Volunteer Policy

Agreed: /04/26 Review: 04/2028

1. Introduction and Purpose

Volunteers are central to the work of Horsforth Climate Action (HCA). We are a community-led organisation working to promote action on climate change and support a greener, fairer and more sustainable Horsforth and surrounding areas.

This policy sets out the principles, processes and responsibilities that support volunteers and ensures volunteering with HCA is positive, safe and rewarding.

2. Principles of Volunteering

HCA is committed to:

- Valuing and recognising the contribution made by volunteers.
- Ensuring volunteering is inclusive, accessible and free from discrimination, in line with HCA's Equality and Diversity Policy.
- Providing clear roles, appropriate support and a safe environment.
- Ensuring volunteering complements, but does not replace, paid or grant-funded roles where these exist and relevant funds are available.

Volunteering with HCA is unpaid, freely chosen, and open to anyone who supports our aims.

3. Relationship to the Code of Conduct

All volunteers are expected to read, understand and comply with the **Horsforth Climate Action Staff & Volunteer Code of Conduct**. This sets out the standards of behaviour, respect, inclusion and safeguarding expected of everyone representing HCA.

4. Recruitment of Volunteers

HCA recruits volunteers in an open, transparent and fair way. Recruitment will:

- Focus on widening participation and reducing barriers to involvement.
- Match volunteer interests, skills and availability with appropriate roles.
- Be proportionate to the role (for example, informal for one-off activities, more structured for ongoing roles).

5. Volunteer Roles and Role Descriptions

All ongoing volunteer roles will have a brief role description outlining:

- The purpose of the role
- Key activities
- Time commitment and flexibility
- Support and supervision arrangements

Volunteers are not obliged to carry out tasks they are uncomfortable with and may change or end their role at any time with reasonable notice.

6. Induction and Training

All volunteers will receive an appropriate induction, which may include:

- An introduction to HCA's aims, activities and structure
- Access to the Volunteer Policy and Code of Conduct
- Health and safety information relevant to the role
- Safeguarding guidance.

Training will be provided where needed to help volunteers carry out their role safely and effectively, within HCA's capacity.

7. Support and Supervision

HCA will:

- Provide a named contact or coordinator for volunteers.
- Offer ongoing support, informal check-ins and opportunities for feedback.
- Encourage a culture of teamwork, learning and mutual respect.

Volunteers are encouraged to raise any concerns, issues or ideas at an early stage.

8. Health, Safety and Wellbeing

HCA takes reasonable steps to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of volunteers while they are volunteering. Volunteers are expected to:

- Take reasonable care of their own safety and that of others.
- Follow relevant risk assessments and safety guidance.
- Report accidents, hazards or concerns promptly.

9. Expenses

Where possible and agreed in advance, HCA will reimburse reasonable out-of-pocket expenses incurred while volunteering, subject to available funds and submission of receipts.

10. Data Protection and Confidentiality

Volunteers may have access to personal or sensitive information. All volunteers must:

- Follow HCA's Privacy Policy.
- Treat information confidentially and use it only for agreed purposes.

11. Ending Volunteering

Volunteering with HCA can end at any time by either the volunteer or HCA. HCA may end a volunteering arrangement if:

- The role is no longer required or sustainable.
- There are concerns about conduct, safety or wellbeing.
- The Code of Conduct is not followed.

Where possible, this will be handled respectfully and with discussion.

12. Review of This Policy

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually to ensure it remains fit for purpose and reflects the needs of volunteers and the organisation.