

## Growing Roots



Gardening for Personal Growth

### **VOLUNTEERING POLICY**

Growing Roots' core principles are to meet individuals' needs effectively and use resources effectively and sustainably. We ask that all volunteers respect the people they work with and meet during the course of the project, respect the garden and its plants and look after any tools that are used.

Growing Roots' greatly appreciate the support of the volunteers it recruits and undertakes to:

- To give clear information as to what the volunteer's role is at each project.
- To support volunteers in their volunteering role. If a volunteer feels that support is inadequate, he/she is encouraged to discuss this in the first instance with the Horticultural Project Leader of the project they are volunteering at.
- Ensure that volunteers have safe working conditions

#### **Recruitment**

- Growing Roots actively promotes equality of opportunity and welcomes applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. All volunteers are requested to complete an application form and provide two references and attend an informal interview.
- A Disclosure and Barring Service check will be required for all volunteers who are recruited to work with Growing Roots as Social and Therapeutic garden assistants.
- The organisation is committed to the fair treatment of volunteers regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.

#### **Data protection**

Personal information on application forms will be stored securely and will be kept whilst there is a working relationship with Growing Roots and for a period of up to five years after the end of the working relationship.

## **Confidentiality**

It is the policy of Growing Roots to respect everyone's rights to privacy. Everyone is defined as paid employees and volunteers working for Growing Roots, the children, young people and adults who take part in programmes run by Growing Roots and their accompanying staff from partner agencies. We expect volunteers working for Growing Roots to work within the guidelines of this policy. Volunteers are requested to:

- consider the presence of other people when they have conversations that may need to be kept confidential
- not talk about the personal situations of others whilst volunteering for Growing Roots
- not pass on any information about any of the people taking part in projects indiscriminately or via social media

## **Safeguarding**

Growing Roots advises the following code of behaviour to minimise contact with vulnerable people being misinterpreted or seen as inappropriate.

- Minimise chances of spending time alone with participants but if required let staff know that you are doing so in advance.
- Where close contact is required e.g. teaching how to use tools safely, ensure that it takes place in a group.
- Language should be appropriate to age and nature of the participants with whom you are working

Please report any suspected or disclosed abuse that you are made aware of to Jane Cummings who will pass it to the Local Area Designated Officer at Somerset County Council.

An awareness of safeguarding issues will form part of the Induction for volunteers.

## **Health and Safety**

It is the policy of Growing Roots Community Interest Company to make provisions to prevent personal injury and health hazards to all employees, volunteers and participants in its horticultural activities that they set up and minimise damage to property during activities.

Training in the use, storage and maintenance of tools including adapted tools will be given at the Induction session.

Use of toxic plants will be avoided as much as possible. Volunteers are asked to ensure that they communicate any known allergies on the application form.

Volunteers are asked to ensure that they wear clothing appropriate to the weather conditions. Steel-toed boots are recommended wear, if possible. Gloves and eye protection will be provided by Growing Roots.

Volunteers are responsible for ensuring that they have an up-to-date tetanus vaccination and that any cuts on hands are covered before taking part in activities.

Information about fire assembly points and hand-washing and toilet facilities will be made available at each project venue.

Growing Roots has Public Liability and Employers' Liability insurance.

### **Ground Rules**

- Respect for all people involved in the project
- Respect for the plants
- Respect for the tools

### **Photographs**

Please only use the Growing Roots camera for taking photographs of participants.

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