

Northstowe Town Council Volunteer Policy

1. Introduction

Northstowe Town Council recognises the invaluable contribution that the volunteers in Northstowe make to the community. Volunteers enhance the services we provide, strengthen community engagement, and support the Council's mission to improve the quality of life for its residents. This policy outlines the principles and procedures for recruiting, managing, and supporting volunteers to ensure a positive and rewarding experience for all involved.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Provide a clear framework for the involvement of volunteers within Northstowe Town Council.
- Ensure volunteers are recruited, supported, and managed in a fair, consistent, and inclusive manner.
- Define the responsibilities of the Council and its volunteers.
- Promote a safe and respectful environment for volunteering.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all volunteers engaged by Northstowe Town Council, including those involved in one off events, ongoing projects or regular activities. It does not apply to employees, contractors or councillors acting in their official capacities.

4. Volunteer Roles and Recruitment

4.1 Volunteer Roles

- Volunteers may assist with activities such as community events, council initiatives, administrative tasks or other activities run by the Council.
- Specific roles and responsibilities are briefed or documented by the councillors or council staff running the activity or event.

4.2 Recruitment

- Volunteers will be recruited based on the needs of the Council and the skills, interests, and availability of the volunteer.

- Recruitment will be open to all individuals aged 16 and over, regardless of background, provided they meet the role requirements.
- The Council reserves the right to decline volunteer applications if they do not align with our needs or values.

5. Volunteer Agreement

- Volunteers are not employees and do not have a contract of employment.
- Volunteers are expected to adhere to Council policies, including Health and Safety, Equality and Diversity and Confidentiality.

6. Support and Supervision

- Each volunteer will have a designated point of contact a councillor or council staff for guidance and support.
- Training will be provided where necessary to enable volunteers to perform their roles effectively.
- Volunteers will be encouraged to provide feedback and raise concerns through their point of contact.

7. Expenses

- Volunteers will not be paid for their time.

8. Health and Safety

- The Council is committed to ensuring the health, safety, and wellbeing of all volunteers.
- Volunteers will receive appropriate information and training to carry out their roles safely.
- Any accidents or incidents involving volunteers must be reported immediately to the point of contact.

9. Insurance

- Volunteers are covered under Northstowe Town Council's public liability insurance while carrying out approved activities.
- Personal belongings and vehicles are not covered, and volunteers are responsible for their own insurance in these cases.

10. Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

- Northstowe Town Council is committed to ensuring volunteering opportunities are accessible to all, regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religion, or sexual orientation.
- Discrimination, harassment, or bullying by or toward volunteers will not be tolerated and will be addressed under the Council's disciplinary procedures.

11. Confidentiality

- Volunteers may have access to sensitive information during their roles. They are expected to maintain confidentiality and not disclose information without authorisation.
- Breaches of confidentiality may result in the termination of the volunteer relationship.

12. Ending the Volunteer Relationship

- Volunteers may choose to end their involvement at any time by notifying their point of contact.
- The Council may end a volunteer relationship if the volunteer's conduct breaches this policy, or if the role is no longer required.
- An exit interview or feedback session may be offered to departing volunteers.

14. Responsibilities

14.1 Northstowe Town Council will:

- Provide a safe and welcoming environment for volunteers.
- Offer clear guidance and support for volunteer activities.
- Ensure volunteers are treated fairly and respectfully.

14.2 Volunteers will:

- Carry out their roles to the best of their ability.
- Follow Council policies and instructions from their point of contact.
- Report any concerns or issues promptly.

15. Problem Resolution

- Any issues or concerns raised by or about volunteers will be addressed fairly and promptly. Complaints may be made in accordance with the Northstowe Town Council Complaints Procedure.

- Volunteers have the right to raise concerns with their designated Council representative.

15. Review

- This policy will be reviewed annually or as required to ensure it remains fit for purpose.
- Feedback from volunteers and staff will be considered during the review process.

Document History

Status	Date	Version
Drafted by Assets & Estates Manager on a draft from Cllr. Delip.	April 2025	
Adopted by Full Council	22 nd April 2025 (item 11/25-26/FC(3))	V1.0
<i>Next Review Date</i>	<i>27 May 2025</i>	