



Angling Trust

AT Volunteer Best Practice Guide for Clubs

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1. DISCLAIMER NOTICE

The Angling Trust has produced this Volunteering Best Practice Guide for Clubs in good faith for reference purposes only. No contractual relationship exists or is deemed to exist between the Angling Trust and users of this Guide and as such no liability will be accepted by the Angling Trust for any loss incurred by its users, or any other third party, that may be perceived to result from its use. Users of this Guide may wish to seek independent legal or taxation advice before entering into any agreement with volunteers.

2. WHY IS VOLUNTEERING IMPORTANT?

Angling is mainly a leisure pursuit, and most clubs are non-profit making, heavily reliant upon volunteers for essential personnel such as committee members and water bailiffs. Volunteering is essential but subject to certain legislation.

For this reason, angling clubs must be aware of the legalities and ethics involved, protecting both the organisation and the volunteer. An awareness of best practice will better equip clubs to provide the best volunteering experience.

This guide covers the key aspects of working with volunteers, providing advice, and signposting further information.

3. VOLUNTEER POLICY

It is important for clubs to have in place a Volunteer Policy document which defines the role of volunteers within the organization and outlines how they can expect to be treated.

It helps to:

- Confirm your club's commitment to volunteering and volunteers.
- Ensure that volunteers are treated fairly and equally, demonstrating that decisions are made to a formal written policy.
- Provide security, knowing what they can expect and who to approach in the event of a problem.

When drawing up the Volunteer Policy, you should consider:

- Recruitment of volunteers including commitment to inclusivity, diversity and equality.
- Induction and training.
- Process for reimbursement of reasonable out of pocket expenses.

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- Structure, including supervision and available support.
 - Health and Safety.
 - Confidentiality and data protection.
 - Who to contact if there are any problems.

The Volunteer Policy should be shared with committee and club members, paid staff and all volunteers. Review the Policy annually to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

4. VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

Because volunteers are unpaid, they have no contract of employment so do not have the same rights as an employee or other worker. However, although not mandatory, a Volunteer Agreement is useful because it explains:

- The level of supervision and support to be expected.
- What training will be provided.
- What insurance policy covers volunteering.
- Signpost to Health and Safety Policy.
- Signpost to Expenses Policy.
- Signpost to Equality Policy.
- That the volunteers must comply with the club's policies and procedures.
- That the club will adhere to its policies and procedures concerning volunteers.
- The amount of time the volunteering role is expected to contribute.

It is common practice and advisable to include a clear statement that the agreement "is binding in honour only and is not intended to be a legally binding contract between the club and the volunteer, and that neither the club or the volunteer intends any employment relationship or other worker relationship to be created."

Clubs can minimise the risk of inadvertently creating an employment contract by:

- Setting out what the club will provide, how the volunteer will be treated without creating mutual obligations, which could be construed as a contract.
- Setting out the relationship's terms based upon reasonable expectations as opposed to specific obligations.
- Avoiding using contractual language. For example, instead of stipulating that volunteers must contribute a set number of hours per week for a given period, emphasise that volunteers are free to come and go without obligations but suggest that volunteers remaining in the role for, say, at least six months, generally get more from the experience.
- Reducing perks that could be seen as either a consideration or a payment.

- Emphasising that only out-of-pocket expenses can be covered.

5. ROLE DESCRIPTION

Individual volunteering roles within a club should have a relevant and current Role Description. An honorary secretary's Role Description, for example, could include:

- Being first point of contact for all Club enquiries.
- Organising and attending all key meetings, including the AGM.
- Taking and circulating meeting minutes.
- Delegating tasks to members.
- Dealing with all correspondence.
- Attending to affiliated memberships.
- Ensuring insurance is current and relevant.
- Maintaining relevant records.
- Liaising with committee members as appropriate.

5.1 Volunteer Role Description

Role title	
Purpose of the role	
What you will be doing	
Skills, experience and qualities needed	
Support offered	
Other relevant information	

6. CODES OF CONDUCT

All organisations, especially those reliant upon membership, strive to present the most positive image. It is important, then, that all volunteers adhere to a formally laid out code of good ethical practice and conduct. Such 'Codes of Conduct' provide clarity on the standard of behaviour required, may include dress code and where volunteers can report concerns.

