

A guide for green space volunteers

Essential information about volunteering in council parks and open spaces



Basingstoke
and Deane

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Key to symbols



Important information



There is a template for this in the toolkit for green space volunteers booklet

1. Introduction

Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council values the enormous contribution given by local volunteers who help to manage our parks and open spaces for the benefit of both people and wildlife.

This guide will offer general advice on how you can volunteer across the council's green spaces, as well as how to run nature-related activities on council land, increasing awareness of the safety requirements. The council has a duty of care to ensure that all locally organised activities on council land are held in a safe manner and this guide offers assistance in complying with regulations.

The guidance aims to be comprehensive and covers most of the regular activities and hazards relating to green space volunteering. However, on occasion, unforeseen circumstances may occur that mean new temporary or permanent guidance is issued which could work alongside, or override, elements of existing guidance. If this is the case, all community groups and volunteers will be notified.

Green space activities can include, but are not limited to:

- **practical work parties**
- **guided walks**
- **family wildlife activities**
- **or ecological surveying.**

There are several ways that you can volunteer to help look after council green spaces:

- **As part of a corporate volunteering session with your company or organisation.**
- **Volunteering for a specific and regular role.**
- **Ad hoc volunteering at council-run work parties.**
- **Joining one of the borough's local green space volunteer groups.**

Corporate volunteering

For organisations based in Basingstoke and Deane looking for volunteer opportunities for employees as part of the company's corporate social responsibility, the council can organise and deliver corporate volunteer days undertaking practical conservation work in one of the council's green spaces.

Volunteering with the council

The council recruits individual volunteers to fulfil specific roles, including park volunteers, volunteer rangers, community engagement volunteers and volunteer ecologists. These volunteer opportunities come with role profiles to help explain more about what is involved. The roles are discussed in more detail in chapter 2.

For ad hoc volunteering opportunities, council staff also run regular practical volunteer sessions throughout autumn and winter, when the bulk of habitat management work is undertaken outside of bird nesting season. In spring and summer, there are also opportunities to volunteer with the council helping to deliver wildlife events and activities, for example pond-dipping as part of Love Parks Week.



Local green space groups

The council is fortunate to have numerous local conservation, wildlife and green space groups helping to maintain, conserve and improve public open spaces for the benefit of wildlife and residents. Details about these groups, the sites they work on and the activities they undertake can be found here: www.basingstoke.gov.uk/conservationgroups

Natural Basingstoke is an umbrella volunteer group based in the borough that offers technical and administrative support to the local green space groups mentioned above. To find out more, visit their website: <http://naturalbasingstoke.org.uk> or follow/like their page on Facebook: www.facebook.com/naturalbasingstoke

For further information about any of the volunteer opportunities listed above, please contact wildlifeconservation@basingstoke.gov.uk

Part 1

Volunteering with the council

2. Volunteer opportunities

There are many different opportunities to volunteer with the council in our green spaces. Between October and March, the council runs practical conservation work parties once a month which everyone is invited to join. You don't need to have any prior experience as all the tasks and tools will be explained at the start of each session. Just come suitably dressed for the weather conditions and working outdoors, with sturdy boots on, and we will organise the rest.

To find out more about council work parties, email wildlifeconservation@basingstoke.gov.uk, phone 01256 844844, or like/follow the council and/or Natural Basingstoke on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/BasingstokeGov
www.facebook.com/naturalbasingstoke

For those looking to volunteer more regularly, to gain experience and develop new skills, or to help out during the spring and summer months, there may also be opportunities to apply for specific volunteer roles, which will be advertised when opportunities arise. Roles will be offered subject to a successful application process and suitable references.

Parks Volunteer

This role is for individuals who would like to help look after certain areas of particular parks which don't currently benefit from the help of a local volunteer group, or where volunteers would like to undertake some general maintenance work on behalf of the council for their own enjoyment, wellbeing, or to gain skills and experience to help with their future career. The role will likely involve lone working, so only low risk tasks will be approved. The role will be supported by the Community Green Space Officer who will liaise with the council's Grounds Maintenance team to agree suitable activities.

Volunteer Ranger

This role supports both the council's Community Green Space Officer and the Biodiversity Rangers in delivering practical conservation and habitat management, undertaking ecological surveys and helping with volunteer-related administration. You will be working directly alongside council staff as part of the role, so would need to be available on weekdays and would have a regular pattern of volunteering so that a work programme can be put together that works for both you and the council.

Community Engagement Volunteer

This role is primarily active in the spring and summer months, during our events season, on an ad hoc basis. Love Parks Week is in July and events include children's wildlife activities, pond-dipping, bug hunts and nature crafts. Additionally, the council also runs bat walks and other nature events later in summer through to early autumn. You don't need to commit to any specific times for this role – you can attend any events to help when you are available.

Volunteer Ecologist

For people with an interest in ecology and surveying wildlife, we have numerous sites across Basingstoke where monitoring is currently under way, or where we would like it to begin. Volunteers undertake plant surveys, bird surveys, invertebrate surveys and more. Basic identification skills are essential, but many naturalists are self-taught. As with the Community Engagement Volunteer role, this type of volunteering is on a more ad hoc basis and can be undertaken at any point during the right season, when it is most practical for you.

Your health, safety and wellbeing

When you are volunteering directly with the council, either supervised as part of a work party, or by fulfilling one of the individual volunteer roles, you will be covered under the council's public liability insurance. This means that should any incidents occur whilst you are volunteering which result in damage to third party property or person, it is covered by the council's policy. Additionally, you will be protected by – and expected to adhere to – all of the relevant council policies, including 'health, safety and wellbeing' and 'equality and diversity'. The Community Green Space Officer can direct you to these policies.

There may be training opportunities available, where a specific need has been identified, and you will be provided with the necessary Personal Protective Equipment, tools and any other additional equipment needed to undertake the work safely.

When volunteering directly with the council, your primary contact staff member will be the Community Green Space Officer. This role manages and coordinates all volunteering across the council's green spaces and will be able to support you with any queries. You will also be covered by the council's Framework for the Engagement of Volunteers, which includes information about responsibilities, equal opportunities and what to do if you have any problems.

If you take up one of the specific volunteer roles listed on the previous page, you will be given a volunteer agreement to read and sign, which explains the role itself, what you can expect from the council as well the council's expectations of you as a volunteer.



3. Corporate volunteering

The council offers the opportunity for businesses and other organisations to fulfil their corporate social responsibility targets through volunteering. Between the months of September and March, practical conservation sessions can be arranged, organised and delivered by council staff and volunteers.

Timings

The main conservation season runs outside of bird nesting season, which means scrub and woodland management for the year needs to be within the six-month window of September to February. Some work can be undertaken into March, but only when surveys have proven there will be no disturbance to nesting. During these autumn and winter months, the council can offer a variety of enjoyable practical tasks, which not only help make the site better for both wildlife and local residents, but provide some great team bonding opportunities outside of the usual office environment.

Activities

Typical activities for your corporate volunteering day would include clearing scrub (small trees) off meadow areas, coppicing and thinning woodlands, clearing out and opening up watercourses and other hands-on practical conservation tasks. Hand tools are used, including loppers, pruning saws and mattocks, but no powered machinery will be available for corporate volunteers.





