



Castle Hedingham Parish Council

Volunteer Policy

Introduction

Castle Hedingham Parish Council (CHPC) recognises that volunteers contribute in many ways, and that volunteering can benefit the council, local communities and the volunteers themselves.

This document sets out the principles for voluntary involvement in activities authorised by Castle Hedingham Parish Council. The council may decide to set-up a volunteer database that records volunteers and some basic contact details.

Only voluntary activities specifically approved by CHPC will be covered by the Council's insurance and this policy **must** be complied with.

Equality Act 2010

Volunteers are to be treated equally, regardless of their gender, race, age, religion/belief, disability or sexual orientation.

Approval to carry out voluntary work on behalf of CHPC *(see Appendix 1)*

The Organiser will be the lead person responsible for any project. An Organiser wishing to obtain CHPC's approval to carry out work on its behalf shall apply to CHPC using the form at Appendix 1 by no later than the first day of the month, and not less than two months ahead of the proposed work. This shall enable the council to consider the proposal at a Parish Council meeting and ask further questions if needed before giving its response by no later than the second month (e.g. apply by 1 April; approval by end May; activity carried out in June). In giving its approval, CHPC reserves the right to limit or modify the extent of the proposal. CHPC's decision is final.

No work shall be carried out or goods/services ordered before any CHPC approval has been confirmed in writing by the Clerk (see Costs below).

Types of voluntary work carried out on behalf of CHPC

CHPC may revise the types of voluntary work it will approve from time to time. However, in order to encourage voluntary work, usually each application will be considered on its merits.

Resource Suitability

Volunteers should be appropriately trained and/or experienced to carry out the task required. The exact nature of the training will depend on the task. A judgement about competency should form part of the CHPC Risk Assessment *(see Appendix 2)*.

The Health & Safety of volunteers and anyone who may be affected by the task(s) should be protected as far as reasonably practicable. Responsibility for providing training rests with the Organiser to whom authority has been provided by CHPC to undertake the work.

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

Volunteers may use their own hand tools and should ensure that they are in good condition, fit for the intended purpose and only used by them. If an Organiser determines

that the tools are not fit for purpose or a danger to other volunteers, they must stop using them. CHPC is not liable for the loss or breakage of a volunteer's tools.

The use of plant (electrical or mechanical) must be discussed with the Clerk beforehand (see costs below). Any operator of plant must have received appropriate training. Where the hire of large plant is required, consideration should be given to hiring an operator instead of using volunteers for that task.

Responsibility for the induction rests with the Organiser to whom authority has been provided by CHPC to undertake the work.

Risk Assessment (see *Appendix 2*)

An assessment must be undertaken to identify risks that might be faced and how they will be managed. If an area of work presents a significant risk, consideration must be given to reducing or stopping the work which gives rise to the risk. CHPC, through the office of its Clerk or other person(s) as advised, must receive a copy of such risk assessment records with the application. A copy should be signed by each volunteer before they participate in the work.

Responsibility for undertaking the risk assessment rests with the Organiser to whom authority has been provided by CHPC to undertake the work. Risk assessments and their associated paperwork must comply with Health and Safety at Work legislation.

Prior to work commencement, a visual inspection must be carried out to ensure that there are no obvious hazards such as litter, glass or stones. Responsibility for undertaking the inspection rests with the Organiser to whom authority has been provided by CHPC to undertake the work.

Remedial action must be taken immediately and these inspections are to be recorded and retained by the Clerk.

Cleaning or other hazardous materials must not be stronger than those available on shop shelves and their use must be carried out in accordance with the instructions on the packaging and COSHH Regulations.

The Organiser shall familiarise themselves with Health and Safety legislation² and the COSHH Regulations (if relevant) and apply them as required

Insurance

On condition that volunteers are working with the sole agreement of and under the sole control of CHPC, then they will be insured under the Parish Council's Public Liability and Employer's Liability cover.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Where appropriate, volunteers must be instructed to wear PPE to minimise exposure to serious workplace injuries and illnesses. PPE may include goggles, gloves, ear-defenders, stout footwear, hard-hat (with or without visor), face mask and/or hi-vis clothing. As a minimum, hi-vis clothing is recommended at all times when working out doors.

Hazardous tasks include, but are not limited to:

- path maintenance
- grass cutting (including lawnmowers and strimmers)
- painting
- cleaning

Exclusions: Jewellery (including watches) must not be worn if they are likely to compromise the safe working environment for the volunteer and/or others. Training shoes, open-toed shoes, heeled shoes or sandals must not be worn unless the tasks to be performed are of an administrative nature and are to be carried out inside a building where no manual tasks are being undertaken. Long hair must be tied up if it is long enough to compromise health and safety requirements.

Children

Children aged 10 and over are welcome to participate in most volunteering activity provided:

- signed consent has been given by their parent/carer
- they are supervised by their own parents/carers (or designated adult(s) for youth groups) at all times.