It could also include that volunteers should:

- Do nothing to bring the Club or angling into disrepute.
- Treat everyone with respect and dignity.
- Promote the positive aspects of angling.
- Follow all guidelines laid down by the governing body and Club.
- (MUST) have a rod licence for England and Wales if you're fishing for salmon, trout, freshwater fish, smelt or eel with a rod and line in England (except for the River Tweed), Wales or the Border Esk region, including the parts of the river that are in Scotland.

7. VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

All clubs should have a Volunteer Handbook to bring together all policies and information in one place. It often sits alongside the Role Description and includes:

- Useful information about the Club
- Club Mission Statement
- Equal Opportunities
- Health and Safety
- Safeguarding
- Support, Training and Equipment
- Insurance
- Complaints Policy
- GDPR responsibilities
- Useful Contacts

8. HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

Organisations employing five or more people must have a written Health and Safety Policy and conduct a Health and Safety Risk Assessment. Although the law is very clear that volunteers should not be treated like employees, a club is responsible for any actions or omissions by its volunteers that negatively impact the health and safety of others. For that reason, it is highly advisable to publish a written Health and Safety Policy. This emphasises how seriously an organisation takes its responsibilities and seeks to protect those potentially affected by its policies.

The Health & Safety Policy should also include reference to Risk Assessments which will help to identify and relevant risks associated with volunteering.

9. SAFEGUARDING POLICY

A Safeguarding Policy is necessary to protect children, young people and adults. Whether volunteers need Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks depends on their role in the club and who they will be working with. It's not a requirement for all positions, but you should consider carefully what the remit of each volunteer role is before deciding on the level of screening required.

The Angling Trust has produced essential Safeguarding Policies which can be adapted by your club. They include the Safeguarding Children and Young People in Angling Policy and the Safeguarding Adults Policy. They can be found here:

<https://anglingtrust.net/safeguarding/safeguarding-policies/>

10. ANTI-DOPING POLICY

Your club should adopt a clean sport policy and support the anti-doping policies and anti-doping rules of WADA, UKAD and the International Angling Confederation (CIPS) to ensure the integrity of our sport is protected. The use of performance enhancing drugs and other doping behaviour severely damages the legitimacy of angling and undermines the integrity of the sport.

11. DATA PRIVACY POLICY

The rules around personal data, requiring organisations to be more accountable and transparent, are set out in the Data Protection Act 2018, General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) which came into force on 25 May 2018.

All clubs should have a Privacy Policy (also known as a 'Privacy Notice') detailing how data is treated, which should be provided to all staff, volunteers and members, as appropriate. This also provides users

details of the club's location and contact details and identifies any third party that data may be shared with, explaining for what purpose.

12. COMPLAINTS POLICY

All clubs using volunteers should strive to create an environment in which volunteers feel valued. It is important to provide a Complaints Policy, providing reassurance that in the event of an issue arising which cannot be informally resolved, a written process exists to provide an open and fair way for volunteers to make their concerns known, enabling complaints to be resolved quickly.

13. EXPENSES GUIDANCE

The golden rule is that volunteers must never be out-of-pocket. However, every year sports clubs are penalised by HMRC for paying volunteers for services, which happens if volunteers are paid *more* than actual out-of-pocket expenses. In addition, the volunteer can claim to have worker or employee rights, and demand minimum wage, which can cause the organisation serious problems in the event of any dispute.

Reasonable out-of-pocket expenses whilst volunteering can include:

- Travel to and from the place of volunteering or other location.
- Meals.
- Accommodation for overnight stays.
- Care of dependents.
- Postage, phone calls, stationery for the club.
- Cost of protective clothing/special equipment.
- Cost of relevant training.

A flat rate, however, must not be paid, only the actual cost, preferably supported by receipts. It is important to note that HMRC treats benefits such as free membership as a payment for services, equating to the membership's value, and is therefore taxable. Any expenses should be claimed using an approved claim form.

14. INSURANCE POLICY

All clubs, whether Angling Trust members or not, should have the appropriate insurance cover for their activities. This insurance needs to consider club officials, members, volunteers, guests and the public.

At the very least, a club ought to have cover for:

- Employer's Liability, covering the club (officials, members, guests and volunteers) in the

event an employee, member or volunteer makes a claim against the club for harm caused while performing duties for the club. This could include during voluntary bailiff duties or while undertaking work party maintenance.

