



Oxford Conservation Volunteers

www.ocv.org.uk

Policy Handbook

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Table of Contents

Volunteer Policy.....	4
Equal Opportunities Policy.....	5
Vulnerable Adult Policy.....	6
Child Protection Policy.....	8
Expenses Policy.....	10
Responsible Adult Consent Form.....	11
Incident Report Form.....	12
Mileage Expenses Claim Form.....	13
Emergency Contact Form.....	14

Volunteer Policy

Oxford Conservation Volunteers (OCV) provides practical conservation management work to a wide variety of sites in and around Oxford. The group is managed by a volunteer committee and each work party has a designated volunteer leader and minibus driver. The group would not exist without its volunteers, and this policy outlines what volunteers can expect from OCV and what OCV expects in return.

As a volunteer, you can expect that:

- Tools and appropriate safety equipment will be provided for you to use during a work party.
- Safety advice and instructions will be given at the beginning of each work party.
- Refreshments will be provided where possible.
- You will be covered by OCV's public liability insurance.
- OCV aims to be as inclusive as possible, and does not discriminate, subject to the natural restrictions of work sites, where safety is first priority.
- There is no obligation to volunteer on any particular work party or to make an ongoing commitment.
- You may reclaim out-of-pocket expenses where these have been approved in advance.

OCV expects volunteers to act responsibly. This includes:

- Following the safety guidelines given at the beginning of each work party.
- Wearing appropriate clothing for the conditions, including strong footwear, sun protection, and/or waterproofs.
- Using PPE (personal protective equipment) when instructed.
- Respecting other volunteers.
- Following instructions given by the work party leader or the site warden.
- Informing the leader if another volunteer is behaving in an unsafe or inappropriate manner.
- Asking for assistance if you are unsure about any aspect of the task or have any problems.
- Taking reasonable care of tools, the minibus, and other OCV property.
- Safeguarding your personal belongings. These are not covered by our insurance.
- Informing the work party leader if you are about to leave the site, so that we know you haven't got lost or had an accident.

The work party leader may refuse minibus transport to volunteers who have inadequate clothing or footwear for the conditions, or ask those who have made their own way to the site to leave the work party.

Volunteers who fail to follow instructions from the work party leader, particularly regarding safe working practices, respecting others, and using PPE, may be asked to leave.

Equal Opportunities Policy

Oxford Conservation Volunteers (OCV) aims to be inclusive to all people and does not discriminate on any grounds, subject to the natural restrictions posed by the environments in which work is undertaken, where safety is of primary importance.

In pursuit of this aim, OCV is committed to ensuring that all of its activities are governed by principles of equality of opportunity, and undertakes to make all reasonable adjustments to enable volunteers to participate in conservation activities, in the running of the group, and in the social activities of the group.

Vulnerable Adult Policy

Oxford Conservation Volunteers (OCV) recognises its responsibility to safeguard vulnerable adults. The committee have adopted this policy and leaders of work parties, social events and residential trips are asked to abide by it.

The aim of OCV's vulnerable adults policy is to reduce the risk of harm to vulnerable adult volunteers whilst allowing them to contribute to the organisation's conservation work as much as possible.

Adults aged 18 and over have the potential to be vulnerable (either temporarily or permanently) for a variety of reasons and in different situations. An adult may be vulnerable if he/she:

- Has a learning or physical disability
- Has a physical or mental illness, chronic or otherwise, including an addiction to alcohol or drugs
- Has a reduction in physical or mental capacity
- Is in the receipt of any form of healthcare
- Is receiving community services because of age, health or disability
- Is living in sheltered housing, residential care, temporary housing, or is homeless,
- Is unable, for any other reason, to protect himself/herself against significant harm or exploitation.

People who meet one or more of the criteria above may not be vulnerable at all, or all of the time.

