



Ku-ring-gai Council

Volunteer Handbook – Bushcare, Parkcare, Streetcare

Version 2.00
January 2016

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Doc distribution		Doc status	Draft
File No		Record No	
Document owner		Contact officer/s	Peter Clarke
Approval date		Approved by	
History of approved versions			
Version	Effective date	Author	Summary of changes
0.00	15/09/2015	Francine Pavkovic	First Draft
1.00	27/10/2015	Francine Pavkovic	Second Draft
2.0	1/02/2016	Francine Pavkovic	Third Draft
2.0	1/2/16	Peter Clarke	Final

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Volunteer Handbook

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1 Introduction

36% of Australians over the age of eighteen volunteer¹. Volunteerism provides opportunities for community engagement, personal satisfaction (commonly articulated as a sense of purpose²) and creates a pathway to suitable and sustainable paid employment³. There are also other reasons for volunteering⁴.

To ensure the maintenance of mutuality and regard in the relationship between Ku-ring-gai Council ('Council') and volunteers, this Handbook outlines the measures Council will follow to ensure the health, safety and well-being of volunteers. Other Council risk management, environment and safety requirements will also be incorporated in this Handbook.

The scope of these measures includes all Ku-ring-gai Council (KMC) sites.

Equally, volunteers must be prepared to uphold the duties and responsibilities contained in this Handbook and in the absence of any documented duty or responsibility, maintain a general duty of care in their work.

2 Objectives

Council is committed to providing a safe work environment for all volunteers (and employees, contractors, visitors, and the public). To meet these objectives the following is to be undertaken:

- volunteers must be aware of their responsibilities and obligations and comply with all Council risk, safety and environment policies and procedures while volunteering;
- volunteers must maintain a safe working environment;
- volunteers must not generate risks;
- volunteers must be familiar with site safety requirements, and;
- volunteers must be familiar with and comply with their legal requirements.

3 Induction

All volunteers cannot commence their work in a voluntary capacity without having been inducted. The induction for the Bushcare, Parkcare and Streetcare programs is undertaken by the Community Volunteer Program Co-ordinator, Trainers and staff working for the Streetcare/Bushcare/Parkcare programs. These staff will outline expectations⁵, contact and reporting requirements such as first aid contacts, standard/safe operating and emergency procedures.

After successful completion of the volunteer induction, volunteers will be issued with a KMC permit. Should KMC risk, safety and environment practices and procedures change, volunteers may be asked to undertake further training. Depending on the nature of the training, volunteers may or may not be re-issued with a permit.

All volunteers will receive this Handbook at their induction.

KMC take safety and the safety of others as well as the conservation of intergenerational heritage very seriously. If volunteers are breaching standard/safe operating procedures, and the breach creates a

¹ Volunteering Australia Inc., *National Standards for Involving Volunteers in Not-For-Profit Organisations* (Melbourne, 2nd edition, 2001) 3; Australian Services Union South Australian and Northern Territory Branch, Local Government Research and Development Scheme, Local Government Volunteer Managers Network, *Volunteer Management in Local Government*, 4.

² Volunteering Australia, *2011 National Survey of Volunteering Issues*, 2.

³ Australian Services Union South Australian and Northern Territory Branch, Local Government Research and Development Scheme, Local Government Volunteer Managers Network, *Volunteer Management in Local Government*, 4.

⁴ John Wilson, 'Volunteering' 2000 (26) *Annual Review of Sociology*, 215 -240, 215.

⁵ Which are also documented in the Volunteer Agreement and Volunteer Position Description – Appendices 4 & 5.

serious breach or incidence of environmental non-compliance, sanctions may be applied to your engagement.

3.1 Emergency Response

Volunteers will be briefed on specific emergency requirements and security procedures as part of the induction mentioned above.

If you discover a fire or emergency:

- notify the Bushcare, Parkcare or Streetcare Supervisor or Trainer (at Council);
 - notify the appropriate emergency service, Is this necessary?
- alert people in the vicinity,

3.2 First Aid

An injured person after receiving immediate attention to their injury must report the injury to the Convenor, Trainer or Community Volunteer Program Coordinator. The details of this incident will be recorded on the appropriate forms as soon as practicable, Please also see 5.2 of this Handbook.

3.3 Fire Prevention

Bushcare sessions will be abandoned in the event of total fire ban days



The Convenor is responsible for checking the rating for the day and notifying volunteers of cancellation. Ratings can be found at <http://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/fire-information/fdr-and-tobans> (NSW Rural Fire Service website) or <http://www.bom.gov.au/nsw/forecasts/bushfire.shtml> (Bureau of Meteorology website).

