CHELTENHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

GREENSPACE'S COMMUNITY GROUPS HANDBOOK

2026 EDITION

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How to use this handbook

We hope you will find this handbook useful for navigating the intricacies of volunteering in a public space. Here are some tips on how to use this document to assist you in your volunteering endeavours:

- **Please do not print this document.** It is under constant revision, so please check the CBC website for the most up-to-date version.
- **Use Ctrl + F to search for key words or phrases** – this will help you find the sections you need.
- **Follow the links** - we have tried to avoid 'reinventing the wheel' with this document, any linked websites will contain useful information already produced by professionals in the volunteering industry. (let us know if a link no longer works and we can update it!)

Welcome and Introduction (For All Groups)

Purpose of this handbook

In Cheltenham we are lucky enough to have lots of parks and green spaces across the town. It has even been referred to as ‘a town within a park’. Because of that, we have lots of fantastic people and groups who care about their local green spaces and want to get involved. This could be through grant finding, working parties, or being extra eyes and ears for the council. All this help is brilliant, as it makes our parks safer, more accessible, wildlife considerate, and all round better!

The purpose of this document is to support groups in navigating their way around volunteering in their local green space or park. From basic set up and who to contact to report fly tipping/homelessness, to working with business groups and applying for grants to achieving large scale projects, this handbook will provide guidance for every common query.

Benefits of getting involved

Being involved as a group allows you to make a real impact to your local community’s green space. You can help plants trees or bulbs, raise money for play equipment, conduct community surveys, litter pick and so much more. All these efforts make a real difference to the green space—shaping how it looks, how people use it, and how they feel when they’re there. They also give you the chance to learn new skills and meet like-minded folk who are keen to help out. However you can help, we want to take this moment to thank you. Without the help of volunteers, we would not be able to achieve all that we can.

Spotlight on resources

We have limited resource in the green space team. If you are interested in starting a group, please contact greenspacedevelopment@cheltenham.gov.uk to find out if there is resource to support you.

Forming and Organising a Group (For All Groups)

With an increasing number of volunteer groups across Cheltenham, we have reviewed how we work with groups to ensure we can support as many people as possible who want to get involved.

There are two main ways groups can work with us: either as an independent partner organisation (constituted group) or as volunteers working directly on behalf of the council (small group). Each arrangement requires different levels of support and resources from us.

The information below outlines both options to help you decide which approach would be most suitable for your group.

Different types of groups

Constituted Groups:

- Self-led working parties & litter picks
- Biannual work plan meetings to decide and agree work
- Ad hoc drop-in's by rangers during scheduled working parties
- Occasional power tool support by rangers
- Support from green spaces department on projects
- Insurance and PLI required from group - £5million minimum.

Small Groups:

- Quarterly ranger led working parties
- Tools and work provided by rangers
- Limited support from green space development on projects
- No insurance or PLI required from group

➔ Forming your group

If you want to become a constituted group, you need to do a couple of things to make sure you can act effectively and responsibly in your local green space.

THINK:

🌱 Group structure

🤝 Committee roles

⚖️ Finance

🚀 and more.

Below are some links to support you in making these decisions –

1.) Choosing the right organisational structure for your group - MyCommunity – This website guides you through these decisions
2.) Setting up a basic community group | The Wildlife Trusts – This website explains community groups simply in a video
3.) Starting a group | Resource Centre – This website gives LOADS of help for setting up groups, including writing constitutions/setting up bank accounts and more:
4.) Please utilise the paid support of GRCC to be guided further on becoming a constituted group. Link here: Home | GRCC
5.) Bank info Bank accounts for community groups | Resource Centre

→ See how your group fairs with the self-assessment tool 'better friends' Better Friends : Parks Community UK

There are also national organisations who support friends of groups – they have many resources which may prove useful

Parks Community UK : We empower Friends of parks and greenspace community volunteers

National Federation of Parks and Green Spaces – supporting grass roots

🤝 Working with the Council (For All Groups)

How we collaborate

There are many ways that the green space team work with groups in the local community.

When it comes to groups physically working in the park (working parties) there are two ways.

1. Constituted groups:

These groups will be able to carry out working parties in the park independently from the council as they will have their own insurance. All work and projects will be decided and agreed with the ranger team. To understand how this works, see essential documents below.

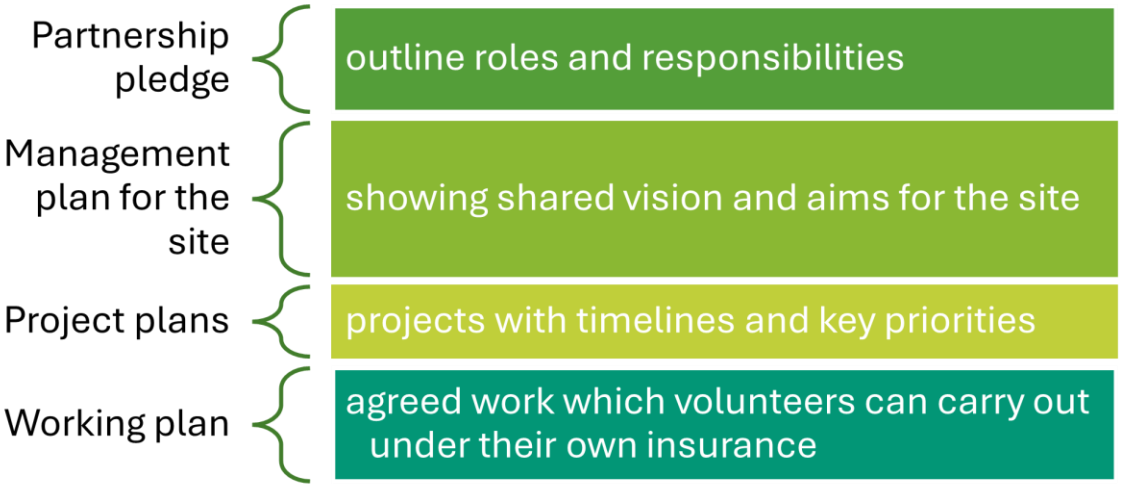
2. Small groups (Ranger led groups):

These groups will need to have working parties run by the ranger team as all volunteers will be working under the council's guidance and insurance.

Essential documents:

We have created some key documents with the aim of making things more streamlined and to ultimately help us (the council) help you (the group) achieve more and do more for our parks and green spaces!

Key documents which we will work on and create together are:



1. Partnership pledge (Constituted groups only)

This document sets out the key roles and responsibilities of both the group and the council. You can find a copy of this document– here.

The groups responsibilities include:

1. Adhering to shared values.
2. Agree all work with Green Space Development (GSD) team.
3. Work with GSD for all projects.
4. Follow CBC's event procedure.
5. Process and store all volunteer data safely.
6. Have a safeguarding policy.
7. Follow recommended health and safety procedures.
8. Have public liability (£5mil required) and employer liability insurance (£5mil recommended).
9. Ensure 3rd parties are covered by their own insurance.
10. Record and report any accidents.
11. Ensure all volunteers are trained appropriately.

Cheltenham borough council will:

1. Adhere to shared values.
2. Provide induction and the volunteer handbook for new groups.
3. Hold meetings to agree work and projects.
4. Keep Friend's groups informed of any changes or projects.
5. Regularly communicate with Friends groups.
6. Fairly consider the ideas of Friends groups.
7. Keep the Friends group informed of any changes to the council's volunteer policy or health and safety requirements.
8. Support Friends groups with good governance.
9. Provide key points of contact.
10. Keep Friends group informed of any other major works in the park.

2. Management plan

This is a document which is created in partnership with the council and the group. It sets up the basic management plan of a green space. It will include the vision and aims of a green space and different areas within it, as well as roles and responsibilities of the volunteers, the green space team, UBICO, and other groups. This document will be more detailed if the green space has a Green Flag. It will also link with the project plan and work plan documents (learn more about these below). We will aim to review this document every **3 - 5 years** with the group (site dependent).

3. Project plan

This is a document which outlines the future projects (one off pieces of work) for a green space. This document will be created with the support of the green space team.

For more guidance on achieving a larger project have a look at our project process below.

4. Working plan

This document outlines the agreed work which a group can carry out on council land. Work outside of this remit should not be completed without permission from the council. We will aim to review this document **every 6 months to a year** with the group (group dependent).

Celebrating Our Volunteers

We know that volunteers are fantastic. To celebrate and show off that fantastic work you do we do a couple of things:

Yearly Christmas Newsletter: Each year we ask every group to put forward some words for their page in our yearly achievements and a few photos (the sillier the better!).