- Public Liability insurance covering the club (officials, members, guests and volunteers) in the event of a club member or a third party (e.g. a member of the public) being injured by the club's actions or inactions.

Depending upon the type of activity involved, Professional Indemnity insurance may also be required, covering claims arising from loss or injury caused by services provided negligently or without reasonable care.

A club may also want to have insurances for property to cover assets (such as money, machinery and trophies); personal accident; directors and officers; and abuse.

When purchasing an insurance policy:

- Ensure the policy explicitly mentions and covers club members and volunteers.
- Check if there are upper and lower age limits for members and volunteers.
- Ensure that the policy covers the type of activities your club are involved. If it doubt, ask your insurer before you undertake the activity.
- Conduct risk assessments and record them in writing for any activities your members and volunteers undertake.

Angling Trust member clubs receive all of these insurance benefits as part of their inclusive membership insurance package. For more information on that insurance contact our membership team on 0343 5077 006 or visit our website at <https://anglingtrust.net/membership/insurance-centre/>

15. QUICK GUIDE TO GDPR RESPONSIBILITIES

Volunteers are responsible for protecting the security of personal data and confidential information that they receive in the course of volunteering activities. This is particularly important in the context of personal data and responsibilities under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

This guide has been developed as an easy reference point for the main elements of GDPR and how volunteers can help with compliance with the requirements of GDPR.

Examples of personal data:	Examples of sensitive personal data:	Examples of confidential information:
• A name and surname	• Racial or ethnic origin	• Credit/Debit card details
• An email address	• Political opinions	• Banking Details
• Location data	• Religious or philosophical belief	• Contracts
• A home address	• Sexual orientation	• Commercial documents
• A member ID number	• Health	• Reports
• An internal protocol (IP) address	• Trade union membership	
	• Generic data	
	• Biometric data	

DOs	DON'Ts
Shred/burn personal/confidential data if in paper form	Leave any personal information lying around
Keep your usernames and passwords secure	Give your username or password to anyone
Dispose of personal/confidential data securely	Dispose of personal data in regular bins or recycling if it has not been shredded or destroyed
Dispose of personal/confidential data as soon as possible (i.e. after an event has finished)	Open emails or attachments from unknown sources
Report any data breaches <u>immediately</u> to your AT contact person	Duplicate personal data unnecessarily e.g. printing it out
Undertake regular training on GDPR	Download business data onto personal devices unless authorised
Be vigilant with emails and attachments	Leave your computer logged in if you can access personal data from it
Familiarise yourself with AT's documentation and policies	Store your passwords in browsers
Log out when not using a digital service	Log on to public Wi-Fi or unsecured networks whilst working on personal data
Only use personal data if you need to and for as long as you need it	Provide access to personal data unless it is necessary and lawful
Verify an individual before handing over personal/confidential data	
Arrange certified confidential waste disposal for large amounts of personal data	

16. CONCLUSION

This Guide is intended as a starting point for angling clubs to ensure that existing processes are legally and ethically compliant and reflect Best Practice when engaging volunteers. It is not definitive but covers the key points, providing links to more detailed further information or helpful resources.

To prepare angling for the future, clubs must carefully consider their current use of volunteers, updating and upgrading policies and processes as necessary. Equally important is ensuring a positive volunteering experience - which can only benefit angling.

The Angling Trust is a member of the NCVO, through which advice and resources can be accessed. Should any further help, advice or signposting to information and resources be required, please contact: volunteering@anglingtrust.net

This guide and other useful information about volunteering can be accessed via the Angling Trust website at:

<https://anglingtrust.net/get-involved/volunteering/>

Relevant policies including codes of conduct, volunteer policy and handbook, health and safety policy, anti-doping policy, data privacy policy, complaints policy etc can be accessed via our website:

<https://anglingtrust.net/about-us/governance-and-policies/policies/>

Other useful links:

<https://www.sportengland.org/guidance-and-support/volunteering-qa>

<https://www.ncvo.org.uk/help-and-guidance/involving-volunteers/#/>

<https://www.gov.uk/volunteering/pay-and-expenses>

<https://www.sportandrecreation.org.uk/pages/volunteering>