3.4 Environment

A site plan will be developed to ensure that the environment is protected and improved as a result of the work done by volunteers

3.5 Housekeeping

In some instances working areas must be barricaded off and appropriate warning notices erected. This is the responsibility of the Trainer or Convenor who will then notify the appropriate Council Officer

3.6 Volunteer Responsibilities

WHS legislation requires that volunteers are made aware of their safety responsibilities, to that end, volunteers will;

- take reasonable care for their own safety and health and for the safety and health of other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions in the workplace;
- co-operate with KMC, and comply with all reasonable safety directions and statutory requirements;

- not wilfully or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety or welfare; and
- use equipment in accordance with any instructions given by KMC consistent with its safe and proper use.

4 Onsite Management

At the beginning of each session, after registration, volunteers will be inducted in site specific emergency procedures by the Supervisor. Emergency procedures will vary depending on the location and climatic conditions. Sessions will be abandoned in extreme weather conditions.

At the end of sessions, all volunteers will be accounted for. Any administrative, safety or housekeeping information for the next session should ideally be provided. If this is not a possibility then volunteers need to be informed of such information sufficiently in advance.

5 General Safety Rules

5.1 Communication and Consultation

A site visit form and log sheet will be accurately filled out detailing the volunteers in attendance and a brief summary of the work undertaken

5.2 Reporting of Incidents and Behaviours

The Convenor or Trainer must report all incidents to KMC as soon as practicable. These may include medical treatment, injuries, near miss/hit incidents, environmental damage, and dangerous occurrences. It also includes inappropriate behaviour and those behaviours defined as bullying and harassment.

The Convenor or Trainer is to advise KMC and the relevant officer who will be responsible for the completion of the *WHS Incident Report Form*. Incidents, injuries and illness that are a 'notifiable incident'⁶, a 'serious injury or illness'⁷ and/or 'a dangerous incident'⁸ need to be reported to NSW WorkCover immediately after emergency services have been called. After contacting emergency services, the Convenor or Trainer will contact KMC who will make the WorkCover notification as required in consultation with KMC's Safety Officer. If notification is made to WorkCover, the location will need to be cordoned off so WorkCover can undertake an investigation.

Volunteers can report inappropriate behaviour and those behaviours defined as bullying and harassment. The usual way to report inappropriate, bullying and harassing behaviours is through the usual Council reporting lines. Depending on individual circumstances alternate lines of reporting may be taken. Volunteers should read KC's *Bullying and Harassment in the Workplace Policy* for an understanding of procedures in place to stop inappropriate behaviours.

5.3 Asbestos

KC sites containing asbestos have been suitably identified, assessed and controlled. When scheduling sessions, the Convenor will inform KMC where there is asbestos. KMC will accordingly inform volunteers. Volunteers will also be informed of KMC's related controls.

Volunteers may come across asbestos illegally dumped. They are to abandon the area and follow the procedures set out in 3.1 and 5.2 of this Handbook.

⁶ *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (NSW) s 35.

⁷ *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (NSW) s 36.

⁸ *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (NSW) s 37.

5.4 Confined Spaces

All work to be performed in a confined space must be performed in accordance with KC Confined Space Safety Standard [2012/073429](#) and *Australian Standard AS2865: Safe Work in a Confined Space* and relevant legislative requirements. Considering the complexity in supervising adherence, no volunteer is to undertake work in a confined space.

5.5 Hazardous Substances/Dangerous Goods

Any chemicals purchased must be the least hazardous for the task. If a chemical is used that is a Hazardous Substance or Dangerous Good, it must be listed in the KMC Chemical Register. A template is provided at the end of this Handbook – Appendix 2. KMC will supply the Bushcare convenor with a Safety Data Sheet (SDS) from the manufacturer for each listed Chemical after each revision of the Register.

All SDS is to be kept in a folder with the Register, located near the chemicals. Volunteers will be directed to read the SDS before using the relevant chemical.

5.6 Portable Ladders

Ladders cannot be used without the KC Safety Officer undertaking a risk assessment. Information from the risk assessment will be inserted in a standard/safe operating procedure with reference to *Australian Standard AS1892: Portable Ladders*.

5.7 Alcohol, Drugs and Smoking

All KMC sites are all smoke, drug and alcohol free. The consumption or being under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol whilst volunteering is prohibited and sanctions may be applied to a volunteers' engagement. In the event that a volunteer is under the influence, the Convenor will immediately close down the site and inform the appropriate authorities if deemed necessary.

5.8 Public Safety

Ku-ring-gai Council aims to maintain the safety and wellbeing of the public. All volunteers are responsible to ensure that members of the public are not injured or otherwise affected by their activities. Volunteers shall take suitable precautions to protect the safety and welfare of the public. This may include constructing barriers/screens etc. to protect the public. It may also involve giving or erecting a notice.