Volunteer Recognition Event: Every 2 years we hold a volunteer recognition event which is a 'get together' of all CBC Green Space Volunteers who volunteer in CBC Green Spaces. Please keep an eye on your email and send it out to the rest of the group when the invite comes out. We would love to see you there. Last year we held a talk about orchards, stands from local group, music and cake and tea

Here is a YouTube short video of our celebration in 2025.

Working Safely (For Constituted groups)

Health and safety essentials

Health and Safety doesn't have to be a thing that stops you and the group from doing something. It can help you make working parties and other volunteering opportunities more accessible to all.

The Resource Centre has a good section on this: Health and safety for community groups | Resource Centre)

We require or strongly advise that you have each of these:

1. Insurance – £5 million Public liability (required) & £5 million Employer liability or personal accident cover (strongly advised).
2. Risk assessments (required).
3. Safeguarding policy (required).
4. Trained first aiders and first aid kit (strongly advised).
5. Personal protective equipment, e.g. gloves and hi vis vests (strongly advised).

More details on these can be found in the next few pages.

Insurance

Your group will need to get insurance to cover what work your group will be carrying out. As a standard the council **need £5 million for PLI and ELI**. Speak to recognised groups for suggested companies.

Here is a link for the Resource Centre which can support you in understanding what and how risk assessments could look, what Public Liability and Employers Liability is (PLI and ELI) and more:

Health and Safety and Insurance | Resource Centre

Data protection and 'GDPR'

GDPR is another thing you need to think about when you are working with people's personal data. Personal data is information about a person which can identify them, including basic things like names and addresses but also includes sensitive information such as health information. The basics of this are: don't collect more data than you need, store it securely, and get rid of it once you no longer need it. There is no getting away from this one when you work with people, as it's everything from their name, phone number, email address etc.

Practical applications of this:

- BCC volunteer email addresses when sending emails to multiple people.
- Ensure you get permission to add a new volunteer to WhatsApp groups or other messaging groups.
- Store medical data and volunteer contact details securely - think password protected.

Again, the resource centre has lots of information on this: Data protection for community groups | Resource Centre

Tetanus shot

Volunteers working in parks and green spaces may come into contact with thorny plants, rusted metal, or sharp objects that can cause cuts and puncture wounds. Tetanus is a serious infection caused by bacteria commonly found in soil and can enter the body through even minor injuries. For this reason, volunteers are strongly advised to ensure their tetanus vaccination is up to date before joining a working party.

📝 Paperwork and Administrative Support (For All Groups)

Risk assessments

So… What is a Risk Assessment?

Think of a risk assessment as a way to spot anything that could go wrong while you're working or volunteering, figure out how serious it is, and decide what needs to be done to keep everyone safe. It’s a simple but important process that helps us look after each other.

Once a risk assessment is done, you need to make sure everyone involved in the activity knows about the safety measures—so everyone is clear on what to do and what to avoid. These safety tips might be shared during team chats, inductions, briefings, or training sessions.

Why It Matters—and How to Do It

Now that we know what a risk assessment is and why it’s important, let’s look at how to actually do one. We use a simple 5-step method:

✅ **Step 1: Spot the Hazards**

Take a good look around and think about what could cause harm. These are your hazards. Break the task down into parts first, then look at the bigger picture. Ask yourself:

- Are any substances being used?
- Is there any lifting or carrying?
- What tools or equipment are involved?
- What’s the working environment like?
- Are there other activities happening nearby?

✅ **Step 2: Assess the Risk**

Once you’ve spotted the hazards, think about how likely it is that something could go wrong—and how bad it would be if it did. Most places use a simple scale: High, Medium, or Low.

✅ **Step 3: Put Controls in Place**

Now, figure out what you can do to reduce the risk. This might mean using protective gear, changing how a task is done, or making sure people are trained properly.

✅ **Step 4: Write It Down**

It's a legal requirement to record your risk assessment findings – we ask for this in the volunteer pledge to ensure your group is protected. See appendix for our template.

✅ **Step 5: Keep It Updated**

Things change—so it's important to review your risk assessment regularly to make sure the safety measures still work and are being followed.

Want to Learn More?

If you'd like to dive deeper, check out:

- **iHasco Risk Assessment Training**
- **HSE – Managing Risks and Risk Assessment**
- Health and Safety and Insurance | Resource Centre

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) guidance

Every group must provide their volunteers with suitable PPE. PPE is any personal protective equipment designed to protect individuals from health and safety risks. This may include:

General gardening – Gloves.

Working near roads or busy paths – Hi viz vest.

Sanding & painting – gloves, eye protection, dust mask.

Strimming & brushcutters – Gloves, safety glasses, ear defenders if machinery is above 85dB, sturdy shoes, forestry helmet if working under trees.

First aid requirements

Your group is responsible for any first aid requirements if you run your own working parties. Check with your insurance provider if you are unsure what exactly your group needs. It's worth having at least 2 members trained up so if someone is off you know how to help someone in need.

First aid training is recommended to be at least Level 3 Award in Emergency First Aid at Work (RQF). This is a 1-day course.

First aid kits are recommended to be of **BS 8599** standard.

First aid training is cheaper as a group, think about working with other organisations or friends groups to run joint training courses. Funding for these courses can be found through grants – see more details here.

Accident reporting

As a group you need to make sure you are documenting any accidents that happen while you are in our parks. This is for insurance purposes as well as reporting these to the council and HSE if anything big were to happen. This is so we can work together to make sure it doesn't happen again! We suggest getting an accident book such as this: GDPR Compliant Accident Book | First Aid 4 Less

If a major incident does happen during a work party, please contact your ranger as soon as possible. The HSE will need to be contacted no more than 10 days after it has occurred with a short summary of the incident.

A list of reportable incidents can be found on the HSE website:

Types of reportable incidents - HSE

Safeguarding policy

A safeguarding policy is a document that explains how an organisation will protect the health, wellbeing, and human rights of vulnerable individuals. Having a policy demonstrates professionalism, helps meet legal duties, and reassures partners, councils, and funders that you operate safely. You may also find that grants and funding, your group wants to apply for, need this element.

Think about it like first aid – we don't turn up expecting someone to get hurt, but we still bring a first aid kit and have a basic idea of what to do just in case. Most of the time, you'll never use it, but having it in place means that if something does arise—however unlikely—we respond properly, safely, and confidently.

You can get extra support from GRCC for this.

Here is a useful resource with sample policies: Safeguarding | Resource Centre

A more basic example of a safeguarding policy can be found here: Child Safeguarding policy – Garthorne Road Nature Reserve

Legislation in one line…

Legislation can be a bit daunting if you don't know what to look for. Please see the below table for a simple 1 sentence summary of the core acts and regulations relevant to your volunteering activities:

Legislation	Summary
Health and Safety at Work Act 1974	Don't put yourself or others in danger.
Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981	Have a trained first aider and first aid box on site.
Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992	Lift safely and within your own ability.
Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992	Wear suitable protective equipment when completing tasks.
The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER) 1998	Tools must be inspected and maintained regularly, and operators must be suitably trained.
Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999	Risk assessments must be carried out and control measures put in place.
Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH) 2002	Handle substances hazardous to both human health and environment carefully.
Work at Heights Regulations 2005	Work at any height must be properly planned, supervised, and carried out by competent people.
Control of Noise & Vibration at Work Regulations 2005	Limit noise and vibration exposure, and wear appropriate PPE.
Reporting of Injuries, Diseases, and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013	Report any accidents or near misses to the HSE.
The Data Protection Act 2018 (GDPR)	Don't collect more data than you need, store it securely, and get rid of it once you no longer need it.

Use the HSE website to support your group with these bits of legislation. This can be found here: HSE: Information about health and safety at work

Projects in Green Spaces (For All Groups)

Projects can help make your green space a better place for all!

Volunteer groups often deliver or support us in delivering a large range of projects across our parks and green spaces. These projects can be anything from building a bug hotel, to installing exercise equipment or play equipment.

Many of our projects are guided by two key priorities: Climate, and Equitable Access for All. This is driven by the Green Flag award scheme, have a look at their hub to learn more: Resources & Research - Green Flag Award

Climate: We aim to create and manage green spaces that are rich in wildlife, resilient to climate change and sustainable for future generations. This includes increasing biodiversity, improving habitats, supporting pollinators, planting for climate resilience and considering the long-term environmental impact of management decisions.

