



# Volunteer Handbook

## Waverley Council

SEPTEMBER 2019



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## Welcome

Welcome to volunteering in Waverley. Thank you for joining Waverley Council's Volunteer Programs.

Our Volunteer Programs support a range of community services in the local area. It is with the help of volunteers like yourself that our community is so connected.

This Volunteer Handbook will give you some information about volunteering with Waverley Council, your role and responsibilities as a volunteer, important safety tips and key contact information.

Happy volunteering!

## What is volunteering?

### Definition and Principles of Volunteering

*Volunteering Australia* the national peak body promoting volunteering in the Australia, defines:

**Volunteering** is an activity, which takes place through not-for-profit organisations or projects and is undertaken:

- To be of benefit to the community and the volunteer
- Of the volunteer's own free will and without coercion
- For no financial payment
- In designated volunteer positions only.

*Volunteering Australia* also developed a set of **Volunteering Principles** to ensure volunteering is a fun, safe and beneficial activity for volunteers and the organisation employing volunteers. These Volunteering Principles are the foundation for Waverley's Volunteer Programs.

The **Volunteering Principles** are:

- Volunteering benefits the community and the volunteer
- Volunteer work is unpaid
- Volunteering is always a matter of choice
- Volunteering is not compulsorily undertaken to receive pensions or government allowances
- Volunteering is a legitimate way in which citizens can participate in the activities of their community
- Volunteering is a vehicle for individuals or groups to address human, environmental and social needs
- Volunteering is an activity performed in the not for profit sector only.
- Volunteering is not a substitute for paid work
- Volunteers do not replace paid workers nor constitute a threat to the job security of paid workers
- Volunteering respects the rights, dignity and culture of others
- Volunteering promotes human rights and equality.

## Benefits of Volunteering

Volunteering provides benefits to the individual volunteer as well as to the entire community. Depending on the volunteer activity, benefits to the volunteer can be:

- Meeting and working with other volunteers and like-minded people
- A sense of personal achievement and contribution to strengthening community bonds
- A chance to make a difference to the lives of people in your community
- Socialising and social interaction on the job and additional Waverley volunteer events
- Professional support and opportunities to learn more about an area of interest, such as the natural environment, local history or community networks
- An indoor or outdoor activity that can provide opportunity for physical exercise and is fun.

Benefits to the community include:

- A sense of community pride and achievement
- The development of community spirit
- Increased community awareness of social and environmental issues in the local area.

## Volunteering in Waverley

### Waverley Volunteer Programs

Waverley Council runs a diverse range of Volunteer Programs offering ample opportunities for community members to participate in an activity and service for the local community, which meets their personal interests, such as:

- Outdoor volunteer work, like bush regeneration and maintaining local green spaces
- Support for elderly residents and people with mixed ability
- Fundraising for local projects
- Researching the history of Waverley and assisting in the Waverley Library.

You can get more information about Waverley's Volunteer Programs on our webpage:

[https://www.waverley.nsw.gov.au/community/connected\\_waverley/volunteering](https://www.waverley.nsw.gov.au/community/connected_waverley/volunteering)

Volunteers are an essential part of the Waverley community and Waverley Council greatly appreciates the contribution of all its volunteers.

### Waverley Council's Volunteering Framework

Waverley Council is committed to ensuring that all volunteering activities occur in an enjoyable and safe environment and comply with legal and social obligations.

Apart from the general volunteering principles, volunteering with Waverley Council is also guided by the overarching **Waverley Council's Values**:

- Great Customer Service
- Great Leadership
- Working Together
- Respect For All
- Getting the Job Done Safely, Sustainably & On Time
- Working Ethically

All volunteers are also expected to acknowledge and comply with **Waverley Council's Code of Conduct for Council Committee Members and Other Council Officials**. Each volunteer program will have a nominated Contact Person who will make each volunteer aware of their responsibilities from the Code of Conduct. The Contact Person may also provide additional information specific to the volunteer role.

More information about the contact people for each Volunteer Program can be found in the Useful Contacts section at the end of this handbook.

## The Safety of our Volunteers

The safety of our volunteers is very important to us. We aim to ensure volunteering is an enjoyable, interesting and safe activity by putting in place several measures such as:

- Written Policies and Procedures, and other Guidelines
- Providing all volunteers with safety inductions and site inductions.
- Providing all volunteers with a Position Description.

The specific measures may vary depending on the Volunteer Program and the volunteer role and more information can be found below. If a volunteer has any concerns or questions about their safety they can ask their Contact Person or talk to the Coordinator Local Connections.

### **MANDATORY SAFETY MEASURE**

The following safety measures are mandatory for all volunteers and require active cooperation.

#### **WHS Online Induction**

All volunteers at Waverley Council are required to complete the Waverley Council WHS Online Induction before they commence their volunteer role. This Online Induction takes the volunteer through the safety information necessary to volunteer with Waverley Council.

This Online Induction should take approximately 30 minutes with a short quiz in completion. As a proof of completing the Online Induction, volunteers need to hand in a copy of the certificate, which is issued for printing after successfully completing the Online Induction.

