

Volunteer Policy and Procedures



This policy sets out the broad principles for volunteer involvement with Lagan Valley Regional Park. It is of relevance to all volunteers and everyone concerned with recruiting, supporting, developing and managing volunteers and promoting volunteer activity.

Values, principles and responsibilities of involving volunteers

- i. LVRP recognises and values volunteers as a core part of our team, with a distinct but complementary role to that of paid staff.
- ii. Volunteering is a two-way process. LVRP is therefore committed to managing volunteers in a way that ensures that the needs of both parties are met.
- iii. The volunteer role is without obligation and is maintained only through a relationship of honour, trust and voluntary agreement. It may be dissolved by the volunteer at any time, or by LVRP in keeping with the organisation's policies and procedures. No gratuity or similar provision shall be awarded to volunteers in the performance of their role with LVRP.

Recruitment

- Information about volunteer work will be made widely available, including information about volunteer projects, necessary skills and time commitment;
- Every effort will be made to match a volunteer's knowledge and skills to the projects available;
- Potential volunteers will be required to complete an application/registration form and undertake a short induction or informal chat about the role;
- LVRP's Volunteer Coordinator will adhere to policy when recruiting and selecting volunteers;
- Recruitment for some roles that involve working with children and/or vulnerable adults may be subject to an access NI check.

Induction

There will be an induction prepared and delivered by the Volunteer Coordinator for each role. Volunteers will be provided with clear information about their role descriptions outlining the purpose, tasks and main expectations of their role. Volunteers will be familiarised with LVRP's policies and procedures, which must be adhered to in the performance of their role. Each volunteer will be assigned a member of staff who will advise and guide them in their role.

As a volunteer, you can expect that...

- Your volunteering will be appreciated and recognized.
- You will be provided with all the information, equipment, resources and guidance required for you to carry out your volunteering role in line with the aims, policies and procedures of LVRP.
- You will be encouraged to develop in your volunteering role.
- You will volunteer in conditions that are safe and healthy.
- You will volunteer in an organisation that is non-discriminatory, respectful of everyone, and welcomes diversity.
- Grievances, from either party, will be dealt with fairly and consistently in accordance with LVRP's policies and procedures.
- We will endeavor to adapt tasks to suit the abilities and interests of volunteers where possible.
- Your ideas and views regarding the organisation and volunteering will be welcomed.
- You may refuse demands that you consider to be unrealistic.
- You are free to stop volunteering at any time.

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Settling in period

In order to make sure you are happy with your choice of placement, we will assess how you're getting on after an agreed period of time. It will take the form of an informal chat and will give you a chance to identify training needs or voice any problems you may have. If there's any difficulty that can't be resolved (this is very rare) we can change your role or end the relationship.

Training and Development

Lagan Valley Regional Park is committed to the ongoing training and development of volunteers. Following a settling in period volunteers may have a chance to develop their skills and undertake training. Volunteers will be notified of training opportunities as they become available. Requests for job references will be considered.

Support

The Volunteer Coordinator will offer ongoing support to volunteers through regular volunteer review sessions. The volunteer coordinator will also offer ongoing support to volunteers informally at each session. Regional Park staff will always be available to support volunteers within their role.

Health and Safety

We have a duty of care to all volunteers and will take all reasonable steps to protect their health and safety at Lagan Valley Regional Park. Health and safety policy and procedures must be followed by volunteers at all times, and will form a part of the core training induction programme. Any accidents or near misses involving volunteers should be reported and will be recorded in the Incident Book.

Insurance

All volunteers are covered by LVRP Employer's Liability insurance whilst actively engaged in LVRP business.

Data protection

Personal information recorded about volunteers will be stored and maintained with appropriate safeguards for confidentiality, complying with data protection legislation.

Copyright

We hope that volunteers will be happy to donate any original copyright works they may produce while volunteering.

Out of pocket expenses

LVRP would like to cover out of pocket expenses but currently we are not in a position to do so.

Dealing with problems or complaints

We hope that any concerns or complaints from either party can be dealt with informally. Volunteers are encouraged to raise issues with the volunteer coordinator or other appropriate staff members. Where this is not possible we have a complaints procedure in place. This procedure will also help LVRP to treat volunteers fairly and consistently where a volunteer's performance or conduct does not comply with the organisation's aims, policies or procedures.