

# Volunteer Policy

## About us

In 1934 Wigginton and Hopwas Parish was created. The estimated population of the parish is a little over 1,300. The Parish Council maintain Hopwas Playing Field and are the sole trustee of Comberford Millennium Green. Other assets include the Samuel Parkes VC War memorial, St John's Closed Churchyard, four bus shelters, three noticeboards, two litter bins, five dog waste bins and we carry out some grass cutting within the Parish. We are a statutory consultee for planning applications in the Parish and liaise with other authorities including local councils, the police, and schools for the benefit of the community. Our volunteers enable us to provide more services at less cost to the taxpayer. Although they are elected officials, our Councillors are unpaid volunteers, the Council have just one part-time paid member of staff who is required by statute.

## Purpose of our volunteer policy

Our volunteer policy has been created to show our volunteers and potential volunteers that we have spent time and care in planning how volunteers will be welcomed at Wigginton and Hopwas Parish Council. It also outlines that all volunteers will be treated in a fair and consistent way. It should also help our volunteers understand what support is available to them and what they can expect from us.

## Our vision and mission for volunteering

Volunteering is a great way to share your enthusiasm, skills and ideas whilst having fun and meeting like-minded people. By volunteering for Wigginton and Hopwas Parish Council you will be making a positive contribution to community development in our area. Volunteers are vital to our work.

## Attracting volunteers and volunteer agreement

We have a range of opportunities for volunteers to get involved in. If you are interested in volunteering for Wigginton and Hopwas Parish Council, please contact our Parish Clerk via email:

[clerk@wiggintonandhopwas-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@wiggintonandhopwas-pc.gov.uk) or call 07540 991 343. Alternatively, you can come along in person to a Parish Council meeting.

The Clerk will be able to provide information on specific opportunities and we can decide together which option best matches your interests and time availability. Your help will be greatly appreciated and really will make a difference.

## DBS Checks

Some volunteer roles will require a DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check to inform Wigginton and Hopwas Parish Council of any criminal convictions that a person wishing to volunteer may have. For example, any volunteer position which involves regulated activity with children or vulnerable adults will be subject to a DBS check.

## Induction and training

It does not matter how much you already know, as there will be opportunities to learn, and we have roles to suit every level of expertise.

There will be an induction prepared and delivered by our Clerk. This will include:

- Information about Wigginton and Hopwas Parish Council, our objectives, aims and future plans
- The role of the volunteer
- An introduction to members and other volunteers
- A tour around our facilities and see some of our initiatives
- A copy of all the relevant policies including this volunteer policy and our Health and Safety, Lone Working, Training, Expenses, Equality and Diversity, Complaint, Grievance and Disciplinary policies and procedures
- Explanations of any essential procedures such as timekeeping, absence and accident reporting
- Information about training and ongoing learning opportunities

There will be a trial period of six weeks to give Wigginton and Hopwas Parish Council and you time to discover if you are suited to each other. A review will be made midway through the trial period and at the end. This is not an assessment; it is just so that we can be sure that you benefit the most from the volunteering experience and maximise the time you are giving freely.

## Support

Our Parish Clerk will offer support to you. They will remain your key contact throughout your volunteering with us. This will include regular meetings with you to discuss how you are getting on, discuss any training needs and deal with issues arising. This will also ensure that Wigginton and Hopwas Parish Council are doing all we can to make your volunteering experience an enjoyable and meaningful one.

## Recognition and reward

We could not do the work we do without our volunteers. To acknowledge this, we will always say thank you and show appreciation for a job well done. There will always be a listening ear or shoulder to lean on.

We will take opportunities in our website and Facebook page, annual general meetings, and local and national press to praise the achievements of our volunteers.

## Expenses

We value our volunteers and want to ensure that there are no barriers to volunteer involvement. All reasonable out of pocket expenses, if required, will be reimbursed including expenses for travel and meals (if working more than 4.5 hours in one session). Please discuss and agree the expenses you may need to claim with the Parish Clerk before they are incurred. To claim, an expense form must be completed and handed to the Parish Clerk along with valid receipts.

## Insurance, health and safety, accidents, and risk assessment

Wigginton and Hopwas Parish Council have a valid insurance policy so that volunteers are covered by public liability insurance, which you are advised to read. It covers the volunteering activities you will be doing. We will provide you with a copy of our Health and Safety Policy and give simple instructions on how to perform each task safely to minimise any identified risks. You will be provided with a copy of our lone working policy.

## Resolving problems

We hope that you will have a very enjoyable experience volunteering with us. However, if your role as a volunteer does not meet with your expectations or with the commitments, we have made to you, we want you to feel comfortable about letting us know. Initially, please talk to the Parish Clerk who will aim to resolve any issues for you before they become a problem. If you do not feel this will resolve things you can speak to the Chair of the Council.

## Confidentiality

We expect all volunteers to adhere to confidentiality guidelines which will be explained to you before you begin volunteering with us and this also includes use of social media and contact with any press.

## Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

Wigginton and Hopwas Parish Council is committed to embracing diversity and promoting equality and inclusion. When representing Wigginton and Hopwas Parish Council as a volunteer we expect you to support our commitment to promoting equality.

## Volunteering whilst on benefit

You can still volunteer with us if you are receiving benefits providing government guidance is followed.

You can find out more about this here: [Volunteering and claiming benefits - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

Wigginton and Hopwas Parish Council will support you with meeting these requirements.

This is the Volunteer Policy of Wigginton and Hopwas Parish Council, it will be reviewed at least every 3 years.

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