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LLANFYLLIN
TOWN COUNCIL

VOLUNTEERING POLICY

DOCUMENT REFERENCE: LTC-25

ADOPTED DATE: TO BE AGREED

REVIEW DATE: TO BE AGREED

Introduction

Llanfyllin Town Council welcomes volunteers who help care for and improve Town Council land for the benefit of the community. This policy sets out how volunteer work is agreed, supported and carried out safely.

It applies to voluntary maintenance, conservation and improvement work on land owned, leased or managed by the Council. All work must have prior written permission and follow approved site plans. Volunteering does not give anyone ownership, exclusive use or authority to manage the land. Existing leases and other agreements remain subject to their own terms.

1 Eligibility of Volunteers

Individuals and community groups may volunteer. Tasks will be matched to their abilities, interests and experience, with reasonable adjustments considered to help people participate safely. Volunteers give their time freely, receive no wages and may decline a task or stop at any time.

No formal qualification is needed for ordinary low-risk tasks. Specialist work and powered equipment require specific approval and suitable evidence of training or competence.

Under-18s require parent or guardian consent, suitable adult supervision and age-appropriate tasks consistent with insurance conditions. They must not use powered machinery or undertake specialist higher-risk work under this policy. Safeguarding arrangements and any legally eligible DBS checks will reflect the role and follow the Council's Safeguarding Policy.

2 Insurance Cover

Council volunteers must be covered by the Council's relevant insurance policies while carrying out authorised tasks. The Clerk must confirm that cover and any conditions are in place before work starts, including requirements for young volunteers, machinery and privately owned tools.

Volunteers must be told about relevant limits. Permission to work on Council land does not itself establish insurance cover. Personal accident benefits or cover for private equipment must not be promised unless confirmed.

Independent groups carrying out their own projects must agree their responsibilities with the Clerk and provide evidence of suitable insurance where required. Their members must not assume they are Council volunteers or covered by Council insurance.

3 Health and Safety

All Council volunteer activities must have a suitable written risk assessment covering the tasks and site. One assessment may cover recurring work where risks and controls remain suitable. The activity lead must check conditions before each session and stop or postpone work if it cannot be done safely.

Before starting, volunteers must receive a briefing on the agreed tasks, site hazards, tools, protective equipment, public access, first aid and emergency arrangements. Training and supervision must be appropriate to the work. Lone working requires specific approval and agreed contact arrangements.

Tools must be suitable, maintained and checked before use. Private hand tools may be used by agreement; the Council remains responsible for managing its own activities safely. Powered equipment requires written approval, competent operators, suitable protective equipment and confirmed insurance.

Activities that are potentially of higher risk such as, but no limited to, working in water, tree felling, work at height, excavation, electrical work and pesticide use require separate assessment and Council or authorised

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committee approval. A competent contractor will be used where volunteer arrangements cannot safely manage the risks. Hazardous waste must be left undisturbed and reported.

Volunteers must follow agreed instructions, protect other site users and wildlife, and stop their task if it is unsafe. Accidents, near misses, damage, defective equipment and safeguarding concerns must be reported promptly to the activity lead and Clerk. Emergency assistance takes priority.

4 Volunteer Recruitment and Management

People wishing to volunteer should contact the Clerk with details of the site and proposed work. Recruitment and records will be proportionate: a short discussion and briefing will normally be enough for occasional low-risk work, with additional checks for regular, specialist or safeguarding roles and where insurers require them.

Written approval, which may be an email or activity plan, must identify the permitted tasks, work area, duration, named lead, risk assessment and conditions. Recurring work may be approved for a defined period. Changes to tasks, equipment or significant risks require further agreement.

Volunteers will receive a named contact, clear instructions and appropriate support. Expenses and purchases must be approved in advance within the Council's financial rules and supported by receipts or equivalent evidence.

Independent groups must agree who organises and supervises their work and manages safety, equipment, insurance and safeguarding. Those arrangements do not remove duties arising from the Council's ownership or involvement. Volunteers may raise concerns with the Clerk or use the Council's Complaints Procedure.

5 Roles and Responsibilities

The Council sets site management plans and budgets, oversees volunteering and decides proposals outside the Clerk's delegated authority. Individual councillors cannot give permission on their own.

On adoption of this policy, the Council delegates to the Clerk authority to approve and administer routine volunteer activities within approved site management or maintenance plans and budgets. The Clerk may agree tasks and dates, appoint activity leads, approve risk assessments and briefings, confirm insurance, set conditions and approve suitable equipment when this policy's requirements are met. This includes recurring work and independent groups working within those limits.

The Clerk must refer new projects, significant site changes, changes to approved plans, specialist higher-risk work and unresolved safety, environmental, insurance or contentious issues to the Council or a committee with the necessary authority. The delegation does not allow the Clerk to grant land rights, override Council decisions or exceed separate financial authority.

The Clerk may stop or suspend unsafe work and vary or withdraw permission issued under this delegation for safety, safeguarding, environmental, insurance or compliance reasons. The Clerk must record approvals and significant action and report them to the next appropriate Council or committee meeting. The delegation must be recorded in the adoption resolution and Council's delegation record; the Council may review or withdraw it.

Activity leads coordinate the authorised work, brief and support volunteers, monitor safety, stop unsafe activity and report concerns. They cannot change site plans or approve additional work. Volunteers must stay within their agreed tasks, behave respectfully and take reasonable care of themselves, others and the land.

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6 Community Engagement

The Council will encourage residents and local groups to suggest and take part in suitable projects, such as litter picking, planting and habitat care. Opportunities will be communicated accessibly and in accordance with the Council's Welsh Language Policy.

Projects must follow approved site plans and the Council's Biodiversity Policy, protect public access and take account of wildlife. Planting, clearance, mowing or alterations must not extend beyond the agreed work. The Council will acknowledge volunteers' contributions and welcome feedback.

7 Monitoring and Review

The Clerk will keep proportionate records of permissions, risk assessments, activity leads, insurance and incidents, with individual records where needed for safety, safeguarding or insurance. Personal information will be handled securely under the Council's data protection and retention policies.

The Clerk will review this policy annually, or sooner following a significant incident or change in legislation, guidance, insurance requirements or Council activities.

Council delegates to the Clerk authority to complete the review where no amendments are required. The Clerk will record the review date, outcome and next review date and report completion to Council for noting. The existing policy will remain in force without further adoption.

Any proposed amendment must be submitted to Council for approval.

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