



Meriden

PARISH COUNCIL

the historic centre of England

Volunteer Policy

Introduction

Meriden Parish Council seeks to involve volunteers to:

- Ensure our services meet the needs of our clients;
- Provide new skills and perspectives;
- Increase our contact with the local community we serve.

Principles and values

This volunteering policy is underpinned by the following principles:

- Meriden Parish Council will ensure that volunteers are properly integrated into the organisational structure and that mechanisms are in place for them to contribute to Any Org's work;
- Meriden Parish Council does not aim to introduce volunteers to replace paid staff but instead to complement their work and extend our services;
- Meriden Parish Council expects that staff at all levels will work positively with volunteers and, where appropriate, will actively seek to involve them in their work;
- Meriden Parish Council recognises that volunteers require satisfying work and personal development and will seek to help volunteers meet these needs, as well as providing the training for them to do their work effectively;
- Meriden Parish Council is proud of our commitment to equal opportunities and seeks to create a diverse and inclusive working environment for staff and volunteers.

1. Preparing for volunteers

Before involving volunteers in any role, Meriden Parish Council will ensure that the following are in place to ensure their safety and efficiency:

- All volunteers will be provided with a written role description that explains the role purpose and main duties/responsibilities;
- Meriden Parish Council will reimburse volunteers for travel expenses from home to the place of volunteering. Volunteers are required to keep receipts where applicable and fill in an expenses claim form;
- Meriden Parish Council will ensure that volunteers have access to the necessary equipment to carry out their duties/tasks, including personal protection equipment (PPE) if appropriate;
- The Volunteer Manager is responsible for the management of volunteers. She/he will ensure that volunteers are properly inducted into Meriden Parish Council and have access to this policy and other relevant policies and handbooks. The Volunteer Manager (or a staff member identified by them) will conduct regular support or supervision reviews with volunteers to ensure good performance and opportunities for personal development;
- Meriden Parish Council has public liability insurance that protects volunteers whilst in their voluntary role. For specific details, including information about using personal vehicles, please see Meriden Parish Council Employee Handbook.

2. Involving volunteers: recruitment and selection process

a. Role descriptions

Meriden Parish Council will create clear role descriptions for each volunteer opportunity. These will be available to ensure that potential volunteers, staff and the organisation as a whole are clear on the purpose of the role, this will also provide a basis for support and supervision as it outlines the volunteers tasks and responsibilities.

b. Promotion

Meriden Parish Council will ensure that all volunteer opportunities are promoted widely to increase accessibility of a diverse range of interested parties. Our recruitment will include but not be limited to online promotions through Volunteer Connect.

- Our recruitment process will be a fair and open procedure, promoting equality of opportunity. For example:

- Meriden Parish Council will only list the skills and requirements on a role description



that are necessary for that role;

- Meriden Parish Council will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate volunteers, for example allowing a support worker to accompany a volunteer.

c. Application form

Our promotional material will clearly explain how a volunteer can get involved.

The first step for volunteers is to fill in a short application form that asks for personal contact information, why the volunteer is interested in the role and how they meet the skills criteria.

d. Interview

All volunteers identified as 'suitable' (from application forms) will be invited to an informal interview. It is at this stage the volunteer and Meriden Parish Council can identify the suitability of the role to the volunteer and identify next steps (either being invited to join the team or 'saying no').

e. Criminal records checks

Meriden Parish Council will carry out criminal records checks for any role that deems it necessary, for example working with children and young people, vulnerable people or sensitive data.

f. Saying no and referring volunteers on

Meriden Parish Council recognise that volunteers are an important part of their work and service but also recognise that volunteers placed in roles not suited to their needs or interests can be detrimental to the organisations service and to the volunteers motivation and development. If during the application and interview process a volunteer has been identified as not suitable to the role then Meriden Parish Council will offer individuals an opportunity to identify other roles within the organisation (if available) or will refer the individual to a volunteering service, such as Warwickshire Community and Voluntary Action (WCAVA).

3. Managing volunteers

Meriden Parish Council are committed to the ongoing support of volunteers to ensure that they are able to carry out their role, the following elements are essential to 'managing our volunteers':

a. Induction

All volunteers will undergo a six-week induction. This induction will include:

i. The background of Meriden Parish Council .

Volunteer Management Resources Volunteer Policy, Handbook and Agreement

Warwickshire CAVA www.wcava.org.uk/volunteering/resource-library

ii. The volunteer role and how this fits into Meriden Parish Council's work.

iii. Signed agreement of hours, responsibilities and tasks.

iv. Where the volunteer will work, resources available and who they will work with.

v. Access to all relevant policies and procedures, such as health and safety, safeguarding, fire procedure, expenses, etc. See section 3.4.

vi. Day to day support from the Volunteer Manager or relevant identified person. This could include daily task sheets or shadowing opportunities.

b. Training

Meriden Parish Council will ensure that any mandatory training that is required for the role is clearly explained to the volunteer during their recruitment interview. Meriden Parish Council will provide any training essential to the role prior to the volunteer undertaking related tasks, for example minibus training, safeguarding training or manual handling. Meriden Parish Council will give volunteers the opportunity to attend the same training that staff of Meriden Parish Council attends (dependent on availability and suitability to role).

c. Support

The Volunteer Manager will be responsible for providing ongoing and regular support sessions. Meriden Parish Council recognise that volunteers have different preferences and availability and so are open to this being an informal process agreed upon between the Volunteer Manager and the individual volunteer.

