HALTON
PARISH COUNCIL

# Volunteer Policy

Adopted Nov 2025

## 1. Introduction

This policy sets out Halton Parish Council's approach to involving volunteers in its activities. Volunteers bring valuable skills, time, and enthusiasm that benefit the council and the local community. The council recognises that volunteering is a mutual exchange and seeks to ensure that volunteers are supported, safe, and appreciated.

This policy reflects best practice and is in line with guidance from the National Association of Local Councils (NALC).

## 2. Definition of a Volunteer

A volunteer is a person who freely offers their time, skills and experience to carry out tasks to benefit the council and its community without financial gain. Volunteers are not employees and will not have a contract of employment.

## 3. Equality and Diversity

Volunteers will be treated equally regardless of their gender, race, age, faith, disability or sexual orientation.

## 4. Scope of Volunteer Involvement

- Litter picking

- Maintaining public footpaths, green spaces or planters

- Supporting local events

- Delivering newsletters or notices

- Participating in working groups or advisory committees (where appropriate)

## 5. Recruitment and Appointment

Volunteers may be recruited informally or in response to specific requests. Where appropriate, volunteers will be asked to complete a simple registration form and may be invited to meet with a councillor or the Clerk to discuss their interests, availability and any relevant skills.

Volunteers under 18 must have parental/guardian consent and will only be involved where appropriate risk assessments and safeguarding measures are in place.

## 6. Role Description and Expectations

- Act responsibly and respectfully

- Follow reasonable instructions and safety guidance

- Represent Halton Parish Council in a positive manner

- Work within the limits of their role

- Carry out only tasks allocated to them by the event supervisor

Volunteers must not speak or act on behalf of the Council unless specifically authorised to do so.

## 7. Supervision and Support

The Clerk, or another designated councillor (the event supervisor), will be the point of contact for volunteers. They will provide guidance, ensure the volunteer understands their tasks, and offer ongoing support. Volunteers must inform the event supervisor of any work they intend to carry out before starting, by email. A record will be kept.

## 8. Training and Insurance

Where appropriate, volunteers may receive training to safely carry out their tasks. Volunteers are covered under the Council's Public Liability and Employer's Liability insurance policies provided they are working with the Council's knowledge and permission and are acting within the scope of their role.

In line with the Council's insurance requirements, volunteers must:

- Work under the direction and control of Halton Parish Council or a person appointed by it

- Be appropriately trained and competent to carry out the tasks assigned

- Use any tools or equipment provided or approved by the Council safely and correctly

- Have their activities authorised and risk assessed by the Council

The Council's insurance does not cover the volunteer's personal possessions against loss or damage. If volunteers use their own tools or equipment, the Council cannot be held liable for any injury, loss, or damage arising from a fault or defect with those items.

Volunteers must only carry out less hazardous work, using non-powered tools. Appropriate protective equipment must be worn, including stout footwear, safety goggles (if appropriate), and high visibility vests.

## 9. Health and Safety

Volunteers must:

- Take reasonable care for their own health and safety

- Follow any risk assessments or safety procedures provided

- Report any hazards, incidents or accidents to the Clerk

A risk assessment will be carried out by the event supervisor prior to any task. This will include:

- The job or activity

- The existing competency of volunteers

- The circumstances of the work (e.g. the degree of supervision)

- The tools and/or equipment being used

- Training requirements to ensure health and safety of volunteers and others affected

Visual inspections of the work area must also be conducted and recorded. All volunteers shall comply with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and will not be authorised to undertake hazardous work.

For the purposes of this policy, hazardous work includes but is not limited to:

- Working at height (e.g. on ladders or scaffolding)

- Working near or with electricity

- Using power tools or heavy machinery

- Manual handling of heavy or awkward loads

- Working in confined spaces or areas with poor ventilation

- Handling hazardous substances or chemicals

- Working near water or in extreme weather conditions

- Any work that would otherwise require specific professional qualifications or training

## 10. Safeguarding

Volunteers working with children, young people or vulnerable adults will be subject to appropriate safeguarding checks and supervision. The Council will follow its Safeguarding Policy where applicable.

## 11. Expenses

Volunteers are not paid but may claim agreed out-of-pocket expenses with prior approval from the Clerk or Council. Receipts must be provided. Provision of any safety equipment or clothing identified in the risk assessment must be authorised in advance by the Council.

## 12. Confidentiality and Data Protection

Volunteers must respect confidentiality and comply with the Parish Council's Data Protection Policy. Personal information held by or about volunteers will be handled in accordance with data protection law.

## 13. Complaints

If a volunteer has a complaint that cannot be resolved at the time, it should be pursued through Halton Parish Council's Complaints Procedure.

## 14. Ending the Volunteer Arrangement

Either the volunteer or Halton Parish Council may choose to end the volunteer arrangement at any time. Wherever possible, notice and feedback will be given. Volunteers are under no obligation to continue volunteering.

## 15. Recognition and Appreciation

Halton Parish Council values the contribution of volunteers and may formally recognise their work from time to time through newsletters, thank-you letters, or public acknowledgement.

## 16. Volunteers Who Are Also Parish Councillors

Parish councillors may volunteer their time to support council activities outside their formal duties. When acting as a volunteer, councillors must:

- Be clear they are acting in a personal capacity, not in their official role (unless authorised otherwise by a council resolution)

- Follow the same procedures and expectations as other volunteers (e.g. health and safety, supervision, reporting)

- Avoid conflicts of interest and adhere to the Council's Code of Conduct

- Be covered by the Council's insurance only when acting within the scope of an approved voluntary role and with the Council's knowledge

Nothing in this policy overrides a councillor's statutory duties or responsibilities as an elected member.

**Contact for Volunteer Enquiries:**
**Halton Parish Council Clerk**
**Email: clerk@halton-pc.gov.uk**