Support

Depending on the size of the group, the council will provide at least one trained supervisor for the day and will bring all the necessary tools and Personal Protective Equipment required for the activity. The minimum group size for a corporate session is eight and maximum is 40, although this will depend on staff availability and location/ task. If your group size is small, you may be paired with another group to make the session more worthwhile. Your employees will be covered by the council's public liability insurance whilst under our duty of care and they will receive a health and safety briefing and tools talk at the start of the session. Risk assessments will be provided in advance and we will ensure there is a first aider and first aid kit on site at all times.

Costs

There is currently no cost to book a corporate volunteering session, however you would need to arrange your own refreshments and lunch for the day, whether this is a packed lunch provided by the individual employees themselves, or a group lunch ordered for the session. A brew kit and some biscuits will be supplied for the session.

Clothing

Those attending would need to wear sensible outdoor clothes, appropriate for the weather conditions, that participants are happy to get muddy, including waterproofs if showers are forecast. They would also need to wear sturdy footwear, such as safety boots, hiking boots or wellies. Trainers/pumps are not appropriate on our countryside sites or for tool use, so we do have some safety boots that participants can borrow for the session if they don't have anything suitable. If heavy rain is forecast for much of the day, or strong winds make the activity unsafe, we may look to rearrange, however light rain won't result in a cancellation as long as people come suitably dressed.

To find out more about corporate volunteering opportunities, or to book your session, please email wildlifeconservation@basingstoke.gov.uk

4. Council staff roles

There are several council employees that you may come into contact with when volunteering:

Ranger Services team

The Community Green Space Officer is the first point of contact for all volunteer enquiries, whether as an individual, with a local group or through corporate requests. The post is responsible for:

- **Managing and monitoring the health, safety and wellbeing of green space volunteers working on council land.**
- **Producing timetables with information about all the local groups' work parties.**
- **Organising training provided by the council for volunteers.**
- **Producing the Community Payback schedule for group support.**
- **Providing advice and support for local groups.**
- **Delivering a programme of engagement events for the public in Basingstoke's green spaces throughout the year.**

Responsibility for natural green space management and volunteer work programming sits with the Ranger Services Team Leader. Also in this team are the Biodiversity Rangers who work alongside the Community Green Space Officer and the Conservation Volunteers to deliver group support and practical habitat management in accordance with site specific management plans. The Rangers are supported by an apprentice who will be learning about countryside management during the course of their employment.

Natural Environment team

This team is made up of several posts with technical knowledge regarding the council's natural assets. The biodiversity officers provide advice on wildlife and conservation, ensuring groups undertake work that is of benefit to local biodiversity and is in line with national and international wildlife regulations and policies. They also work with the Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre (HBIC), who manage ecological data collected within the borough on the council's behalf. The Tree team can provide advice on tree and woodland management, including council-owned trees and woodland, tree preservation orders (TPOs) and conservation areas. The Landscape Architects deliver open space improvements funded by S106 developer contributions. The Natural Environment team leader is the manager responsible for this team.

Grounds Maintenance team

The Grounds Maintenance team is made up of location-based teams and the tractor team, who focus on the maintenance of parks and amenity green space including amenity grass mowing, shrub bed and hedgerow maintenance, all of whom have strict work schedules. As such, they are not often a resource that can be called upon, as they have their own schedule of works to undertake.

Part 2

Guidance for volunteer groups

5. Practical information

5.1. Council support to green space volunteer groups

The council is fortunate to have numerous local conservation, wildlife and green space groups helping to maintain, conserve and improve public open spaces for the benefit of wildlife and residents. Details about these groups, the sites they work on and the activities they undertake can be found here:

www.basingstoke.gov.uk/conservationgroups

Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council greatly values the significant contribution given by volunteers and is committed to supporting local groups. For a group to contribute to green space management on council-owned public spaces, they must agree with the council what their role and contribution will be and how they will operate, which will be summarised in a group volunteer agreement (see chapter 7.1 'group volunteer agreements' for further information).

For a community group to be self-sustaining, it should focus on activities that volunteers can undertake unsupervised by council staff, such as tasks that don't rely on heavy machinery. In line with the specific group volunteer agreement, the council will commit to undertaking higher risk tasks on priority sites where a need has been identified and agreed. However, there may be occasions at times of high demand when requests for work submitted by groups will need to be assessed in terms of priority – in order to make the most efficient use of available resources – and they may take some time to implement. Should this occur, the council commits to working with the groups to find an alternative solution, wherever practicable.

The council retains the right to decide whether work can go ahead on public land and will endeavour to accommodate requests, however it may not always be possible to do so. In such circumstances, reasons for the decision will be communicated by the relevant teams.

5.2. Communicating with the council team

Queries/requests/reporting



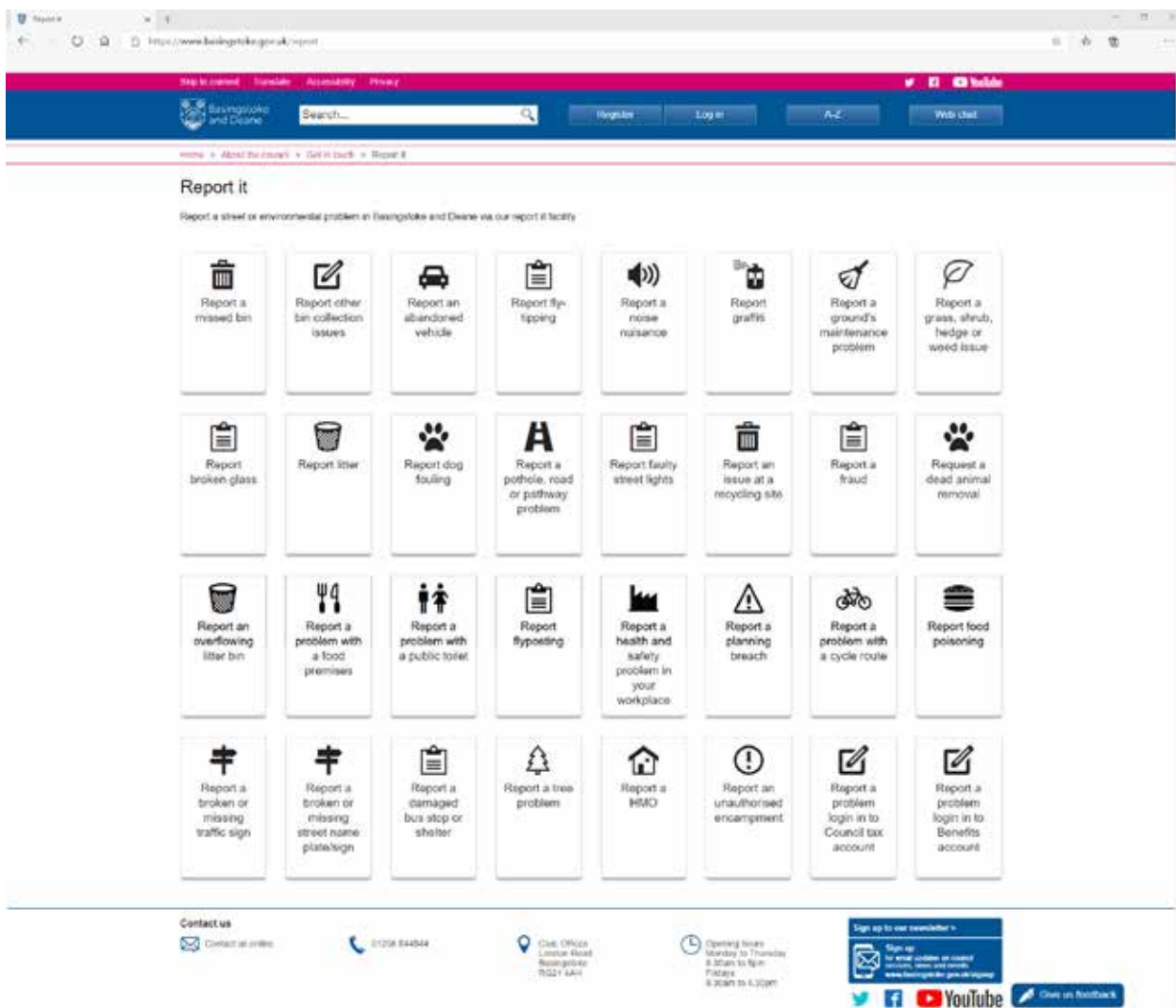
All queries from volunteers or groups should come straight through to the Community Green Space Officer in the first instance. They can be contacted by emailing wildlifeconservation@basingstoke.gov.uk

