



Whistlewood
Common

Volunteer Charter

Whistlewood Common Volunteer Charter

Whistlewood is a volunteer run not-for-profit community benefit society. We rely on income from activities such as site hire and events, grants and donations, but we would not be able to care for and maintain the site without the time, energy, and commitment of our volunteers. We are hugely grateful to everyone who chooses to support Whistlewood in this way.

As in any community, it is important that we have some shared expectations about how we work together. This Volunteer Charter sets out those ground rules. It explains what volunteers can expect from Whistlewood, what Whistlewood asks of its volunteers, and how we can create a safe, respectful, and rewarding volunteering experience for everyone.

Whistlewood is rooted in care for people, care for nature, and a spirit of shared responsibility. These values shape how we work together and how we welcome volunteers.



What is the Whistlewood Volunteer Charter?

Every Whistlewood volunteer is unique. People come with different expectations, motivations, experiences, skills, and personalities, and volunteer in different ways and settings. This diversity is one of our strengths and is part of what makes Whistlewood such a special place.

This charter is a shared understanding between Whistlewood and its volunteers. It gives a clear introduction to volunteering at Whistlewood and explains the support and expectations involved. It is intended to:

- Give volunteers a clear and welcoming introduction to volunteering at Whistlewood.
- Explain roles, responsibilities, and support.
- Promote a safe, respectful, and inclusive volunteering environment.
- Encourage open communication, feedback, and shared responsibility.
- Help create a positive and rewarding experience for everyone involved.

Who is the Charter for?

This charter is for all volunteers, whether you are just getting started or have been involved for years. It is part of our commitment to keeping the volunteer experience at Whistlewood positive, supportive, and always improving.

For the purposes of this charter, a volunteer is anyone who freely gives their time, skills, energy, or experience to support Whistlewood without payment. This may include people who help regularly, as well as those who join us for a particular activity, session, or event.



What can volunteers expect from Whistlewood and what do we ask in return

Our Commitment to Volunteers	Our Volunteer Expectations
<u>We are committed to supporting you in your role, and we will:</u>	<u>When you volunteer with us, we ask that you:</u>
Share information in a clear and accessible way, including the timings for the session and what to expect on the day.	Support the aims of Whistlewood and the spirit of this charter.
Make sure you know who your Volunteer Lead is, so you have someone to support you in your volunteering and involve you, where appropriate, in decisions that affect your role.	Work with your Volunteer Lead to ensure you receive the support you need in your volunteering role.
Treat you with respect, make you feel welcome, and recognise and celebrate your contribution.	Treat other volunteers, members, visitors, and the wider community with kindness and respect.
Ensure a safe, inclusive environment where bullying, harassment, and discrimination are challenged and not tolerated.	Help make Whistlewood a welcoming and inclusive place, where people feel safe, valued, and able to take part.
Make sure you know who the designated safeguarding contact and first aiders are for the session. Provide First Aid Boxes in key places, that are regularly checked and updated.	Arrive in good time for any session where possible, and take part in the briefing so you understand the plan for the day, the main health and safety risks, and who to go to for support.
Make sure your Volunteer Lead talks you through the main health and safety risks and how we manage them, through the relevant risk assessment. Undertake “Tool talks” where relevant. Undertake site checks for safety.	Follow guidance from your Volunteer Lead, including any instructions about health and safety, tools, equipment, and ways of working.

Who is responsible for volunteering?

Overall responsibility for volunteering at Whistlewood sits with the Board. For each volunteering role, session, or event, a named Volunteer Lead will be responsible for supporting your volunteering experience. At volunteering sessions they will coordinate the day, supporting volunteers, and making sure this charter is followed in practice. Together, the Board and Volunteer Leads want volunteering to feel positive, safe, and worthwhile.

What happens if there are concerns about fair treatment or conduct?

