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Rotherham Allotment Alliance Ltd

Volunteer Policy

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1) Introduction



Rotherham Allotments Alliance (RAA) is a 'Community Benefit Organisation' being established in 2020 to manage allotment provision previously completed by Rotherham MBC. The RAA aims to provide, promote, and develop allotments in Rotherham so that they offer people of all backgrounds and abilities opportunities to enjoy gardening in safe, secure, accessible and environmentally sustainable surroundings. It sees Volunteers as a vital part of achieving these aims and actively works to promote volunteering and good practice in Volunteer management. This policy is intended to provide the framework for our involvement with volunteers and help define the role of volunteering within the organisation. This policy is not intended to create a legally binding contract or employment relationship.

2) Definition of Volunteering

"...an activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment or individuals or groups."

3) Aims of this policy

To develop and apply good practice when managing volunteers at R AA

To involve volunteers in the delivery of RAA's services in order to meet the needs of our allotment holders and increase our contact with the local community.

4) Principles

- RAA will ensure that volunteers are properly integrated into the organisation structure.
- RAA recognises that volunteers require satisfying and interesting voluntary work.

5) Why is a Volunteer Policy Important?

5.1. A Volunteer Policy is a tool for volunteers to use and can be referred to, ensuring that there is no discrimination.

6) Diversity

6.1. RAA is firmly committed to promoting diversity in all areas of our work and welcomes volunteers from all backgrounds and experiences. R AA has an Equalities & Diversity Policy and regularly reviews progress towards diversity.



Volunteers are expected to have an understanding of and commitment to our Equal Opportunities.

7) Recruitment

7.1. All volunteers will have a relevant role description that sets out their main tasks.

- Volunteers will be recruited from within the members (shareholders) of RAA.
- It is anticipated that volunteers will only carry out voluntary work on the allotment site on which they are plot holders or by becoming a member of the RAA organised volunteer group to allow working on other allotment sites. It is anticipated that the majority of voluntary work will be instigated and coordinated via the RAA or allotment societies or site representatives responsible for their respective site where work is to be carried out.
- All volunteers will have a relevant role description that sets out their main tasks.

8) Induction and training

8.1. It is important and necessary that each volunteer project is correctly managed and organised.

- Each project will have a full risk assessment completed prior to any work commencing.
- Volunteers should only undertake work when they are satisfied they understand the work required and it is within their capabilities.
- It is imperative that the correct tools for the task are used.
- If machinery is used the volunteers should be familiar and confident in its use before commencing.
- The correct attire and protective clothing should be worn at all times.
- The attached 'Volunteer Induction Checklist' should be completed for each volunteer project.

9) Support

9.1. There will always be a member of the society or RAA available for support when volunteers are present. Volunteers will be provided with regular supervisions and feedback as appropriate. They will be informed who their society/RAA representative is during their induction.

10) Insurance

10.1. RAA currently has both Public Liability and Employers Liability Insurance in place in the event that someone brings a claim of negligence against us. As an individual you are not 'covered' as such, it is the organisation that is covered. It is important to



keep in mind that everyday accidents can and do happen; they're nobody's 'fault'. If you rely on a wage outside your volunteering, you may want to consider exploring your options in terms of Loss of Earnings cover in order to safeguard yourself against this.

11) Attendance

- 11.1. Volunteers are asked to inform their society/RAA representative if they will not be available due to illness, holidays or any other reason. It is helpful if volunteers can give society/RAA representative as much notice as possible so that cover can be arranged if required. There may be occasions when volunteers may wish to take a break for a period of time and RAA respects this.

12) Confidentiality

- 12.1. All volunteers are subject to a 'Common Law of Confidentiality' and must adhere to this. Please refer to RAA's Confidentiality Policy for more information. Volunteers will be asked to sign a confidentiality declaration due to the sensitive and private details they may come across whilst volunteering at RAA.

13) Health & Safety

- 13.1. RAA has a statutory responsibility under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974, not to harm or damage the health of volunteers through their involvement in the activities of the organisation.
- 13.2. All volunteers are expected to conduct themselves in a safe manner and not to act in a way that may cause injury to others. Please refer to RAA's wider *health and safety* policy.
- 13.3. A full risk assessment will be required for all projects. This will be completed by the ASA and 1/2 members of the Board on Directly Managed sites and by Allotment Society representatives on self-managed sites. Volunteers would be made aware of the risk assessment.
- 13.4. RAA will provide PPE equipment such as goggles / gloves / helmets if required.