Clerk: Barbara Bland, 55 James Dawson Drive, Millison's Wood, Coventry, CV5 9QJ

T: 01676 522474 **M:** 07767 162423 **E:** barbarablandmpc@btconnect.com

E: clerk@meridenparishcouncil.org.uk

www.meridenparishcouncil.org.uk



Meriden Parish Council do require that volunteers have a minimum of a 20 minute informal discussion every 6 weeks to discuss their work, any concerns volunteers have and any performance concerns the Volunteer Manager has. The Volunteer Manager should keep a record of these meetings, including actions and outcomes.

d. Record keeping

The Volunteer Manager will keep an accurate file of each volunteer. Files will include the volunteers personal contact information, their application form, role description, signed agreement, record of their interview, training attended, record of all support meetings and any grievances or complaints. This file will be treated in accordance with the Data Protection act (1998).

e. Recognition

Although volunteers have chosen to give up their time to help Meriden Parish Council we understand that recognition of their contribution is vital in helping them to be part of the team, see the difference they make and to encourage others to volunteer. Where possible Meriden Parish Council will promote the contribution that volunteers

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make to our work, through internal newsletters, press releases and through our social media.

f. Saying goodbye

Meriden Parish Council understands that volunteers move on for a number of reasons and so have identified steps to take to ensure a process that is smooth and beneficial to both parties. Volunteers may leave because of another opportunity, because of a grievance or because we have identified they are not suitable to our role. In any case Meriden Parish Council will:

- i. Arrange a support meeting with the Volunteer Manager (or other identified party if necessary) to establish the reasons for leaving or the issues we have;
- ii. If issues can be resolved we will create an action plan to follow. This may include further training and more support;
- iii. If the issues cannot be resolved then the volunteer may be offered an alternative role if available and appropriate;
- iv. If the volunteer cannot be placed elsewhere an exit interview will be carried out to explain to the volunteer why they have been asked to leave, to thank them for their time and refer on to other volunteer services such as WCAVA;
- v. Volunteers will be provided with a reference.

4. Policies and Procedures

Meriden Parish Council recognise that volunteers are a part of our team and should be protected and bound by Meriden Parish Council 's policies and procedures that are designed to keep all interested parties safe and ensure work is carried out to a high and consistent standard. For information about each policy please see Meriden Parish Council 's Employee Handbook. Important policies to read include:

- Safeguarding
- Health and Safety
- Equal Opportunities
- Problem solving
- Confidentiality
- Insurance.

Warwickshire Community and Voluntary Action

Warwickshire CAVA supports volunteer-involving organisations and groups across Warwickshire in developing and maintaining good practice in their relationships with volunteers. We offer up-to-date information, advice and guidance on a range of topics including:

Volunteer Management Resources Supporting and Managing Volunteers



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Warwickshire CAVA www.wcava.org.uk Document review date: July 2019

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- Setting up a volunteer programme
- Developing volunteer roles
- Volunteer recruitment
- Volunteer retention
- Legal and insurance information
- Inclusive volunteering
- Addressing challenges with volunteers.

Warwickshire CAVA's Resource Library

Warwickshire CAVA's resource library contains a wide range of up-to-date, free resources for Warwickshire's community and voluntary organisations in the topic areas of Groups & Organisations and Volunteering. Visit <http://www.wcava.org.uk/resource-library> to view. This resource sheet is part of a series entitled 'Volunteer Policy, Handbook & Agreement'. To view and download, visit: www.wcava.org.uk/resource-library/volunteer-policy-handbook-and-agreement on this topic are available as a collection: <https://drive.google.com/open?id=0BxM5UHfVB7YWSnloQzFJME1iUGM>

For more support and guidance

For more support and guidance on any aspect of volunteer management, contact your local Warwickshire Community and Voluntary Action's Volunteer Coordinators:

North Warwickshire
Sarah Deeming: 01827 718080
sarah.deeming@wcava.org.uk

Stratford District
Kate Morrison: 07939 510081
volroles@wcava.org.uk

Nuneaton and Bedworth
Rowena Musgrave: 07966 380415
rowena@wcava.org.uk

Warwick District
Helen Wilkinson: 01926 477512
helen.wilkinson@wcava.org.uk

Rugby Borough
Carol Kavanagh: 01788 539578
ckavanagh@wcava.org.uk

DISCLAIMER

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Warwickshire CAVA www.wcava.org.uk

Although every effort has been made to verify the accuracy of items in Warwickshire CAVA's resource library, users are urged to check independently on matters of specific interest.

Rev.1 Jan 2020 Review Dec 2022

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