The Community Green Space Officer can redirect to the most relevant member of council staff and gauge the type and frequency of issues arising from different sites. Whilst the Community Green Space Officer will endeavour to follow up on all queries as soon as possible, there is only one person in this position and chasing numerous colleagues and teams for answers to sometimes complex questions can take its time, so patience is appreciated.



Please note: For urgent issues on site, including fly-tipping, tree safety, graffiti, bonfires, vandalism and many others, there is an official reporting webpage on the council website, which ensures potentially hazardous problems are sent directly to the correct team for a quick response. Please visit www.basingstoke.gov.uk/report. Alternatively, you can call the contact centre on 01256 844844.

Even if you have the email address of council employees in the relevant team, reporting via the methods above is the agreed procedure to ensure a swift response and for issues to be logged and monitored accurately and consistently. It also avoids urgent issues sitting unread in officers' inboxes if they are on leave or out of the office.



Information sharing and updates

The Community Green Space Officer will keep volunteers and groups up to date with any of the latest information regarding work parties, training, funding, health and safety and other topics of interest and importance.

In addition to regular email updates, an annual green space volunteer forum will be held. The forum will enable current and relevant queries to be raised and answered, as well as providing a platform to communicate health and safety updates, discuss issues and facilitate networking between different volunteers and groups. It is expected that a representative from each volunteer group will attend.

Meetings

Meetings with council employees may take place from time to time, as this is often an effective way of discussing issues. These can take place on site, if useful to see areas being discussed, or at council offices (Civic Offices or Wade Road depot) by prior arrangement only.



Please note: All meetings must be arranged in advance; we regret that it will not be possible to assist people outside of a pre-arranged meeting. Volunteers are expected to follow the Customer Service Charter when communicating with council employees: www.basingstoke.gov.uk/customer-service-charter. Abusive or aggressive behaviour, whether written or verbal, will not be tolerated.

Natural Basingstoke

In addition to information being disseminated by the council, the Natural Basingstoke committee may also keep groups informed of training opportunities delivered by the group, tool availability and sharing, events and activities open to all volunteer groups and much more. The Community Green Space Officer regularly attends meetings with Natural Basingstoke to help answer queries and update the committee on any relevant news.



6. Support and planning

6.1. Prioritising support and work planning

Depending on the site that you work on and the activities that you do, you will either be:

- **Aiding the council in carrying out its regular management of a priority green space, often detailed through a management plan or agreed work programme (e.g. woodland thinning/ scrub clearance).**
- **Carrying out other activities on behalf of a community group over and above assisting the council to carry out its essential habitat management (e.g. community gardens/ improving the visual quality of parks/ management on sites not deemed high priority habitat by the council).**

The council prioritises the resources it has for work in parks and open spaces using a variety of means, including, not exclusively, the biodiversity value of the site, site designations, actions within the Green Infrastructure Strategy, whether external funding has been secured and if aspirations of local residents have been captured in a community plan, to name a few.

6.2. Work planning

Some sites that groups work on will be covered by management plans. These are written by the council and they set out the aspirations for site management over a five or ten year period. At the back of these management plans, there is an action plan that has specific tasks to be completed by different council teams, as well as highlighting possible projects for volunteers. These may be undertaken either by the local group, or by corporate volunteers.

For groups working on priority sites, council officers will aim to arrange an annual site visit before the start of the autumn work season. This will enable you to talk through the work you have undertaken over the past year, review what was achieved and any difficulties you had and to discuss priorities for the coming year. It will also enable council officers to help plan the best support for activities on site, using a mix of resources, and for you to decide which tasks would be most suitable for your group's work parties for the coming season.

If your site doesn't have an official council management plan, you may have produced your own with some guidance from the council.



In cases where a site visit isn't undertaken, work plans will need to be sent to the council and agreed in writing prior to the new work season in autumn.

Once you are happy with the agreed activities for the coming season and you have confirmed your dates and tasks, you may find it useful to sit down as a committee and plan several months of work parties, thinking about supervision, tools, first aid requirements, etc.



To help you plan this, there is a template activity plan in the guidelines toolkit. This isn't compulsory, but many groups find it useful.

7. Agreements and insurance

7.1. Group volunteer agreements

In order for the council to fulfil its duty of care and to ensure the group understands the permitted activities and tasks relating to a specific site, representatives of the local group will be asked to sign a group volunteer agreement on behalf of their members.

This agreement will include a map of the site(s) and will detail specific work that can be undertaken, where necessary highlighting areas of the site that volunteers are authorised to work. If your site supports any priority or designated habitats, protected or notable species, is in a conservation area or has tree preservation orders, these will also be detailed to ensure everyone in the group is aware and comfortable with what this information means in relation to the work they undertake. The map will also show agreed sacrifice areas and vehicular access points where applicable (see chapters 9.2 'Green waste/ arisings' and 8.13 'Driving on site' respectively for more information).





7.2. Insurance

If your group is undertaking work on council-owned green spaces, unsupervised by council staff, then the group will need its own public liability insurance to cover any potential damages.

For groups who have been volunteering on council-owned land since before 2020 and/or those working on council priority sites undertaking the core management work of the council, BDBC will cover the cost of the group's public liability insurance. Groups formed from 2020 onwards working on non-priority council-owned sites will need to have their own public liability insurance funded by the group itself. For help with fundraising ideas or information about relevant grants please visit

www.bvaction.org.uk



Please note: Any activities undertaken on council-owned green spaces must be approved by the council and have been risk assessed. Under these circumstances, if an incident should occur, the group's public liability insurance policy should cover any legitimate claim. A claim against a public liability policy is for the costs incurred by the claimant as a result of the incident.

However, if you are found to be working in an unsafe manner, or to have not followed agreed safe working practices, public liability insurance will not cover the cost and outcome of a Health and Safety Executive investigation into the incident. This cannot be insured against and may end up in a court of law. The duties of the council, its employees and volunteers regarding health and safety are explained in more detail in the following chapter.

8. Health and safety

The council, as an employer, has a duty of care to both its employees and those people who come into contact with its business. By law we must ensure that our staff, volunteers and contractors are all safe and well at work and we must be confident that the work and services carried out on our land do not cause harm to anyone else.

Practical work in open space using tools and machinery carries a very high risk. The environment is unpredictable, tools and machinery can fail and are dangerous if used incorrectly or by untrained people, and most crucially, public open space means just that – there are local residents, including children and pets, using the same space at the same time.

