



ROWDE PARISH COUNCIL

Volunteer Policy



Adopted May 2026 to be reviewed May 2027

Rowde Parish Council Volunteer Policy

1. Introduction

Rowde Parish Council has adopted this policy in order to comply with Section 3 of the Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974.

2. The purpose of this policy

Rowde Parish Council values volunteers and welcomes their contribution to community life in the parish. This policy seeks to protect and support volunteers working for the Council and to set out the Council's responsibilities to comply with its own employment and insurance obligations.

3. What we do

Rowde Parish Council works to support the community where people can live fulfilled lives. It wants to look after the local environment, encourage biodiversity and reduce carbon emissions. It aims to include everyone and listen to what they have to say. It wants to help improve the wellbeing of parishioners and provide the very best local facilities and services that we can all afford.

4. Valuing and supporting volunteers

Many Council activities involve working in partnership with community groups and volunteers and the Council sets out to ensure that they feel valued and supported through training, briefings and communications to recognise the central role they play. The Council acknowledges that volunteers want satisfying and rewarding activities that contribute to their own sense of wellbeing and personal development, as well as benefits to the community.

5. Working alongside the Council

Rowde Parish Council will never use volunteers to replace paid staff and expects that staff at all levels will work positively with any volunteers and where appropriate, will actively seek to involve them in their work.

6. Who are our volunteers?

Volunteers may come through community groups, direct from the community or be students from a local school or college (over the age of 16). Volunteers may give time regularly or on an occasional basis when this is possible, and every volunteer will have their own personal motivation and preference which we will respect.

7. How we work with our volunteers

The following guidelines deal with practical aspects of volunteering with the Parish Council. More information can be found on our website and in copies of policies and our approach to risk management.

8. Volunteer leaders

Rowde Parish Council generally works with volunteer leaders who:

- Act as the point of contact with the Council
- Access funding allocated by the Council
- Organise the volunteer activities and plan the sessions
- Recruit the volunteers
- Provide training, equipment and health and safety briefings
- Maintain communication with volunteers and promote activities
- Use the Council's risk assessments to ensure everyone stays safe.

9. Volunteer Agreement and Task Descriptions

Each volunteer will have an agreement setting out what Rowde Parish Council undertakes to provide for them – mainly this is to ensure safety and insurance cover. Volunteers will be asked to agree to

these simple guidelines prior to each activity. This does not form any sort of contract and the Council has no intention of creating a contract with local volunteers.

10. Young People

For some activities, those under 16 or requiring additional support will not be able to take part in Council organised activities, and this will be made clear on risk management documentation. For other activities young people will be welcome as volunteers provided that they are supervised by an adult; in all such cases, they will not be covered by the Council's insurance.

11. Training and Instruction

All volunteers will receive training and instruction relevant to the roles they perform. This will be provided by the volunteer leaders or persons nominated by them in liaison with the Council. Volunteer leaders will be provided with enhanced training opportunities funded by the Council in areas relevant to their sphere of activity.

12. Volunteer Voice

Volunteers are encouraged to express their ideas and views about matters relating to their area of voluntary work through the volunteer leader. If a volunteer has concerns about actions of a volunteer leader or the safety or organisation of volunteer activities, they may report these direct to the Parish Clerk. The Council aims to identify and solve problems at the earliest possible stage and to treat all volunteers fairly, objectively and consistently. The Parish Clerk is responsible for handling problems regarding volunteers' conduct or complaints which will be handled in accordance with the Council's complaints and grievance policies. The Council will seek to ensure that the volunteer's views are heard, noted and acted upon promptly aiming always for a positive and amicable solution.

13. Insurance

All volunteers are covered by Rowde Parish Council's insurance policy whilst they are engaged in any work on its behalf. It should be assumed that insurance is not provided unless that Council has explicitly authorised the activities to be undertaken. This can be granted by a resolution at a Parish Council meeting, or by the Clerk in consultation with the Council Chair.

14. Health and Safety

Volunteers are covered by Rowde Parish Council's Health and Safety Policy, which is available on our website.

15. Equal Opportunities

Rowde Parish Council operates an Equality Policy in respect of both paid staff and volunteers. A copy will be provided upon request. Volunteers will be expected to have an understanding of and commitment to equal opportunities.

16. Safeguarding

In appropriate circumstances volunteers will be made aware of the Council's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and where necessary DBS checks and training will be undertaken. Primarily this applies where volunteers may be working with children or vulnerable adults.

17. Confidentiality

Volunteers will be bound by the same requirements for confidentiality as paid staff.

18. Data Protection

Personal information recorded about volunteers is stored and maintained in accordance with the Council's Data Protection Policy, a copy of which is available on our website. All volunteers agree to allow their photographs, video and voice media taken during the volunteer activity to be used in Rowde Parish Council publications, public relations outputs including digital media unless the Council is otherwise notified in advance.