



Volunteer Policy

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Approved by: Full Council

Next Review date: September 2027 (Subject to changes in Legislation)

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1.Introduction

Mangotsfield has existed for many centuries with 'Manegodesfelle' appearing in the Domesday Book in 1086. The area has been covered by a Parish Council since they were first introduced in 1894.

In 2015 Mangotsfield Rural Parish Council changed its name to Emersons Green Town Council following a Community Governance Review due to the considerable development taking place in the area.

The Emersons Green Town Council area now covers Emersons Green, Lyde Green, Blackhorse, Pomphrey, and parts of Mangotsfield and the edge of Downend.

The Council is committed to the provision of facilities and resources to its residents and is developing a range of events, activities, and new projects to bring the community together and develop local networks.

Mission Statement - To develop and sustain a sense of community within the catchment area of Emersons Green Town Council by addressing environmental, economic and social issues and delivering quality services to our parishioners.

2. Purpose of this Policy

- To provide a framework for all staff across the Council in considering involving volunteers in their work.
- To provide a foundation on which our involvement of volunteers will be based.
- To help ensure fairness and consistency when involving a diverse group of people.

Being able to refer to a written policy ensures that decisions are not made on an ad-hoc basis.

3. Definition of a Volunteer

A 'volunteer' is defined as someone who commits time and energy for the benefit of others, who does so freely, through personal choice and without financial remuneration, except for the payment of actual out of pocket expenses.

Emersons Green Town Council actively encourages the engagement and involvement of volunteers across all areas of the Council. It is acknowledged that volunteer engagement is crucial to the success of the Council and that without the personal generosity of people working for no personal compensation, the Council would not be able to deliver the range of services that it currently offers.

It is not the intention of Emersons Green Town Council to use volunteers as a replacement to paid staff but as complimentary to the professional staff team in place. Where paid staff express a wish to volunteer in addition to their role, this is done outside of the scope of their normal duties and hours of paid employment.

4. Confidentiality

When working within the Council it may be possible that volunteers will see confidential information during their work. Within the induction process confidentiality will be discussed and any breach of this will result in the termination of the volunteer's placement and could result in criminal charges being brought by the police.

5. Procedures

Volunteers must be adequately trained to be able to carry out the role. The exact nature of the training will depend on the role. It is not possible to detail what constitutes 'adequacy' as requirements will vary according to:

- 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.

The training standard, however, must be sufficient to ensure the Health and Safety of volunteers and any people who might be affected by the work, as far as reasonably practicable. Responsibility for providing training rests with the Town Council.

Volunteers, if working for only a few hours to help at an event or similar, must still be informed about the task and its purpose, health and safety and supervision arrangements. Responsibility for this rests with Town Council.

Volunteers can expect to be treated equally, regardless of their gender, race, age, faith/religion, disability, or sexual orientation. Volunteers should be accommodated from all walks of life.

Volunteers must undergo an induction appropriate for the task(s) being undertaken. This must include health and safety, what to do if there is a problem and an introduction to other relevant individuals. Responsibility for the induction rests with Town Council.

A risk assessment must be undertaken to identify risks that might be faced and how they will be managed. If an area of activity presents a significant risk, consideration must be given to reducing or stopping the activity which gives rise to the risk. The Town Council, through the offices of its Clerk or other person(s) as advised, must receive a copy of such risk assessment records. Responsibility for undertaking the

risk assessment rests with the Town Council. Risk assessments and their associated paperwork must comply with current Health and Safety at Work legislation.

So far as insurance is concerned, on condition that volunteers are working at the sole request of and under the sole control of the Town Council, they will be insured under the Town Council's Public Liability and Employers' Liability cover. Reporting to the Town Council in respect of work which is of an ongoing nature is not necessary on each occasion and does not require formal approval of the Town Council on each occasion.

Volunteers must only carry out less hazardous work and will not be supplied with powered tools. If volunteers use their own tools (powered or not), then the Town Council cannot be held liable for any injury caused by them through the use of faulty equipment/tools. Cleaning materials must not be stronger than those available on shop shelves. High visibility vests or other appropriate clothing must be worn where appropriate.

Jewellery (necklaces, watches, and the like) must not be worn if they might compromise the safe working environment for the volunteer.

Generally, trainers, open-toed shoes, heeled shoes or sandals must not be worn. If by so doing, the safe working environment for the volunteer is compromised.

Long hair must be tied up if it is long enough to compromise health and safety requirements.

All work undertaken by volunteers shall have regard to the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and all other Health and Safety Legislation.

Volunteers wishing to provide the Town Council with an update on their activities can do so during the public session of any Town Council meeting or to the Town Clerk.

No Travel expenses will be paid to volunteers.

Under exceptional circumstances, expenses will be paid only with the prior approval of the Town Council and after receipt by the Town Council of paper receipts in respect of same. They will not include safety equipment or clothing.

Volunteers must inform the Town Council if they are to start work without supervision from the Town Council, either in writing or by attending the public session of the Main Council Meeting, prior to any work taking place.

Information on volunteers will be kept in a confidential file. Data collected will include date of commencement, emergency contact, position held, duties agreed, support and supervision notes.

Volunteers who have a complaint against another volunteer, a staff member, or a member of staff from a partner organisation should, in the first instance, contact the

member of staff or town councillor supervising that volunteer. If this is not possible or the outcome is not satisfactory, the volunteer should contact the Town Clerk at the Town Council during working hours.

There are some occasions on which a volunteer can be suspended immediately while an investigation is carried out. These include, but are not limited to, acts that are deemed equal in nature to gross misconduct, e.g. theft, assault, act of violence, malicious damage, and deliberate falsification of documents, harassment or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol. The decision to suspend a volunteer's activity needs to be confirmed to the volunteer in writing.

6. Review

Regular review of this policy will take place at least every 3 years or in the event of a change in applicable legislation. This policy applies to volunteers (not including Councillors) working with /on behalf of, but not employed by, the Town Council.