There is a raft of legislation that the council and those undertaking activities on its land must ensure they adhere to. The basis of this is the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, which developed a series of regulations setting out how organisations are to keep their employees and others safe during work. The main ones relating to volunteer tasks you may undertake are listed below, with a brief explanation:

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, 1999	Risk assessments must be produced and reviewed regularly.
Personal Protective Equipment Regulations, 1992	Volunteers must be provided with – and use – the correct PPE for the job.
Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER), 1998	Volunteers must be formally trained and have their competency assessed before using machinery. Only machinery deemed suitable and appropriate by BDBC, with regular maintenance checks, is allowed to be used on council land.
The Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations, 1981	Volunteers must have an in-date British standard first aid kit with them. Each group also needs an appointed person who regularly checks the kit and orders replacement contents where necessary.
Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR), 2013	Volunteers must report all incidents and near misses to the council, within three days of them occurring, to ensure compliance with RIDDOR where necessary. Incident reporting is also a vital process of risk assessment review.
Manual Handling Operations Regulations, 1992	Volunteers must undertake tool talks to discuss manual handling techniques relating to tool and equipment use.

8.1. Running an activity



Before starting any activity, a safety plan must be produced.

This details whereabouts on site the work/event will be taking place, access information, the nearest accident and emergency hospital and other details. For those working on a small site, the safety plan will not vary much for each session.



There is a template safety plan in the guidelines toolkit.



All new volunteers should be inducted by an experienced volunteer.

Make them feel welcome and introduce them to all the members. Explain the tasks, tools, safety information and find out about any concerns they may have. Buddy new volunteers up with someone suitable for their first session.



At every work party session you should be undertaking a tools talk.

This is to remind existing members how the tools are to be safely used, transported and stored and provides the necessary induction for any new members.



Ensure to discuss manual handling, especially the lifting and carrying of tools/materials and avoiding twisting.

Back injuries are far too easy to pick up during a practical conservation session if people aren't thinking about how they use the tools.

The back of the safety plan has a register that volunteers must sign to say they have listened to, understood, and will adhere to the health and safety guidance discussed during the tools talk.



A copy of these completed safety plans needs to be sent to the Community Green Space Officer after each work party, who will store the data for the appropriate length of time.

8.2. Risk assessments



All open spaces worked in, or providing the backdrop for an event, must be risk assessed, along with any activities being undertaken in those sites.

A risk assessment identifies any hazards that might be present and enables you to estimate the severity of that hazard and how likely it is that the hazard will cause harm, providing you with a risk factor. Control measures can then be put in place to reduce the likelihood of the hazard causing harm, thus reducing the risk factor.

The council provides template risk assessments for all volunteers and local green space groups to use. The Community Green Space Officer can support groups to produce new risk assessments and to update existing ones.



All risk assessments used by groups must be reviewed and signed off annually by the council, or after any amendments/ updates. It is important that all volunteers and members of groups have seen and understand the risk assessments relevant to them and the control measures in place to keep them, the general public and the environment safe.



Template risk assessments can be found in the guidelines toolkit.

8.3. Site safety

Ensuring a work or event site is kept safe throughout the session and then made safe and secure at the end of the day is one of the most important considerations. Making the public aware that you are working on site is crucial to keep both you and them safe, and is a legal requirement.



You should place yellow 'At work' signs along any paths leading to where you are working, or at the edge of open areas to make the public aware of your presence. If coppicing, you may need to cordon off an area to stop other park users from wandering through and putting themselves and you at risk.

Please note: You must leave sites safe and tidy at the end of each session. Thin, sharp stumps must be cut down to ground level to avoid potential trips and injuries and litter must be taken off site or placed in/by bins. Arisings should be neatly stacked in a designated area, or moved to the sacrifice pile.



8.4. Personal Protective Equipment

It is important for groups to have a supply of PPE for volunteers to use when necessary. For groups who have been volunteering on council-owned land since before 2020 and/or those working on council priority sites undertaking the core management work of the council, BDBC will purchase PPE for the group. Other groups will need to ensure they have the funds to purchase the required PPE for their members. A basic kit should include:

- **Gloves (builders/ rigger for general work).**
- **Gauntlet gloves (for thorny vegetation).**
- **Nitrile gloves (for first aid incidents).**
- **Goggles (to protect eyes from vegetation/ stones etc).**
- **High vis (when working along footpaths or undertaking higher risk activities).**
- **Hard hats (if coppicing or working in woodland).**

PPE can become easily worn and some equipment has a manufacturer's use by date; see 'A manual for green space volunteers' for more information on how to check and store PPE.



You must undertake an annual inspection of your PPE, auditing what you have and calculating what may need to be bought before the next season begins.



A template PPE checklist can be found in the guidelines toolkit. You will need to complete one annually and send to the Community Green Space Officer who can also arrange replacements if needed.

8.5. First aid

The council regularly organises one day emergency outdoor first aid training for volunteers free of charge and **strongly advises each group to have at least one trained first aider**. There is no limit to the number of people in your group who can be first aid trained, however spaces will be prioritised based on need. Training is undertaken on both weekdays and weekends to try and ensure it is open to people with differing commitments.

It is important that volunteers have access to first aid help if they fall ill or suffer an injury, so please ensure you always have a means of contacting the emergency services when working on site. It is also advisable to have at least two litres of fresh water available, specifically for first aid incidents.



All groups must own and use a British standard first aid kit which is in date. One member of your group must be nominated as the appointed person who regularly checks the kit, records any use and orders replacements. You must keep a monitoring sheet to record the checks.



A template first aid checklist can be found in the guidelines toolkit. You will need to complete one annually and send to the Community Green Space Officer.

8.6. Welfare and comfort on site

As well as a first aid kit, it is important to look after the welfare of your group members and ensure they are comfortable at work. A small welfare kit can be put together for little cost, which could include antibacterial hand wipes and gel, insect repellent and sun cream. For groups working on council priority sites, the welfare kit will be provided by BDBC.

In addition, some groups choose to bring a 'brew kit' to thank volunteers for their work, with tea and coffee making facilities and biscuits/ snacks, whilst others opt to ask volunteers to bring their own hot drinks and have a rota for cake. You may find that local residents offer to bring out refreshments for break time too, to thank you for your hard work. The social aspect of volunteering is very important to many people and a brew kit is a great way to gather people round, as well as thanking people for their hard work.

8.7. Incident reporting

Groups will be supplied with accident books for reporting both incidents and near misses. The emergency services should be called to any incident on site that requires the attention of medical professionals, the police or the fire and rescue service.



The council must be made aware of any incidents that have happened on site, however minor they may seem. Copies of reports should be sent to the Community Green Space Officer within three days of the incident occurring in case the incident falls under RIDDOR. These reports should include any near misses/ injuries involving members of the public to enable a thorough review of the risk assessment.

8.8. Health, fitness and wellbeing – the ‘volunteer medicard’

Most volunteers state their number one reason for joining an activity is for the enjoyment. The enjoyment of being outdoors, meeting like-minded people and undertaking tasks that have a feel-good factor, giving back to the local environment and community. We want to make sure all volunteers remain healthy, fit and well, in mind and body, when undertaking work on council land.