If volunteers are unable to print a certificate or do not have access to the internet, they can talk to their contact person or the Coordinator Local Connections, who will be able to assist and, if required, organise a hard copy of the induction to be completed on site.

#### **Accident reporting**

Waverley Council must comply with Work Health & Safety Regulation 2011, which requires that volunteer and staff member report all incidents and accidents. This obligation ensures that Waverley Council can develop and implement appropriate safety measures to keep volunteers and staff safe.

Volunteers will get the necessary information on how and when to report an incident and their contact person will be there to assist them.

### **OPTIONAL SAFETY MEASURES DEPENDING ON SPECIFIC VOLUNTEER PROGRAM**

As all Volunteer Programs are different volunteers may also need to participate and complete some of the following:

#### **Site induction**

Our outdoor Volunteer Programs generally provide a site induction by a trained Waverley Council staff member or a Supervisor, to ensure volunteers are familiar with the site-specific risks and aware of the relevant safety measures to be taken. A site induction will be based on a Site Risk Assessment prepared by Waverley Council, and volunteers will be required to sign to confirm they have completed the induction and understand their responsibilities.

We also provide instruction on planting, weeding and safely handling tools. Any new volunteers will be inducted when they first attend a volunteer group.

#### **Signing in**

For some Volunteer Programs volunteers may be required to sign in at the beginning of each shift.

#### **Police & Working with Children Checks**

Waverley Council may conduct Police Checks or Working with Children Check for some Volunteer Programs, especially if there is contact with other community members as part of the volunteer role, e.g. facilitating classes for children, seniors or people with mixed ability. All other volunteers or students on placement working with children must sign the Volunteer/Student Declaration.

# Volunteer rights and responsibilities

## Your role

Your role and responsibilities may vary depending on the Volunteer Program you have joined. To ensure you are aware of your role your contact person will give you a copy of your Position Description before you start first volunteering.

The Position Description will clearly outline what is expected of you, and what you can expect from Waverley Council. You need to sign the Position Description. If you have any questions around the Position Description or your role, you can talk to your contact person, who will be able to clarify any issues and concerns.

## Your privacy

Any information you provide, such as your address, phone number or contact details for emergency contacts, will be kept confidential and stored safely in our office. The information will only be used to keep you updated on upcoming events and information about Waverley Volunteer Programs or other relevant volunteering information that may be of interest or importance to you. No personal information will be passed on to third parties and we will use any attendance information only to report on the progress of the specific Volunteer Program.

## Your feedback and complaints

Waverley Council always welcomes feedback about the organisation and management of the Volunteer Programs. You have the opportunity to tell us about your experience at any point in your volunteering role. You can discuss your matter with your contact person, who will pass this information on to the Coordinator Local Connections. Or you can contact the Coordinator Local Connections directly. Your feedback is important to improve the Waverley Volunteer Programs.

One of the joys of volunteering is that it brings together people from all walks of life, working towards a common goal. Should nevertheless a difficulty arise the best way is often to address the issue directly: you could discuss your concerns calmly with the person concerned or ask your contact person to do so. This approach can often solve any difficulty quickly and stop it from becoming a more serious problem. Depending on the nature of the problem, your contact person may pass this information on to the Coordinator Local Connections.

If you ever have a more serious concern or complaint about any aspect of the Waverley Volunteer Programs, you can contact the Coordinator Local Connections directly to discuss your concern or you could follow Waverley Council formal complaints process. This formal complaint process is outlined in Waverley Council's Complaint Management Policy, which is available on Waverley Council's webpage. Further information can be obtained from the Coordinator Local Connections or the Waverley Council Customer Service Centre in Spring Street, Bondi Junction.

## Frequently asked questions

### Who can volunteer?

Anyone over 15 years old can volunteer, as long as they:

- Complete induction training, including the Online Induction and safe work practices
- Follow Council's Code of Conduct
- Follow Volunteer Program specific rules and procedures to keep everyone safe
- Are physically fit enough to participate in the volunteer activity.

### How do I join a volunteer group?

You simply need to register on our webpage and someone will be in touch with you shortly: [https://www.waverley.nsw.gov.au/community/connected\\_waverley/volunteering/apply\\_to\\_be\\_a\\_volunteer](https://www.waverley.nsw.gov.au/community/connected_waverley/volunteering/apply_to_be_a_volunteer)

Alternatively you can contact the Coordinator Local Connections or the contact person for a specific Volunteer Program. You can find their contact details at the end of this Volunteer Handbook.

You may also be able to register with other volunteering association and organisations Waverley's Volunteer Programs are linked with, such as the Centre for Volunteering.

### Who can I contact if I have questions about my role or volunteering in Waverley?

All volunteers will have an allocated contact person to turn to if they have any questions or concerns about their volunteer role. Depending on the program this may be a:

- Designated Waverley Council staff member (e.g. a Volunteer Program coordinator, a Coordinator or Manager, another staff member),
- An external supervisor
- A nominated volunteer who has received the necessary induction and training.