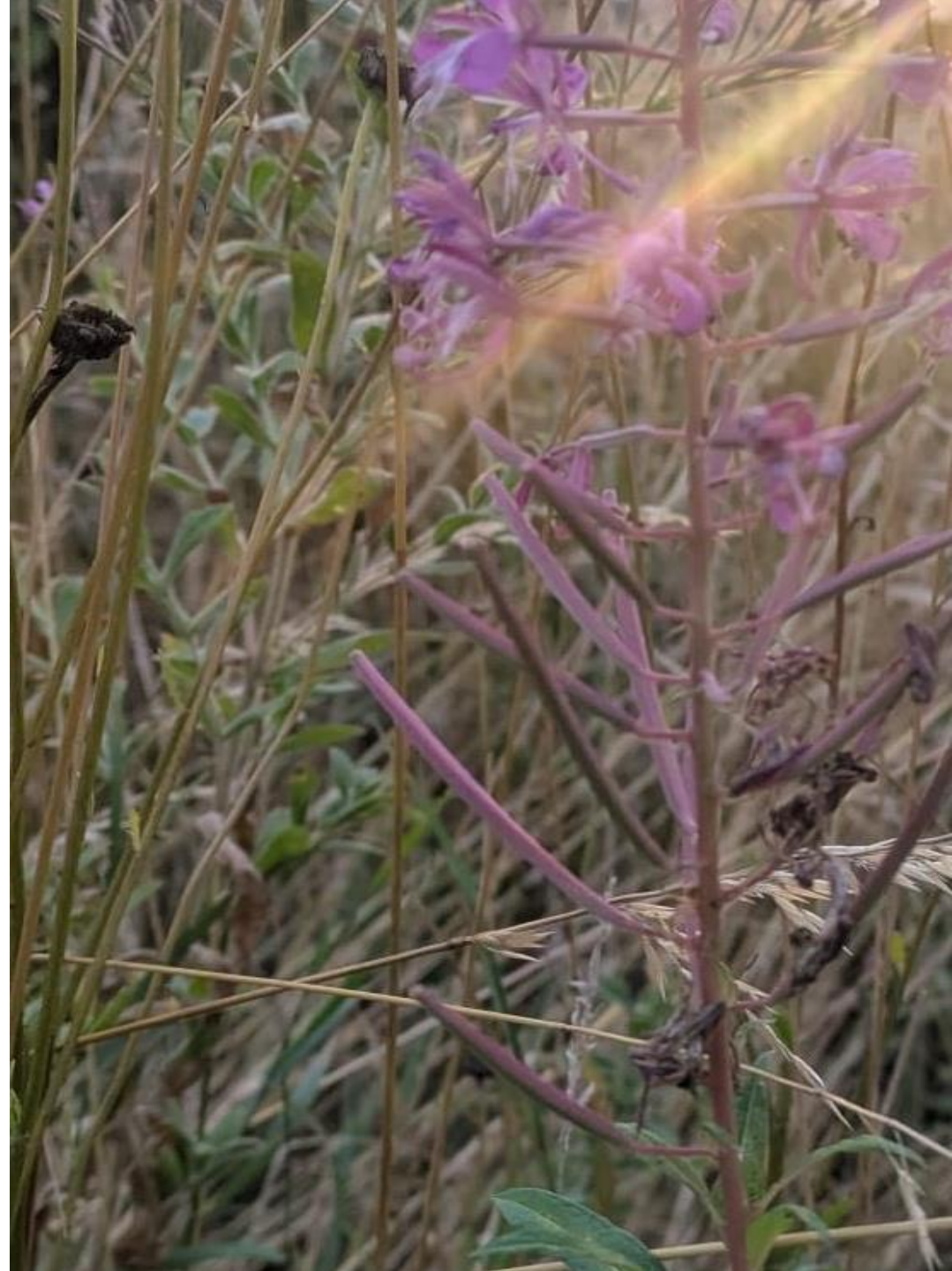
We want all volunteers to be treated fairly and with respect. We welcome feedback, will listen to your views, take concerns seriously, and do our best to reach a positive outcome.

If something is not going well, or you have a concern about your volunteering, please speak to your Volunteer Lead as soon as you can. We will support you and work with you to understand the issue and, wherever possible, resolve it informally.

Where needed, we will look into the situation promptly and fairly and make sure you are supported throughout. If something cannot be resolved informally, we may need to deal with it through our Grievance Policy.

We ask all volunteers to act in line with the shared expectations set out in this charter. If serious or repeated concerns arise, we will discuss these with you and may review whether the volunteering role remains a suitable fit.

This charter sits alongside Whistlewood's wider policies and procedures, including those relating to Harassment and Bullying, Safeguarding, Equality, Diversity and inclusion and Whistleblowing. Full versions of these policies are available on the Whistlewood Common website or from your Volunteer Lead on request.



Volunteering for all

Whistlewood believes in creating volunteering opportunities for all abilities and endeavours to foster an environment that is welcoming to all regardless of age, gender, class or race. If you are comfortable with sharing any particular adaption needs with us then we would be happy to accommodate you wherever possible. We try to provide clear information about our volunteering events so that you can decide whether they are suitable for you.

What to do if you have any questions, feedback or concerns

We also welcome feedback or questions and are here for your concerns so please do get in touch at admin@whistlewoodcommon.org. Alternatively, you can leave your feedback or questions in the red letterbox under the shelter or speak to your Volunteer Lead.

What does volunteering with Whistlewood mean?

By choosing to volunteer with Whistlewood, you are asked to work in line with this charter and understand that:

- This agreement is not a contract of employment and does not create employment rights
- Volunteering is based on mutual agreement and can be ended by either party at any time

We are committed to supporting you in your volunteering journey and truly value the time and care you give to Whistlewood. Thank you.

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