With the majority of green space-related activities being outdoors and fairly physical, it is important that tasks are tailored to the fitness and ability of each volunteer to enable them to participate without harming themselves, or potentially causing harm to other people. Additionally, it could prove life-saving for the group leader to be aware of any relevant medical issues that a volunteer may have. For example, allergies to insect bites/stings or certain food types may mean that somebody carries an EpiPen. Or if somebody has diabetes, they may show certain symptoms when high or low in blood sugar.

Because medical issues are a sensitive matter, we have designed an optional ‘volunteer medicard’, which volunteers are encouraged to keep on their person at all times when volunteering on council land. The information will include emergency contact details and relevant medical issues. It will not be copied or stored electronically anywhere and will be the responsibility of the volunteer to have on them at all times.



We ask that volunteers using a medicard put it in their back right hand pocket so that, should anything happen, the group leader knows where to get crucial information quickly. If you don't have clothing with a back right hand pocket, please make the group leader aware of where your medicard is stored. Please note it is important not to collect cards in to one central location, as it is personal data.

8.9. Machinery

In accordance with the PUWER Regulations (1998) volunteers are not permitted to use any machinery on site if they do not possess a current industry standard competency ticket. Additionally, only machinery deemed suitable for use by the council, with recorded annual maintenance checks undertaken by a trained and competent person, can be used on site.



The only volunteers authorised by the council to use machinery are those that have had prior approval by the Community Green Space Officer, where a need has been identified and there is sufficient financial resource, who will organise the relevant training, competency tests and purchase PPE. The only types of machinery that authorised volunteers can use are electric brushcutters/ strimmers. This equipment is owned and maintained by the council and is kept in the designated council store, which authorised volunteers will have access to once they are trained and have signed an annual volunteer machinery use agreement. You cannot use your own personal home/ garden power tools in public open space.



8.10. The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)

COSHH regulations (2002) require organisations to assess the risk posed by any hazardous substances. It is important to be aware that this covers dust, fumes and vapour and numerous substances which aren't labelled as hazardous.



Volunteers are not permitted to use chemicals on council land, but oil and other lubricants/ sprays also come under COSHH, so assessments must be undertaken and volunteers must be aware of the control measures. The Community Green Space Officer can help you access/ produce these.

8.11. Sharps

It is important that all volunteers are aware of the possibility of finding sharps on site (e.g. needles, syringes, blades and other hazardous objects that can cause puncture wounds and/ or may have the potential to carry disease). Work gloves should always be worn when working in vegetation and you should use a rake, pitch fork or leaf-grabbers to move arisings.

A few sites are well-known hotspots for needle use, whilst others might be used occasionally. For volunteers who are willing to handle sharps, we can provide training and a sharps kit for their safe disposal.



Please note: Nobody should move sharps without formal training or a correct sharps kit. Please do not put needles in general waste bins, as this can be extremely hazardous for yourself, the public and the refuse collectors/ processors. There is no expectation for volunteers to be trained in handling sharps. For this reason, if you are not trained, or do not have a sharps kit on site, please report it to the council's contact centre on 01256 844844, giving a detailed description of the location.

8.12. Litter picking

Many groups litter pick when undertaking their usual conservation tasks, as litter is often exposed in autumn/winter when the vegetation dies back and scrub clearance can open up previously inaccessible areas. All volunteer groups should have at least one litter picking tool when working on site and this can be provided by the council, along with council branded bin bags.

If you are wanting to arrange a community litter pick as a separate event to your usual work parties, you will need to contact the Community Green Space Officer who can liaise with the Street Cleansing team about suitable places and any restrictions.

The council also provides some health and safety guidance notes specifically for community litter picks; the Community Green Space Officer can direct you to where these are found.

8.13. Driving on site



Driving off-road on council land can only be undertaken with prior agreement by the council. Volunteers with permission to drive on site must check whether their car insurance covers them for such activities and whether their provider requires business use, providing the council with a copy of their insurance certificate annually. In addition, the council must have a record of an online DVLA check to verify volunteers hold the correct licence, without any restrictions or bans.

If an accident occurs on site when undertaking volunteer duties and you don't have the correct cover, your car insurance may be invalid.

Once these checks have been made, a risk assessment specific to the site must be produced and signed off by the council, along with agreed routes on and off site. The risk assessment details information such as speed limits, reversing, parking and other information. You will then be provided with a driver's permit to display in your front window when driving on site, to alleviate any concerns from members of the public.



We also advise those of you transporting tools to site to check you are covered by your car insurance policy for any damage, injury or theft resulting from carrying tools for voluntary work in your vehicle

(See Chapter 10.2 'Tool storage and transportation' for more details).

8.14. Working on roads/highways

Carrying out maintenance activities on or close to the public highway (road, verge and pavement) is high risk and therefore governed by numerous pieces of health and safety legislation. This requires workers to undergo regular training and thorough safe working systems to be in place.



To reduce the risk of serious accidents, volunteers are not permitted to work on the carriageway itself, or within two metres of the edge of the carriageway. Additionally, no work is to be undertaken on the roadside of roads with a speed limit in excess of 30mph. Any work undertaken on the verges of roads within this speed limit must still be agreed in writing by the council and will require its own risk assessment and safe working practices.

8.15. Working at height

The Work at Height Regulations, 2005, state no minimum height requirement to be classed as working at height, which means anything above ground level that could cause personal injury is included. Falls from height remains the biggest cause of fatalities in the British workforce. As such, eliminating the risk altogether is the preferred option.



Due to these statistics, volunteers are not permitted to undertake any work on council land that is off the ground, as this requires additional training, competency testing and risk assessing. This includes using ladders, which is strictly forbidden on council land other than by trained staff/ contractors.

8.16. Working in or near water

Working in or near water when undertaking conservation activities carries much higher risks than similar tasks in non-aquatic habitats. Tasks require specific risk assessments relating to the additional hazards posed by working near water, as well as agreed safe systems of work. The council recognises the importance of managing wetland habitats and that several groups have bodies of water on site.



For this reason, permission to work in these areas must be agreed in writing by the council and will be subject to additional safety procedures.

8.17. Lone working

Where possible, lone working should be avoided in order to ensure people are safe and looked after in case of an incident. However, we know in practice this can be more difficult, especially for volunteers who may go surveying on their own accord, or to collect/ drop-off tools etc.

If you are ever lone working when volunteering, then please tell somebody where you are going and your expected time home and what to do should they not hear from you by a certain time.



Please note: No-one should be lone working when using machinery, working in/ by water, or when undertaking high risk activities, to ensure there is someone there to raise the alarm in the event of an emergency.

8.18. Fires

Whilst fires can be a useful tool used by some conservation organisations to eliminate green waste from sites, in urban environments they can be dangerous if not managed effectively and may also be a nuisance to residents.



The risk of fires spreading or reigniting, in addition to green waste producing large quantities of smoke, means groups are not permitted to have bonfires on council-owned green spaces, unless prior approval has been given or a council officer is on site.

Arisings will need to be dealt with either by removal from site, using a designated sacrifice pile, through dead-hedging or by creating habitat piles where appropriate.



9. Environmental considerations

We tend to think about health and safety in relation to people, but it is just as important to ensure we don't harm wildlife or adversely impact the environment when we are working. Things to consider include:

9.1. Trees

Trees are managed by the council's Tree team who carry out regular inspections and maintenance work. This includes trees and woodlands on conservation sites.

Some sites that groups work on are within conservation areas, or contain woodlands/ trees with tree preservation orders, which require a tree works application before work can be undertaken (this includes any work council staff, contractors or volunteers wish to undertake).

