



VOLUNTEER POLICY

1. Introduction

Horsforth Town Council 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.

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.

Many of the Town Council's activities involve working in partnership with community and voluntary groups, also volunteers work directly with the Council for a number of reasons:

- To increase our contact with the local community we serve
- To help ensure our services reflect the needs of our community
- To increase skills, experience, perspectives and diversity in the workplace
- To temporarily increase our skills and capacity.

We will ensure that volunteers feel part of the Town Council structure by enabling them to contribute to our ongoing development.

Horsforth Town Council does not aim to introduce volunteers to replace paid staff. We expect that staff at all levels will work positively with any volunteers and where appropriate, will actively seek to involve them in their work.

We acknowledge that volunteers require satisfying work and personal development and will seek to help volunteers meet these needs.

Volunteers may come through community groups or direct from the community.

The following guidelines deal with practical aspects of volunteering with the Town Council. More information can be found on our website and in copies of policies mentioned in this policy.

2. Recruitment

The council may recruit volunteers using a range of methods, including word of mouth, advertising, talking with other organisations or engaging volunteers through another organisation. It may also directly approach people who have previously volunteered with the council.

The Council's Equal Opportunities Policy will always be adhered to in relation to the recruitment and support of volunteers.

Whilst not applicable for the majority of volunteering opportunities with the Council, for certain voluntary roles prospective volunteers may be informally interviewed to assess their suitability.

DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks and references may be required for some volunteer roles, especially if there is to be any regular contact with children. This requirement would be discussed with the relevant volunteers. A volunteer will be informed if we intended to apply for DBS checks. DBS checks are not a reflection on an individual but may be a legal requirement in certain circumstances.

Depending on the nature of the volunteering opportunity, a volunteer may be required to provide the names of two referees who have agreed to provide a reference on behalf of the volunteer.

Depending on the nature of the volunteering opportunity, the council may need to understand specific health issues in order to assess whether reasonable adjustments can be made.

All volunteers must be over 16 years of age.

3. Volunteer Agreement and Task Descriptions

Each volunteer will have an agreement establishing what Horsforth Town Council undertakes to provide for them. Also, volunteers will be asked to agree to a written outline of the specific work they will be undertaking and requires them to abide by the policies and procedures of Horsforth Town Council . Neither of these documents is intended to form a contract.

Horsforth Town Council has no intention of creating a contract with any volunteers.

This requirement may be disapplied where volunteers are working through a partner organisation which has a similar agreement in place for its volunteers.

4. 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.

5. Induction and training

All volunteers will receive an induction into Horsforth Town Council and their own area of work.

The council may offer training and development opportunities where it helps fulfil the volunteer's role.

6. Support

All volunteers will have a named person as their main point of contact.

Where appropriate (for example for ongoing volunteer work) volunteers will receive regular supervision to feedback on progress and discuss future development.

7. The Volunteer's Voice

Volunteers are encouraged to express their views about matters concerning the Town Council, its facilities, services and events to the volunteer coordinator. The council welcomes volunteers proactively providing feedback and making suggestions for how things may be done differently in future.

The council wishes to identify and resolve any problems at the earliest possible stage and volunteers are encouraged to raise any grievance or complaint with their volunteer coordinator or the Town Clerk.

8. Insurance

All volunteers are covered by Horsforth Town Council's insurance policy whilst they are on the premises or engaged in any work on our behalf.

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.

9. Health and Safety

The council has responsibility for the health and safety of its volunteers and will undertake a risk assessment of all volunteering activities.

Volunteers must always follow the council's health and safety policies and procedures; they have a duty of care to themselves and 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.

The council will inform volunteers of any specific health and safety measures which must be taken during a voluntary activity and volunteers must wear any PPE as required.

Volunteers must report any accidents, incidents or other dangerous circumstances immediately using the appropriate process.

Volunteers will not be asked to and must not lone work.

Volunteers must only use Town Council tools, equipment and machinery (where permission and training has been given) and must not use personal tools, equipment and machinery unless explicit permission has been given in writing.

10. Equal Opportunities

Horsforth Town Council will make any necessary adjustments to ensure that all volunteers are treated equally.

11. Confidentiality

Volunteers will be bound by the same requirements for confidentiality as paid staff.

12. Grievance

The relationship between Horsforth Town Council and its volunteers is entirely voluntary and it does not imply any contract.

However, it is important that the relationship between Horsforth Town Council and the volunteer is clear and positive, with volunteers enjoying their contribution.

Volunteers will not be subject to Horsforth Town Council disciplinary procedures nor have access to Horsforth Town Council grievance procedures, both of which are for employees only.

If, in their role volunteering for the Council, a volunteer does not meet with Council standards, their case will be dealt with in the same manner as paid staff.

If a volunteer has any concerns regarding our treatment of them and this has been fully discussed with their named contact or Town Clerk, but they are not satisfied, any complaint may be taken to the Chair of the Town Council.

13. 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
- f) Not behave in a way which could bring the Council into disrepute

14. Right to Leave

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.

Adopted: 27th March 2025

Review date: May 2025

Volunteer Agreement

This Volunteer Agreement describes the arrangement between Horsforth Town Council and you. We wish to assure you of our appreciation of your volunteering with us and will do the best we can to make your volunteer experience with us enjoyable and rewarding.

NAME	
ADDRESS	
TELEPHONE	
EMAIL	
EMERGENCY CONTACT 1: NAME AND CONTACT DETAILS	
EMERGENCY CONTACT 2: NAME AND CONTACT DETAILS	
YOU WILL VOLUNTEER AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATION/PREMISES	
VOLUNTEER ROLE TITLE/POSSIBLE TASKS:	
START DATE:	
THIS VOLUNTEERING ROLE IS DESIGNED TO (state nature and components of the volunteering role)	
MAIN POINT OF CONTACT AT HORSFORTH TOWN COUNCIL	
VOLUNTEERING TIMEFRAME	
ANY OTHER SPECIFIC REQUIREMENT TO BE DISCUSSED WITH YOU AND YOUR POINT OF CONTACT AT HORSFORTH TOWN COUNCIL:	
DO YOU CONSENT TO PHOTOS BEING TAKEN OF YOU AND BEING USED FOR TOWN COUNCIL PUBLICITY PURPOSES?	

Thank you for agreeing to volunteer with Horsforth Town Council. For your information and safety we ask you to read and sign this agreement before commencing duties.

Volunteering is undertaken freely and not in return for any remuneration. We hope that your voluntary work will give you a sense of achievement, work experience, a chance to build on your skills and learn new ones, as well as a chance to strengthen your confidence and make new friends.

As a volunteer you will not do the work of paid staff, but complement the services offered by Horsforth Town Council.

You will be supervised by a named person who will issue you with a role description which specifies what your contribution is expected to be, place of work, hours volunteered etc.

You will be expected to fulfil your agreed commitment and should inform the Town Clerk as soon as possible should you not be able to do so. You will be expected to follow the policies and procedures referred to in the volunteer policy including health and safety and diversity and equal opportunities.

Horsforth Town Council reserves the right to ask a volunteer to withdraw their services. Any disciplinary or grievance situation will be dealt with in accordance with the Volunteer Policy.

This agreement is binding in honour only. It is not intended by the parties to be a legally binding agreement nor is it intended to create an employment relationship between us now or at any time in the future. It may be cancelled at any time at the discretion of either party.

I agree to abide by this agreement and the Volunteer Policy:

Signed and dated by the Volunteer	
Signed and dated by the Town Clerk	