



Volunteer Policy

February 2017

Policy for volunteers within Young Farmers

1. Introduction

Young Farmers' Clubs is a voluntary youth organisation led by young people, for young people. Our Young Farmers' Clubs provide their members with a unique opportunity to develop skills, work with their local communities, travel abroad, take part in a varied competitions programme and enjoy a dynamic social life. There are 25,000 members aged 10-26 belonging to 630 Young Farmers' Clubs in England and Wales dedicated to supporting young people in agriculture and the countryside.

In order to function Young Farmers' Clubs involve people effectively in a volunteering partnership to help support rural youth provision, develop them personally as individuals and enrich their communities. As a volunteer your gift of time, skills and experience is valued and will extend Young Farmers' Clubs capacity to provide valuable opportunities to rural young people.

It does this by:

- Helping people who might otherwise have found themselves isolated in rural areas.
- Supporting young people to take on roles within young farmers at club, county, area and national levels.
- Providing potential volunteers with the means to access volunteering opportunities with external organisations.

Young Farmers' Clubs is committed to working with volunteers within the organisation to:

- Contribute to the delivery of services to members.
- Make sure we are responsive to the needs of our members.
- Provide different skills and perspectives.
- Offer opportunities for participation by people who might otherwise be excluded.

The definition of a Young Farmers' Club volunteer is an individual who puts their time, experience, knowledge and skills to use within the organisation, free of charge, with the aim of bringing benefit to the local community. Young Farmers' Clubs is made up of all types of volunteers, most of which are members, other supporters and others are parents of members wanting to do something to promote the development aims and principles of the organisation. For many Young Farmers' Clubs volunteers they may not realise they are volunteering and class it as a lifestyle choice to be involved in the Young Farmers' Clubs community.

This volunteer policy sets out the principles and practice by which we work in partnership with volunteers.

2. Principles of volunteering

When you volunteer within Young Farmers' Clubs it is our aim that:

- You can make a difference to the lives of young people in rural communities.
- Your time, skills, experience and knowledge will be used well.
- Your volunteering will be appreciated and recognised.

- You will be provided with the appropriate information, guidance and offered training required for you to carry out your volunteering role.
- You will be kept up to date with the work of Young Farmers' Clubs.
- You will volunteer in an organisation that strives to be diverse and non discriminatory.
- You will be provided with out of pocket expenses with prior authorisation.
- You will volunteer in an environment that is safe.

In exchange Young Farmers' Clubs:

- Recognises that voluntary work brings benefits to volunteers themselves, to Young Farmers' Clubs members and to paid staff.
- Will ensure that volunteers are properly integrated into the organisational structure and that mechanisms are in place for them to contribute to all elements of the organisation.
- Expects that staff at all levels will work positively in partnership with volunteers and actively seek to involve them in all elements of Young Farmers' Clubs.
- Recognises that volunteers require satisfying work and personal development and will seek to help volunteers meet these needs, as well as providing the training for them to do their work effectively.
- Will endeavour to identify and cover the costs of supporting volunteers.
- Recognises that the management of volunteers requires designated responsibilities within specific posts at different levels of the organisation.
- Will endeavour to involve volunteers from a wide range of backgrounds and abilities and ensure our volunteering opportunities are as accessible as possible.

3. Recruitment

Recruitment of volunteers will largely be from within our existing membership or the local rural community, and will be in line with the Young Farmers' Clubs Equality and Diversity and The Safeguarding Children, Young People and Adults at Risk Policy. Volunteers will be selected through the following process –

- People interested in becoming volunteers with Young Farmers' Clubs will have the opportunity to speak to a member of staff or a previous post holding volunteer to find out more information about the opportunity.
- They will be given information on the roles available within Young Farmers' Clubs from the Source resource. Volunteer committee or board level members will be given role specific information and induction and by the County Federation or The National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs.
- All volunteers applying for roles involving working in direct contact with children, young people or adults at risk will be asked to complete a simple application form appropriate to the role that they are applying for and will be asked to supply two references. A template reference form is available in the Safeguarding Children, Young People and Adults at Risk Policy.
- For roles which involve working in **regulated activity** with young people or vulnerable adults, volunteers will also be required to have a full DBS disclosure check which will be arranged by the safeguarding lead at the level which you are applying. In addition to this they will be asked to provide information about any disciplinary procedures or criminal convictions via a self

disclosure form that is completed prior to starting your volunteering. A template self disclosure form is available in the Safeguarding Children, Young people and Adults at Risk Policy.