In addition to tree preservation orders, some sites may require a felling licence, depending on the amount of timber likely to be removed in a given year.



As such, all tree/ woodland work, however minor, will need to be authorised by the council's Natural Environment team to ensure the correct procedures are followed.

As explained in chapter 8.9 'Machinery', no volunteers are authorised to use chainsaws. Therefore, woodland work undertaken by volunteer groups should focus on coppicing and thinning using hand tools.

9.2. Green waste/ arisings

Where possible, arisings (green waste/ brash created when undertaking habitat management) should be processed on site. Depending on the site and habitat, this may include creating habitat piles with larger logs, or dead-hedges with brash where screening/ boundaries can be accommodated. Some larger sites may already have what is referred to as a 'sacrifice pile', where green waste is deposited and left to rot down.

However, it is important to note that some sites suffer adversely when too much green waste is left to rot down, as this can alter nutrient levels in the soil. This is especially true of chalk grassland sites and heathland. Additionally, some tasks will produce much larger amounts of green waste than others, and may need to be removed off site, whilst other sites may be too remote to enable access for efficient green waste removal. Some green waste piles in certain areas may also attract anti-social behaviour in the form of arson, particularly in spring/summer.

As such, each site will require careful thought as to what happens with different types of arisings. As part of your group volunteer agreement, the location of any sacrifice piles will be mapped, along with instructions on how to process different types of green waste.

9.3. Designated sites

Some sites that groups work on may be designated, for example as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) or a Local Nature Reserve (LNR). These designations highlight the importance of the habitats on the site, or the notable species they support.

If part, or all, of the site your group works on is designated, this will be detailed in the group volunteer agreement, with information about what this means.

9.4. Wildlife

Bird nesting season



Bird nesting season dates are set by Natural England and the season runs from 1 March until 31 August. All scrub, hedgerow and woodland work should be planned to avoid these months.

However, as the climate changes and with seasonal variability, birds may nest earlier/ later than this. As such, you should always check the area of scrub you are planning on working in and survey for any potential nests, as it is illegal to disturb or damage the nests.

Protected species

Many of Basingstoke's green spaces support a wide range of important species, including those that carry legal protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 and the Habitat and Species Regulations 2017. These include:

- **badgers**
- **water voles**
- **birds**
- **and reptiles.**





Some species found in the borough's green spaces are protected by international law. The following are European Protected Species:

- **bats**
- **dormice**
- **great crested newts**
- **and otters.**

Any work to, or disturbing, the habitats of these species may require a licence, as might handling them. If your site is known to, or has the potential to, contain any of these species, this will be detailed in the group volunteer agreement, with information about what this means practically.

Amphibians

If you work on a wetland site with ponds, then any work undertaken within the pond itself should be completed in early autumn, after breeding has finished in summer but before the weather turns colder and amphibians begin to take shelter, often lying dormant at the bottom of ponds. Care should also be taken not to disrupt amphibian migration towards the end of winter (January/ February) when species that have overwintered in woodlands move to ponds ready for mating.

10. Tools and equipment

10.1. Tool ownership and borrowing

Most groups have their own hand tools for use on site, some belonging to the group and some belonging to individual volunteers. These can be stored in council-owned lockups, or at volunteers' homes.

In addition to volunteer groups' own tools, Natural Basingstoke has a selection of tools that are shared amongst different areas of the borough. These tools can be borrowed by any groups, with prior arrangement and subject to availability and collection. To find out what tools can be borrowed, or to book some for a particular session, please email admin@naturalbasingstoke.gov.uk

The council also has a tool store specifically for volunteer projects and the Community Green Space Officer is responsible for this. There is a wide range of tools that groups may not own themselves, or only have one or two of, and if you are planning a big session and need extra equipment, then you can contact the Community Green Space Officer to arrange borrowing tools from the store. There is a signing in/out sheet and equipment borrowing agreement to sign to keep track of what tools are where and they must be returned in the condition they are borrowed in. In addition to tools, there is also a large range of pond-dipping and bug hunting equipment, which can be loaned out if groups have the permission and expertise to use it.



Please note: the only types of powered machinery permitted for use on council land are electric brushcutters/ trimmers owned, maintained and stored by the council, where volunteers are trained and authorised to use them. No other powered machinery is to be used on council land, strictly hand tool use only. See chapter 8.9 'Machinery' for more information.

10.2. Tool storage and transportation

When storing your group's tools, you must ensure they are put away safely. If you use freestanding shelving, then make sure it is fixed to the wall, or sturdy enough not to topple over. Put the heaviest tools at the bottom and, where possible, use stands or hanging racks to stop larger tools falling. Good lighting and ventilation are important, as well as making sure access to tools doesn't require awkward stretching and bending.



It is good practice to do an annual check of your tool store, along with an inventory and maintenance check of the tools. This should include sharpening blades and oiling joints, in addition to cleaning them after every use. You should keep a log of this maintenance and send it to the Community Green Space Officer annually.



There is a template checklist in the guidelines toolkit.



We also advise those of you transporting tools to site to check you are covered by your car insurance policy for any damage, injury or theft resulting from carrying tools for voluntary work in your vehicle.

See chapter 8.13 'Driving on site' for more information. Please also make sure when transporting tools that you have arranged them safely in the back of the car, where they can't move or cause injury to passengers, or damage to the vehicle.



10.3. Safe use of tools

It is important that all volunteers understand what each tool is, what it's used for and how to use and store it safely. This information should be covered in a tools talk at the start of each session and new volunteers should be supervised when first using equipment. To ensure everybody has the same information about tools, we have produced a tool safety manual given to each group, which is also lent out when equipment is borrowed.



11. Training opportunities

To ensure you stay safe and well whilst working on council land, and to help with personal development and employment opportunities for those people volunteering to gain experience, the council offers training to group leaders and group members annually. Some training is targeted to particular roles and mandatory for health, safety and wellbeing reasons and other training is optional and open to all.

Work party leader



We require all volunteer groups working on council land to have at least one nominated work party leader and this person must have undertaken work party leader training, delivered by the council, before running any activities on site. Work party leader training will also need to be refreshed every three to five years, dependent upon how regularly the person has led work parties.

The Community Green Space Officer runs work party leader training annually and will contact groups to find out who needs to do the training.

First aid

The council regularly organises one-day emergency outdoor first aid training for volunteers free of charge and strongly advises each group to have at least one trained first aider. There is no limit to the number of people in your group who can be first aid trained, however spaces will be prioritised based on need. See chapter 8.5 'First aid' for more details.

Brushcutters/ strimmers

A small number of volunteers will be offered training to use electric brushcutters/ strimmers, where resources allow. Training will be offered based on evidence of need for the group/ site and how frequently machinery is likely to be used, which will need to be prioritised against requests from other groups. For more information, see chapter 8.9 'Machinery'.





Natural Basingstoke training programme

Natural Basingstoke runs an excellent annual training programme free of charge, largely focusing on habitat management, species identification and surveying skills. Emails are circulated at regular intervals to advertise opportunities and enable booking. They also actively encourage suggestions from group members as to what training they would like to see included in the programme.

Other training

In addition to work party leader training and first aid, the council also commissions ad hoc training if a need is identified, for example social media training.

