

Policy

VOLUNTEERING POLICY

Version:	1.0		
Effective date:	6 December 2021		
Purpose:	To set out the principles and practice by which FRP involve and work with volunteers.		
Scope:	All staff, volunteers, members, and contractors of FRP		
Associated Policies, Guidelines and Procedures:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Volunteering policy ● Whistleblowing policy ● Data protection policy ● Recruitment policy (Employee, Contractor & Trustees) ● Communication policy ● Equal opportunities policy ● Complaints handling policy 		
Approved by:	FRP Trustees	Date:	2021
Last Amended:	December 2021		
Next Review:	December 2023		

Data Protection

Personal data will be processed in accordance with the requirements of GDPR and in compliance with the data protection principles specified in the legislation.

1. Introduction

1.1. Friends of Rowntree Park is a charity which seeks to promote the well-being of the Park and its users. The park is managed by City of York council and we consult with them on developments and changes to the park. The Friends are responsible for some areas of the gardens as agreed with the council. We carry out some practical tasks, such as gardening and maintenance and we run a wide range of events and activities for the community. Friends of Rowntree Park is largely volunteer-run, and volunteers are vital to our work.

2. Purpose

2.1. This volunteer policy sets out the principles and practice by which we involve volunteers and is relevant to Friends of Rowntree Park's volunteers, committee members, trustees and partner organisations (particularly City of York Council and York Cares).

2.2. It aims to create a common understanding and to clarify roles and responsibilities to ensure the highest standards are maintained in relation to the management of volunteers and their experience of working with FRP.

2.3. Volunteer Role Descriptions give further information about specific roles.

3. Volunteer roles

3.1. Friends of Rowntree Park offer a variety of volunteering opportunities, including but not limited to:

- Bird feeding
- Children and young people's activities
- Events (including the summer music programme)
- Gardening
- Fundraising
- Leaf clearing
- Litter picking
- Marketing and social media
- Snow clearing
- Fund raising
- Organisation and management (committee and trustee roles)

3.2. While most opportunities are available year-round, others are seasonal or offered depending on the needs of the charity. Opportunities may be added or withdrawn depending on the needs of the charity.

3.3. Information will be made available to those enquiring about volunteering, including written role descriptions which set out the nature and purpose of the volunteering role, key tasks, skills required and benefits.

4. Recruitment, equality and diversity

- 4.1.** Friends of Rowntree Park welcomes applications from all members of the community.
- 4.2.** Equal opportunities principles will be adhered to in recruiting volunteers. Opportunities will be widely promoted so as to attract interest from different sectors of the community.
- 4.3.** Positive action to target recruitment may be used where appropriate.
- 4.4.** Online application is encouraged but non-digital methods of application are also available.
- 4.5.** The majority of volunteering opportunities with Friends of Rowntree Park are open to anyone who would like to take part. However, where opportunities are limited and a selection process is necessary, this will be carried out without regard to protected characteristics (age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation). The recruitment process will be defined and consistent for any given role: for example the recruitment process for trustees, regular volunteers and for volunteers for one off events will be tailored in each case and may differ from one another.
- 4.6.** Some volunteering opportunities are subject to the availability and capacity of Volunteer Leads. FRP reserves the right to refuse volunteer opportunities or end volunteering opportunities if we have insufficient volunteering managers
- 4.7.** A small number of opportunities (trustee roles, and those that involve working with children or vulnerable adults) will require references and adherence to all applicable safeguarding measures will be required.
- 4.8.** Where it is safe, practical and compliant with the requirements of our insurance, we welcome applications to volunteer from young people under the age of 18. We require consent from the young person's parent or guardian prior to them beginning to volunteer.
- 4.9.** We will make reasonable adjustments to ensure that volunteers with disabilities or additional needs are able to participate in our volunteering opportunities.
- 4.10.** For roles which require sustained and direct contact with young people or adults at risk, volunteers will be required to have a full DBS disclosure check which we will arrange.
- 4.11.** DBS disclosures are dealt with in the strictest confidence. A criminal record is not necessarily a bar to volunteering. Each instance will be dealt with on its own merits and appointment will depend on the nature of the position and circumstances of the offences.

- 4.12.** We also work with partner organisations such as York Cares to provide volunteering opportunities for their members. Volunteers on these schemes are the responsibility of the relevant partner organisation, who will manage their recruitment, induction, supervision and recognition.

5. Induction and training

- 5.1.** Friends of Rowntree Park is committed to providing appropriate and effective induction and training for volunteers.
- 5.2.** All new volunteers must attend an induction session before starting their role. This is to ensure that they are ready to start volunteering, and to comply with insurance requirements. Volunteers whose roles are entirely desk based (for example those working on marketing and social media) can complete their induction online or by telephone
- 5.3.** Volunteers who participate in more than one role must complete an induction for each role.
- 5.4.** Inductions should be delivered by the relevant Volunteer Leader or (in the case of York Cares volunteers) a City of York Council Environment and Community Officer. The person leading the induction should complete an induction checklist to ensure that all volunteers receive consistent information.
- 5.5.** Attendance at an induction should be recorded on the volunteer's record. Where relevant, their details should also be sent (with the volunteer's permission) to the City of York Council to ensure that the volunteer is covered by Council insurance.
- 5.6.** Inductions will include but not limited to:
- Safety procedures while volunteering (including, where relevant, volunteering alone)
 - Safe use of any tools and equipment
 - Dealing with the public
 - Dates, times and locations of volunteering sessions, and details of how to sign up for them
 - Orientation within the park, including the location of toilets, the cafe, entrances/exits, and areas relevant to the volunteer's specific role
 - How volunteer information is stored, and how volunteers can record their hours
 - Details of any additional training that must be completed, and how this can be accessed
 - A brief overview of the structure of Friends of Rowntree Park, including an invitation to attend committee meetings
 - An opportunity for volunteers to ask questions
 - Volunteer code of conduct
- 5.7.** Volunteers will sign and date their induction forms

