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Volunteering Policy

Introduction

St Erth Parish Council (the Council) recognises the valuable contribution that volunteers can make to the work it does in the community and how vital volunteers can be for projects and events to be successful.

The Council also recognises that volunteers are motivated, because it is their choice to volunteer and give their time freely. In return, the Council wishes to provide volunteers with opportunities that will help them to develop new skills and experiences.

The aim of this policy is to ensure volunteers are safe and appreciated when volunteering with the Council. It is designed to provide a framework for how the Council will manage volunteers and what volunteers can expect from the Council; it sets out the principles and practice by which the Council will involve volunteers.

This policy applies to all volunteers undertaking work or duties on behalf of the Council in a voluntary capacity. It does not apply to those who are directly employed or contracted by the Council, or to Councillors.

Principles

All employees and Councillors will be expected to work positively with any volunteers.

The Council aims to provide volunteers with a satisfying role and ensure that they are adequately trained to be able to carry out the role.

The Council will not introduce volunteers to replace paid staff.

The Clerk will undertake the role of Volunteer Coordinator and is responsible for all volunteers.

The Council is committed to providing equal opportunities for all volunteers, irrespective of their characteristics and opposes all forms of unlawful or unfair discrimination. The Council's [Equal Opportunities Policy](#) will always be adhered to in relation to the recruitment and support of volunteers.

Recruitment

The Council may recruit volunteers on an ad-hoc basis depending on opportunities available using a range of methods, including word of mouth, advertising, talking with other organisations or engaging volunteers through another organisation. It may also directly approach people who have previously volunteered with the Council.

The Council will endeavour to help a volunteer overcome barriers which may make it difficult for them to volunteer. There may, however, be occasions when it is not possible to accept an offer to volunteer. If this is the case, the Council will inform the individual without delay and try to signpost them to other organisations to help them find alternative opportunities.

All volunteers will be asked to sign a volunteer agreement (Appendix 2) which details the role they agree to undertake (Appendix 1), indicates agreement to the Council's relevant policies and sets out the intentions and expectations of both parties. This requirement may be disapplied where volunteers are working through a partner organisation which has a similar agreement in place for its volunteers.

Training

All volunteers will receive an induction and relevant training that is directly related to the tasks they will be undertaking. The exact nature of the training will depend on the work involved, but will ensure that volunteers are aware of the appropriate risk assessment and any safety measures applicable to the particular role.

Support and Supervision

All volunteers will have a named person as their main point of contact, usually the Clerk.

Where appropriate (for example for ongoing volunteer work) volunteers will receive regular supervision to feedback on progress and discuss future development.

The Council may offer training and development opportunities where it helps fulfil the volunteer's role or where it is required for health and safety purposes or in compliance with the law.

The Council will invite volunteers to provide feedback on activity they are engaged in, including, but not limited to, the post-event evaluation of events and projects.

The Council wishes to identify and resolve any problems at the earliest possible stage and volunteers are encouraged to raise any grievance or complaint with the Clerk.

Health and Safety

The Council has responsibility for the health and safety of its volunteers and will undertake a risk assessment of all volunteering activities.

Volunteers must always follow the Council's health and safety policies and procedures; they have a duty of care to themselves and others who might be affected by their actions. Volunteers may also need to disclose any medical conditions which affect their ability to undertake certain activities.

The Council will inform volunteers of any specific health and safety measures which must be taken during a voluntary activity and volunteers must wear any PPE as required.

Volunteers must report any accidents to the Clerk and these must be recorded in the Council's accident book.

Volunteers are covered by the Council's insurance policies whilst undertaking official duties on behalf of the Council; cover is not provided for unauthorised actions or actions taken outside the volunteering agreement.

Expenses

Volunteers will only be reimbursed for any out-of-pocket expenses incurred on behalf of the Council where this has been approved in advance.

With prior agreement of the Clerk, reasonable personal expenses may be reimbursed on a case-by-case basis to enable volunteers to overcome financial barriers to volunteering.

Where expenses are agreed, receipts and a claim form must be submitted.

Volunteer Conduct

Volunteers represent the Council and whilst they are not employees there are certain expectations the Council has for its volunteers. Volunteers are expected to:

- undertake their volunteering duties to the best of their ability;
- treat all volunteers, staff, contractors and members of the public fairly and courteously;
- respect decisions taken by staff and follow all reasonable instructions;
- follow safety procedures and wear any PPE provided;
- wear appropriate clothing (including suitable footwear), provide identification (if required), and take necessary steps to protect themselves in the environment they are working in (e.g. protection from UV rays through the use of sunscreen and a hat);
- not behave in a way which could bring the Council into disrepute;
- return any equipment/clothing supplied at the end of their duties.