Safeguarding of Children

Parents/carers/designated adults should be aware that an Organiser or other volunteers may not have a Disclosure and Barring Service check and it is therefore entirely the parent's/ carer's/ designated adults' responsibility to ensure the safeguarding of their children at all times.

If a youth group is participating in the work, the Organiser must check that the designated adult(s) has/have a valid Disclosure and Barring Service check and confirm this in writing to the Clerk.

The Organiser reserves the right to ask a parent/carer/designated adult to remove a child if they are likely to cause a danger to themselves or to others or signed consent has not been provided. The Organiser's decision is final.

Children (under 18) shall not participate in any activities on the highway (i.e. roads, pavements and verges).

Volunteering for Litter Picking

The Risk Assessment must include all the areas that the volunteer litter pickers will cover. If litter picking is carried out mainly on the highways (roads, pavements and verges) then under 18 year olds **cannot** be used. They are, however welcome to participate in litter picking on Public Rights of Way (PRoW) and recreational areas. PRoWs in the Parish can be identified using Castle Hedingham Parish Council's Footpath map .

<https://castlehedingham.org/assets/images/footpath-map-2020>

The health and safety of everyone involved in litter picking is paramount. Therefore, volunteers must use high-vis clothing, gloves and a litter picker. The plastic bags used to collect waste should not be overloaded and should be thicker than standard bin liners.

Sharps (e.g. hypodermic needles) must not be handled or collected. If practical, the location should be reported to Braintree District Council for such items to be collected.

Arrangements must be made beforehand with Braintree District Council to collect the waste from agreed locations.

Costs

The Organiser shall not commit to any expenditure on behalf of CHPC until and unless CHPC has given its approval to that expenditure and this has been confirmed in writing by the Clerk.

If plant is required, the Organiser shall discuss the need for it with the Clerk before submitting an application for the work. Depending on the lead times for ordering any plant

etc, the Organiser should consider whether to put back the proposed date for the work bearing in mind the time needed to obtain approval from CHPC.

Estimates of costs should be submitted to the Clerk with the application. There must be at least two quotes included for costs over £100. Failure to include any estimates if expenditure is anticipated will delay approval by CHPC.

If the project is approved, any contracts and expenditure shall be made in the name of Castle Hedingham Parish Council and all invoices should be addressed to the Clerk, Castle Hedingham Parish Council, 25 Bayley Street, Castle Hedingham CO9 3DG
If CHPC does not approve the work and the Organiser has already entered into any contracts or incurred expenditure, the Organiser shall be solely responsible for those costs.

CHPC does not provide any individual remuneration for volunteers or organisers.

Declarations

The Organiser and each volunteer (or parent if under 18) must sign the declaration on the risk assessment form before the voluntary work starts.

APPENDIX 1

Castle Hedingham Parish Council: APPLICATION to carry out Voluntary Work

Organiser's Details*	
Organiser's Name:	
Address:	
Telephone:	
Alternative Contact Number (if different from above)	
E mail	
I confirm that no contract has been/will be entered into or expenditure incurred until this application is approved (in whole or in part) by CHPC:	
Signed	Date
*Note: Personal data will be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018	

Project Proposal		
Project Title		
Proposed Date (this should be at least 2 months after application)		No. of Volunteers Expected/Needed
Location(s) within Castle Hedingham Parish		
Purpose and Scope of Project (continue on a second sheet if needed)		
Costs of Project (Please provide an estimate of any costs and if any item needed over £100, two quotes for each item)		

APPENDIX 2

RISK ASSESSMENT – Complete all sections

Project:			
Project Date:		Organiser:	
Date of Site Inspection(s)		Hazards Identified (if none state none)	
Comments and remedial action taken (if any available):			
Induction carried out?		Induction Date:	
Personal Protective Equipment Required?			
Item	Issued Date	Returned Date	Initials/Signature
Hi-Vis Jacket			
Goggles			
Gloves			
Litter picker			
Stout footwear			
Hard hat (no visor)			
Hard hat (with visor)			
Other (specify overleaf)			
Tools/Equipment Required?			
Item	Issued Date	Returned Date	Initials/Signature
Lawn mower			
Strimmer			
Hand tools (bladed)			
Hand tools (no blade)			
Drill			
Cleaning product			
Paint/wood stains			
Glue			
Other (specify overleaf)			
Does the volunteer have an appropriate level of experience for the tasks?		Does the volunteer have an appropriate level of training/qualification for the task?	
Can training and/or close supervision of the volunteer be carried out?		Training Resource Name	
Declaration by Organiser I, in the role of Organiser, have read the CHPC Volunteer Policy, understand my responsibilities and will undertake them to the best of my abilities. Signed:		Declaration by Volunteer (by parent if U/18) I, in the role of Volunteer, have read the CHPC Volunteer Policy, received induction and appropriate training for this work and understand my responsibilities. I will undertake them to the best of my abilities. Signed:	