

Agenda Item 7 - Wells City Council Volunteering Policy

1. Introduction

Wells City Council recognises and greatly values the contributions made by volunteers in enhancing our community. This policy outlines the framework for volunteer involvement, ensuring clarity, safety, and support for both the Council and volunteers.

This policy applies to all individuals volunteering for Wells City Council, primarily in roles involving events and litter picking. The Council's insurance covers a maximum of 60 volunteers at any given time.

3. Definitions

A **volunteer** is someone who undertakes unpaid activities to benefit the Council and the community, of their own free will.

A **Lead Coordinator** is someone who takes responsibility for the activity being completed, and ensures the completion of the documents within this pack, and is on site with the volunteers through the time of the activity.

The **Council**, is acting as the sponsor to the activity, offering technical support and use of the Council's resources such as Insurance to facilitate the activity for the good of the community.

4. Recruitment and Supervision

The Lead Coordinator is responsible for the activity they are undertaking, and for ensuring that their volunteer team(s) have completed the required documentation before commencing the activity.

Volunteers will be recruited for defined activities, primarily events and community clean-up operations, and details of volunteers will be held by the Lead Coordinators confidentially and in line with Data Protection regulations.

Volunteers must be 18 years or older unless part of an organised group with appropriate supervision and a designated responsible adult.

Each volunteer will be allocated a named point of contact acting as their Lead Coordinator, and in their absence should contact the Town Clerk of Wells City Council.

The Town Clerk will be responsible sponsor for volunteering activities from an insurance and management perspective are maintained, but may delegate responsibility to other officers of the Council as required. Any officer of the council can request details of the event from the relevant Lead Coordinator at any time.

5. Induction and Training

The Lead Coordinator will be responsible for ensuring necessary training has been completed. All volunteers will receive a basic induction including information about their role, safety, and expected conduct before commencing any work.

Task specific guidance and support will be provided before each activity by the Lead Coordinator and records kept of training completed.

Where the Lead Coordinator is a member of staff or Councillor, the Town Clerk will offer additional support and training opportunities in line with Staff and Councillor training programmes at appropriate intervals.

6. Health and Safety

Wells City Council as the sponsor has a duty of care to ensure volunteers work in a safe environment.

Volunteers must follow instructions and health and safety guidance at all times.

A risk assessment will be carried out by the Lead Coordinator for each type of volunteering activity.

Volunteers must not undertake tasks that are outside the scope of what has been risk assessed and approved.

All Lead Coordinators should engage with the Town Clerk before completing any activity to ensure that the Clerk, as the sponsor of the program/project is satisfied that health and safety provisions and conditions have been met.

7. Insurance and Liability

Volunteers are covered under the Council's Public Liability Insurance and, where applicable, Employer's Liability Insurance.

The total number of active volunteers at any time must not exceed 60.

Volunteers must report any accidents or incidents to their Lead Coordinator immediately and in turn, the Lead Coordinator is required to report to the Council and review any associated risk assessments and/or processes as a result of the accident or near miss.

All Lead Coordinators should engage with the Town Clerk before completing any activity to ensure that the Clerk, as the sponsor of the program/project is satisfied that insurance provisions and conditions have been met.

8. Safeguarding

Although most volunteer activities do not involve direct work with vulnerable groups, Wells City Council is committed to safeguarding practices.

Volunteers must report any safeguarding concerns to their Lead Coordinator immediately. In turn the Lead Coordinator must then provide details of the concerns and associated actions to the Town Clerk immediately.

Should anyone under the age of 18, whom is accompanied by an adult take part in activities, a signed agreement must be completed and signed by the parent or guardian of the child, even if that parent or guardian is the accompanying adult.

Whilst it is preferable that all Lead Coordinators hold a DBS, it is not essential, but where any activity includes or is in the proximity of children, more so than simply passing, the Town Clerk should be advised by the Lead Coordinator to ensure that the necessary officer support is provided.

9. Conduct and Behaviour

Volunteers are expected to behave respectfully and responsibly, representing the Council positively.

Any misconduct may result in the volunteer's involvement being ended.

10. Expenses

The Council does not offer recompense for expenses of any kind associated with volunteering activity. Any requirement for equipment to facilitate specific works should be sought through the appropriate approval channels, either through the Town Clerk or the Finance Committee.

11. Data Protection and Confidentiality

It is the responsibility of the Lead Coordinator with the support of the Town Clerk to ensure that all volunteer personal information is held securely in accordance with UK GDPR.

Lead Coordinators are required to ensure that all information provided to volunteers, such as addresses, business names etc., is public information. Nothing that is considered to be confidential or sensitive should be provided in any circumstances.

12. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if required due to changes in legislation or Council operations.

Wells City Council Volunteer Agreement Form

This is not a legally binding contract but a statement of understanding between Wells City Council and the volunteer.

1. I am volunteering of my own free will and understand that I will not receive any financial remuneration.
2. I have read and understood the Wells City Council Volunteering Policy.
3. I will carry out my tasks responsibly and follow health and safety instructions.
4. I acknowledge that I am covered by the Council's insurance only while undertaking approved tasks.
5. I will raise any concerns or incidents with my Lead Coordinator, or in their absence the Town Clerk.
6. I agree to treat all members of the public, fellow volunteers, and staff with respect.
7. I understand that failure to adhere to this agreement may result in my role being ended.

Volunteer Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Lead Coordinator Signature: _____

Date: _____

Town Clerk Signature: _____

Date: _____

Volunteer Activity Risk Assessment Template

This template is to be completed by the Lead Coordinator prior to any volunteer activity undertaken on behalf of Wells City Council. It helps identify and manage potential hazards to ensure the safety of volunteers and the public.

Activity / Task	Hazard Identified	Persons at Risk	Control Measures in Place	Further Action Required
Example: Hand Weeding in High Street	Traffic if close proximity	Volunteers, Surrounding Public	No volunteer activity to be completed within 2 m of the Highway Activity to be completed at quieter times of day to reduce risk of overloading the curbside/pavement	Ensure all training references Chapter 8 requirements and the roles of volunteers.

Date of Assessment: _____

Location: _____

Assessed By: _____

Review Date: _____

Wells City Council Safeguarding Statement

Wells City Council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people, and vulnerable adults.

Although most of the Council's volunteer activities do not involve direct work with vulnerable individuals, we recognise our responsibility to take all reasonable steps to protect those who may come into contact with our volunteers during Council activities.

All volunteers are expected to:

- Treat everyone with respect and dignity.
- Avoid situations that may be misinterpreted by others.
- Immediately report any safeguarding concerns, disclosures, or allegations to the Council's nominated safeguarding lead.

The Lead Coordinator will:

- Provide guidance on safeguarding responsibilities during volunteer induction.
- Nominate a safeguarding lead to receive and act on concerns.
Consider safeguarding risk when planning volunteer activities.
- Where applicable, ensure that volunteers working directly with vulnerable groups undergo relevant DBS checks.

The Council will:

- Complete regular checks and balances of the activities of the group and the Lead Coordinator to ensure compliance and good governance.

This statement will be reviewed annually or sooner in the event of relevant legislative or operational changes.

For concerns, please contact:

Safeguarding Lead: _____

Contact Details: _____