the Council) will manage volunteers, while recognising the voluntary nature of its relationship with volunteers.

The Council defines volunteering as *“The commitment of time and energy, for the benefit of society and the community, the environment or individuals outside, (or in addition to) one`s immediate family. It is unpaid and undertaken freely and by choice.”*¹

This policy applies to all volunteers engaged by the Council including Councillors and Flood Wardens acting as volunteers in activities managed by the Council, save that Flood Wardens when acting in their capacity as Flood Wardens are subject to the provisions of the Gillingham Flood Warden Handbook.

Some aspects of this policy also apply to volunteers from community groups and not for profit organisations (external groups) working in partnership with the Council to deliver projects for the Parish of Gillingham.

The Council Policies referred to in this Policy can be found on the Council’s website <https://gillinghamdorset-tc.gov.uk/policy-admin/policies-procedures> Volunteers are expected to read all policies applicable to their role and shall be deemed to have done so.

2. General Policy Statement

This Policy recognises the valuable contribution made by volunteers through the gift of time, skills and knowledge.

The Town Council values working in partnership with volunteer groups who carry out tasks on land owned by the Town Council.

3. Purpose of the Policy

The relationship between the Council and volunteers is non-contractual and no working relationship is created or implied at any time. The Council wants volunteers to feel supported in a way that reflects the values of the Council and to achieve this it is important

¹ Department for Communities, Join in Get Involved, Build a Better Future 2012)

to set out clear, reasonable guidelines to manage expectations and to help things run smoothly.

4. Co-ordinators

A Co-ordinator will be appointed by the Council for each activity managed by the Council. External groups will, when managing their own activities, nominate their own Co-ordinator. In each case the nominated Co-ordinator will be responsible for managing the activity for which the nomination has been made.

5. Volunteer Involvement

The Council strives to create a diverse and inclusive organisation within a diverse and inclusive community. The Council is committed to ensure equality of access to, and treatment of, its volunteers. The Council's Equality and Diversity Policy will apply to volunteers.

The roles of volunteers will extend the work of the Council and will complement, but never substitute, the work of paid staff. Volunteers will not be used in times of industrial action to do the work of paid staff. They may continue with their regular tasks but will not be asked to undertake additional duties.

Volunteers give their time freely and are free to leave at any time without being required to give a reason however, where possible, notice would be appreciated.

6. Insurance

Volunteers engaged in tasks directly managed by the Council are covered by the Council's public liability and personal accident insurance.

Self-managing independent groups carrying out voluntary work on behalf of the Council may have their own insurance. Members of such groups must check with the Council and their group to ensure that they are covered.

Drivers using their own vehicles in connection with their voluntary work must inform their own Insurance Company to ensure adequate and continuing cover for such use of their vehicle during the volunteering activity.

Volunteers will not be covered if they carry out tasks on the public highway or tasks that have not been agreed with their Co-ordinator.

7. Safeguarding

Most roles to be undertaken by volunteers will not require a DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check. However, if such a check is required, it will be made clear to the volunteer. Volunteers must disclose any unspent convictions, as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

All volunteers are required to adhere to the Council's Safeguarding Policy.

8. Personal Data

Any information provided by a volunteer and personal data processed by the Council will be dealt with in accordance with the Council's Data Protection - Data Breach Policy, the Information Security Policy and the Privacy Policy.

Volunteers may have access to personal data or gain sensitive knowledge about the work of the Council, volunteers, staff, Councillors, organisations groups and others who have contact with the Council. There is an absolute obligation, both during and after volunteering, to maintain confidentiality and not to pass on information to any individual or third-party organisation unless required by law to do so.

Volunteers shall not, without the express permission of the Town Clerk, publish any photographs or post information or comment on social media of any description anything relating to an activity undertaken by or managed by the Council.

Volunteers are required to complete the Volunteer Agreement which includes their details and that of an emergency contact for the day - see Appendix A.

There is no upper age limit for volunteers. However, most volunteering opportunities have a minimum age of 18 years. Children under 18 years old are welcome at family volunteering events but must be accompanied by a parent or guardian at all times.

9. Expenses

Where a volunteer seeks reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses incurred in carrying out voluntary duties, prior approval of the Town Clerk must be obtained. Claims must be submitted to the Town Clerk on a Council Expenses Claim Form, accompanied by proof of the expenditure.

10. Health and Safety

a) Risk Assessments

A risk assessment for volunteer activities managed by the Council will be carried out by the nominated Co-ordinator in accordance with the Council's Health and Safety Policy.

A risk assessment for volunteer activities managed by an external group will be carried out by the Co-ordinator nominated by that group. A copy of the risk assessment must be submitted to the Town Clerk not less than 2 clear working days prior to commencement of the activity.

b) Accidents/Incidents

Volunteers must report all accidents and incidents to their Co-ordinator as soon as possible after it has occurred. Serious injuries or incidents must be reported immediately in accordance with Council's Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR).

c) Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Where appropriate, PPE and protective clothing will be supplied for a Council managed activity. All PPE and protective clothing remain the property of the Council and must be returned to the Co-ordinator upon completion of the relevant activity.

11. Complaints

The Council aims to reflect the voluntary nature of its relationship with volunteers in all its policies and procedures for managing their involvement. Therefore, the Co-ordinator will deal with minor complaints about, or by, volunteers or their work in the first instance. If the complaint is not resolved it will then be dealt with in accordance with the Council's Grievance Procedure. Where a criminal offence is suspected it will be referred to the police.

12. Photography

The Town Council often takes photos of volunteers for marketing purposes and project reporting. These images may appear in printed publications, on the website, on social media and at meetings. Volunteers are asked for their consent to be included in these photos and imagery. Consent can be withdrawn at any time after it is given.

13. Review

This Policy was reviewed at the Finance and policy Committee meeting held on Monday 20th April 2023 Minute no. ratified by Full Council on xxxx 2023 and will be reviewed by the biennially.

Signed: (Mayor of Gillingham)

Date:



GILLINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL - VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT AND CONTACT DETAILS

We very much appreciate you volunteering with us and committing your time and skills. We hope your experience with us will be rewarding and enjoyable.

The purpose of this Agreement is to ensure volunteers comply with the Volunteer Policy and to collect essential personal data and consents.

This Agreement is not intended to be a legally binding contract and may be ended at any time by either party.

Risk Assessment

By signing this Agreement, I confirm that I have read and understood the risk assessment for this activity.

Criminal Convictions

By signing this Agreement, I confirm that I do not have any unspent criminal convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

Personal Details

Volunteer Name:	
Address:	
Contact Number(s):	
Emergency Contact Name:	
Emergency Contact phone number(s):	

Consents

- **Photography**

Photographs of the task may be taken for use on the Town Council's website, social media sites and/or in presentations.

I consent/do not consent to being photographed for publication as above. I understand that I can withdraw my consent at any time.

- **Personal Data**

I consent/do not consent to my details being kept by Gillingham Town Council for future volunteering. I understand that I can ask for them to be removed at any time.

Gillingham Town Council is committed to protecting and respecting the privacy of everyone and ensuring it is fully compliant under the UK General Data Protection Regulations and the Data Protection Act 2018. We process your personal data in accordance with the law, please see the privacy notice on our website (www.gillinghamdorset-tc.gov/privacy-policy), which provides more details on the processing of data.

<i>Signed (volunteer):</i>	
<i>Date:</i>	
<i>Signed (Co-ordinator - on behalf of Gillingham Town Council):</i>	
<i>Name:</i>	
<i>Date:</i>	