Equitable Access for All: Everyone should be able to enjoy and benefit from our parks and green spaces. We work towards creating environments that are welcoming, safe, accessible and inclusive, regardless of age, ability, background or circumstance. Volunteers can support this by considering how paths, entrances, seating, signage and activities can be made accessible to as many people as possible.

The Access to Nature Hub: Access to Nature Hub - Practical Tools for Accessibility provides practical guidance, resources and ideas to help groups make green spaces and activities more inclusive.

Project definitions

What constitutes a project? Any item that requires officer time or funding above what is already provided through the work plan.

PROJECT	WHEN	WHO	EXAMPLES	TIME-FRAME
Small project	Agreed during 6 monthly meetings.	A project that the group can complete with little or no support from the green space team.	Bug hotel Single tree planting	Loose timeframe: 1-6 months
Medium project	Proposed during 6 monthly meetings.	Requires some support from green space team. Small costs/grants may be involved, but can be dealt with by the relevant ranger or officer in conjunction with the group.	Wildflower meadows Small copses Hedge	Loose timeframe 5 months – 1 year
Large project	Proposed during 6 monthly meetings. These will follow the project process and may require consultations, more detail, and support.	Steve/Malcolm/Wayne etc. The green space team will manage these projects with partnership support.	Paths Play parks	Loose timeframe: 8 months – 2+ years

From idea to implementation

If your group has an idea for a project, the first point of call is to speak to a ranger. They will be able to advise on whether it is suitable or if certain elements need rethinking. Before this chat, **please think about the list of questions below** – this will give your project the best chance of success!

- What is the project – one sentence.
- Where will it be? (location, effect on surrounding facilities and neighbours)
- How will it be done? (Friends group, GSD, contractors etc.)
- Who will it benefit?
- Any possible funding sources.
- Constraints/opportunities? (eg wildlife considerations, timeframe/seasonal constraints)
- Long term maintenance requirements and who is responsible (e.g play equipment, orchards etc.)

Project process (for large projects only):

If you are looking to undertake a large project, we have created this process to guide you and your group in what you need to think about. The green space team will work through this process with you with regular catch ups to ensure good progress.



Initial conversation

- Explore if project is viable and understand aims and objectives. Think costings & maintenance.



Basic scope drawn up

- Meeting with Green space team: rough sketch up & understand basic costings/possible grants.
- Identify partners



Local consultation

- Create consultation with partners to put out to the local public.



Targetted local consultation

- Create consultation with partners to gain specifically targetted groups for projects.



Final specification written up

- The final project is agreed and written up
- Final project can go public once all partners behind decision are in agreement



Quotes Found

- Note: some projects will need to find 3 quotes to ensure best value for money for procurement purposes



Funding identified

- Funding identified and bid drawn up
- All partners to agree time scales and costings before submission.



Funding acheived & work carrier out

- Time scales agreed
- Contractor identified and booked



Project review

- Lessons learnt
- Overall feedback and opening ceremony

📣 Communication and Community Engagement (For All Groups)

Who to contact for support in CBC green spaces

We have tried to include anything and everything on the list below to help you report something you spot, ask a query, or anything else. Let us know if you see a gap!

Query	Situation	Name	Contact details
❓ **Main RANGER contacts**	Anything parks related or if you can't find what you are looking for on this list or google – we may be able to help!	Lucy Wise Georgie Bearder	lucy.wise@cheltenham.gov.uk georgie.bearder@cheltenham.gov.uk
🏛️ **CBC Volunteer advice**	CBC Volunteering support, including advice on CBC's volunteering policies etc.	Helen Down	helen.down@cheltenham.gov.uk
🙋 **Volunteering advice**	Independent volunteering advice, including advice on how to start and run a volunteering group effectively.	Angela Gilbert and Guy Dobson at GRCC https://www.grcc.org.uk/	angelag@grcc.org.uk and guyd@grcc.org.uk
🍺 **Abandoned beer keg**	Report a beer keg for collection.	Kegwatch	https://www.kegwatch.co.uk/
⚠️ **Antisocial behaviour**	Report antisocial behaviour.	Cheltenham Borough Council	Anti-social behaviour (ASB) - Cheltenham Borough Council
🪑 **Benches**	Queries about benches, including acquisition of new benches, damaged benches, sponsoring benches.	Green spaces department	greenspacedevelopment@cheltenham.gov.uk
🗑️ **Bins**	Bins, including missing bins, overflowing bins, excess litter.	Cleansing	cleansing@cheltenham.gov.uk
🛴 **Abandoned e-scooter**	Report an abandoned e-scooter.	VOI	Email **support@voiapp.io** or Voi Scooters - Report a Voi

Events	Events in parks, including festivals, celebrations and performances.	Events team	special.events@cheltenham.gov.uk
Fly tipping	Fly tipping, both industrial and household.	CBC reporting form	Report fly-tipping - Cheltenham Borough Council
Graffiti	Particularly graffiti containing rude words or in prominent places.	CBC reporting form	Report graffiti or fly-posting - Cheltenham Borough Council
Green algae/lake not looking right	If you spot something that could be Green Algae let us know and we can investigate & take action.	Let Green Space team know, we will report it to EA and work with them.	greenspacedevelopment@cheltenham.gov.uk
Green waste	Reporting piles of green waste produced by working parties for collection. Please see guidance on reporting green waste below.	Cleansing	cleansing@cheltenham.gov.uk
Highways	Situations on highways land, including designated footpaths, road verges etc.	Highways	FixMyStreet – follow link to Fix My Street (or google it)
Homeless person/tent or belongings	Alert support services of a homeless person/tent or belongings. *Please don't move yourself as this is someone's personal belongings! Get in touch with CBC's RANGERS if unsure.*	Streetlink	https://thestreetlink.org.uk/start
Illegal fishing	If you spot someone fishing where they should not be (only certain areas of Pittville bottom lake are allowed and not within the closed season from 15th March – 16th June).	EA and Neighbourhood team	EA hotline on 0800 807060 and envhealth@cheltenham.gov.uk
Invasive species	If you spot an invasive species such as Japanese knotweed, 3 cornered leek,	Green spaces department	greenspacedevelopment@cheltenham.gov.uk

	or giant hogweed, please report to CBC immediately. Identification and guidance on invasive species can be found in the Vegetative Guide for CBC Parks.		
🏍️ **Abandoned motorbike or bike**	As this is possibly stolen, please report to the police. If seen IN THE WATER – contact the greenspace team too so we can remove ASAP for environmental reasons.	Police And sometimes Green Space	01452 753241 or 101 If needed: greenspacedevelopment@cheltenham.gov.uk
👮 **Neighbourhood team**	Low level anti-social behaviour and environmental crime issues such as fly-tipping, dog control, graffiti, and environmental offences. About the neighbourhood team - Cheltenham Borough Council	Neighbourhood team	envhealth@cheltenham.gov.uk About the neighbourhood team - Cheltenham Borough Council
🪰 **Pests**	Issues with pests. Eg. rats, foxes, dead animals.	Pest control	pestpeople@cheltenham.gov.uk
🛝 **Playgrounds**	Including issues with equipment, playground fencing, damage, etc.	Green spaces department	greenspacedevelopment@cheltenham.gov.uk
👮 **Police -999**	Reporting a crime in progress, including drug dealing, active drug use, fire lighting, anti-social behaviour, criminal damage.	Police – emergency	999
🚔 **Local policing team**	Find your local police team through this link. This is for serious criminal damage, threats, violence, theft, or serious anti-social behaviour **when not in progress.**	Gloucestershire Constabulary	Cheltenham | Gloucestershire Constabulary

	See the neighbourhood team for less serious incidents.		
☎️ **101**	Reporting after a criminal event/reporting signs of criminal activity.	Police – nonemergency	Call 101
⚠️ **Sharps**	Any sharp objects such as needles and knives. Please do not touch or move these, report location immediately.	High-priority alert through customer services	Call customer service right away on **01242 262626** and they will raise it on a high priority (4 hours). If outside of office hours, call **01242 264102** and email: cleansing@cheltenham.gov.uk
🏠 **Structures, infrastructure and buildings**	Any broken or dangerous structures or buildings within your park. Eg bridges, paving slabs, street lighting, buildings etc.	Fix my street	FixMyStreet – follow link to Fix My Street (or google it).
🌳 **Trees**	Any issues/queries about trees, including damaged trees, tree guards, and diseased trees.	Tree team	Trees@cheltenham.gov.uk
🛒 **Abandoned trolley**	Report a trolley for collection.	Trolleywise	https://wanzl.com/en_GB/360-degree-service/TrolleyWise
💧 **Water in our parks**	Queries about water (eg. lakes, streams, ponds) including erosion, fish kills, dumped vehicles, etc.	Flooding team & Green spaces department if in a park.	flooding@cheltenham.gov.uk & greenspacedevelopment@cheltenham.gov.uk if in a green space. Visit Reporting flooding | Flood advice | Cheltenham Borough Council for more guidance.

