



## **The Friends of Richmond Park Policies**

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# The Friends of Richmond Park Code of Conduct

## All

- 1 The Friends of Richmond Park is committed to providing a safe environment for anyone who comes into contact with the Friends. This includes people who benefit from our work, volunteers (including the trustees), other people who come into contact with the Friends through our work at our events, at the Visitor Centre or those working for other organisations that we have dealings with.
- 2 We aim to create a safe and welcoming environment, where everyone is respected and valued. We strive to run the Friends in a way that actively prevents harm, harassment, bullying, abuse and neglect and will not tolerate any such behaviour. We will be ready to respond safely and well if there is a problem.
- 3 Our Volunteering Policy sets out our responsibilities to our volunteers and our expectations of them. Our Child Protection and Vulnerable Adult policies set out how we ensure a safe environment for those groups. If we conclude that, in practice, we cannot reasonably ensure the safety of a particular child or vulnerable adult, we reserve the right to require that person and their nominated adult to cease participating in our activities.

## Children (those under 18)

- 4 The safety and well-being of the child is paramount and should be prioritised.
- 5 No volunteer should ever be alone with an unaccompanied child. Children under 18 must always be supervised by their nominated adult who must be their parent or guardian or, exceptionally and subject to approval by the Friends, a close relative nominated by a parent or guardian, except if 16 or over they may join our group walks unaccompanied by their parent or guardian.
- 6 Photography and videoing of children and young people is not allowed, unless consent has been obtained from the child's parent or guardian.
- 7 Any concerns should be reported to the Friends' Nominated Safeguarding Person whose contact details are at the end of this document.

## Vulnerable adults

- 8 We are committed to ensuring that vulnerable people who participate in our activities can do so safely.
- 9 We require that a vulnerable adult is accompanied by their nominated adult, e.g. carer or friend, during our activities.
- 10 Photography and videoing of vulnerable adults is not allowed, unless consent has been obtained from their nominated adult.
- 11 Any concerns should be reported to the Friends' Nominated Safeguarding Person.

# The Friends of Richmond Park Volunteering Policy

## The role of volunteers

1. The Friends of Richmond Park welcomes members who wish to volunteer to help achieve our objectives of conserving and protecting Richmond Park and advancing public education about the Park. The Friends is run on a voluntary basis and has no paid members of staff and so relies on volunteers to achieve its objectives.
2. Friends' volunteering activities include practical conservation work; litter-picking; monitoring events in the Park; staffing the Visitor Centre; organising public walks and courses; running an education programme for young families; and managing and administering the charity. The trustees are all volunteers.

## Recruitment

3. The Friends welcomes volunteers regardless of their age, disability, gender including reassignment, race, religion or belief, or sexual orientation. Main volunteering activities are listed on our website. Other opportunities to volunteer are included in Park Life, the Friends magazine, or the Bulletin which are sent to members.
4. All new volunteers must be members of the Friends of Richmond Park and must continue to be members while volunteering. New volunteers must complete the Volunteer application form which includes potential volunteers specifying their area of interest.
5. Volunteer activities are restricted such that no volunteer has unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults. The Friends will risk assess all volunteer roles and decide whether any Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) criminal record checks (and, if so, at what level) are appropriate. The final decision as to whether a role should be subject to a DBS check will be made by the Friends' Nominated Safeguarding Person, and, if the Nominated Safeguarding Person so determines, the volunteer will be asked to apply for the relevant check and to register with the DBS update service. Currently the Friends requires DBS checks for all roles within the Discoverers programme for families as this is the only role where our volunteers are eligible for a criminal record check and it is considered both proportionate and in the interests of the Charity, volunteers and families to do so.
6. The final decision regarding the recruitment of an individual for volunteering will be made by the team leader responsible for that activity. Where applicants are not able to be placed into their preferred role, they will be given feedback and the opportunity to discuss other roles.

## Induction and training

7. All volunteers are allocated to a team with a designated team leader. The team leader is responsible for ensuring that each new volunteer:
  - is a member of the Friends;
  - has completed the volunteer application form(s);
  - if aged under 18 or a vulnerable adult has a nominated adult and both have completed the relevant form; and
  - receives induction and training commensurate with the risks of the planned volunteering activity.