- 5.8.** Role-specific training includes:
- Children and Young People Volunteers, and those volunteering with adults at risk (in any role): online safeguarding training
 - Trustees: NCVO training on the role of the trustee

6. Supervision, support, and complaints

- 6.1.** All volunteer activities are overseen by a Volunteer Leader (also a volunteer).
- 6.2.** As part of their induction, all volunteers will meet their Volunteer Leader and be given their contact details.
- 6.3.** For some regular volunteering activities, the Volunteer Leader will be present (for example, weekly gardening sessions or Forest School). Other activities can be undertaken by volunteers working independently.
- 6.4.** Volunteers who undertake their roles outside of organised sessions (for example litter pickers who visit the park on their own schedule) should keep a record of their volunteering dates and hours, and regularly add this information to their electronic record or pass it to their Volunteer Leader.
- 6.5.** If a volunteer requires additional support, or has questions about their role, they should contact the relevant Volunteer Leader.
- 6.6.** If the volunteer still feels they need support after contacting their Volunteer Leader, they should contact a member of the Board of Trustees. Each area has a link trustee.
- 6.7.** Friends of Rowntree Park is committed to treating all volunteers fairly, objectively and consistently.
- 6.8.** We aim to resolve problems as early and informally as possible. In the first instance, volunteers should approach their Volunteer Leader (or the person running the volunteering activity) with any issues.
- 6.9.** If matters cannot be resolved informally, the Complaints Procedure should be followed.
- 6.10.** FRP reserves the right to request that a volunteer end their service with us if a positive solution cannot be found.

7. Recognition

- 7.1.** Friends of Rowntree Park is a volunteer-led organisation and as such volunteers are vital to our functioning. We want all volunteers to feel supported, valued and appreciated, and that they can speak up when things need to be improved.
- 7.2.** We regularly seek volunteers' feedback, through formal and informal means.
- 7.3.** Ways in which we show our appreciation of volunteers may include: encouraging Volunteer Leaders to regularly thank their volunteers; offering refreshments at

volunteering sessions; an annual party for volunteers; showcasing the work of volunteers on social media and (where possible) in the local press.

- 7.4. We welcome volunteers' ideas for recognising the contribution that they make to Rowntree Park and the local community.

8. Health and safety

- 8.1. Friends of Rowntree Park have a detailed Health and Safety Policy, which can be viewed [here](#).
- 8.2. A risk assessment will be undertaken on all volunteer roles, and reviewed, where necessary.
- 8.3. All volunteers must complete an induction before beginning their volunteering. Where the volunteering role involves using tools, safe usage must be covered as part of the induction.
- 8.4. Some roles require additional training, which must be completed before volunteers begin their role:
- Volunteers who regularly work with children and young people must complete an online safeguarding course (provided by City of York Council).
- 8.5. Once a volunteer has completed their induction, they are covered by City of York Council insurance or Friends of Rowntree Park insurance (depending on their role) while volunteering.

9. Expenses

- 9.1. Most volunteers should not need to incur expenses in the course of their role with Friends of Rowntree Park. However, where this is necessary, reasonable costs will be reimbursed.
- 9.2. Before incurring expenses, volunteers must seek approval from the Volunteer Leader for their role, or a member of the Board of Trustees.
- 9.3. Volunteer Leaders must seek approval from a member of the Board of Trustees before incurring any expenses that are outside the given budget requests.
- 9.4. Volunteers must ensure that they keep receipts for any expenses incurred - any spending to be agreed with the Volunteer Lead in advance.
- 9.5. Expenses must be submitted to the Treasurer, along with an expenses form. This should be submitted no longer than 6 weeks after the expense is incurred.

10. Confidentiality and data protection

- 10.1. All volunteer data will be stored in accordance with GDPR legislation and the Friends of Rowntree Park GDPR and Privacy Policy, which can be viewed [here](#).
- 10.2. We will only request information that we need in order to manage volunteers appropriately. Due to the nature of some of our roles, we may ask for some sensitive information, such as medical details or a DBS disclosure.
- 10.3. Access to volunteer records will be given to Volunteer Leaders, Trustees or members of staff only where necessary.
- 10.4. All Volunteer Leaders, Trustees or members of staff will keep volunteers' information confidential, unless there is an urgent need to share it. For example, in an emergency situation, a Volunteer Leader may give medical information to the emergency services if the volunteer is unable to do this themselves.

11. Moving on

- 11.1. When volunteers move on from volunteering with Friends of Rowntree Park they will be asked to provide feedback on the volunteering experience by way of an exit questionnaire. They will also be given the opportunity to discuss their responses to the questionnaire more fully.
- 11.2. Volunteers who have remained with the organisation for at least 3 months will have the right to request a reference.

Other Relevant Documents

- Volunteer Role Descriptions
- Volunteer Code of Conduct
- GDPR and Privacy Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Procedure

Date approved _____

Date of next review _____

Person responsible _____