Social media Guidance

Having a social media presence as a group is a fantastic way to engage with local folk who are interested in your green space.

Typical social media platforms our groups use are:

- Facebook
- Instagram
- LinkedIn

On these platforms you can tell people what you are doing and why, how they can help your cause, or how to get involved. It's a great way to link up with local folk who may not engage with you otherwise.

To help your content find the right audience and link up with other volunteer groups, use these hashtags: #Cheltenhamparks #volunteercheltenham #biodiversity #volunteering #nature #wildlife

Benefits of social media

Social media can be a really positive tool for volunteer groups if utilized well. It can help you:

- **Recruit New Volunteers -** Social media helps groups reach a wider audience and attract people who may be interested in volunteering but are unaware of local opportunities.
- **Promote Events and Activities -** Platforms such as Facebook and Instagram make it easy to advertise work parties and events. Facebook events is a really good way of getting your events out to local people.
- **Showcase Achievements -** Sharing photos, videos, and success stories demonstrates the positive impact of the group's work, helping to build support within your local community.
- **Increase Public Awareness -** Social media can educate local communities about the importance of green spaces, biodiversity and conservation works.
- **Strengthen Community Engagement -** Regular updates encourage interaction with local residents, helping to build relationships and create a stronger sense of community.

Guidance on setting up social media for your volunteer group can be found here: How to use social media to promote your organisation | MyCommunity

Drawbacks of social media

Unfortunately, being a public space, there are sometimes conflicting views on how a space should be used or managed. As a volunteer group working under council guidance you should and can always refer these complaints to the council by giving them the Green Space Email address – greenspacedevelopment@cheltenham.gov.uk

It's also worth having a set of house rules visible on your platform. This is now typical in spaces where anyone can comment. Here is an example:

Group Social Media House Rules

Welcome to our community page! We want this to be a positive, welcoming space for everyone who cares about our green space. Please keep to these simple guidelines:

Be respectful

- Treat everyone with kindness and courtesy
- No abusive, offensive, or discriminatory language

Keep it positive and relevant

- Stay on topic (our green space, volunteering, nature, and community)
- Celebrate successes and share constructive ideas

Respect privacy

- Don't share personal information about others without consent
- Please ask before posting photos of identifiable individuals, especially children

No conflict or confrontation

- If you have a concern, raise it privately with the organisers
- Avoid arguments or negative exchanges in public comments

Protect the group's reputation

- Remember this page represents the whole group
- Avoid posting anything that could be misleading or harmful

No spam or promotion

- No unrelated advertising or repeated self-promotion without permission

Follow safeguarding principles

- If something doesn't feel right, don't post it
- Report any concerns to the organisers rather than sharing online

Admins may remove content

- Posts or comments that break these rules may be removed to keep the space safe and welcoming

It's also worth knowing you can turn off comments on posts to stop topics escalating.

Here are the councils house rules we abide by on our social media platforms:

Keeping our platforms safe and enjoyable | Social media house rules | Cheltenham Borough Council

Personal social media accounts:

Protecting Your Privacy Online

Please be aware that if you interact with volunteer groups, pages, or individuals using your personal social media account, others may be able to view information from your profile, such as your name, photos, friends list, or other personal details, depending on your privacy settings. Before engaging online, we recommend reviewing your account's privacy settings and considering whether you are comfortable sharing this information. Taking a few moments to check your settings can help protect your privacy and personal information.

🔍 Spotlight: Homelessness (All Groups)

It's unfortunate in Cheltenham that we have people who find themselves homeless. Once you start volunteering in our parks you may find that you notice them more – especially in the summer months.

If you see someone homeless/a tent/obvious homeless belongings, please report it on StreetLink. Don't assume someone else has done it as often, they haven't!!

Street Link will inform Julian House, who are commissioned by Gloucester City Council on behalf of Gloucestershire Housing Partnership. Julian House will ensure that the person gets the help they need and that if a tent/belongs are left, they will contact the relevant services to get them cleared up. Talk to your ranger if you have any queries or concerns.

Important:

Please don't take it upon yourself to remove belongings if the person doesn't seem to be 'home'. They have a right to be there – please respect them and try and help them by reporting it on Street Link.

Please don't take matters into your own hands if you do see abandoned items as there may be **unsafe substances/sharps** within their belongings.

Wildlife Conservation and Biodiversity (For All Groups)

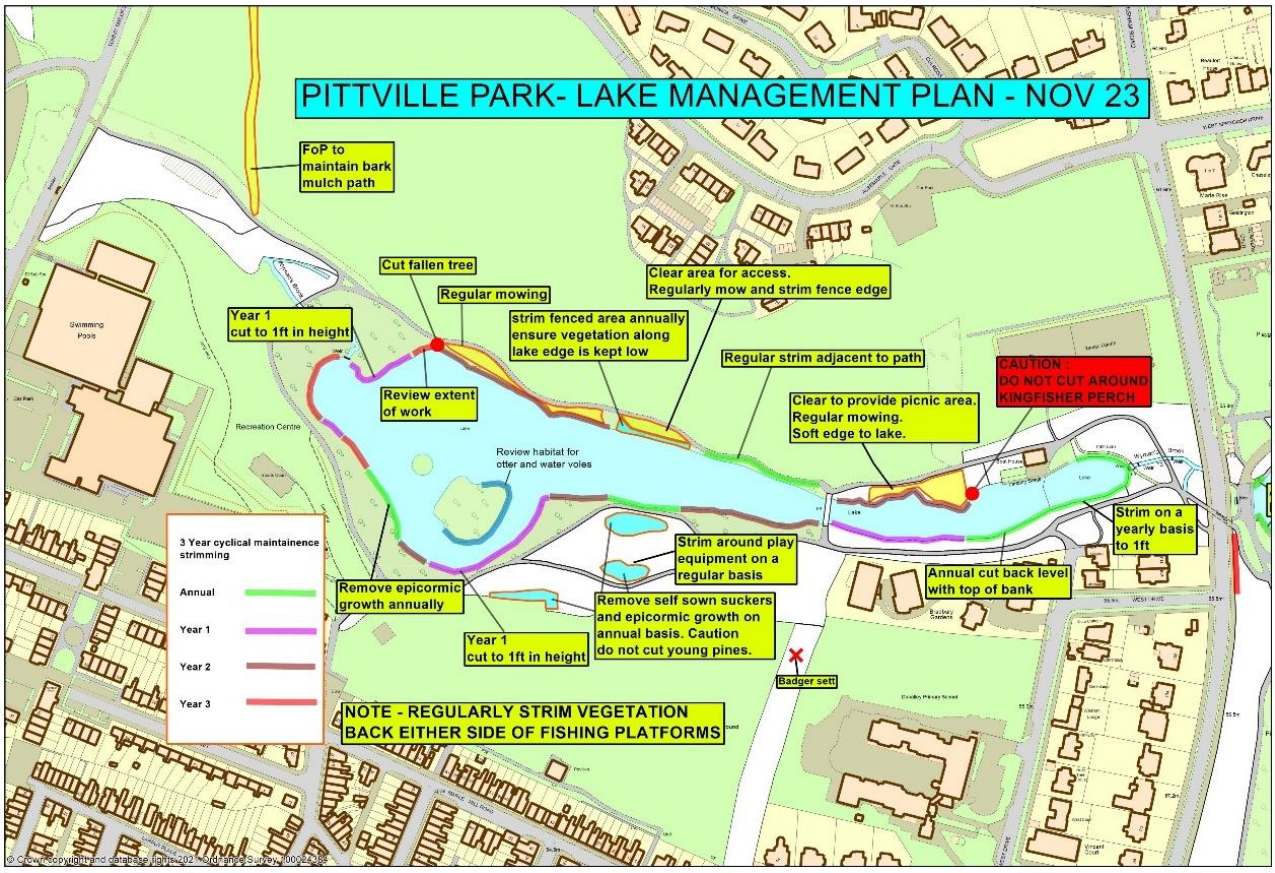
The council's wildlife strategy

On 18 March 2024, Cheltenham Borough Council declared a nature emergency. Since then, we've begun incorporating more wild areas into our green spaces to help bring nature back into the town. Managing these spaces can be time-intensive and resource-heavy — and that's where you come in! With the help of volunteers, we can do more to support wildlife and boost biodiversity throughout the local area.