8. We aim to be as inclusive as possible and team leaders are happy to discuss if a volunteer needs accompanying on their initial volunteering activity, but we cannot always provide ongoing supervision.
9. For all volunteer activities, induction and training includes a meeting with the team leader for that activity and receipt of this collection of policies. Induction and training are dependent on the activity. For example, the practical conservation and litter picking activities are particularly focused on health and safety.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

10. The volunteer role is based on trust and mutual understanding. There is no contractual obligation for the volunteer to attend or to undertake particular tasks. However, there is a presumption of mutual support and reliability and a reciprocal set of expectations:

### **Support and Supervision**

11. Each volunteer's team leader is responsible for training, supporting and supervising the volunteer, as well as providing guidance, giving feedback and answering queries. The aim is to ensure that the volunteering experience is a positive and rewarding one.
12. The nature and level of catch-up and liaison between the volunteer and the team leader will vary according to the nature of the role. However, volunteers should feel able to raise any concerns or issues with their team leader.
13. The Friends acknowledges that sometimes problems may arise. In the first instance, any volunteer with a complaint or concern should discuss it with their team leader. If the issue cannot be resolved by discussion with the team leader or the volunteer feels unable to discuss the issue with their team leader, then the volunteer is encouraged to discuss the issue with the Chairman or the Secretary (their contact details are at the end of this document).

### **Health and Safety**

14. The Friends recognises the importance of all volunteering activities being carried out in a safe environment. Volunteers should carry out all their activities in accordance with health and safety requirements and any guidance provided by their Team Leader or The Royal Parks.

### **Vulnerable adults**

15. We require that a vulnerable adult volunteering with the Friends of Richmond Park is accompanied by their nominated adult (e.g. carer or friend) during volunteering activities.
16. All volunteers are responsible for recognising and reporting an allegation or observation of maltreatment or abuse to a vulnerable adult to the Friends' Nominated Safeguarding Person. Full details are set out in the Friends' Vulnerable Adults policy.

### **Children (Under 18s)**

17. We require that a child under 18 volunteering with the Friends of Richmond Park is supervised by a nominated adult who must be their parent, guardian or, exceptionally and subject to approval by the Friends, a close relative nominated by a parent or guardian.

18. All volunteers are responsible for recognising and reporting an allegation or observation of a child being at risk of harm or abuse to the Friends Nominated Safeguarding Person. Full details are set out in the Friends' Child Protection Policy.

### **Expenses**

19. The Friends makes no payments to volunteers other than reimbursement of expenses incurred wholly in service of the charity. Volunteers should consult their team leader in advance of incurring any expenditure.

### **Insurance**

20. The Friends organises insurance cover for volunteers. This provides, subject to the detailed terms of the policy, modest cover if a volunteer suffers harm while volunteering for the Friends. Insurance is subject to age restrictions:
  - under-18s are only covered if they are supervised by their parent/guardian;
  - volunteers aged between 18 and 80 are covered as normal;
  - any volunteers aged 80-85 can also claim if they suffer harm, except for Permanent Total Disablement; and
  - any volunteers over-85 are excluded from the insurance cover unless they tell us and we arrange for them to be specifically included.
21. Vulnerable adults are only covered by our insurance if they are accompanied by their nominated adult, e.g. their carer or friend, during our activities.
22. If volunteers wish to use their car to carry out any aspect of their volunteering role, the volunteer should notify their insurance company to ensure that they are covered on their vehicle insurance.

### **Ending the volunteering relationship**

23. We expect that volunteering with the Friends will be a mutually positive and rewarding experience and are delighted that many of our volunteers continue to help for many years. If an issue arises, we expect it can be resolved through discussion, but we reserve the right to ask a volunteer to stop volunteering if we consider that necessary.

### **Confidentiality**

24. A small number of volunteers have access to confidential information. Only volunteers who need to see information for purposes related to volunteer involvement will be able to access it. They are required to keep such information confidential, to retain the information only for as long as it is necessary, and to only use that information for legitimate reasons relating to the activity of the Friends of Richmond Park.

# The Friends of Richmond Park Child Protection Policy

## Scope

1. The Friends of Richmond Park believes everyone has a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to behave in a way that protects them. We will give equal priority to keeping all children and young people safe regardless of their age, disability, gender including reassignment, race, religion or belief, or sexual orientation.