12. Species recording

Some volunteers enjoy undertaking wildlife surveys on council green spaces, an important activity in helping to monitor sites and for providing feedback on the types of habitat management undertaken. Anything from birds and butterflies to fungi and grasses might be monitored and results from these surveys can help shape site management decisions. As such, it is helpful for the council to have sight of these records to inform future management planning and to ensure we are protecting notable species.

It is also important that these records are verified by the county recorders; skilled and dedicated volunteers who act as the central point for the recording of a particular taxonomic group of organisms in each county. County recorders receive records, verify them (checking they are authentic and accurate) and maintain a local database. This information is then shared with Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre (HBIC), who manage and supply the data on the council's behalf.

There are several ways you can ensure the county recorders receive your records. The preference is to input them via the Living Record website, www.livingrecord.net. Alternatively, you may send your records to the relevant conservation NGO (e.g. Butterfly Conservation). Finally, some volunteers know their local county recorder and send them directly.



In addition to any submitted electronic records to the contacts mentioned above, please also send an annual list of species to wildlifeconservation@basingstoke.gov.uk, highlighting any rare or notable species you are aware of, as this may impact habitat management decisions.



13. Other important matters

13.1. Third party groups on site

The council has a duty of care to ensure everybody remains safe on its land.



Only the council can give permission for activities to go ahead on its land, including work undertaken by contractors, community groups and other conservation charities, such as the Basingstoke Conservation Volunteers and the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust. If you are approached directly by an organisation or business who would like to undertake some volunteering on the site you work on, please forward this on to the Community Green Space Officer.

The council will then decide if we have the resource to safely manage the session, ensure it is the right time of year to undertake particular tasks and check the relevant safety and insurance documents from the third party organisation before work commences.

13.2. Safeguarding

Many groups like to encourage families and young people to volunteer, which is a great way for the younger generation to grow up with an understanding and appreciation of their local natural environment. However, it is important to understand that we all have a duty to safeguard children, young people and adults who may be at risk of abuse. For this reason, groups are encouraged to have their own safeguarding policy to ensure vulnerable adults and children are safe and looked after on site.





If your group is hosting a youth group and/ or uniformed group, the council will need to approve this and have sight of the group's safeguarding policy. Under-18s attending sessions outside of organised youth groups should be accompanied by a responsible adult.



If you have any concerns that a member of your group or visitor may be subject to, or at risk of, abuse, you must contact Hampshire County Council's Children Services (0300 555 1384 during office hours, or 0300 555 1373 out of hours) or Adult Services (0300 555 1386 during office hours, or 0300 555 1373 out of hours) or the police in the first instance. In a situation where someone is at immediate risk of harm, always call 999.

13.3. General Data Protection Regulation



Groups must handle any personal data they collect in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

You should familiarise yourself with the seven key principles of GDPR and ensure that any personal data of group members that you process is dealt with in line with these. For any support on matters relating to data protection, you should contact the Community Green Space Officer or visit www.ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr

13.4. Photo consent

Taking photos of group members on site and your achievements can be a fantastic way of promoting the great work that you do. It is also good for group morale and demonstrating the impact you have each season.



Please be mindful that photographs constitute personal data and therefore people must have given permission for you take their photo, store it and use it for various mediums, from press releases to social media.

For regular volunteers, it is best practice to ask them to sign a photo consent form, so that you can be confident you have written permissions for any photos.



There is a template GDPR and photo consent form in the guidelines toolkit.

13.5. Media guidelines

Many groups choose to have a Facebook page or group to share information about work parties, events and volunteering opportunities. Some groups also have regular slots in local newsletters, which can be a great way to gain support from residents and share stories about local activities and wildlife.

As the council supports the work you do (financially and/ or through officer support) we expect to receive a fair representation in anything published by your group in the media. This includes press releases, local newsletters and on social media.



If you have a concern about something related to your group and/or site and are wishing to report to the public about it, this must be raised with the council in the first instance, before making any statements, to ensure you understand the full details regarding the issue and that the information you are providing is factually correct.

13.6. Site noticeboards and furniture

Many of the sites that groups help to look after have existing noticeboards that you may wish to advertise your work parties on, or list wildlife seen on site. If you would like to put a poster up anywhere on site, please contact the Community Green Space Officer to discuss the content to ensure it is accurate and up to date; they may also be able to help with design and printing, depending on resources.



If you are thinking about installing anything on site, from benches to noticeboards to bug hotels, you must have prior approval from the council first. This includes if third parties and other community groups approach your members to ask for any changes or additions to be made on a site you help to look after.

13.7. Financial support

Financial support is available for groups formed before 2020 and/or those working on council priority sites. This support includes public liability insurance for the group, Personal Protective Equipment, first aid supplies and basic hand tools. All training is also provided free of charge for groups working on council priority sites.

For groups formed from 2020 onwards working on non-priority sites, public liability insurance, tools and Personal Protective Equipment will need to be provided by the group. The Community Green Space Officer will be able to signpost you to information for grants that you may wish to apply for.

13.8. Fundraising and grants

Groups may be eligible to apply to external organisations for relevant grant funding to help buy new equipment, plants or items for the site they help to look after. Several groups also fundraise through plant sales, or products made from materials from site.



If your fundraising project will result in any changes on site, from new plantings to new site furniture, you must have prior permission from the council as the landowner before starting the grant application process. Similarly, you must have permission to use timber and other materials on site when making products.

13.9. Events

Some groups enjoy leading guided walks, or running wildlife activities such as pond-dipping. To ensure risk assessments and safety plans are in place, as well as checking that there are no clashes with other events on that site on the same day, the council has an events application procedure. For more information, please visit: www.basingstoke.gov.uk/event-application or speak to the Community Green Space Officer who can advise on the process.

13.10. Activity monitoring



As part of your group volunteer agreement, you will be asked to send quarterly updates to the Community Green Space Officer summarising the work you have been undertaking.

Data requested might include the number of group members over a given season, the number of hours your group has spent on specific tasks/ activities, any events you have delivered for the general public and any Community Payback sessions you have supported. The Community Green Space Officer will prompt you each quarter when this data is due and provide a simple template for you to complete.



A copy of the volunteer hours' template can be found in the guidelines toolkit.

The figures you provide not only help to showcase the variety of work your group undertakes, they also highlight the positive impact you have on local green spaces. When added together, cumulative figures from all local green space groups create a very powerful message about the importance and impact of volunteering.

13.11. Volunteer recruitment

Recruiting and maintaining group volunteers takes time and effort and is a rolling programme. Many groups have their own social media page and use this to advertise their work parties and to recruit new volunteers. Additionally, local newsletters or events can be a way to garner support for your group.

Basingstoke Voluntary Action also advertises volunteering opportunities on behalf of the council. Any enquiries relating to conservation volunteering will be passed on to the Community Green Space Officer, who will send the potential new volunteer some information about the different local groups and put them in touch with group leaders if requested.

13.12. Celebrating volunteering

The council values the enormous contribution given by local volunteers who help to manage our parks and open spaces for the benefit of both residents and wildlife. For this reason, the Community Green Space Officer organises annual 'Thank you' events, which are also the perfect opportunity to socialise with other group volunteers who you may not meet during the work season, other than at training events.

14. Community Payback

People who are convicted of a crime by a court but are not sent to prison may get a community sentence. This involves unpaid work in their local community, known as Community Payback. They can expect to complete anything from 40 to 300 hours of Community Payback, depending on how serious the crime was, and they are managed by a Community Payback supervisor. People who are unemployed must complete three to four days each week of their community sentence. Those with a job will have Community Payback work arranged outside their working hours, for example evenings or weekends.

