



Volunteering Policy

Reviewed Feb 2022

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Management Committee to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

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Overview

Any enquiries can be directed to volunteer@hcf.org

The activities that volunteers can help Horton Community Farm (HCF) in are...

- Gardening and maintaining the site alongside other volunteers and staff
- Working in the therapy garden alongside our staff and directly with our clients
- Helping with fundraising activities to develop and sustain the project
- Working on admin
- Helping with our marketing

Time commitments can vary from one-off days to regular support depending on the type of volunteering. Volunteers who work directly with clients will need to undergo a criminal records check (DBS – Disclosure and Barring Service) before starting their volunteering. We ask that volunteers who work directly with our clients commit to the project for a minimum period of three months on a regular day each week so that we can create a stable environment for our clients.

Volunteers have much to gain from volunteering at our project. It provides people with the opportunity to learn new skills, develop old ones, meet new people, try out new things and have some fun. In addition, we endeavour to provide them with support (including a named contact) and interesting and challenging work. We will also cover reasonable out-of-pocket expenses.

What volunteers need to do to join

Volunteers can apply for a placement to do site work (lasting at least 8 sessions over two months) via our website (or by requesting a paper form). The application process involves collecting an applicant's contacts, medical information in case of emergency and any other useful information that will enhance their experience.

If people wish to volunteer with us working directly with clients, we ask them to supply us with the contacts of two independent referees and complete a DBS. We invite volunteers to join us for a session on a trial basis. If volunteers are working directly with clients, we invite them to work with us for 4 sessions in the first instance.

Policies relevant to volunteers

HCF has put in place several policies and procedures, all available on our website, that are part of our volunteer support system – something we take seriously. Not all policies and procedures will be relevant to all volunteers; this will depend on the role or activity in which they are involved. A volunteer's named contact will make sure they are aware of all policies and procedures relevant to them at their induction. If they would like further information or guidance on any of our policies and procedures, their named contact will be happy to discuss them.

Equal Opportunities

We aim to create an environment free from unlawful discrimination on the grounds of colour, race, religious/political beliefs, trade union membership, nationality, ethnic origin, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age or marital status and develop a community which supports equality, diversity and inclusion.

Our aim is to ensure that our policies and practices are without prejudice. Decisions relating to an individual are made purely on the basis of merit and ability.

Harassment

Harassment describes the behaviour of one or more persons that another person or group of people, finds unacceptable or unwanted. Harassment occurs when unwanted aggression or attention is given on the grounds listed above in the Equal Opportunities section or any other grounds. Harassment can take place face to face via words and actions or via telephone or e-mail.

It does not matter how the behaviour was intended. It is the effect it has on the recipient that determines if it is harassment. Harassment of any kind is a form of discrimination.

It is no excuse to say, "I was only joking." Harassment is often taken to refer to sexual advances (sexual harassment), however many things can form the basis of unwanted aggression and attention.

Volunteers are responsible for their own behaviour and are expected to act in a manner that avoids and discourages any form of harassment. Volunteers are required to uphold this policy and to report any known actions of harassment to HCF's management committee.

Confidentiality

Everyone involved at HCF has the right to confidentiality. HCF is committed to providing a confidential service and to integrating the principles of confidentiality throughout the organisation.

Volunteer Health and Safety

Health and safety is important. Under the [Health and Safety at Work Act \(1974\)](#), HCF has a duty of care to make sure there are systems in place to ensure the health and safety of its volunteers. HCF has a written Health and Safety Policy, which is available on our website or from your named contact. Volunteers also have a duty of care to look after themselves and those with whom they come into contact. Staff and volunteers together can help to promote a positive safety culture throughout HCF. Your named contact is there to support you. Get in touch as soon as possible if you have any concerns about health and safety, or if you are worried about your own role.

Induction and Training

All new volunteers receive an induction to the project to introduce them to the project, its staff and clients (where applicable) and their role within the project. Any initial training required will also be provided at induction.

Insurance

HCF Provides adequate insurance cover for volunteers undertaking voluntary work approved by us and agreed in advance.

Complaints

Complaints should be taken to the staff member, client or volunteer involved, in the first instance, if possible. If they are not available, or they failed to satisfactorily resolve your complaint or you feel unable to approach them directly, another staff member will handle your complaint. If you don't wish or are unable to meet with them in person you may send your complaint by email. The email addresses for HCF staff begin with the first name of the staff member followed by @hcf.org.uk

Current staff and their email addresses can be found on our [website at this link](#).

If your complaint fails to be addressed to your satisfaction within the HCF organisation, a third party will be solicited to mediate. In the case of a serious enough action by HCF being committed that you suspect is breaking the law, you may feel it necessary to call the police.

[See our full complaints policy on our website for more details.](#)