5.9 Personal Protective Equipment

The basic Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for all KMC sites include:

- enclosed footwear;
- high visibility clothing;
- sun-safe hats;
- sun protective clothing (long sleeve shirts or tops and long pants);
- sun-screen of a suitable UV rating for the day;
- water;
- approved safety glasses or shields as required by the standard/safe operating procedure incorporating *Australian Standard AS1336: Recommended practices for occupational eye protection, and*;
- approved hearing protection as required by the standard/safe operating procedure incorporating of *Australian Standard AS1269: Occupational noise management* particularly when noise levels exceed 85 dBA (Leq) 8hr or 140dB Lin.

Appendix 2

Volunteer Application

The information required in this form is necessary for council's insurance and reporting purposes. Additionally, statistics about our volunteers are used in the evaluation of volunteer programs and as input to grant applications. Please see information on privacy and protection of personal information on reverse side.

In which volunteer program will you be working? (please tick)

- BUSHCARE
- PARKCARE
- STREETCARE
- COMMUNITY GARDEN
- OTHER

Name	
Address	
Country of birth	Date of birth
Home phone	Mobile phone
Email	
Any skills, experience or qualifications relevant to the program you are volunteering for?	

In case of emergency, please contact:

Name	
Address	
Home/Work phone	Mobile phone
Relationship	

PLEASE READ & SIGN THE DECLARATION OVER THE PAGE

Appendix 3



Volunteer Agreement

1. I agree to work under the guidance and supervision of the Kur-ring-gai Council (council) employee responsible for the area of work for which I have applied,
2. I agree to work in a constructive and cooperative way with council staff and comply with any safety procedures requested,
3. I understand that as a volunteer I am expected to maintain the same standards of confidentiality, courtesy and organisational discipline as council's paid employees,
4. I agree to contact the council employee designated if I intend to vary the nature of the work specified in this application or if I experience any problems with the work I am undertaking,
5. I understand that council may terminate my volunteering services if I do not comply with any aspect of this agreement or breach council policy or procedure,
6. I am willing to undertake any training deemed necessary by council in relation to my volunteering services to ensure that I comply with all policies and legislative obligations of council,
7. I agree to use appropriate protective equipment and not to use power tools or chemicals except after consultation and agreement reached with council staff,
8. I agree to inform council of any injuries sustained whilst undertaking volunteering activities, and
9. I understand that I am volunteering my services to council and will not receive remuneration for my services and that I will inform council when I no longer wish to be considered for further volunteering activities.

Signed _____ Date _____

Note: If an applicant is under 18, a parent or guardian must co-sign this application and the volunteer must be supervised at all times by a responsible adult.

Please return completed form to:

Bushcare
Reply Paid 75620
Ku-ring-gai Council

Privacy Information

In completing this form you will be prompted to supply information that is personal information for the purposes of the Privacy and *Personal Information Protection Act 1998* (NSW). The supply of this information is voluntary. If you cannot provide, or do not wish to provide the information sought, Ku-ring-gai Council may be unable to process your application. Council is required under the Act to inform you about how your personal information is being collected and used. If you require this or any further information please contact Council's Privacy Officer.

Purpose of Collection: To record contact details and to program status

Intended Recipients: Council's staff and Council's insurers

Supply: Voluntary - however Council is unable to process your application without the details requested

Storage: Council's Administration Building

The information may be corrected or updated by contacting Council.

Appendix 4

Volunteer Position Description

Position Title:	Bushcare/ Parkcare/Streetcare Volunteer
Purpose of Position:	To participate in the management of local open space and bushland reserves in order to improve environmental values
Position Reports to:	Community Volunteer Program Co-ordinator
Approved by:	
Date:	

CONTACTS

Key Contacts Within Council

Community Volunteer Program Team

Key Contacts Outside Council

None

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA TO BE ADDRESSED IN YOUR APPLICATION

A desire to want to look after the local environment

GENERIC OUTPUTS OF POSITION

- **Comply with WHS Legislation, Policies and Procedures**
 - Maintain a high standard of housekeeping and a safe work area
 - Identify and report all hazards for your area
 - Wear required Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
 - Adhere to control measures and safe systems of work
 - Report all incidents and near misses
- **Comply with EEO and Anti-discrimination Legislation, Policies & Procedures**
 - Act to prevent workplace harassment, discrimination and bullying
 - Report known incidents of workplace harassment, discrimination and bullying
- **Comply with Council's Code of Conduct and Values**
 - Behave ethically and transparently
 - Lead by example and take responsibility for your actions
 - Support sustainable programs and activities
 - Learn and comply with Council's strategies, policies and procedures
 - Act with care for the local environment, community and Council assets
- **Perform as a Team Member**
 - Productively contribute to the outcomes of the Program
- **Complete required learning and development programs**
 - Learn and share knowledge