14) Complaints Policy

- 14.1. RAA has a Complaints Policy which covers complaints made by a volunteer and complaints made *against* a volunteer. Please refer to this policy for further details.

15) Other RAA policies

- 15.1. The majority of RAA policies apply to volunteers. Volunteers are invited to familiarise themselves with these on RAA's website, at their leisure.



16) Reimbursement of Expenses

The following section is only applicable - when a non allotment-based voluntary group is used for a specific project on RAA allotment site/s and the payment of expenses is a prerequisite of their undertaking

Volunteers will be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses against receipts only.

RAA is happy to reimburse expenses on a daily, weekly or monthly basis by arrangement with the Volunteer staff member.

Volunteers should complete an expenses claim form available from their Volunteer Coordinator. This should be:

- Handed in within a month of expenditure
- Given to the member of staff supporting the volunteer
- Attached to the appropriate receipt
- Recorded into the petty cash form by the volunteer and signed off by a member of staff.

**Where possible, bus fares and lunch expenses should be reimbursed the same day.*

Volunteers can claim for the following:

- *Travel costs:* (travel to and from the organisation and any agreed travel undertaken during the course of volunteering) this will be either public transport rates or Private Car rates. Volunteers claiming mileage expenses need to complete a *mileage claim form* and expenses will be reimbursed monthly by Online banking, unless otherwise agreed. Anyone needing to use Taxis will need to check this out with their society/RAA representative and should only be used in exceptional circumstances.
- *Meals:* if volunteering exceeds 5 hours at any session:
- Volunteers staying for a minimum of 5 hours per day will be reimbursed for lunch expenses to the maximum of £4.50 per day. A valid receipt will need to be provided with a *petty cash* expenses claim form.
- *Care costs:* of dependants while volunteering (by agreement with their supervisor)
- *Training:* that is relevant to the volunteer role agreed by their supervisor.

Directors reimbursement of travel expenses

1. Director's reimbursement of travel expenses.

- Directors will be reimbursed for any authorised travel from home to allotment site and return. Directors should wherever possible arrange to share vehicle to avoid travel duplication,
- Payment will be at the HMRC approved mileage rate (currently .45p per mile for the first 10000 miles then .25p 12/21).



- It is the Directors responsibility to ensure that their vehicle insurance takes into account this type of usage.
- It will be the Directors responsibility to submit a duly completed claims form at the end of the month in which the expense was incurred.
- The claim form will be submitted to the ASA who will check the claim is mathematically correct and the travel claimed is for authorised duties. The claim will be prepared for payment via BACS direct to the Directors accounts and will be authorised by the Chair (or Treasurer) (*Authorisation cannot be completed by any Director involved in the claim)



What	Who	When & Where	How
About the organisation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the aims of the project the type of work to be done structure importance of volunteers to the organisation 	RAA rep/ site secretary	At the start of the project / before it begins / first day	Face to face meeting onsite / via electronic communication
The building / volunteer base <ul style="list-style-type: none"> layout, toilets, parking, fire exit and procedures etc Facilities for volunteers e.g. break out area, parking, notice board, kitchen, health and safety guidelines. Allotment rules 	RAA rep/ site secretary	First day of project	Face to face on site. Relevant documents sent prior.
The role <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outline of volunteer role, tasks involved, confirm agreed commitment day / time etc; Staff / Volunteers working with directly; Boundaries of role / Expected Conduct / Confidentiality; The process to follow if difficult situations arise; - Insurance cover; Risk areas. Health and Safety. 	RAA rep/ site secretary	At the start of the project / before it begins / first day	Go through role description,
The support system <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Main contact and their details; Reporting accidents/problems Resources, equipment, Training; How are expenses reimbursed (if applicable) 	RAA rep/ site secretary	At the start of the project / before it begins / first day	Face-to-face / phone / email



Volunteer: I confirm that I have been made aware of all items in the induction checklist and where indicated understand the policies and procedures.

Print Name:

Signature:

Date:

Volunteer Supervisor: I confirm that all items in the induction checklist, including policies and procedures have been explained.

Print Name:

Signature:

Date:

Disclaimer - Reasonable precautions have been taken to ensure information in this publication is accurate. However, it is not intended to be legally comprehensive; it is designed to provide guidance in good faith without accepting liability. If relevant, we therefore recommend you take appropriate professional advice before taking any action on the matters covered herein.