- For those ad hoc volunteering roles e.g. judge's, stewards or car park attendants that do not involve direct supervision or responsibility of working with children, young people or adults at risk they will be asked to provide contact details, which also give permission for this to be held by the county federation in accordance with data protection regulations.
- After obtaining the safe recruitment documents listed above every volunteering role will undergo a risk assessment by the safeguarding lead at the level which you are applying.
- Where applicants are not placed in the role applied for, they will be provided with feedback and given the opportunity to discuss alternative volunteering roles where appropriate.

4. Volunteer Agreements and Voluntary Work Outlines

Volunteers will receive a role description containing full information about their chosen area of work and a clear idea of their responsibilities. Where appropriate they will also be given a volunteer agreement, this should be signed by the volunteer and returned to the volunteer coordinator* at the level at which they are applying. An example volunteer agreement can be found at the end of this document.

5. Induction and Training

Volunteers will be given clear instructions, an induction where required and offered training appropriate to the specific tasks to be undertaken within their role.

6. Support

Volunteers will be assigned a named contact person who will be a point of contact and provide support when required. Volunteers can request informal support sessions which will provide the opportunity for discussions about their current role, development of the volunteering role and any advice and guidance as needed. Where the volunteering role is emotionally demanding these sessions also give volunteers the opportunity to access emotional support from the organisation.

Young Farmers' Clubs can also assist volunteers that would like to maintain records of their volunteering experiences to evidence development for future learning, career progression or general development.

7. The Volunteer's Voice

Volunteers will be consulted in decisions which affect them. Young Farmers' Clubs works in partnership with its volunteers to ensure a coordinated approach to all decision making.

8. Records, Confidentiality and Data protection

Minimum details will be confidentially retained on volunteers. This will usually include the application form, references, self declaration form, DBS information (if required for post), records of any investigations you are involved in, emergency contact information, correspondence address and any other relevant information to facilitate the volunteering role. Volunteers can request to view information held about them by the organisation using the Freedom of Information Act.

Following the end of the period of volunteering, records will be retained for a period of time in accordance with safe recruitment guidelines. Records pertaining to any volunteer involved in a safeguarding investigation may be kept for the duration of the individuals working life, dependent on the nature of the issue. Young Farmers' Clubs may be required to share information held about volunteers to assist organisations with information gathering.

9. Expenses

Many volunteers are very happy and able to meet the costs incurred for occasional volunteering activities (travel to and from the activity for example) – they see this as part of their volunteering and perhaps also as their own small financial contribution to the charity. For others, the costs incurred may prove to be a barrier to their opportunity to volunteer, so it is appropriate for YFC Clubs, County Federations and the NFYFC to consider an appropriate expenses policy for volunteers that meets the costs incurred. Volunteers are in no way obliged to claim expenses, nor should volunteers be judged negatively if there is a requirement to make an expenses claim.

Out of pocket expenses:

The cost of purchasing equipment and/or resources for YFC Club or County Federation activities will be reimbursed as long as the purchase was pre authorised by the Club or County Federation.

Reimbursements will be made against receipt only (for clarity this means no receipt or invoice, no reimbursement)

Travel expenses

Some journeys made by YFC member volunteers may fall within the YFC Club/County Federation/NFYFC travel expenses policy. This policy may pay travel expenses for some volunteer activities. Due to the nature of the organisation, some activities result in the volunteer being both a leader and a participant at the same time. Activities defined as participant activities and not volunteering will not fall within the travel expenses policy.

Some examples of expense claims volunteers may be entitled to are -

- Club representatives attending a County Committee meeting. The YFC Club may have a policy that reimburses travel to and from meetings to represent the YFC Club. This is a YFC Club responsibility/decision.
- County representatives attending a NFYFC / Area Committee meeting. The County Federation may have a policy that reimburses travel to and from Area meetings to represent the County Federation. This is a YFC County Federation responsibility/decision.

- Club/County representation to a YFC Competition. This activity is a participant activity for those YFC members competing in the competition. However this is a volunteer activity for those of the YFC community that are running the competition (stewards for example) and the Club/County Federation policy may decide to reimburse volunteers for the travel to and from the event.

General

Travel expenses should be recorded with the use of an expense claim form. Travel expenses for mileage should be accompanied by a printout of a route planner that records the mileage of the journey(s) made. Rail and other travel expense claims must be accompanied by the ticket receipt or invoice.

10. Insurance

Volunteers will be covered by Young Farmers' Clubs insurance while carrying out agreed duties.

