RISE WALLED GARDEN

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

Thank you for volunteering with Rise Walled Garden!

We appreciate you offering your time and skills to the organisation, and we aim to make the experience both enjoyable and rewarding for you and appropriate to the standards required by us.

About the Handbook

This handbook is designed to introduce you to Rise Walled Garden and to provide a basic overview of the key policies and procedures.

Rise Walled Garden is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, run in accordance with a Constitution approved by the Charities Commission. Our aim is to preserve and restore the walled garden as an area for the use of the population of East Riding and Hull. In accordance with the principles of organic or regenerative horticulture the garden will operate as a closed loop production system with minimal external inputs (other than seeds and cuttings), a combination of green manures, fast growing perennials, and wildlife friendly habitats to create a balanced and healthy ecosystem whilst maintaining or improving soil fertility. Management of the CIO is in the hands of four trustees, who are also volunteers at the garden. They are responsible for planning and supervising the work of growing the produce. There are currently no paid staff, though this might change in future as the enterprise develops.

As a volunteer we extend to you many of the same rights and benefits as trustees with regards to the work environment, job training, supervision, and recognition of achievement.

In return we hope you will honour your commitments to Rise, respect staff members, other volunteers, and our service users/beneficiaries.

As our organisation grows and changes, there may be a need to modify the policies, practices and other information described in this handbook. When such changes occur, you will be notified by an email or at a meeting.

Induction

One of the trustees will introduce you to the volunteer team and anyone else who you might be working with. They will also go over health and safety requirements and volunteering goals. Please use this opportunity to ask any questions and to highlight any areas you would like further training and support in. They will also cover key Policies and Procedures with you as part of your induction. These policies and procedures are available to view at any time and copies are available to take home. It is important that you adhere to all Policies and Procedures as part of your volunteering for the organisation; some of the key elements you need to be aware of are summarised in this booklet for your convenience.

Volunteers are encouraged to join the WhatsApp? group which greatly helps communication.

Training

We want to ensure that you feel happy and confident to carry out your role and are happy to organise training to ensure that you feel competent in your role and to support your personal development. Please do also keep us informed of the kinds of training you feel would benefit you as your role

develops and pass on information about any specific training courses you may see that are of interest to you.

Attendance

As a volunteer we are extremely grateful to you for offering your time and skills to the organisation. We are hopeful that you will be able to keep to any arrangements for attending activities at the times and dates agreed.

We do understand that from time to time certain situations may arise that prevent you from doing so, and so we are grateful if you can give us as much notice as possible if you are unable to attend a session/activity that you have agreed to support. The best way of doing this is by messaging using the WhatsApp? group, alternatively phone Graham Brooks on 07949 805695 or Paul Hanson on 07958 289635 or Rohan Lewis on 07925 201605.

Our main day for volunteering in the Walled Garden is Monday but other days may be an option. Please discuss this with us when you are here, or by phone / email. We ask that volunteers try to arrive by 10am for commencement of the day's work, but we understand that certain flexibility will always be necessary.

Our working day will usually start to wind down at 3pm when all tools can be brought back to the workshop and cleaned before putting away. If anyone wishes to carry on working then this can be discussed with the staff on site – equally, we can accommodate those who, for health reasons, can only work for a shorter period.

There are facilities for making hot drinks on site, and instant coffee and a variety of teas are provided free of charge, but please bring your own food plus any other drinks if you need them.

What you can take home from Rise Garden to eat

Produce, when available, will be shared out among volunteers by agreement with the trustees. In general, no more will be allowed at a time than is sufficient for the individual and his/her family for the coming week. Surplus produce is sold where possible to fund the running expenses of the Garden, or alternatively donated e.g. to food banks.

Health and Safety

We are committed to looking after the health, safety and wellbeing of everyone who works for us or benefits from our services. Any activities carried out on a voluntary basis are covered by the same health and safety legislative requirements as those carried out by employees. It is therefore important that you understand and accept your personal responsibility towards promoting and maintaining health and safety standards in order to provide a safe working environment for all. Suitable risk assessments will be prepared for all activities being carried out in the name of Rise Walled Garden CIO and these will be discussed with you prior to any activity you take part in.

It is important that you:

- Carry out your duties without endangering either your own health and safety, or that of colleagues, third parties and/ or the general public.
- Comply with all relevant instructions and procedures relating to safety and follow guidance provided by the management.

- Inform one of the trusteed of any personal health and safety requirements that you have. If you have any doubts regarding your health and safety role or responsibility, please speak to them as soon as possible.

Accidents and Incidents

All accidents and incidents must be reported to a trustee as soon as possible. If you feel that it is a real emergency, please contact the emergency services immediately.

Representing the Organisation

It is important that all volunteers represent the organisation positively to members of the public and beneficiaries/service users. This includes ensuring the use of appropriate language around staff, other volunteers and beneficiaries/service users, being conscious of appearance in terms of wearing appropriate clothing for the activity in question and ensuring good personal hygiene, avoiding drinking alcohol during all volunteering activity and being aware of and upholding Rise Walled Garden policies and procedures.

Please consult with, and receive permission from, one of the trustees before engaging in any actions which may make Rise Walled Garden legally liable. These include (but are not limited to) making public statements to the press, signing contracts or entering into financial agreements, lobbying or forming partnerships with other organisations.

Ending Your Volunteer Service

You may resign from your volunteer service with Rise Walled Garden at any time. We request that you notify one of the trustees with as much notice as possible prior to your departure and hope that you will be happy to complete an exit interview.

