



Volunteer Policy

This policy has been adopted by Highfield Park Trust

Date Ratified: July 2019

Review Date: May 2020

Signed: T Abbott

Position: Chair of Trustees



Volunteer Policy

Values

- 1 Highfield Park Trust values the involvement of volunteers in its work because they help reflect the interests, needs and resources of the community we aim to serve and bring a unique perspective to all our work.
- 2 Highfield Park Trust recognises volunteers as a core part of our team, with a distinctive but complementary role alongside paid staff.
- 3 Highfield Park Trust recognises the benefit it gains from the skills, experience and enthusiasm of volunteers, we believe that volunteers should be able to gain personal benefits from the experience. We are committed to managing volunteers in a way that ensures that the needs of both parties are met.
- 4 Highfield Park Trust strives to create a diverse and inclusive organisation within a diverse and inclusive community. Therefore, we are committed to ensuring equality of access to high quality volunteer opportunities and equality of treatment for our volunteers in all our policies and practices.

Preparation and planning

- 5 Highfield Park Trust identifies roles for volunteers which extend the work of the organisation. Volunteers are involved at every level of the organisation in roles which complement, but never substitute, the work of paid staff.
- 6 Volunteers will not be used in times of industrial action to do the work of paid staff. They may continue with their regular tasks, but will not be asked to undertake additional duties.
- 7 All volunteers are provided with an explanation of their role, outlining the purpose, tasks and main expectations.
- 8 Volunteers with Highfield Park Trust are fully protected by the organisation's public liability and personal accident insurance. However, drivers using their cars in connection with their voluntary work must inform their own insurance company to ensure adequate and continued cover.
- 9 Highfield Park Trust will not normally reimburse volunteers travel expenses.
- 10 Highfield Park Trust endeavours to provide adequate and appropriate facilities, equipment and resources to enable volunteers to fulfil their roles.
- 11 The Park Manager is responsible for the overall management of volunteer involvement, including overseeing the implementation of this policy and dealing with any complaint or grievance relating to volunteers. The Park Supervisor and Groundsman provide support and supervision and identifies specific training requirements.

Recruitment and selection

- 12 Highfield Park Trust is committed to serving and representing all the people of St Albans and the surrounding district and wishes to see all sections of the community represented among our volunteers. Volunteer opportunities are widely promoted via the Trust website and St Albans CVS, and the Trust will endeavour to make recruitment and selection materials available in a format accessible to any individual or group, upon request.
- 13 Highfield Park Trust implements a fair, effective and open system in the recruitment and selection of volunteers and treats all information collected in this process confidentially. All potential volunteers will go through a recruitment and selection process that is appropriate to the role offered. Highfield Park Trust uses registration forms, references and informal chats / interviews. Additional measures may be implemented depending on the nature of the volunteer role and police records checks are conducted where appropriate.

The process is conducted by appropriately briefed/trained staff and aims to allow **both** parties to give and receive sufficient information to assess whether the volunteer opportunities available match the potential volunteer's skills, qualities and interests.

If unsuccessful, individuals will be offered an opportunity to discuss the outcome and identify possible alternatives within or outside of Highfield Park Trust.

- 14 All volunteers are provided with an induction within four weeks of commencing their voluntary work. The induction: provides background information on Highfield Park Trust; explains its structures and procedures; describes the volunteer role and the work team and outlines how s/he will be supported, including any practical information e.g. clothing. During the induction period volunteers will be provided with information on relevant legislation, organisational policies and codes of practice and will be given the opportunity to discuss any of the issues with the Park Manager.
- 15 All volunteer placements are subject to a settling in period, the length of which depends on the nature and hours of the voluntary work. During this period volunteers are given additional support if necessary and a review meeting between the volunteer and his/her supervisor is held at the end of the settling in period to ensure that all parties are satisfied with the arrangement.
- 16 Day-to-day help and guidance on any issue related to the voluntary work can be sought at any time from the Park Manager, Supervisor or Groundsman who are responsible for providing regular support to, and supervision of, the volunteer.
- 17 Highfield Park Trust is committed to improving the effectiveness of volunteers. Volunteers may request in-house training course that they feel is relevant to their voluntary work. Volunteers may also apply to the Park Manager for financial and practical support to attend external courses, where they can be shown to have a clear relevance to the voluntary work. Volunteers attending approved training courses, internal or external, may do so within their normal hours of voluntary work and may reclaim out-of-pocket expenses.
- 18 Highfield Park Trust aims to reflect the voluntary nature of the relationship with volunteers in all our policies and procedures for managing their involvement. Therefore, the volunteer's designated supervisor deals with minor complaints or grievances about or by volunteers or their work through the usual support and supervision procedures, in the first instance. However, the Trust recognises its duty to protect the wellbeing and interests of all our stakeholders and therefore operate a formal complaints procedure in the case of more serious complaints. In the case of particularly serious offences as detailed in the Trust Disciplinary procedure, this process may be bypassed and/or the subject of the complaint asked to leave. Where a criminal offence is suspected, the matter will be handed over to the police.
- 19 Highfield Park Trust recognises the core role that volunteers fulfil at every level of the organisation. It endeavours to communicate with volunteers in appropriate ways. It also recognises the importance of seeking volunteers' ideas and opinions. Feedback from volunteers is always welcome and any volunteer may make representations to the Board of Trustees.