



# VOLUNTEERS POLICY

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This policy sets out the principles for volunteering with Thornbury Town Council and it outlines what volunteers can expect from the council as well as how volunteers are expected to behave when volunteering.

This policy is designed to reflect current legislative provisions in respect of volunteers and is non-contractual and applies to all unpaid volunteers.

### **Definition of a Volunteer**

A volunteer is a person who donates their time, skills and experience without receiving any form of compensation from Thornbury Town Council.

A volunteer is not an employee of Thornbury Town Council and there is no legally binding contractual relationship between the council and the volunteer.

### **Why Does Thornbury Town Council Involve Volunteers?**

Volunteers allow the council to expand and improve its services to local communities. Local volunteers have the opportunity of putting their time, skills and experience to good use and to contribute to the community in which they live.

Volunteering offers people the opportunity to gain experience and the opportunity to 'try something new' as well as meeting like-minded people.

## **THE VOLUNTEERING RELATIONSHIP**

### **Thornbury Town Council's commitment to volunteers**

We will:-

- Allocate a contact person who will liaise with a volunteer about their volunteering, arrange an induction, training tailored to the volunteering opportunity and provide support throughout a volunteering placement;
- Explain the standards expected and encourage and support volunteers to achieve and maintain them;
- provide any necessary equipment for volunteers to complete their roles;
- explain the accident and incident reporting procedure;
- make sure that there are no barriers which would make it difficult for a volunteer to undertake the agreed activity;
- be flexible in relation to volunteering hours, recognising the need for holiday time and other commitments;
- pay travel expenses should a volunteer be requested by the council to attend training or a function outside the parish of Thornbury. Fuel travel expenses will be paid in line with the Approved Mileage Allowance Payments (AMAPs) rate in operation at the time or reimbursement for bus or train travel, whichever is the cheapest. Authorisation must be sought in advance from the Town Clerk;
- reimburse car parking fees incurred when visiting non-Council premises whilst on Council business. The Council will not be liable for any parking fines or road traffic penalties incurred by volunteers regardless of circumstances. Authorisation must be sought in advance from the Town Clerk.

## **The Town Council's expectation of volunteers**

- To attend the induction or ongoing training which it is felt is necessary for volunteers to perform in an informed and safe way;
- To read, understand and adhere to relevant council policies and procedures;
- To treat any information obtained when undertaking volunteering duties as confidential and not disclose it to any third party;
- To attend meetings with the contact person when able to do so;
- To notify the contact person of any health issues in order that reasonable adjustments may be considered;
- To report any accidents or incidents, whether it concerns themselves or another person;
- To review personal insurance policies so that appropriate insurance is in place for a volunteer to volunteer;
- To understand what a volunteer must do if they are driving on behalf of the council;
- To let the nominated contact person know if they are likely to incur out of pocket expenses in order that a relevant claim may be raised to reimburse the volunteer in an appropriate timeframe;
- To maintain and uphold the good name and reputation of the council;
- To represent the council positively/appropriately at all times;
- To treat all members, officers, service users and members of the public with respect and dignity;
- To tell the local contact person if the volunteer wishes to end the volunteering relationship, in case alternative arrangements need to be made;
- If a volunteer is claiming state benefits, to make sure the relevant agencies are aware of the volunteering placement.

## **References and other checks**

Depending on the nature of the volunteering opportunity, a volunteer may be required to provide the names of two referees who have agreed to provide a reference on behalf of the volunteer.

Depending on the nature of the volunteering opportunity, the council may need to understand specific health issues in order to assess whether reasonable adjustments can be made.

An enhanced disclosure and barring service (DBS) check will always be required where the volunteering opportunity involves contact with children or vulnerable adults deemed to be regulated activity.

Any necessary references and other checks will need to be completed before the volunteer is able to commence any volunteering activity with the council.

## **Insurance**

Volunteers are covered by the council's insurance policy whilst engaged in volunteering roles that have been approved and authorised by Thornbury Town Council. Further information can be provided upon request. There are some exceptions as to what is covered.

## **Health and safety**

The council is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all volunteers and has a health and safety policy in place.

Volunteers will be made aware of this policy during their induction and must be familiar with it before undertaking any volunteering activity.

Volunteers must report any accidents, incidents or other dangerous circumstances immediately using the appropriate process.

Volunteers will not be asked to and must not lone work.

Volunteers must only use Town Council tools, equipment and machinery (where permission and training has been given) and must not use personal tools, equipment and machinery unless explicit permission has been given in writing.

### **Complaints**

Should you wish to make a complaint about your volunteering placement you should put this in writing to your local contact who will investigate the complaint and respond accordingly.

### **Equal opportunities**

Managers will make any necessary adjustments to ensure that all volunteers are treated equally.

### **Other policies**

There are a number of other Town Council policies you should make yourself familiar with when volunteering. Further information will be provided by your local contact person.

### **Young Volunteers**

A young person (between the age of 14 & 18) can be considered as a volunteer, however certain additional processes must be followed:

- Parental or Carers consent must be sought;
- Details of the nature of the volunteering to be given to the volunteer and the guardian including task descriptions, where the work will take place and how it is supervised;
- Volunteering under age 18 should not be undertaken before 7am or after 7pm on any day or for more than two hours on any school day or Sunday and must have 2 consecutive weeks free from volunteering during the school holidays;
- Thornbury Town Council will obtain references and permits (permits are necessary where the volunteer is under 16);
- The Town Council insurers will be advised if a volunteer is under 16 years of age;
- a DBS check will be required if there is regular contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults, even if the volunteer themselves is a young person.