## Scope of volunteering by children

2. Volunteers who are under the age of 18 cannot participate in volunteering activities unless:
  - the work to be undertaken does not involve equipment requiring skilled operation;
  - the individual has been trained in the tasks to be performed; and
  - the individual is supervised at all times by a nominated responsible adult.
3. The nominated responsible adult must be a parent, guardian parent, guardian or, exceptionally and subject to approval by the Friends, a close relative nominated by a parent or guardian and must sign the volunteer's application form to confirm that they will supervise the volunteer when they are participating in a volunteering activity.

## Children participating in activities

4. No volunteer should ever be alone with an unaccompanied child. Children under 18 must always be supervised by their nominated adult who must be their parent, guardian or exceptionally and subject to approval by the Friends, a close relative nominated by a parent or guardian, except if 16 or over they may join our group walks unaccompanied by their parent or guardian.

## Photography

5. We will only take photographs of children if we have explained the purpose of taking the photograph and have the written consent of their parent or guardian.

## Reporting

6. If a volunteer sees or suspects that a child participating in our activities is at risk of harm or abuse then this must be reported to the Nominated Safeguarding Person (NSP). Their contact details are at the end of this document.
7. The Nominated Safeguarding Person must report the matter to The Richmond Single Point of Access number for all referrals which is 020 8547 5008. The NSP must make the trustees aware of any referral. If you consider the child to be in immediate danger or at risk of serious harm danger always call 999.

## Nominated Safeguarding Person

8. The trustees have appointed a Nominated Safeguarding Person (NSP) who is responsible for taking the lead in ensuring that appropriate arrangements for keeping children safe are in place at The Friends of Richmond Park. The NSP's role includes leading on revisions to this policy, advising the trustees on safeguarding issues and reporting any concerns.

# The Friends of Richmond Park Vulnerable Adults Policy

## **Commitment**

1. The Friends of Richmond Park is committed to providing a safe environment for vulnerable adults.

## **Definition**

2. A vulnerable adult is a person who is aged 18 or over who needs or may need community care services because of a disability (mental or other), age or illness and is someone who could be unable to look after themselves or protect themselves from harm or exploitation.

## **Policy**

3. We require that a vulnerable adult either volunteering or attending one of our activities is accompanied by their nominated adult (e.g. carer or friend) during volunteering activities. Team leaders are responsible for identifying vulnerable adults and ensuring they are accompanied by their nominated adult when participating in our activities. If in doubt, the team leader should consult the Volunteering Trustee lead in the first instance and then, if necessary, the Nominated Safeguarding Person (NSP).
4. If a vulnerable adult wishes to volunteer with us, they and their nominated adult must be members and must complete the Under 18s / Vulnerable Adult Volunteer form and their nominated adult the volunteer form.
5. The trustees have appointed a NSP who is responsible for taking the lead in ensuring that appropriate arrangements for keeping vulnerable adults safe are in place at The Friends of Richmond Park.

## **Creating a Safe Environment**

6. We will assess health and safety risk based on the capabilities of the individual and reserve the right to restrict access if we deem it unsafe for a vulnerable adult to take part – for example using machinery.
7. We will only take photographs of vulnerable adults if we have explained the purpose of taking the photograph and have the written consent of their nominated adult.

## **What to do if you suspect or maltreatment or abuse**

8. Vulnerable Adults have a high risk of maltreatment. Many of them are reluctant to report and, sometimes, they even deny that they have experienced harm. It is important for anyone present to protect them against people who try to abuse them. Such maltreatment/abuse can be physical, verbal, sexual, financial or lack of care.
9. If such maltreatment or abuse is witnessed or suspected, the NSP should be informed; if for any reason you cannot tell the NSP, the Chairman or the Honorary Secretary should be informed. You must do this as soon as is practicable. Failing this, contact Richmond Council Adult Access team on 020 8891 7971. Describe what you have been told or what you have observed. Try not to give your interpretation but do share your instincts. The role of the Friends is to refer the concern or complaint to Adult Social Care and not to investigate.

# The Friends of Richmond Park Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Policy

## Introduction

- 1 The Friends of Richmond Park uses the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checking service to help assess the suitability of applicants for volunteering positions with its Discoverers programme for families. This is considered to be the only role where a criminal record check is considered both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. Any advertisements for Discoverers volunteering will make clear that a criminal record check will be submitted and this policy will be made available to the applicant.

