Volunteer Policy

Thurston Parish Council

Policy Approved: Policy & Resources Committee 18 February 2026
Presented to Council: Full Council Meeting 4 March 2026
Review Body: Policy & Resources Committee
Review Period: Annually or following legislative changes.
Next Review: Policy & Resources Committee February 2027

This document is subject to revision and is maintained electronically. Electronic copies are version controlled and printed copies are not subject to this control.

Objectives

This policy will enable Thurston Parish Council to demonstrate its commitment to keeping safe volunteers and those undertaking voluntary involvement in activities overseen or provided by Thurston Parish Council.

Policy Statement

Thurston Parish Council acknowledges and values the support that volunteers provide to the local community. This policy applies to volunteers working on behalf of, but not employed by, the Parish Council. It will be reviewed annually to ensure that it is relevant to the needs of Thurston Parish Council and its volunteers.

Definitions

- Volunteers are unpaid and of their own free will contribute their time, energy and skills to benefit the community.

- Parish Council volunteer opportunities are advertised through the Thurston Newsletter, Parish Council notice boards and the Parish Council website.

Related Policies

This policy will need to be read in conjunction with the following Parish Council policies: Equality and Diversity, Data Protection, Complaints Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Accident Reporting Policy and Procedures and any others deemed appropriate.

Responsibilities of the Parish Council

- All volunteering opportunities that arise from the community must be authorised by the Parish Council. Volunteers must inform the Parish Council of the work they intend to undertake before commencing such work by contacting the Clerk.

- Volunteers can expect to be treated equally, regardless of their gender, race, age, faith, disability or sexual orientation.

- Volunteers must be adequately trained to be able to carry out the role. It must be sufficient to ensure their health and safety and, as far as reasonably practicable, that of any people who might be affected by the work. The Parish Council will work with the individual authorised to undertake the work to assess training needs and provide appropriate training as required.

- Volunteers must undergo an induction appropriate for the task being undertaken. This should include health and safety, what to do if there is a problem and an introduction to other relevant individuals. The Parish Council will work with the individual authorised to undertake the work to ensure appropriate induction takes place.

- Copies of the Councils Health and Safety Policy and Accident Reporting Policy and Procedures will be handed to all Volunteers prior to the commencement of their volunteering work. Details of the location of the Accident Record Folder and First Aid Kit held by the Parish Council will be communicated to all Volunteers.

- A risk assessment must be undertaken in order to identify risks that might be faced and how they will be managed. The Clerk must receive a copy of such risk assessment records. The Parish Council will work with the individual authorised to undertake the work to ensure appropriate risk assessments are undertaken.

- On condition that volunteers are working on behalf of the Parish Council and at their direct request, then they will be insured under the Parish Council's Public Liability and Employer's Liability cover. However, the volunteer's personal possessions against loss or damage will not be insured. If volunteers are to use their own tools or equipment the Parish Council will not be held liable for any injury, loss or damage arising from a fault or defect with these.

- Volunteers will only be required to carry out less hazardous work involving use of non-powered tools where possible. In all cases, sensible and appropriate protective equipment should be worn including stout footwear, safety goggles (if appropriate); protective clothing and high visibility vests.

- Expenses will only be paid only with the prior approval of the Parish Council and after receipt by the Parish Council of paper receipts in respect of same. Provision of any safety equipment or clothing needs that are identified during the risk assessment process must be authorised in advance by the Parish Council.

- If volunteers are dissatisfied with any aspect of their work or wish to resolve a problem, contact should be made in the first instance with the Parish Clerk.