Volunteers may have access to personal data or sensitive information about the work of the Council, its volunteers and staff, clients or other organisations. There is an absolute requirement both during and after volunteering with the Council to maintain confidentiality and not pass on information to any individual or third-party organisation unless required to do so by law.

Right to Leave

The Council recognises that volunteers give their time freely and are under no obligation to give notice. However, it is greatly appreciated if volunteers can provide advance notice if they are either unable to attend their volunteer role or wish to end their volunteering arrangement with the Council. If a volunteer consistently does not turn up for an agreed session without any notice, this may impact their ability to volunteer for the Council in the future.

Adopted	10 th September 2024	097/09/24-25a)
Reviewed	30 th September 2025	112/09/25-26a)
Review due	Sept 2027	

Appendix 1 – Volunteer Role Description

Example to be completed by the Clerk / Project Lead to suit the role

Role Title	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• St Erth Volunteer River Warden
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To ensure the long-term sustainability and impact of the green bank repairs that are being carried out on Section 2 of the River Hayle as part of the St Erth Riverside Regeneration & Community Access Project (SERRCAP)
Tasks & Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regular monitoring of natural bank reinforcements carried out by Westcountry Rivers Trust (WRT)• Ongoing maintenance of these reinforcements• Tree planting and monitoring
Skills, experience & qualities required	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No specific skills or experience are required• A desire to help protect the riverbank footpath from further erosion
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Training to be arranged by the Clerk to include safe working practices in accordance with the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and to include First Aid training if identified as being needed.• Subsequently to be agree
Support offered	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Initial training and induction day delivered by WRT will:<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ outline how to approach the ongoing maintenance of the natural bank reinforcements safely and competently;✓ cover safe working conditions, hazard identification, correct tool use, required PPE and safe approach to the works.• Ongoing support from the Clerk as required
What you could get out of it	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The satisfaction of being part of a team helping to ensure the long-term sustainability of the riverbank walk for future generations• The health benefits gained through meeting new people, being out in the fresh air and physical exercise
Other information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Anyone undertaking this role must read and agree to comply with the Council's Volunteering Policy
Point of contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fiona Drew, Clerk – 01736 757575 or email: clerk@sterth-pc.gov.uk

Appendix 2 – Volunteer Agreement

Thank you for volunteering with St Erth Parish Council (SEPC). SEPC appreciates your commitment and will its best to make your voluntary experience enjoyable and rewarding. This agreement should be read in conjunction with the relevant Volunteer Role Description and sets out the intentions and expectations of both parties.

SEPC is committed to:

- ensuring any volunteer roles align with current safety guidelines;
- providing volunteers with induction and training relevant to the activity being undertaken;
- providing adequate tool and equipment safety awareness training and ensuring volunteers know what to do to stay safe;
- providing adequate insurance to cover volunteers whilst undertaking approved and authorised volunteering;
- ensuring that all volunteers are treated fairly;
- trying to resolve fairly any issues or difficulties that a volunteer raises;
- following up any feedback or questions a volunteer may have.

I agree to volunteer with SEPC and am committed to the following:

- performing my volunteering role to the best of my ability;
- following reasonable instructions from the Volunteer Coordinator and / or Project Lead;
- familiarising myself with the purpose and methods of the volunteering project;
- not working under the influence of alcohol or drugs;
- working safely as advised by the Volunteer Coordinator and / or Project Lead.

I have read and agree to abide by SEPC's Volunteering Policy, and the relevant Risk Assessments that I will be provided with, and am aware that volunteering is done freely and not in return for wages.

Name: _____ **Signed:** _____ **Date:** _____
(Volunteer)

Name: _____ **Signed:** _____ **Date:** _____
(On behalf of SEPC)

VOLUNTEER CONTACT DETAILS:

Name: _____ Address: _____

Phone no: _____ Email Address: _____

Person to contact in the event of an emergency: _____

Emergency Contact's Phone no: _____

St Erth Parish Council is committed to protecting your personal data and complies with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). We collect and process your information only where necessary for the lawful functions of the Council, and we take appropriate security measures to safeguard your data. You have the right to access, rectify, or erase your personal information held by us. For further details on how we handle your data, please refer to our full [Privacy Notice](#) available on our website.