Problem Solving Procedure

When a group of people work and volunteer together, problems may arise. It is important to all of us that such problems are solved as quickly and amicably as possible. Occasionally, however, it may be necessary to investigate certain problems in greater detail. Our problem-solving procedure provides you with the opportunity to have a review of any problem, dispute, or misunderstanding that may arise during your volunteering.

You may submit a problem in writing to one of the trustees within three (3) working days after the problem becomes known to you. We will be interested in any proposed solution that you may have and will schedule a meeting to discuss your concerns further.

The trustees will attempt to resolve your problem at this initial meeting. If unable to reach a mutually agreed-upon settlement, then we will investigate the situation further, and within three (3) working days, meet you to give you a final answer in writing.

Exit Interview and Exit Checklist Process

We encourage all volunteers to participate in an exit interview before leaving Rise Walled Garden, regardless of your reason for leaving. You may also request a letter of reference or referral at this time.

The exit interview is your opportunity to communicate your views about the organisation, along with any other relevant information you feel it is important for us to know. A trustee will contact you to arrange an exit interview upon receiving notice of your intention to end your volunteering.

Confidentiality

It is important that all volunteers have due regard for the confidentiality of the organisation, its board, staff, other volunteers and service users. Due to the nature of the work you may be doing as a Rise Walled Garden volunteer, you may become party to information about the organisation, the people that you are supporting and/or people that you are working alongside which it is important that you do not share with others. We expect all volunteers to agree to refrain from the unauthorised use or disclosure of any proprietary information.

Harassment & Discrimination

Rise Walled Garden is committed to maintaining a work environment free of unlawful harassment and discrimination. Rise Walled Garden's Harassment and Discrimination Policies forbid any form of harassment or discrimination based on sex (including sexual harassment, gender harassment and harassment due to pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions), race, religion, creed, colour, national origin or ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition, marital status, age, sexual orientation or any other status defined in UK Law.

All such harassment is unlawful. The Rise Walled Garden policy applies to all persons involved in the operation of Rise Walled Garden projects and prohibits unlawful harassment by any volunteer/employee of Rise Walled Garden including supervisors and co-workers.

Examples of sexual harassment may include, but are not limited to:

- Physical, unwelcome touching.
- Verbal conduct such as epithets, derogatory jokes or comments, slurs, or unwanted sexual advances, invitations or comments.
- Visual conduct such as derogatory and/or sexually oriented posters, photography, cartoons, drawings or gestures.
- Threats and demands to submit to sexual requests as a condition of continued employment, or to avoid some other loss, and offers of employment benefits in return for sexual favours.
- Inappropriate conduct or comments consistently targeted at only one gender, even if the content is not sexual.
- Retaliation for having reported or threatened to report sexual harassment.

This behaviour is unacceptable in the workplace itself and in other work-related settings such as trips and social events.

Smoking

Volunteers must take a break from their work and use the relevant designated smoking area at the site. Please use an ashtray and do not leave discarded cigarettes anywhere else on the site.

Pets

Dogs can be brought to the Walled Garden, but it is the owner's responsibility to ensure that no damage is caused to any part of the site; our plants are our livelihood so please be mindful. Any animal excrement should be collected by the animal's owner and taken off site for disposal.

Solicitation

Solicitation by volunteers for any reason on Rise Walled Garden property or during Rise Walled Garden sessions activity is strictly forbidden. Volunteers wishing to distribute literature for other groups, organisations or events may be given permission to do so but should always seek express prior agreement by submitting the relevant material to a trustee for approval.

Substance Abuse

The possession, use or sale of illegal drugs is never acceptable during volunteering activity or the wider work environment. We recognise that substance abuse can be successfully treated and encourage any volunteer who is concerned about their substance use to contact a member of staff for advice and support.

Our commitment to our volunteers, we will:

- Always treat you with respect, consideration and appreciation
- Ensure you have a clear idea of your responsibilities
- Give you information about the training and support available to help you carry out your role
- Support you with any development goals that are defined as part of your induction or via subsequent supervisions
- Provide you with support through regular meetings or discussions
- Offer you fair, honest and timely feedback on your work.
- Update you on how your work has made a difference.

To ensure you get the most out of your role, please try to do the following:

- Always treat staff, beneficiaries and fellow volunteers with respect, consideration and appreciation.
- Act in a professional way whenever you represent Rise Walled Garden in public
- Act in a way that doesn't discriminate against or exclude anyone.
- Provide as much notice as possible if you are unable to fulfil your volunteering commitment
- Ask a staff member for guidance if you don't fully understand your role and responsibilities.

The volunteer

I, (volunteer's name)……agree:

- To help Rise Walled Garden fulfil its services within the community
- To perform my volunteering role to the best of my ability
- To follow all of Rise Walled Garden's procedures and standards, including those relating to health and safety and equal opportunities, customer care, and confidentiality in relation to its staff, volunteers and beneficiaries
- To meet time commitments and standards agreed to, and to give reasonable notice of any absences so that other arrangements can be made

This agreement is binding in honour only, is not intended to be a legally binding contract with Rise Walled Garden and may be cancelled at any time by either party. Neither Rise Walled Garden nor the volunteer intends any employment relationship to be created either now or at any time in the future

RISE WALLED GARDEN would like to take this opportunity to thank you for committing your time and experience and volunteering for us. We hope that it will be a rewarding, enjoyable experience.

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