

# **Minstead Parish Council**

## **Volunteers Policy**

### **Introduction**

The Government continues to encourage communities to be more resilient, whether it is keeping their communities clean and tidy, supporting vulnerable people or supporting the emergency services in the event of a major incident. For a community to be resilient there is a need for parishioners to be aware of potential risks in their community and to develop procedures to respond effectively to potential emergencies in that community. A key component of any community resilience plan is the volunteer.

### **Aim and Objectives**

The aim of this policy is to identify the responsibilities of:

- The Parish Council with regards to volunteers who assist Minstead Parish Council, in both emergency and non-emergency situations, and
- The volunteers when undertaking tasks for Minstead Parish Council.

### **Recruiting volunteers**

Volunteers will be recruited from the parish through email, via Minstead mail and Minstead Parish Council Facebook page.

### **Induction and training of volunteers**

Volunteers must be competent to undertake the task they are being asked to do. The nature of required skills will depend on the activity.

Volunteers will be informed about the task and its purpose, health and safety and supervision arrangements before the commencement of the task.

If required, appropriate training of the volunteer prior to them undertaking the task will be undertaken. The minimum level should be sufficient to ensure maintenance of health and safety of the volunteer and any people who may be affected by the work.

Volunteers will be expected to confirm that they do not have any medical issues that would put them or other volunteers at risk.

### **Working with Equipment**

Any volunteer working with equipment for the Parish Council should have the appropriate experience and/or qualifications to operate the machinery, e.g., chain saw, heavy machinery, tractors, trailers and quad bikes etc.

### **Tasks**

Volunteers may be asked to undertake the following tasks by the Council:

- Assist with tasks associated with opening and manning of an emergency rest centre. This may include making beverages and food, collecting items that those using the rest centre may need such as bedding and clothing;
- Assist with manning a rest centre throughout a 24-hour period;
- Drive a vehicle to collect items required in the rest centre;
- Support vulnerable people in their own homes or rest centre as required;
- Collect medication and food for those who are vulnerable and unable to do this themselves;
- Those with first aid qualifications, medical or nursing experience to provide support to the emergency services or provide first aid in the rest centre;
- Assist the Emergency Co-ordinator to contact volunteers as required;

- Use equipment they have appropriate safety equipment and training for e.g. chain saws;
- Drive vehicles that they have the appropriate licences and experience to drive to move heavy equipment e.g. tractors and trailers and quad bikes.

This should not be viewed as an exhaustive list of tasks. In the event that a volunteer is asked to undertake a task that has not been risk assessed, a risk assessment will be undertaken by the Community Resilience Co-ordinator, their deputy or a member of the Parish Council.

### **Undertaking tasks**

Volunteers should only carry out the task allocated to them

Volunteers must be dressed appropriately for the task to which they have been allocated. Appropriate footwear should be worn, ideally sturdy boots covering the ankle and providing support on uneven ground. Long hair should be tied back and jewellery should not be worn.

Prior to the task being undertaken a visual check of the site for hazards should be undertaken.

Prior to any task being undertaken the volunteer will be expected to read the risk assessment related to the allocated task. If there is no existing risk assessment relating to the task, the Parish Councillor allocating the task must undertake one, record it and share it with the volunteer to whom that task has been allocated.

Volunteers must have due regard to the fact that they are conducting authorised work on behalf of the Parish Council and as such are representing the Council, in terms of both the quality of the work and their possible interaction with the public.

Volunteers must ensure when working in an emergency or non-emergency situation that the supervisor is aware of where they are. This will be achieved with a sign in, sign out sheet that will

be the responsibility of the supervisor to know where the volunteers are at any time.

### **Contacting Volunteers in the event of an emergency**

In the event of volunteers being required to help the Council in an emergency they will be contacted by the mobile number identified on the emergency data base. For non-emergency help by volunteers, they will be recruited using various methods including face to face contact, Minstead mail, email or Facebook e.g., litter pick.

### **Equality and Diversity**

It is the responsibility of both members of the Parish Council and the volunteers who carry out tasks for the Council to ensure they meet the criteria of the Equality Act of 2010. This means that everyone who volunteers for and receives support from the Parish Council through the Parish Council should be treated equally and fairly, regardless of any differences. Everyone should be valued as individuals, rather than all being treated as the same.

### **Insurance**

Volunteers working at the sole request of and under the sole control of Minstead Parish council will be insured under the Parish Council's Public Liability and Employers Liability cover.

### **Confidentiality**

Minstead Parish Council will maintain a database of volunteers which will be held centrally by the Clerk and Council's Community Resilience Co-ordinator. This database will not be published as part of this document or the Community Resilience plan to ensure that the council complies with GDPR regulations. This database will be updated formally on a yearly basis.

On confirming that they are willing to volunteer, volunteers will be sent this policy and the current identified risk assessments on

tasks they may be asked to undertake for the council. They will be expected to confirm by email that they have read the policy and a copy of their email response will be held centrally by the clerk. The policy will be reissued to volunteers if any material changes are made to it.

A volunteer is responsible for advising the Parish Clerk if they are no longer able to support the council in the event of an emergency so their name can be removed from the database.

### **Complaints made by volunteers**

If a volunteer raises a complaint that can not be resolved at the time, then a complaint should be instigated in accordance with Minstead Parish Council's Complaints Procedure.

### **Related Documents**

This document should be read in conjunction with:

    Minstead Parish Council's Emergency plan, and

    Minstead Parish Council's Complaints Procedure

Current versions of these documents are published on Minstead Parish Council's website.

### **Appendices:**

Appendix A. Litter Pick Risk Assessment

Appendix B. Risk Assessment for delivering Items  
to Vulnerable Parishioners

Appendix C. Risk Assessment to Support the Emergency  
Response to a Major Incident

Appendix D. Risk Assessment Scoring Matrix

Appendix E. Volunteers Risk Assessment Template