We have different levels of wild areas: completely left, and under rotational management.

- ➔ Completely left areas are spots that we want minimal input from humans; these will be sanctuaries for our wild animals, such as birds, reptiles, and insects.
- ➔ Areas under rotational management will be actively managed every 3 – 5 years. This allows different densities of wildlife to be present – 1st year growth brambles support different species than 3-year-old brambles.

How this rotation looks depends on the green space. Below is an example of Pittville park's lake management plan.



More details on how we manage wilder areas can be found in the Vegetative guide to CBC parks.

A Vegetative guide to CBC Parks

This document will contain plant identification and vegetation management guidance for working with different types of vegetation in Cheltenham's parks. Everything from invasive species to soft edges and rotational management will be found here.

THIS DOCUMENT IS COMING SOON

Protected species and legal responsibilities

Many of Cheltenham's parks and green spaces support species that have legal protection under several pieces of legislation, including the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the Protection of Badgers act 1992. Here are some of the species you may encounter:

Species	Relevant legislation	What to do
Badgers	Protection of Badgers act 1992	➔ Report any possible badger set to greenspacedevelopment@cheltenham.gov.uk especially if it is a public health concern (e.g. hole on a footpath) or if you are scheduled to do work in the area. ➔ Work will need to be paused until appropriate procedures are in place. ➔ Contact a ranger before completing work near a badger set.
Bats	Wildlife & Countryside act 1981, Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2017	➔ If you find bats while working- stop work and let a ranger or greenspacedevelopment@cheltenham.gov.uk know immediately. - Avoid disturbing any bats, especially when occupying a structure/place used for shelter. - Do not obstruct access to any structure/place used for shelter. - Bats mainly roost in trees with veteran features & old buildings, so avoid damaging/obstructing structures like this. ➔ We have a good working relationship with the University of Gloucestershire with a bat

		specialist. If you or anyone if the group would like to be a specific bat champion and do extra volunteer hours monitoring/recording let us know - greenspacedevelopment@cheltenham.gov.uk
🦦 **Otters**	Wildlife & Countryside act 1981, Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2017	- Avoid disturbing otters whilst they are occupying a structure/place used for shelter, or obstructing access to a structure/place used for shelter. - Avoid damaging/destroying their resting/breeding places, even if the otters are not present.
🐭 **Water Voles**	Wildlife & Countryside act 1981, Schedule 5	- Avoid disturbing any water voles when occupying a structure/place used for shelter. - Do not obstruct access to, or damage/destroy, any structure/place used for shelter. - Water voles tend to dig holes into the banks of water bodies – avoid doing work near any likely looking holes.
🌼 **Bluebells**	Wildlife & Countryside act 1981, Schedule 8	- Avoid picking, uprooting or destroying native English bluebells. This can include trampling/crushing with machinery. - Please note this does not apply to Spanish bluebells.

Bird nesting season

Legislation

All nesting birds and their nests are protected under the Wildlife and countryside Act 1981. This makes it an offence to disturb a bird building a nest, on a nest, or the nest itself.

The bird nesting season runs between 28th February and 31st August; however, weather conditions and specific bird species can influence this, and you may come across birds nesting outside this season.

It is essential that disturbing a nest, or a nesting bird, is avoided.

It is important to highlight bird nesting season at the start of a working party during this time.

Planning work around the nesting season

When working in Cheltenham Borough Council's parks, any work that runs the risk of disturbing nesting birds should be completed in winter, outside of bird nesting season. This includes tasks such as bramble bashing, cutting and clearing dense vegetation, and raising the canopies of trees.

Please contact a ranger if you have queries or concerns regarding this. greenspacedevelopment@cheltenham.gov.uk

Surveys and citizen science

There are many ways to support your local wildlife. One way is to complete surveys or take part in citizen science initiatives.

Surveys will help us map increases and declines as well as implement and assess maintenance and projects, such as wildflower areas, in your green space.

You can find a list of websites which supports local folk in completing citizen science in the appendix - here.

If you have any ideas of other things you want to survey in your local green space, please get in touch. greenspacedevelopment@cheltenham.gov.uk

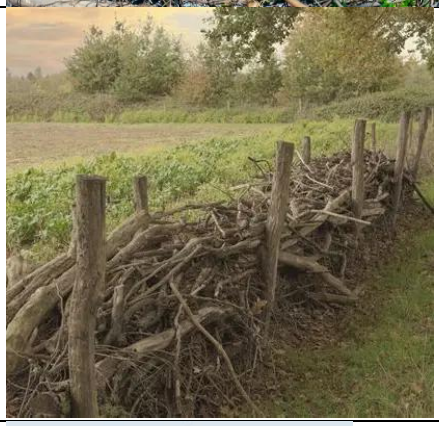
Wildlife cameras guidance

If you are interested in setting up a wildlife or trail cam, please speak with your ranger to work out how this can be done safely.

Green waste disposal

Many of the activities you undertake in parks as green space volunteers will produce some amount of green waste. Ideally, most of the green waste produced should be utilised within the park to create further habitats and ecological niches for local species. This helps both create habitats and reduce the need for waste movement.

Several varieties of habitat can be created from green waste:

Habitat	Picture	Good website link
Habitat piles		Make a Log Pile for Wildlife | Habitats for Hedgehogs, Frogs & More
Dead hedges		Build a dead hedge for wildlife
Hibernaculum's		How to build a hibernaculum for amphibians and reptiles | Wiltshire Wildlife Trust
Compost (The Friends of Hatherley make their own LEAF compost from fallen leaves in the park. Get in touch to see how they do it!)		Composting: How to Make a Compost Heap for Wildlife Garden Organic | Gloucestershire Master Composters

WARNING: non-native invasive species should never be included in any of these disposal methods as it may facilitate the establishment or spread of them to other areas.

Arranging collection for green waste

If you are unable to dispose of green waste within the park, please make a neat pile of the greenery next to an entrance or easily accessible path for collection (they will be driving there so be mindful in winter where the ground is soft!). Then, contact CBC at cleansing@cheltenham.gov.uk to request collection. You will need to provide the following information in your email.

- Photo of the pile of green waste.
- The park the green waste is located in.
- The exact location of the green waste, a description, or a map with a cross on it.

Green waste is generally collected on Mondays, so it may take up to a week for your pile to be removed.

Grant Applications and Funding

Being an independent group means you are able to apply for pots of funding which the green space team don't have access to. These can be small pots of funding or really big ones.

Grants can provide funding for both volunteer tools and larger projects. **Groups must only apply for project-related grants if their project has been agreed by the green space team through the project process.**

Top tips for applying for grants:

- Prove that you've got support from the local community – this can be with an open evening/presentation in your local hall/pub/etc, online surveys, talking to local schools, parish councils (if there is one in your area), your local councillors or community and faith groups.
- Keep a note of all hours you and the rest of the group have given – this can sometimes be counted as 'in kind' contributions and match funded.
- Have your projects 'ready to go' by working with us in the green space team. Many grants need quotes of work. Remember this all takes time so having projects 'on a shelf' when a grant is made available makes it much smoother.

Further advice for finding and applying for grants can be found here: Resources | VCSE news & resources

Some possible grant sources:

- Grants from Cheltenham Borough Council: https://www.cheltenham.gov.uk/communities-and-leisure/community-advice-and-engagement/community-grants-and-funding/ This includes community building grants of up to £300 which can be applied for at any time as well as larger grant pots which open for applications at set times.
- TCV (The Conservation Volunteers) offer small start up grants to new groups setting up and support grants to existing groups looking for funding for tools, equipment and training: https://www.tcv.org.uk/tcv-community-network-membership/chestnut-fund/
- https://www.greggsfoundation.org.uk/grants/community-funding
- VCSE also provide a monthly funding bulletin: Support for new organisations — Gloucestershire VCSE Alliance

👭 Working in Parks and Green Spaces (Constituted groups)

Running a working party

- ➔ Before
- ➔ At the start of the session
- ➔ During
- ➔ After

Before – Before a working party it's important to get the message out to everyone about what the plan is. Include things like date, timing, meeting location, task, and why. This can be done on an email or WhatsApp group.

