

East Leake Parish Council Volunteer Policy

Aims

Volunteers are central to what we are and do in promoting active citizenship. We aim to:

- Recruit, involve and enable volunteers with East Leake Parish Council,
- Support and value volunteers who work with us,
- Encourage volunteers to enable them to:
 - Develop skills and interests.
 - Be part of the community.
 - Develop confidence and personal fulfilment.
 - Experience a sense of satisfaction by adding value to the village.
 - Explain, where necessary, the skills and experience needed.
 - Seek ways to formally and informally thank them for giving their time.
 - Provide adequate but not excessive formalising of procedures.

We make volunteering accessible by recruiting volunteers from all walks of life, promoting diversity and reflecting all local communities in terms of age, gender, race and ethnicity, religion (faith) or belief, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 Protected Characteristics.

East Leake Parish Council employs paid staff undertaking work duties on weekdays, including Grounds Maintenance staff, as well as office based. They are able to support volunteers by agreeing in advance the best possible collaboration and avoid any misunderstandings. Volunteers do not replace the role of paid staff, are not on the payroll of ELPC, which is not responsible for their tax affairs.

We distinguish three categories of volunteers:

- Individuals undertaking tasks directly for the Parish Council.
- People working as part of a group of volunteers on Parish Council tasks, under an agreement with the group.
- Others working in the community in a voluntary capacity, as individuals or as part of a group.

This policy, and the Parish Council insurance, covers the first two categories, but not the third.

Individual Parish Council Volunteers

ELPC maintains a register of these individuals, and they are registered to carry out specified tasks, as long as they are covered by insurance within the age range 16-80. Information held includes: the task(s) they are approved to undertake, name, contact details (including emergency/next of kin), and may include a record of work done and dates. If appropriate a Disclosure and Barring Service check may be requested. This information is held and managed in accordance with the ELPC data protection policy.

For each task ELPC maintains a role description, including a risk assessment with particular regard to Health and Safety, the list of skills required, and if helpful, a list of benefits to the volunteer such as skills and experience which could be gained, but not formally assessed. Training is given as appropriate.

Tasks and role descriptions are reviewed annually, issued and explained to new volunteers, so that competency can be established and recorded as necessary, e.g., evidence of relevant training or qualifications.

New approved tasks can be defined in discussion with the Parish Clerk.

Volunteers undertaking tasks not on their approved list will not be covered by insurance.

Partner Groups

ELPC maintains agreements with some groups who undertake tasks on our behalf, with liaison via a nominated link person or committee. Tasks undertaken are documented by the group and/or ELPC as for individuals above. Details as above of the volunteers involved may be maintained by the group rather than ELPC and supplied to ELPC on request.

The current list of approved partner groups is:

- Friends of Meadow Park.
- Churchyard volunteer group.

Other groups wishing to be approved as a partner group (and so be covered by ELPC insurance) should contact the Clerk in the first instance.

Event Management

Some events are organised by ELPC, with volunteers undertaking tasks such as publicity and marshalling. These roles are covered by the volunteer policy and the ELPC insurance. Examples: annual litter pick; Remembrance Sunday; Carnival; May Day; Tidy Team; Christmas Lights Switch On; and one-off events such as the Tour of Britain cycle race.

A separate addendum is being developed to clarify sharing of responsibilities in what might be referred to as a Joint event.

Other events are organised by other groups, and do not fall under this policy.

If groups wish ELPC to take responsibility for organisation of additional events as part of its remit, contact the Clerk in the first instance.

Councillors and ELPC Staff as Volunteers

ELPC recognises that its councillors and staff undertake many voluntary tasks as part of their role and as part of a wider role in the community, and they should distinguish between tasks undertaken as part of their role as a councillor or employee and other voluntary work they do that falls outside this policy. It should be noted that involvement of a councillor in other voluntary work does not imply that ELPC is responsible/liable for the task or event.

Support Provided to Other Voluntary Groups

We recognise that many other organisations in the village have volunteers engaged in a variety of tasks for the community. Although not covered by this policy, and not covered by the ELPC insurance, ELPC may in some circumstances provide support on request by means of:

- Grants,
- Advertising and promoting volunteer opportunities,
- Providing clerical assistance,
- Allowing use of Parish Council premises free of charge (see separate policy),
- Allowing use of Parish Council outdoor spaces with or without charge.

Health and Safety and Other Policies

The Parish Council Liability Insurance covers staff and volunteers aged 16 – 80 for work carried out for and on behalf of the Parish Council.

Volunteers should adhere to East Leake Parish Council's Health and Safety Policy, and only do approved tasks (see above) which they are competent and safe to perform, under guidance and supervision as necessary. Volunteers should not place themselves or others at risk of any harm whatsoever.

All staff and volunteers must comply with Safeguarding practices to protect children and vulnerable adults. Checks from the Disclosure and Barring Service may be required for certain roles. We may also need to "alert" authorities of inappropriate behaviour if observed and causing concern – support and guidance available at all times from the Clerk.

All other policies are available on request and will be explained as thought necessary or relevant.

Costs Incurred by Volunteers

Volunteers should not be "out-of-pocket" and expenses can be reimbursed if approved in advance and receipts provided. For example, if small items are necessary and not available from Parish Council stock. Larger items will be provided and paid for by ELPC under financial regulations for approval of purchases.

Fuel costs for use of volunteer vehicles may be agreed in advance and reimbursed at HMRC approved rates per mile. Insurance cover for such journeys must be covered by the volunteers, normally at no extra cost from their insurer, and proof supplied with any claim.

Contact and Support

Volunteers' main point of contact is with the Clerk or Deputy Clerk of East Leake Parish Council at the Parish Office, 45 Main Street, LE12 6PF, Tel 01509 852217, or parishclerk@east-leake.gov.uk

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