Community Payback is another resource the council pays for to support the work of volunteer groups. They are available to help with tasks and projects run by volunteer groups on Saturdays between October and March. The Community Green Space Officer coordinates their timetable and will scope interest from groups in hosting Community Payback before finalising dates. The timetables are produced in September (for Saturdays running from October through to December) and December (for Saturdays running from January through to March).

Group size can vary, but is anywhere from two to eight people. There is always one Community Payback paid supervisor who will drive the group to the site and monitor behaviour at all times. They usually have some experience in practical work and it is their job to keep the group motivated and working.

If your group is interested in hosting Community Payback, there are some activities that work much more effectively than others. Anything that requires repetitive tasks on the same type of vegetation with clear instructions tends to work quite well. Similarly, removing tree guards or other tasks that are not particularly rewarding for your group members to undertake would be a good idea. Tasks that require identification skills, sensitive pruning or planting may not always be undertaken to the standard we would expect/ require, so do think about the activities you are asking for support with.

Community Payback tend to get on site anywhere between 9.30am and 10.15am, but this can vary depending on who needs picking up and whether they are all on time. The supervisors have little control over this, so can't give an exact arrival time. They will then work until about 3pm, with a lunch break in between. You do not need to stay on site all day – you can meet the supervisor at the start of the session and leave them with instructions and a phone number. However, we suggest being on site for at least part of the day (and/ or checking through the day) as sometimes the instructions are interpreted slightly differently!

Community Payback come with their own basic hand tools, including bowsaws, loppers, litter pickers, shears and some other items. You can also bring or borrow any additional tools for the session.

If you would like to book Community Payback to help with a particular task, you will need to complete a task checklist form, which details information about the task, the site location, parking and whether any facilities are available.



There is a template Community Payback task sheet in the guidelines toolkit and the Community Green Space Officer will provide this for you to complete once you have a date confirmed.

15. Record-keeping summary

Throughout the guidelines, you will have read some best practice instructions relating to records that need to be kept by the council to ensure both we, and volunteer groups working on our land, are fulfilling our duty of care and complying with national health and safety legislation. A summary of this information can be found below.

Information to be sent to the Community Green Space Officer after every work party:

Copy of the safety plan

Scan or photograph sent via email, or original copy to council offices, to include: safety plan front page, volunteer register (with contact numbers redacted) and blank risk assessment page (if used).

New risk assessments

Only applicable for new tasks that haven't previously been assessed and signed off by the council.

Information to be sent to the Community Green Space Officer quarterly:

Volunteer hours detailing the different activities your group has undertaken, the number of volunteers and other participants involved and the number of hours spent on these.

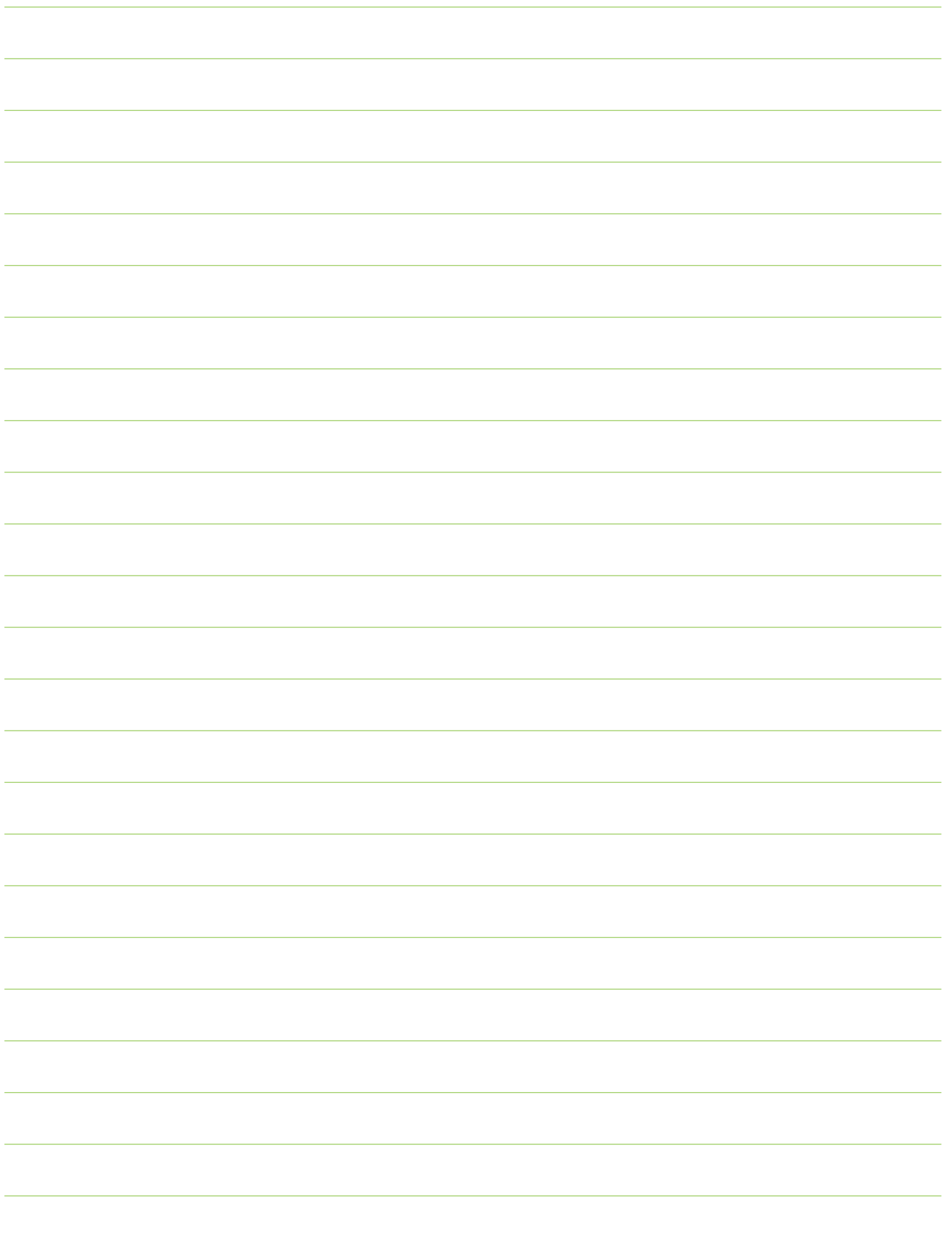
Information to be sent to the Community Green Space Officer annually:

- **Risk assessments for the site and any tasks undertaken.**
- **PPE and first aid checklist.**
- **Tool store safety, tool inventory and tool maintenance checklist (if applicable).**
- **Public liability insurance certificate.**
- **Driving licence and insurance check (only applicable for people driving off-road on council land).**

Each year, the Community Green Space Officer will also ask groups to confirm the details the council holds for the group, including:

- **Contact details for committee members/ group leaders.**
- **GDPR permissions.**
- **AGM dates (if applicable).**
- **Constitution and policies (if applicable).**

The group volunteer agreement will be signed off annually, once all the information above has been received. It will also incorporate any potential changes to the previous year's agreement that may arise following a site management visit by council officers to support the group with work planning.



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  @BasingstokeGov

If you need this information in a different format, for example large print, CD or braille, please contact the council.

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