

# ASHWELL PARISH COUNCIL: VOLUNTEER POLICY

Based on a model document from HAPTC (Hertfordshire Association of Town & Parish Councils)

**Provision to refer** (*applicable to all relevant policies, procedures, etc.*): The option to refer to external parties for advice and/or determination where this is appropriate. The default being HAPTC and/or the body that created the model document.

**Review date** (*applicable to all relevant policies, procedures, etc.*): Following the election of a new council or when agreed to be necessary, or prompted by external bodies.

**Last review date:** June 2023

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Ashwell Parish Council is committed to working with volunteers, when appropriate, for the benefit of the community. This can cover support in the Council Offices and around Ashwell and any other aspects of the Council's work.

This policy will be available to all Ashwell Parish Council volunteers and staff and can be found at the Council Office and on the website. It will be reviewed every year by volunteers and staff.

## 2. OVERVIEW

Anyone can be a volunteer – whether it is on a planned project, work experience or specific arrangement. Volunteers bring time, experience, knowledge and skills. Engagement of volunteers must not be taken lightly; procedures are in place to ensure volunteers receive the best possible recognition, management support and guidance, appreciation and valuing from staff, and where necessary training, and that consequently the Council will receive maximum benefit from a volunteer's contribution.

What is expected from the volunteer should be clearly outlined (e.g. performing the required duties/tasks adequately) as should what the volunteer will gain from the experience (e.g. increased knowledge, experience).

Engagement of volunteers should be regularly reviewed to ensure the best working practices are in place on both sides.

Engagement of volunteers is covered by the Council's insurance whilst working on projects initiated and supervised by Council staff.

The engagement of volunteers should be:

- Encouraged
- Planned in advance for sufficient notification
- Offered as widely as possible
- Clearly and specifically identified and defined
- Supervised
- Appreciated and valued

### **3. THE BENEFITS OF VOLUNTEERING**

Volunteering provides the opportunity to use current skills and develop new ones, acquire new interests, meet people, become active in bringing about social change, and to get involved and contribute to the community.

Undertaking voluntary work provides:

- Enjoyment and personal satisfaction
- A chance to meet people, make new friends and associates and get involved in the community
- Gain valuable work experience and training
- A chance to use and learn new skills
- A change from the normal routine
- Recognition and a chance to build up confidence

Volunteering can also improve the wellbeing by

- Improving health and fitness, particularly with outdoor activities
- Reducing depression and combating stress
- Build on self-esteem

### **4. WHAT VOLUNTEERS SHOULD EXPECT FROM THE COUNCIL**

To be:

- Welcomed
- Valued and supported
- Fully supervised
- Treated as a co-worker, part of the team, and not just free help, in doing so ensuring they are part of the process, free to make suggestion, and respected for their views and opinions
- Provided with any required training
- Provided with adequate tools and equipment to undertake their duties/tasks
- Covered by health and safety legislation, which is in place and enforced
- Recognised and thanked for their support and achievements

### **5. REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed regularly and when changes occur with groups/volunteers involved.