Vulnerable adults may be at greater risk of:

- Physical, sexual, or psychological abuse, bullying or coercive behaviour
- Financial abuse including theft, fraud and scams
- Neglect
- Discrimination
- Modern-day slavery
- Radicalisation

Vulnerable adults can contribute to OCV and volunteering may benefit them by:

- Reducing social isolation and developing independence
- Developing new practical and social skills
- Acting as a bridge to employment

OCV aims to be inclusive, but we recognise that our volunteer leaders may not be able to provide adequate support for every vulnerable adult. When contacted before an event we will discuss with him/her and with people or organisations providing services to him/her the suitability of a particular activity. We may ask about his/her needs and capabilities and we may advise that particular activities are more suitable than others. In some cases we might advise that an activity is unsuitable, if we do not think he/she will be safe, or we may recommend that a friend or carer accompanies him/her.

Most OCV events are open to the public and many are held in public places. The group does not know who will be attending ahead of time so it may not be possible to identify vulnerable adults or those who may wish to harm them ahead of time. Consequently, it may be necessary for the work party leader to adopt a precautionary approach with someone who may be a vulnerable adult, such as proposing he/she works with a group of people close to the leader, rather than asking him/her to go and do a particular task on his/her own.

When a potentially vulnerable adult attends an event, the leader will mitigate risks to him/her by:

- Taking opportunities, where appropriate, to discuss with him/her which tasks are best suited to his/her abilities.
- Ensuring he/she understands the safety information.
- Not leaving him/her working alone far from the main group, or with only one other person.
- Preventing and reporting any physical, sexual or psychological abuse, or inappropriate behaviour towards him/her.
- Refraining from and discouraging any unnecessary physical contact.
- Avoiding first aid being delivered to him/her alone, except in an emergency.
- Not attempting to start a relationship with him/her.
- Being alert to signs of abuse or neglect, including those occurring outside of our events, and reporting them appropriately.
- Not making any decision about him/her without involving and informing him/her.

If a concern arises involving a vulnerable adult or a complaint is made about the behaviour of any volunteer, the event leader should record exactly what happened using the OCV incident form, and inform a member of the committee. Any complaint about an event leader should be reported to the committee.

In the event of a safeguarding concern the event leader or committee should refer the matter appropriately (to a carer, community services, or the police). Any allegation of a criminal nature must be referred to the police.

Useful Information

OCV committee contact details: <http://www.ocv.org.uk/contact.php>

Police non-emergency number: 101

Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board: <http://www.osab.co.uk>

Child Protection Policy

Oxford Conservation Volunteers (OCV) recognises its responsibility to safeguard young people. The committee have adopted this policy and leaders of events are asked to abide by it.

The aim of OCV's policy is to reduce the risk of harm to young people whilst allowing them to take part in the organisation's conservation work where possible and appropriate.

This policy applies to all under 18s. Young people aged 5 to 17 may participate in work parties only under the close supervision of a responsible adult such as a parent or guardian, or someone known to and acting with permission of the parent or guardian. We do not recommend that children under 5 take part in our work parties. The task leader will check that potential volunteers are aged 18 or over or are accompanied by a responsible adult before permitting them to travel in the minibus or join the task. This can be done when collecting emergency contact information.

Most OCV events are open to the public, often in public places, and the group does not know who will be attending ahead of time. Thus it is not possible to identify individuals who may intend to harm children and work party leaders have generally not had any checks or vetting. Thus, we do not permit volunteers (including work party leaders) to have one-to-one contact with young people under 18, unless they are the young person's parent/guardian. There are also risks associated with the use of tools and other hazards specific to each site. **Consequently OCV requires that there is a responsible adult to closely supervise a young person under 18 at all times.**

For a young person aged under 18 to take part:

- a consent form must be signed by the responsible adult before starting work, this includes an agreement to supervise the young person closely
- tasks which are appropriate to the young person's age and abilities must be agreed between the work party leader and the adult.
- the purpose of the work must be clearly explained to both the young person and the adult
- appropriate and adequate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) must be available, either provided by OCV or the parent/guardian
- if the young person is travelling in the minibus:
 - o he/she must be accompanied by the responsible adult at all times
 - o he/she must be at least the legal minimum age of 3
 - o he/she must not sit in the front seats
 - o he/she must occupy a full seat (no sharing)
 - o he/she must wear a seatbelt. The driver (not the responsible adult) has legal responsibility for this if the young person is under 14
 - o he/she must be seated next to the responsible adult

If these requirements cannot be met, the project may not be appropriate for young people.