11. Health and Safety

Young Farmers' Clubs will take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure the volunteers' health, safety and welfare while at work in accordance with the adopted Health and Safety policy. Volunteers will have access to the policy in operation at the level at which they are volunteering during their induction and training period.

12. Equality, diversity and inclusion

Volunteers and staff will work in accordance with the Young Farmers' Clubs policy on Equality and Diversity policy and will prevent discrimination on any grounds. Volunteer roles will be open to individuals irrespective of their protected characteristics. If volunteers demonstrate a lack of support to maintain the standards of the Equality and Diversity policy they will be deemed as unsuitable for a volunteering position within Young Farmers' Clubs.

13. Solving problems

Young Farmers' Clubs at all levels will help deal with any concerns or grievances that volunteers may have. Volunteers have the right to discuss any concerns they may have about their role with their named volunteer coordinator. If the volunteer coordinator is unable to resolve the problem they will refer the matter to the Management committee, with the permission of the volunteer.

14. Endings

When volunteers move on from their role at Young Farmers' Clubs they will be given the opportunity to discuss their volunteering period with their *volunteer coordinator or a member of the management team. On the basis of their voluntary work, volunteers will have the right to request a reference. Volunteers will be supported to move on to other options.

15. Monitoring and review

Young Farmers' Clubs will continuously monitor and evaluate its use of volunteers with reference to this Volunteer Policy. This policy will be reviewed annually by the National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs.

Glossary

**Volunteers Coordinator – the volunteer coordinator is your assigned contact during the period of volunteering. This person may vary throughout the various levels of Young Farmers' Club. For a club level volunteer this is likely to be a county staff member, area level volunteers are coordinated by the area committee and National level volunteers will be coordinated by an NFYFC staff member.*

Please use own headed paper

Young Farmers Clubs Volunteer Agreement

We appreciate your commitment to us and will do the best we can to make your volunteer experience with us enjoyable and rewarding. To make sure you have the best possible experience we have created this agreement which sets out our commitment to you and what we hope you can contribute.

Young Farmers Clubs is committed to:

- Giving you a great experience.
- Explaining the aims of the organisation and how volunteering benefits the members of Young Farmers' Clubs.
- Being responsive to your requirements.
- Treat you with respect and Courtesy.
- Providing you with an induction.
- Providing support throughout your volunteer experience.
- Supporting you to say 'no' when necessary.
- Explaining the standards we expect and to encourage and support you to achieve and maintain them.
- Providing a named person who will be your point of contact whilst volunteering.
- Doing our best to help you develop your volunteering role with us.
- Being flexible in relation to your volunteering hours, recognising your need for holiday time and other commitments.
- Honouring the time commitment you have agreed to give us and not to expect more from you unless offered and agreed.
- Providing training required to undertake the role.
- Reimbursing agreed out-of-pocket expenses
- Providing adequate training and ensure you know what to do to stay safe, in accordance with our Health and Safety Policy.
- Providing adequate insurance to cover for volunteers whilst undertaking volunteering approved and authorised by us.
- Ensuring that all volunteers are treated fairly and in accordance with our Equality and Diversity Policy.
- Trying to resolve fairly any issues or difficulties you may have whilst you volunteer with us before they become problems. In the event of an unresolved problem, to offer an opportunity to discuss the issue in accordance with the relevant policies.
- Follow up on any feedback or questions you may have regarding your involvement as a volunteer.

I, [VOLUNTEER NAME] agree to volunteer with Young Farmers' Clubs and am committed to the following:

- Support the objectives of Young Farmers' Clubs.
- Performing my volunteering role to the best of my ability.
- Treat other people with respect and courtesy.
- Attend relevant training and support sessions if requested.
- Working as agreed in my volunteer role description.
- Work as a team with staff and other volunteers and make new people feel included and welcome.
- Following the organisation's policies and procedures.
- Familiarise myself and ask if I'm not sure about what to do stay safe whilst volunteering.
- Maintain high standards of behaviour throughout my volunteering.
- Maintaining the confidential information of the organisation.
- Meeting time and other commitments as agreed but when unable to do so to give reasonable notice so that other arrangements can be made.
- Providing references and to agree to checks under the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Act as required.

- Return any loaned equipment when ending my volunteering.

This agreement is not intended to be a legally binding contract between us and may be stopped at any time by either party.

We hope you find your volunteering with us enjoyable and rewarding.

Signed:

[VOLUNTEER NAME]

[VOLUNTEER MANAGER NAME]

[VOLUNTEER ROLE]

[VOLUNTEER MANAGER ROLE]



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National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs is a registered Friendly Society
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