RISK ASSESSMENT – for volunteer works on Allotment Site Located at				
Risk Assessment completed by				Date of Assessment
People at Risk: Tenants Co-Workers Volunteers RAA Representatives Visitors Contractors Residents				
Common Hazards	Actions / Standard Control Measures	Further Action / Comments	Action Level (High / Medium / Low)	Action Date
Slips, trips and falls	Maintain paths / mow grass / keep clear of debris. Wear appropriate footwear for the conditions	Tidy up plots regularly. Public areas mowed regularly during summer months Seek medical advice if required	Low	Ongoing
Contact with sharp objects / use of hand-tools	Injury resulting from discarded objects / use of hand tools. Remove any Broken glass / glass bottles / broken plant pots / from site.	Allotment is fenced and locked to reduce the risk of unauthorised access Tenant responsibility to remove Wear gloves / appropriate PPE Use tool as per manufacturer's instructions / training Ensure fit-for-purpose and maintained regularly	Low	ongoing
Waste	Injury resulting from plastic, metal and wooden debris	Place in an area where it is not going to cause a risk. Provide skips where possible.	Medium	Ongoing
Use of machinery – lawn mowers / strimmers etc.	Cuts / damage to property	Ensure machines are maintained regularly Use as per manufacturer's instructions Use adequate / appropriate PPE Training - TBC	Medium	Medium Ongoing



RISK ASSESSMENT – for volunteer works on Allotment Site Located at				
Risk Assessment completed by				Date of Assessment
Exposure to the elements: Cold and sun / heat	Hypothermia, sunburn, Sunstroke, dehydration	Dress appropriately to weather conditions (coats / hats / gloves etc.) Use sunscreen. Avoid sun in peak hours Take regular breaks to reduce exhaustion	Plan for every weather type Always have drinking water available	Low Ongoing
Exposure to bacteria, pathogens, allergens etc.	Disease, infection, allergic reaction, anaphylactic shock	Check areas for faeces. Cover cuts and grazes Wear gloves when handling compost and animal manure Wash hands thoroughly or use hand sanitising gel Use appropriate medication when required	Use PPE where required Ensure vaccinations are up to date, e.g. tetanus Advise of severe allergies	Medium Ongoing
Toilets (where applicable)	Disease, blocked drains	Leave clean after every use Follow good hygiene practices Don't flush inappropriate items	Use own disposable products / hand sanitiser	Low Ongoing
Vehicles	Accidents, damage	Ensure full driver's license, tax and insurance Drive at 5mph maximum onsite Park in designated areas only Don't obstruct access for tenants / residents	Walk to sites where possible	Low Ongoing



Inappropriate conduct and antisocial activities	Verbal / Physical abuse, intimidation and damage / theft of property	Incidents to be reported to the RAA for investigation. Criminal acts to be reported to South Yorkshire Police. Remove yourself from situations	Tenant / volunteer to follow terms of Tenancy Agreement / Allotment Rules at all times	Low Ongoing
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RISK ASSESSMENT – for volunteer works on Allotment Site Located at	
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Risk Assessment completed by		Date of Assessment
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COMMENTS / ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
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- Each allotment holder / volunteer responsible for their actions and use of allotment gardens
- Each allotment holder / volunteer is responsible for their health and safety and the health and safety of others • All children must be supervised at all times by parents and / or carers

Continued misuse of allotment gardens or careless actions towards others may result in eviction from the site if deemed necessary.

N.B: The main focus of undertaking risk assessments is to identify areas where there is a significant risk, with the requirement to identify and implement controls which will reduce the level of risk to the lowest acceptable level.

RISK ASSESSMENT (Cont) – for volunteer works on Allotment Site Located at	
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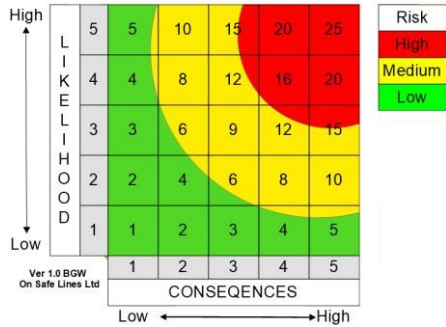
Project specific tasks	What is the hazard?	Local control measures	Further Action / Comments	Action Level and Date

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All risks should be assessed utilizing the matrix based on LIKELIHOOD AND CONSEQUENCES. Scores within the green LOW sector may require no further action, those in yellow MEDIUM risk may require measures to reduce risk and those in red HIGH zone need immediate action to reduce or remove the risk completely.