For all young people the work party leader should:

- Not permit physical contact, except in an emergency
- Not permit first aid being delivered to him/her alone, except in an emergency
- Be alert to signs of abuse or neglect, including those occurring outside of our events, and report them appropriately

Photographs and videos taken during work parties are sometimes published on our website or social media. The work party leader should:

- Ensure consent for photos and videos has been obtained from the responsible adult, usually via the consent form.

- Not permit an indecent photo or video to be taken or published. This includes any photo or video containing nudity.

Organised groups of young people (school groups, youth organisations etc.) may attend work parties their leader must contact the OCV work party leader beforehand to make sure there is sufficient suitable work and tools. The group will only be able to take part if:

- The responsible adult is part of an organisation that has performed all the safeguarding checks required by law. OCV may ask for evidence of this.
- There is at least one adult to every 5 young people.
- Consent forms have been signed for every young person taking part.
- Appropriate tasks for the young people have been agreed between the work party leader and the responsible adult.

If a problem involving a young person arises or a complaint is made about the behaviour of a volunteer towards a young person the work party leader should inform the committee. Any complaint about a work party leader should be reported to the committee.

In the event of a safeguarding concern the event leader or committee should refer the matter appropriately (to the responsible adult, social services, and/or the police). Any allegation of a criminal nature must be referred to the police.

Useful Information

OCV committee contact details: <http://www.ocv.org.uk/contact.php>

Police non-emergency number: 101

Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board: <http://www.oscb.org.uk>

Expenses Policy

Task leaders and minibus drivers can claim for out-of-pocket expenses such as fuel for the minibus, milk, biscuits, coffee, tea bags and firelighters.

The cost of any purchases approved in advance by the committee can also be refunded, such as new tools, or bills related to the minibus or insurance premiums.

Anyone transporting volunteers to an event in their own vehicle when the minibus is full can make a claim for mileage.

Leaders and drivers can make a claim for reasonable travel costs from home to the tool shed when leading or driving. This can be mileage of a car or bike, or the cost of a bus or train ticket.

Other reasonable travel costs can be reclaimed for trips made on solely OCV business such as making site visits, shopping for residential trips, purchasing tools or materials for a task, provided the journey has been approved by the committee in advance. Travel to and from tasks, socials or residential is not included.

Anyone unsure about whether an expense is refundable should check with the treasurer before incurring the expense. The treasurer can also advise on the current mileage rate for cars and bikes.

A claim for an out-of-pocket expense must be accompanied by a receipt.

A mileage claim must be submitted using a signed mileage claim form.

Responsible Adult Consent Form

Task location: _____ Date: _____

Task leader: _____

OCV's Policy Regarding Young People

Young people aged 5 to 17 are welcome to join an OCV work party, but for their own safety when working outdoors in a public place they must be accompanied and closely supervised by a responsible adult. The adult must be a parent/guardian or someone known to the parent/guardian, and the parent/guardian must have agreed that the young person can take part in this activity under their supervision. Groups of young people from schools or youth organisations are also welcome, but their leader must contact the OCV leader in advance to find out if the task is suitable. There must be one responsible adult to every 5 young people.

At the start of a task the leader will agree with the responsible adult which activities are suitable for the young person to participate in, and which tools are appropriate. It is then the responsibility of the adult to ensure that the young person does not work outside those guidelines. We have some child-sized personal protective equipment, but we do not keep large stocks, so it may be necessary for young people to bring their own.

People sometimes take photographs, audio or video recordings during tasks. These may be stored by OCV and/or published on OCV's or our partner organisations' websites or social media accounts.

We will not allow any young people to become involved in any of our activities unless this agreement is completed.

Responsible Adult Consent

Name of young person: _____ Age: _____

I will be responsible for supervising this young person. I am their parent/guardian, or I am known to their parent/guardian, have explained the above policy to them and have their permission to supervise the young person, sign this form, and act as their parent/guardian for the purposes of today's activity. I am aged 18 or over.