At the start of the session – At the start of the session, welcome everyone along to the working party. You want to talk through the tasks that are available/need doing and what the main tools/risk factors are. This is an important part of your working party as this is your opportunity to talk about the risk assessment you have completed in a relaxed but informative way. You don't want to say everything on your risk assessment – just the key highlights. E.g. if working next to a road it can be wearing high vis' and being aware of cars and pavement users, or if working next to or in water – knowing what to do if you get into trouble or how to move in the water.

During – During the working party it's important to keep up morale. When leading a team, lead by example and get stuck in. It's also important to celebrate the little wins – say well done and thank you to everyone. Vocally notice the work people are doing. Lots of working parties also give out biscuits and homemade cakes – this is always a nice opportunity for socializing.

After – It's important to make people feel recognised so a big THANK YOU to everyone who turned up on the day is essential. This can be done in person as people leave but also on the email or whatsapp channel. In the modern world it's also a nice idea to post a 'before' and 'after' photo on social media channels. This engages the local community and may recruit more people to get involved.

New volunteers

When you have a new volunteer join the group it's important to make them feel welcomed.

Here are a couple of thoughts on how to help them feel welcomed, valued and want to come back!

- Give them a quick introduction to the site, projects and people – they want to feel part of your fabulous community!
- Think about buddying them up with someone during the working party – it's a bit 'schooly' but it's nice for some people to have one person to go to for questions/to chat to during the session.
- Give them a more in-depth tool talk. They may have never used some of the tool you are using, so this will make sure they are confident and working safely during the working party. This is also important for experienced gardeners – working in a public space will mean they come across things not in their personal garden from dogs & children, bikes whizzing past as well as sharps (needles and glass found in the undergrowth) it's important to think differently in our green spaces to make sure everyone is safe!!

Collaborating with schools

Sometimes local schools may contact you to volunteer in the green space. With our partnership agreement, it's down to you to organise this to complete work that has been agreed by the Green Space team. If you have a specific job in mind to complete with a school which has not been agreed by the green space team, please get in touch with us to discuss. If you need support with tools let us know too. It's important to note that it's down to you to ensure the school has an appropriate risk assessment for the day's activity as well as public liability insurance (5 million).

For further support with this, please contact your ranger.

Partnering with businesses

Lots of businesses are now given time to volunteer as part of their working year. Similar to working with school groups, with our partnership agreement it's down to you as a group to organise business group volunteering. You need to make sure that the work you have in mind has been agreed with the green space team (it's sometimes worth having a couple of 'business group jobs' up your sleeve when one comes along). It's also your responsibility to ask them to provide a risk assessment and PLI (public liability insurance). Here is a nice

piece written by GRCC which is to support employers in volunteering. Employer Supported Volunteering | Go Volunteer Glos

Remember that your insurance is for your group – businesses should be providing their own insurance and risk assessments so that any incidents during the working party do not fall on your shoulders. If you need extra support with this, please contact a ranger.

Litter picks and tools:

The green space team may be able to provide extra litter pickers or tools to support your group with hosting larger volunteer groups. Please follow the below processes to access this support:

Litter picking: Use this link to borrow litter picking packs Litter picking - Cheltenham Borough Council This support is used by all residents across cheltenham from scout groups to local neighbourhoods.

Tools: If you think you may need tools, please contact your Ranger as soon as possible. We have a limited supply of equipment, much of which is used for our day-to-day operations. We will do our best to provide what you need, but please be aware that we may not be able to supply a full complement of tools for every task.

Recruiting volunteers:

Recruiting volunteers can be done in a variety of different ways. Posters on local notice boards or local Facebook groups are handy methods to engage people from the local community. Volunteer websites can also be used to recruit other skillsets:

- Go Volunteer Glos (find local volunteers within Gloucestershire)
- Reach Volunteering | Connecting people, skills and great causes (more around finding trustees, digital marketing etc.)

Organising community events

If you decide you want to run an event in a park or green space, have a look at this website:

https://www.cheltenham.gov.uk/info/33/parks_and_open_spaces/278/events_held_on_council_land

Please note you need to be thinking about your event and submitting at least 3 months in advance of it being run. There are many events and event requests all over the town – it takes time to ensure everything is in place.

☑ Additional Resources and Appendices (For All Groups)

A. Recognised Green Space Volunteering Groups –

Name	Email	Webpage/Facebook link
Benhall Residents Association	mh005b9999@blueyonder.co.uk	(17) Benhall Residents | Facebook
Cox's meadow group	cllr.paul.baker@cheltenham.gov.uk	
Friends of Elmfield Park and Community rest gardens	alison.friendsofelmfieldpark@gmail.com	Community Rest Garden | Cheltenham Rocks
Friends of Griffiths Avenue Nature Reserve	<ganr.cheltenham@gmail.com>	
Friends of Hatherley Court Park (little sister of Friends of Hatherley Park)	hatherleypark@gmail.com	www.friendsofhatherleypark.org
Friends of Hatherley Park	hatherleypark@gmail.com	www.friendsofhatherleypark.org
Friends of KGV (King George V)	franjohns@hotmail.co.uk	(17) Friends of King George V Playing Field, Cheltenham | Facebook
Friends of Leckhampton Hill and Chalton Kings Common (FOLK)	folk.workparty@gmail.com	Friends of Leckhampton Hill and Charlton Kings Common
Friends of Montpellier Bandstand and Gardens	fombagcheltenham@gmail.com	FOMBAG (@friends_of_montpellier_gardens) • Instagram photos and videos
Friends of Naunton Park	info@friendsofnauntonpark.org.uk	Friends of Naunton Park – Bringing park and people together

Friends of Pilley Bridge Nature Reserve	hazelbolton@googlemail.com	Pilley Bridge | Pilley Bridge Nature Reserve
Friends of Pittville Park	volunteer@friendsofpittville.org.uk	Welcome to Friends of Pittville
Friends of Sanford Park	cheltenhamsandfordparks@yahoo.co.uk	Home Page
Friends of Winston Churchill Memorial Garden (WCMG)	friendsofwcmghoneybourne@gmail.com	The Friends of the Winston Churchill Memorial Garden & Honeybourne Line - Cheltenham Zero
LINC garden	l.adkins@nhs.net	Home - Linc Charity
Merestone Residents Association	Mra_gardening@protonmail.com	
Minster Quarter Party	chair@cheltminsterfriends.org.uk	The Friends of Cheltenham Minster, St. Mary's
QEII playing field group	abby.sabey@gmail.com	
St. Paul's Hub Garden	ali.english@cbh.org	https://www.facebook.com/groups/cbhhubs/

B. Partnership agreement

GREEN SPACE VOLUNTEERING: PARTNERSHIP PLEDGE

BETWEEN CHELTENHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL AND XXXXX

1. Introduction

Cheltenham Borough Council's Green Space Development team (**GSD**) has a long and active history of collaboration with Friends of Parks and Green Spaces Groups (**Friends Groups**), who are an important part of championing, developing, and supporting the maintenance and improvement of our green spaces. Green spaces include parks and gardens, green corridors, amenity green paces, playing fields, nature reserves and play areas. We encourage the establishment of Friends Groups for all these types of green spaces, small and large.

Working together, GSD and its Friends Groups maintain and enhance the environment within our parks and green spaces across the town. A strong partnership based on trust and shared values is vital in achieving this. The purpose of this pledge is to lay out the shared values, roles, responsibilities, and ways of working for a collaborative, transparent, open, inclusive, and trusting partnership.

2. Aims and outcomes of this pledge

This pledge provides a framework for relationships between GSD and the Friends Group named at the start of the pledge (**XXXXXXX Friends Group**). It is a code of conduct for partnership working which sets out a number of principles and tasks in paragraph 5 of this agreement by which partners should work together effectively to help create the following:

- Equity in the way GSD works with Friends Groups, ensuring all groups are treated fairly.
- Transparency.

- Good governance arrangements, for example, good financial arrangements, relevant insurances, the correct permissions, and agreements for undertaking work on Council owned or managed land.
- Clear expectations between the Friends Group and the Council.

3. Shared values

- Mutual respect
- Independence
- Honesty
- Equality, diversity and inclusion
- Cooperation and collaboration between GSD and the Friends Group.
- Taking action towards the shared goals and ambitions.