**POLICY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

<b>IMPACT ASSESSMENT</b>	
<b>Strategic</b>	No impact
<b>Equalities</b>	No impact
<b>Environmental/Sustainability</b>	No impact
<b>Crime and Disorder</b>	No impact
<b>Financial</b>	No impact
<b>Resource</b>	No impact
<b>Risk management</b>	Mitigates against negative PR from inappropriate communications.

- END OF POLICY –

## APPENDIX 1: VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

This Volunteer Agreement describes the arrangement between Thornbury Town Council and you. We wish to assure you of our appreciation of your volunteering with us and will do the best we can to make your volunteer experience with us enjoyable and rewarding.

<b>NAME</b>	
<b>ADDRESS</b>	
<b>TELEPHONE</b>	
<b>EMAIL</b>	
<b>EMERGENCY CONTACT 1: NAME AND CONTACT DETAILS</b>	
<b>EMERGENCY CONTACT 2: NAME AND CONTACT DETAILS</b>	
<b>YOU WILL VOLUNTEER AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATION/PREMISES</b>	
<b>VOLUNTEER ROLE TITLE/CATEGORY:</b>	
<b>START DATE:</b>	
<b>THIS VOLUNTEERING ROLE IS DESIGNED TO</b> (state nature and components of the volunteering role)	
<b>MAIN POINT OF CONTACT AT THORNBURY TOWN COUNCIL</b>	
<b>APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF HOURS PER WEEK:</b>	
<b>DAYS AND TIMES I WOULD LIKE TO VOLUNTEER:</b>	<p>MONDAY / TUESDAY / WEDNESDAY / THURSDAY / FRIDAY</p> <p>Please specify times, if applicable, or any other details</p>
<b>Any other specific requirement to be discussed with you and your point of contact at Thornbury Town Council:</b>	
<b>DO YOU CONSENT TO PHOTOS BEING TAKEN OF YOU AND BEING USED FOR TOWN COUNCIL PUBLICITY PURPOSES?</b>	

### WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT FROM THORNBURY TOWN COUNCIL:

#### Induction and Training:

- To provide a thorough induction on the work of Thornbury Town Council, its staff, your volunteering role and the induction and/or training you need to meet the responsibilities of this role.

**Supervision:**

- To explain the standards we expect for our services and to encourage and support you to achieve and maintain them.
- To provide a named person who will meet with you regularly to discuss your volunteering and any successes and problems
- To provide any necessary equipment for you to complete your role;
- To be flexible in relation to your volunteering hours, recognising your need for holiday time and other commitments.

**Expenses**

- To pay travel expenses should you be requested by the council to attend training or a function outside the parish of Thornbury then fuel travel expenses will be paid in line with the AMAPs rate in operation at the time or reimbursement for bus or train travel, whichever is the cheapest;
- To reimburse car parking fees incurred when visiting non-Council premises whilst on Council business. The Council will not be liable for any parking fines or road traffic penalties incurred by volunteers regardless of circumstances.
- Authorisation must be sought in advance from the Town Clerk.

**Health and Safety**

- To provide adequate training and feedback in support of our health and safety policy;
- To carry out any necessary risk assessments and provide any special equipment as required (including Personal Protective Equipment).
- To not use personal equipment, tools or machinery unless explicit permission has been obtained in writing from the Town Council.

**Insurance**

- To provide adequate insurance cover for volunteers whilst carrying out their volunteering roles which have been approved and authorised by us.

**Equal opportunities**

- To ensure that all volunteers are dealt with in accordance with our equal opportunities policy.

**Problems**

- To try to resolve fairly any problems, complaints and difficulties you may have while you volunteer with us;
- In the event of an unresolved problem, to offer an opportunity to discuss the issue.

**Training**

- To arrange required training.

**WHAT WE EXPECT FROM YOU AS A VOLUNTEER:**

- To help Thornbury Town Council fulfil its aims and purpose in line with its 5-year Strategic Plan (available on the Town Council website or hard copy on request).
- To perform your volunteering role to the best of your ability;
- To follow the organisation's policies and procedures, including health and safety and equal opportunities, in relation to its staff, volunteers and clients;
- To maintain the confidential information of the organisation and of its clients;
- To meet the time commitments and standards which have been mutually agreed to and when this is not possible, to give reasonable notice so other arrangements can be made;



- To be respectful towards staff, other volunteers and members of the public;
- To be aware that you may on occasion be required to work alone unsupervised or within a group;
- To return any equipment issued to you by Thornbury Town Council when requested;
- If opted in, to allow photographs, taken whilst you are performing your volunteering role to be used for publicity purposes;
- To provide referees as agreed who may be contacted, and to agree to a Disclosure and Barring check being carried out where necessary;
- To adhere to Thornbury Town Council’s Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy at all times;
- To consider and arrange car sharing should more than one volunteer be asked to attend either training or an event;
- To complete and submit a volunteer’s expense claim sheet to the Town Council along with a receipt representing fuel or transport used for your journey to claim expenses;
- To ensure that the insurance covering your vehicle is adequate if used on council business. The cover must be sufficient to permit the volunteer to drive the vehicle for business purposes. Volunteers should contact their insurers for any advice;
- To undertake required training as directed by Thornbury Town Council.

This agreement is binding in honour only, is not intended to be a legally binding contract between us and may be cancelled at any time at the discretion of either party. Neither of us intends any employment relationship to be created either now or at any time in the future.

**SIGNED BY VOLUNTEER:** \_\_\_\_\_

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**SIGNED BY TOWN CLERK (OR DEPUTY):** \_\_\_\_\_

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_