I understand and agree to abide by OCV's policy regarding young people.

I agree to the above named young person travelling in OCV's minibus (if applicable); working with OCV on today's site; and participating in the today's task. I understand that the work and site may sometimes change at short notice due to circumstances outside of OCV's control.

I agree to allow emergency medical treatment in hospital if necessary.

I agree to photographs, audio and/or video recordings from today's task being stored, published and/or distributed in any form of media.

Name: _____

Relationship to young person: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Please ensure that you have provided emergency contact details separately. Please list on the back of this form any medical information that may help in the event of first aid being required. Please note that immunisation against tetanus is strongly recommended.

Incident Report Form

OCV policy is to record all accidents more serious than small scratches to the skin, so that the risk of further harm can be minimised. Use this form to report **all** incidents where:

- someone is injured, harmed or affected by a medical condition
- someone could have been harmed if circumstances had been slightly different (near miss)

This form should be completed by the task leader, and given to a committee member.

Part A - About the incident

When did it happen?	Date:	Time:
Where did it happen?	Site: Location within site:	

Part B - About the person injured or harmed (if no-one was affected - go to Part D)

Affected person's name?		
How old is he/she?		Male or female?
Volunteer or member of the public?		

Part C - About the injury or harm

What was the injury or harm?		
Which of the following describe the injury or harm? (Tick any that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Hit with a blunt object/tool <input type="checkbox"/> Cut by a sharp object <input type="checkbox"/> Hit by moving/flying/falling object <input type="checkbox"/> Injury lifting/handling/carrying <input type="checkbox"/> Slipped, tripped on the same level <input type="checkbox"/> Fell from a height <input type="checkbox"/> Trapped by something collapsing <input type="checkbox"/> Exposed to fire, hot object or explosion <input type="checkbox"/> Heatstroke or sunburn <input type="checkbox"/> Fell into water, drowned or asphyxiated <input type="checkbox"/> Hypothermia or exposure	<input type="checkbox"/> Injured by machinery <input type="checkbox"/> Hit by a vehicle / road accident <input type="checkbox"/> Exposed to a harmful substance <input type="checkbox"/> Poisoned <input type="checkbox"/> Subject to electrical discharge <input type="checkbox"/> Insect bite <input type="checkbox"/> Injured by an animal <input type="checkbox"/> Medical emergency <input type="checkbox"/> Physically or sexually assaulted <input type="checkbox"/> Subjected to verbal abuse or bullying <input type="checkbox"/> Other safeguarding concern/suspicion
What treatment was given?		
Who gave the treatment?		

Part D – Incident Details

What happened?				<i>Continue overleaf...</i>
Services used or contacted?	<input type="checkbox"/> Ambulance service <input type="checkbox"/> Police <input type="checkbox"/> Fire Service <input type="checkbox"/> Search and Rescue	<input type="checkbox"/> A&E, minor injuries <input type="checkbox"/> NHS 111, Pharmacy <input type="checkbox"/> Family doctor <input type="checkbox"/> Hospital specialist	<input type="checkbox"/> Vehicle recovery <input type="checkbox"/> Utility company <input type="checkbox"/> Rail authority <input type="checkbox"/> Local authority	<input type="checkbox"/> Social or care services <input type="checkbox"/> Other specified overleaf <i>Give details overleaf...</i>
How could it have been avoided?				<i>Continue overleaf...</i>

Part E – About the person completing this form

Name: Signature: Date:

Mileage Expenses Claim Form

I declare that the expenses shown below have been incurred by me solely on OCV business.



Name:	
Car/Bike:	
Signed:	
Date:	

Date of Journey	Details of Journey (to/from/via)	Purpose of Journey	Mileage

This form should be submitted to the OCV Treasurer along with your bank details if this is the first time you have claimed.

Emergency Contact Form

SITE :		DATE :	
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VOLUNTEER NAME :	AGE : <small>Or write "over 18". We may ask for ID.</small>	EMERGENCY CONTACT NAME :	EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBER :
(LEADER)			
(DRIVER)			