4. Monitoring and dispute resolution

The following principles will frame how the pledge operates in practice:

I. This pledge will be reviewed after 3 years, or as necessary to reflect best practice and legal and operational requirements.
II. All parties to the pledge will jointly monitor implementation of it through an annual review meeting. For Green Flag parks, the annual meeting will review the Management Plan, including the work plan and project plan for the park.
III. The Friends Group signatory should be the chair of the organisation providing insurance and will be an overall 'Agreement Guardian'. The Green Space Manager will fulfil the same role on behalf of GSD.
IV. Should any disputes arise regarding operation of the agreement that cannot be settled simply, then they can be referred to the relevant 'Guardian' to resolve.

5. **Commitments**

Cheltenham Borough Council will:

I. Adhere to the shared values (section 3).
II. Provide an induction for new Friends Groups, including the option of using the Green Space Handbook for guidance and templates.
III. Hold an annual meeting with the Friends Group to agree a workplan and projects for the year (through the Management Plan for the park when there is one) plus agreed site visits (based on the needs of the group).
IV. Keep the Friends Group informed of any required changes to the workplan or agreed projects in a timely manner.
V. Keep in regular communication with the Friends of Group based on the needs of that group, including ad-hoc visits.

VI. Consider ideas the Friends of Group has for improvements in the management of the site (including opportunities that arise to apply for funding) and work with the group to develop and progress these where appropriate. When ideas cannot be progressed GSD will explain the reasoning and explore alternative ideas of solutions with the group.

~~VII.~~I. Keep the Friends Group informed of any changes to the Council's volunteer policy or health and safety requirements.

~~VIII.~~II. Provide guidance for Friends Groups on how to ensure good governance (signposting to support from Gloucestershire Rural Community Council).

~~IX.~~III. Provide the contact details for the primary contacts in GSD: greenspacevolunteers@cheltenham.gov.uk

~~X.~~IV. Keep the Friends Group informed of action planned on the site which may affect the park activities.

XXX Group will:

I. Ensure that all members adhere to the shared values (section 3).

II. Agree tasks to be carried out or changes to the workplan or agreed projects in advance with GSD.

III. Consult with GSD before planning projects and applying for the necessary funding.

IV. Follow the Cheltenham Borough Council events procedure to apply to run events.

V. Be responsible for storing the personal data of its volunteers, including any health information and emergency contact details in accordance with current data protection legislation.

VI. Ensure that its organisation has an accurate and up to date safeguarding policy in place and has no reason to believe that any of their volunteers are barred from the volunteering activity in accordance with the provisions of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 or any subsequent amendment to that Act.

VII. Be responsible for the health, safety and wellbeing of its volunteers and ensure a risk assessment is undertaken for all activities (templates available if required in the Green Space Handbook).

VIII. Be responsible for ensuring that its members are aware that:

a. they are personally responsible for their own health, well-being and safety, and that they should only perform tasks that they are fit and able to undertake

b. that as volunteers engaged in voluntary activities they have a General Duty of Care towards members of the public, fellow volunteers and Council staff

c. they should act with reasonable care and attention should they be required to use tools and equipment that are supplied by the Council or supplied by its organisation

IX. Cover its activities in volunteering as an organisation on Cheltenham Borough Council property and / or at Council run events by its own public liability insurance policy and provide a copy annually to the Council.

X. Ensure that where it works with business groups or educational establishments providing volunteers, that they are covered by their own public liability insurance and have completed risk assessments for the activities they will be undertaking.

XI. Record any volunteering related accidents and report them to CBC.

XII. Ensure all volunteers receive the appropriate training needed to carry out the tasks in the agreed work plan, consulting with CBC's health and safety partner via GSD if needed.

6. Legal Status

Whilst the parties to this pledge have every intention of complying with its provisions, it is not intended to be a legally binding contract and it may be cancelled at any time by discretion of either party.

Neither party intends for any employment relationship to be created as a result of this agreement either now or at any time in the future in respect of the volunteers.

We the undersigned, agree to the above:

<u>On behalf of Friends of KGV</u> **Status of group: .....**

Name: .... Signature:

Position in Group: .....

Date:.....

<u>On behalf of Cheltenham Borough Council (land owner)</u>

Green Space Manager: ..... **Signature:**

Date: .....

C. Template risk assessment

Group – Friends of AAAA? **Assessor: Aaaaaaaaaaa**

Location- AAAAAAAA Park **Activity-** Maintenance undertaken by volunteers? **Date: 00-00-0000**

Hazard	Who might be harmed and how	Activity Risk Rating (without controls)	Control Measures already considered to be in place	Risk Rating with Control Measures	Further Control Measures Required to be Actioned	Action Owner	Action Date	Action Completed	Residual Risk Rating
Slips, trips and fall	Volunteers. Steep slippery banks	4 Low	Make volunteers aware of this in pre-work briefing. Avoid working on steep banks when wet. Volunteers advised to wear sturdy footwear	Low	None	Volunteer Co-ordinator, CBC Green Space Supervisor		Regular briefings at start of work party	Low
Cuts and Infection	Volunteers. Hypodermic needles and sharp objects	10 Medium	Volunteers made aware of the presence of sharp material when working in shrubberies or litter picking. Gloves made available by CBC or volunteers may bring their own. Litter pickers, brooms and shovels must be used.	Low	None			Regular briefings at start of work party	Low

Hazard	Who might be harmed and how	Activity Risk Rating (without controls)	Control Measures already considered to be in place	Risk Rating with Control Measures	Further Control Measures Required to be Actioned	Action Owner	Action Date	Action Completed	Residual Risk Rating
			Volunteers instructed not to pick hypodermic needles up unless trained and provided with sharp boxes. Notify CBC of precise location. First Aider and kit on site						
Foot injury	Volunteers. Injury caused by spades, forks and mattocks	4 Low	Volunteers advised to wear sturdy footwear, preferably steel toe capped.	Low	None			Regular briefings at start of work party	Low
Lifting	Volunteers and CBC staff. Lifting bin bags and objects	8 Medium	Make volunteers aware of manual handling techniques and to work within their physical capabilities, and not to fill the bin bags too full.	Low	None			Regular briefings at start of work party	Low
Ingesting harmful bacteria and viruses	Volunteers and CBC staff. Unhygienic objects	4 Low	All rubbish must be picked up using litter pickers wherever possible and placed in bin bags provided. No food to be eaten during work. Sterilise hands after activities or before eating food.	Low	None			Regular briefings at start of work party	Low
Collisions	Volunteers, CBC staff, and park users..	4 Low	Volunteers made aware of other park users and to be vigilant at all times and work in pairs wherever possible.	Low	None			Regular briefings at start of work party	Low

Hazard	Who might be harmed and how	Activity Risk Rating (without controls)	Control Measures already considered to be in place	Risk Rating with Control Measures	Further Control Measures Required to be Actioned	Action Owner	Action Date	Action Completed	Residual Risk Rating
	Bumping into one another, members of the public, dogs off lead, cyclists and vehicles.		Mobile phone on site in the event of emergencies. High visibility jackets provide by CBC are required to be worn Report any unsafe behaviour to the volunteer coordinator / CBC supervisor.						
Severe weather	Volunteers and CBC staff. Unsafe working conditions – slipping getting cold and wet high winds and heat.	4 Low	Volunteer Co-ordinator, CBC Green Space Supervisor to cancel work party in advance if severe weather predicted, or assess conditions if work party has started and stop work if weather deteriorates. Volunteers to wear suitable clothing and take breaks and hydrate as necessary.	Low	None			Regular briefings at start of work party	Low
Water born infections	Volunteers and CBC staff contracting illness from organisms present in lake and water courses	4 Low	Volunteers made aware of risks associated with river water i.e. leptospirosis. Cuts and grazes on skin should be covered if working where there is a chance of skin coming into contact with river or lake water. Hands should be washed at the end of the activity, and before eating food	Low	None			Regular briefings at start of work party	Low

Hazard	Who might be harmed and how	Activity Risk Rating (without controls)	Control Measures already considered to be in place	Risk Rating with Control Measures	Further Control Measures Required to be Actioned	Action Owner	Action Date	Action Completed	Residual Risk Rating
Lone working	Volunteers from violence and/or abuse	L	Inform volunteer coordinator and/or Green Space staff of whereabouts and agree time scale. Preferably carry mobile phone. Only work during daylight hours or preagreed hours	Low	None	Volunteer		Regular briefings at start of work party	Low
Underlying Health Issues	Volunteer, Stress, ill health and allergies	Low 4	Volunteers who are aware they have underlying health issues should only take on suitable activities and protect themselves sufficiently during the activity. Volunteer to declare such conditions to Volunteer coordinator and green space supervisor Carry appropriate medical awareness bands, equipment and medication if required.	Low	None	Volunteer		Regular briefings at start of work party	Low

Review Schedule

Date of review:	Reviewed by:	Reason for review:	What changes or amendments have been made to this risk assessment during the review?