When you first join the Volunteer Program, you will meet with your contact person, who will complete your induction and provide you with your Position Description.

For general information on volunteering in Waverley, or if you have more serious concerns, you can contact the Coordinator Local Connections, who supports all Waverley Volunteer Programs.

You also have the right to lodge a formal complaint for serious concerns, which could not be resolved by you directly. More information about how to do this can be found above, in the Your Feedback and Complaints section.

### Can I change my volunteer role?

If you decide you would like to explore other volunteering roles you just need to talk to your contact person, who will liaise with the Coordinator Local Connections and other appropriate people trying to determine alternative opportunities for you.

### What should I do if I cannot attend for my volunteer shift (anymore)?

If you are unable to attend the next volunteer session, it would be appreciated if you told your supervisor before your volunteer shift. It will make planning any activities easier if your contact person knows who and how many people will be attending.

If you are not able to come any longer to any volunteer shifts, please contact the Coordinator Local Connections to discuss the reasons why you need to leave the Volunteer Program. It is important for us to find out if there is anything we could do to keep you as a valued volunteer or to improve our Volunteer Programs.

### Am I able to get reimbursement of expenses whilst volunteering?

Generally there are no expenses for volunteers. In the rare case this may be necessary, you need to discuss this with your contact person beforehand and get approval.

You will be reimbursed for approved expenses incurred whilst volunteering.

**What do I need to bring?**

Waverley's Volunteer Programs generally provide all necessary equipment and tools that you require to conduct your volunteer work. All you need to bring is your enthusiasm.

However if you are working outdoors you will need to bring drinking water, sensible clothing such as a long sleeved shirt and trousers to protect your skin from the sun, bites, scratches, and splinters, sturdy closed-in shoes or work boots, a hat and possibly sunglasses.

**Am I covered by Waverley Council insurance in the event of an accident?**

If you have completed the Online Induction and follow the specific tasks outlined in your Position Description you will be covered for personal injuries obtained during your volunteer work.

If you use your own cars as part of your volunteer duty you need to ensure you have your own Comprehensive Motor Vehicle insurance.

**Can I bring my children?**

Yes, as long as they are appropriately supervised by you and do not interrupt the running of the Volunteer Program or group. If you are volunteering outdoors, you are responsible to supervise your children and need to be aware of cliffs and steep slopes on outdoor sites or other safety hazards.

**Can I bring my dog?**

That depends on your volunteer role, the location/space where you are working and other group members, that may volunteer with you. To respect all other volunteers you should ask your contact person and other group members first if there are any concerns about bringing your dog.

If you bring your dog, you are responsible to supervise it and ensure appropriate behaviour.



## Useful Contacts

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|---|--|
| <b>Your Volunteer Role</b>              |  |
| <b>Local Connections Coordinator</b>    | Astra Howard<br>Level 1, 31–33 Spring Street, Bondi Junction NSW 2022<br>Phone: 9083 8916<br>Email: <a href="mailto:astra.howard@waverley.nsw.gov.au">astra.howard@waverley.nsw.gov.au</a> |
| <b>Waverley Bushcare</b>                | Council Chambers, Cnr Paul St and Bondi Road<br>Phone: 9386 7915<br>Email: <a href="mailto:bushcare@waverley.nsw.gov.au">bushcare@waverley.nsw.gov.au</a>                                  |
| <b>Waverley and South Head Cemetery</b> | St Thomas Street, Bronte NSW 2024<br>Phone: 9665 4938<br>Email: <a href="mailto:cemetery@waverley.nsw.gov.au">cemetery@waverley.nsw.gov.au</a>   |
| <b>Waverley Library</b>                 | 32 - 48 Denison Street, Bondi Junction NSW 2022<br>Phone: 9386 7777<br>Email: <a href="mailto:library_enquiries@waverley.nsw.gov.au">library_enquiries@waverley.nsw.gov.au</a>             |
| <b>Bondi Pavilion</b>                   | Queen Elizabeth Drive, Bondi Beach NSW 2026<br>Phone: 8362 3400<br>Email: <a href="mailto:bondipav@waverley.nsw.gov.au">bondipav@waverley.nsw.gov.au</a>                                   |

## Other Useful Waverley Council Contacts

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|--|---|
| <b>Customer Service Centre</b><br>Waverley Council | 55 Spring St, Bondi Junction, NSW 2022<br>Phone: 9369 8000<br>Email: <a href="mailto:info@waverley.nsw.gov.au">info@waverley.nsw.gov.au</a> |
| <b>Mill Hill Centre</b><br>Community Services      | 31-33 Spring Street, Bondi Junction, NSW 2022<br>Phone: 9386 7999   |
| <b>Council Chambers</b><br><b>Waverley Council</b> | Cnr Paul St and Bondi Road<br>Phone: 9369 8000  |

You can find more information on Waverley Council's webpage: [www.waverley.nsw.gov.au](http://www.waverley.nsw.gov.au)