## Data protection

- 2 The Friends policy is to comply fully with the code of practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of certificates and certificate information and with applicable data protection legislation.
- 3 The Friends does not retain any information required to obtain a DBS check – this is sought by the applicant not the Friends.
- 4 The Certificate is obtained solely for the purpose of assessing an individual's suitability for a volunteering role and will be maintained by the Secretary and in the ordinary course the result only disclosed to the Team Leader of Discoverers. If necessary, the result will also be disclosed to the Volunteering Trustee and / or the Chairman. The Secretary will maintain a list of who has been sent the Certificate or confirmation of its result.
- 5 The Certificate will be kept for up to six months (in case of a dispute or complaint) and will then be securely destroyed. The Friends may keep a record of the date of issue of a certificate, the name of the subject, the type of certificate requested, the position for which the certificate was requested, the unique reference number of the certificates and the details of the recruitment decision taken.
- 6 Information will be kept securely, in password-protected digital form in a Friends of Richmond Park account or in lockable, non-portable, storage containers with access strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties.

## Rehabilitation of Offenders

- 7 The Friends of Richmond Park undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly and not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a criminal record check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.
- 8 The Friends recognises that it can only ask an individual to provide details of convictions and cautions that are not protected by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 as amended, and where appropriate Police Act Regulations as amended).
- 9 Any offences disclosed by a DBS check will be carefully considered to ensure compliance with the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. This will include discussion on any matter revealed with the potential volunteer.

# **The Friends of Richmond Park Whistleblowing Policy**

## **Purpose of the policy**

1. It is important that any fraud, misconduct or wrongdoing by anyone working on behalf of the Friends of Richmond Park is reported and properly dealt with.
2. We therefore encourage all individuals to raise any concerns that they may have about the conduct of others in the charity or the way in which the organisation is run.

## **Reporting within The Friends of Richmond Park**

3. Volunteers, members and others may raise any concerns with the Chairman or the Secretary (their contact details are at the end of this document). They will arrange for the matter to be investigated.
4. The Friends of Richmond Park will not take any action against a whistleblower where the disclosure is unable to be substantiated or is found to be untrue, provided the disclosure was made with an honest, genuine or reasonable belief.

## **Reporting to the Charity Commission**

5. Volunteers, members and others may report things that have happened, are happening or are likely to happen to the Charity Commission. Matters should only be reported to the Charity Commission if they could seriously harm the people a charity helps, the charity's staff or volunteers, the services the charity provides, the charity's assets or the charity's reputation.
6. If you need advice about blowing the whistle, you should contact Protect, a specialist whistleblowing charity with a free and confidential advice line: Telephone: 0203 117 2520.

## The Friends of Richmond Park Complaint Handling Policy

1. Any individual who has a concern about the conduct of others in the charity, or about the way in which the organisation operates, is encouraged to raise the matter with us. Any complaint should be made to the Chairman or the Secretary (their contact details are at the end of this document).
2. Any complaints (spoken or written) received by the Friends of Richmond Park or any of the Trustees must be escalated to the Chairman and the Secretary immediately. They will arrange for the matter to be investigated.
3. The Secretary will maintain a log of all complaints received. Any unresolved complaints must be considered for action at the next Trustee meeting.
4. The trustees of the Friends of Richmond Park are required to report any serious incidents identified by a complaint to the Charity Commission. A serious incident is an adverse event, whether actual or alleged, which results in, or risks, a significant loss of charity money or assets, damage to charity property, or harm to the work of the charity, its beneficiaries or reputation. Significant means proportionate to the charity, taking account of its staff, operations, finances or reputation.

## The Friends of Richmond Park Contact details

Complaints and whistleblowing matters should be raised with the Chairman or the Secretary.

Safeguarding matters should be raised with the Nominated Safeguarding Person, or in their absence, with the Chairman.

General volunteering matters should be raised with the Volunteering Trustee.

Chairman	Roger Hillyer	<a href="mailto:chairman@frp.org.uk">chairman@frp.org.uk</a>
Secretary and Nominated Safeguarding Person	Judith Pearson	<a href="mailto:secretary@frp.org.uk">secretary@frp.org.uk</a>
The Volunteering Trustee	Peter Allnutt	<a href="mailto:volunteers@frp.org.uk">volunteers@frp.org.uk</a>