D. Emergency contact card template

Call 999 in an emergency

My name:

Any medical things to be aware of?:

My next of kin's name and no:

H&S refresher card



Be aware of your surrounding



Wear appropriate clothing and sturdy footwear



Use the correct equipment



Keep in site of other volunteers



Know your own phyisical capabilities and keep to them.

E. Volunteer disclaimer form

Volunteer Application Form - Green Space

Thank you for your interest in volunteering with the Green Space Development Team at Cheltenham Borough Council. The team works with multiple groups of volunteers across Cheltenham's green spaces who want to make a difference to their local green and open spaces in the town, meeting on a weekly, bi-weekly, monthly or ad-hoc basis.

Please complete the form below to register. Please note that volunteers must be over 18. If you have any questions please email greenspacedevelopment@cheltenham.gov.uk or volunteering@cheltenham.gov.uk or call 07551 262142 or 01242 264376.

Green Space Development volunteering - roles

1. Which green space(s) are you interesting in volunteering at? If you are not sure yet, please put 'not sure' and we will contact you to discuss it. *

Volunteer contact and general information

Information you provide in this form will be used by Cheltenham Borough Council to provide you with the opportunity to volunteer in line with our volunteer privacy statement. You can view this by clicking the link on cheltenham.gov.uk/environment-and-communities-privacy-statements Any health or emergency contact information is only collected to support you whilst volunteering or in case of emergency.

1. Your name *

2. Your address: *

3. Your telephone number: *

4. Your email address *

5. Emergency contact 1 name (Please note, we ask for 2 emergency contacts. Please include someone local who you trust and who is likely to be available and responsive in case of an emergency, which could be a friend or neighbour and ensure you have permission to pass on these details): *

6. Emergency contact 1 relationship: *

7. Emergency contact 1 phone number: *

8. Emergency contact 2 name:

9. Emergency contact 2 relationship:

10. Emergency contact 2 phone number:

11. If you would like to be contacted about other current or future volunteering roles, please indicate which type of volunteering roles you would be interested in hearing about

- [ ] Events
- [ ] Community projects
- [ ] Environmental activities

Personal information

1. Do you have any health, support or accessibility needs that we should be aware of? *

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

2. Please give details of any health, support or accessibility needs that we should be aware of:

3. Do you have any allergies or medications we should be aware of in case of emergency? Please give details: *

4. Age (please note volunteers must be over 18):

- ◯ 18-24
- ◯ 25-34
- ◯ 35-44
- ◯ 45-54

- ◯ 55 - 64
- ◯ 65 - 74
- ◯ 75 - 84
- ◯ 85+

5. Do you have any convictions, cautions, reprimands or final warnings which are not 'protected' as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (as amended in 2013)? *

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

6. If you have answered yes, you now have two options to disclose your criminal record. Option 1: Please provide details of your criminal record in the space below. Option 2: Mark a cross in the box below and disclose your record under separate cover by envelope marked CONFIDENTIAL and stating your name and details of the post to:

   Safeguarding Manager, Cheltenham Borough Council, Municipal Offices, Promenade, Cheltenham, GL50 9SA.

7. Any other information you feel is relevant to volunteering: *

Volunteer Declaration

I understand that I am personally responsible for my own health, well-being and safety, and will only perform tasks I am fit to undertake

I accept that as a volunteer engaged in voluntary activities I have a General Duty of Care towards members of the public, fellow volunteers and Borough Council staff

I agree to act with reasonable care and attention should I be required to use tools and equipment that are supplied by Cheltenham Borough Council or supplied by myself

I understand that the activities I do as a volunteer will be agreed beforehand with the CBC staff member; and that I am only covered by the Council's Public Liability Insurance when I carry out these duties as directed.

I understand that the information I provide will be used by Cheltenham Borough Council to provide me with the opportunity to volunteer in line with their volunteer privacy statement and consent to my data being used in this way. Any health or emergency contact information is only collected to support the individual whilst volunteering or in case of emergency.

8. I understand and agree to the above points in the volunteer declaration *

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

9. Cheltenham Borough Council occasionally works on projects and events in partnership with other agencies. If you volunteer on a multi-agency project, personal information necessary to support the volunteering opportunity may be shared (with your consent) with our partner agencies. Would you be interested in volunteering on joint projects with other organisations and do you give consent? *

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

10. Today's date *

F. Citizen Science links

Name	Purpose	Link
All species		
inaturalist	A species recording app that allows the user to identify species and upload records of any species worldwide. These records help generate data for science and conservation!	https://www.inaturalist.org/
irecord	A species recording app/website that allows the user to identify species and upload records of any species in the UK. These records help generate data for science and conservation!	https://irecord.org.uk/
Gloucestershire Centre for Environmental Records	A county wide record of all species present. Individual species records can be added via the website.	https://www.gcer.co.uk/records.html
Nature's calendar	A Woodland Trust led project to track the effect of weather and climate change on species across the UK.	https://naturescalendar.woodlandtrust.org.uk/
People's Trust for Endangered Species	There are multiple citizen science projects available through this organisation, including ones focused on water voles, stag beetles, and orchards.	https://ptes.org/get-involved/surveys/
Biological records centre	Many specialist-level recording and monitoring schemes can be found here, including ones for fungi, mosses and liverworts, invertebrates, and insects.	https://www.brc.ac.uk/recording-schemes

Insects and pollinators		
DECIDE tool	Recording nature where it Matters. A mapping tool that shows areas where there is little data available, so butterfly/moth surveys are really needed.	https://decide.ceh.ac.uk/opts/scoremap
Big butterfly count	A UK wide survey run by Butterfly Conservation to monitor butterfly and moth numbers during the summer.	https://bigbutterflycount.butterfly-conservation.org/
UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme	A UK wide monitoring scheme to record butterflies. This requires an intermediate skill level. Several survey opportunities are available.	https://ukbms.org/
UK Pollinator Monitoring Scheme	A pollinator monitoring scheme that collects data on flower-visiting insects on a national scale. Provides both beginner (FIT count) and advanced opportunities.	https://ukpoms.org.uk/
BeeWalk	A recording scheme run by the Bumblebee conservation trust to monitor the abundance of bumblebees.	https://decide.ceh.ac.uk/opts/scoremap
Mammals		
Living with Mammals	An urban mammal count run by the People's Trust for Endangered Species to record urban mammal populations including hedgehogs, deer etc.	https://ptes.org/get-involved/surveys /garden/living-with-mammals/
Mammal mapper	A mammal recording project run by the Mammal Society to record mammal signs and sightings across the UK.	https://mammal.org.uk/how-to-record-mammals
The BIG Hedgehog map	A citizen science project to map where hedgehogs are across the UK.	https://bighedgehogmap.org/
Birds		
Garden BirdWatch	A year-round bird survey run by the British Trust for Ornithology to monitor bird populations.	https://www.bto.org/our-science/projects/gbw
Big Garden Birdwatch	A citizen science project run annually by the RSPB to monitor garden birds. Date dependant – only runs for 3 days at the end of January.	https://www.rspb.org.uk/whats-happening/big-garden-birdwatch

Amphibians & Reptiles		
ARC record pool	A project run by Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (ARC) to record reptile and amphibian sightings nationally.	https://www.recordpool.org.uk/
National Amphibian and Reptile Monitoring Program	Also run by ARC, this program has a number of survey opportunities, from beginner friendly to more advanced. Free online training courses are also available.	https://monitoring.arc-trust.org/
Plants and Fungi		
Habimapping with Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust	The HabiMap programme is a collaborative effort bringing together citizen scientists and landholders to map and monitor Gloucestershire's wildlife habitats.	https://www.gloucestershirewildlifetrust.co.uk/habimap
Great British Hedgerow Survey	A hedgerow monitoring scheme run by the People's Trust for Endangered Species that collects data on the condition of the UK's hedges.	https://hedgerowsurvey.ptes.org/the-great-british-hedgerow-survey
Ancient Tree Inventory	A survey run by the Woodland Trust to record the locations of veteran and ancient trees across the UK.	https://ati.woodlandtrust.org.uk/

G. CBC log

CHELTENHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

VERSION 1.1