

# **Royal Norfolk Agricultural Association**



## **Volunteers' Handbook**

## ***Welcome***

Thank you for choosing to volunteer with the Royal Norfolk Agricultural Association.

The Association is a registered charity, founded in 1847 to promote the image, understanding and prosperity of agriculture and the countryside, primarily through its hosting of the Royal Norfolk Show, the county's annual two-day agricultural show.

## ***History***

The Royal Norfolk Agricultural Association is one of the oldest county associations, being founded in 1847 by the amalgamation of the East Norfolk and West Norfolk Associations. In 1908 the Association was granted the great privilege of the Royal prefix by King Edward VII. For over 100 years shows were held in a variety of locations throughout the county with the co-operation and support of landowners with parkland sites. In 1952 the Association made its initial purchase of land at Costessey for a permanent showground, the first show appeared on the current site in 1954. Over the last sixty years the showground has been expanded and improved with the addition of indoor venues, including the Showground Arena and the MacGregor Building suite of meeting rooms.

## ***Mission Statement***

The Royal Norfolk Agricultural Association aims to help educate young people and adults, and to bring people and business together through a range of inspiring events, including the Royal Norfolk Show and the Norfolk Spring Fling, to promote a better understanding of food, farming and the countryside.

## ***Volunteers***

The Association's volunteers, who mostly serve as stewards, are part of the fabric of Norfolk and the Royal Norfolk Show. They are volunteers, generously giving their time to help deliver the Royal Norfolk Show and other Association events and activities.

We want to make sure that you get the most out of your time with the Association. This handbook will provide you with a general overview of volunteering with us. If you have any questions about your role, please speak to your volunteer manager who will normally be the Head Steward or Assistant Head Steward of the section to which you have been assigned. Additional advice can be sought from the Chairman of the Show Committee or the Show Director.

# Becoming a Volunteer

## *The Relationship Between the Association and a Volunteer*

The Royal Norfolk Agricultural Association recognises that as a volunteer you have offered your time freely. There is, however, an element of responsibility on both sides. It is important for you to understand both the benefits that you will gain from volunteering with the Association, and the Association's expectations of you as a volunteer.

On its part, the Association undertakes to provide you with:

- A clear explanation of what you will be doing and why
- Appropriate training, supervision and support for your role
- A safe volunteering environment
- Induction training and the opportunity to attend further training

As a volunteer, the Association expects that you will:

- Maintain good relations with other volunteers, staff and Association members
- Promote the Association to visitors
- Adhere to the Association's decisions, policies and procedures
- Be reliable and responsible at all times
- Carry out your role safely, both for your own sake and that of others
- Attend training and support sessions as required
- Maintain confidentiality

## **Enrolment**

The Association is committed to equal opportunities with volunteering open to all, regardless of sex, race, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion or political beliefs. Volunteer placements are made on the suitability of the volunteer to carry out the particular role. Please speak to your volunteer manager if you have any essential requirements in relation to your volunteering role. Your manager will be able to discuss any reasonable adjustments which can be made in order to assist you.

The Association expects all staff and volunteers to support and promote a positive equal opportunities environment by treating others on their merits and by disassociating themselves from any form of direct or indirect discrimination, victimisation, or sexual, racial or any other type of harassment.

The Association has no upper age limit for volunteers. While seeking to employ people of all ages and ability, the Association reserves the right to specify age limits and to define physical ability to ensure it complies with statutory and other externally imposed duty of care obligations. Certain activities are restricted for those under 18 by health and safety and child protection legislation.

You may apply directly to the Association office to be a volunteer or be proposed by an existing volunteer. The Association will endeavour to offer you the opportunity to volunteer in the section and role of your choice. However, if necessary, you may be asked to volunteer where the Association has most need of your services.

You need to complete the Association Volunteer Application Form. Thereafter, prospective volunteers are invited to discuss their future role with either the Head Steward of their

preferred section, the Chairman of the Show Committee or the Show Director. The Association invites volunteers to support the Show and other events.

### ***Association Membership***

Registered volunteers are enrolled at no cost as honorary volunteer members of the Royal Norfolk Agricultural Association. They may opt to be full members of the Association on payment of the appropriate subscription.

### ***Induction***

You will be issued with a copy of the Volunteers' Handbook and invited to attend an induction briefing with other new volunteers. The member of staff or volunteer in charge of the section to which you have been appointed will brief you on your role.

### ***Probationary Period***

As a new volunteer you will normally serve as an assistant steward for two years before being promoted to a full steward. This will allow you to gain experience under the supervision of more experienced volunteers.

A Head Steward may make a request to the Chairman of the Show Committee and the Show Director where there are exceptional reasons to appoint an individual as a full steward without completing the probationary period.

### ***Health and Safety***

The Association has a duty to all staff, volunteers, contractors, visitors and others who may be affected by its activities and it aims to protect all from risks to their health and safety as far as is reasonable.

The Association aims to provide a safe and healthy working environment for all, and employees and volunteers are expected to co-operate fully. The Association will provide the same standard of care for both staff and volunteers. Volunteers have a statutory duty to co-operate with the Association in the implementation of its Health and Safety Policy and to ensure that they carry out their volunteering work without risk to themselves or others and to report risks to their supervisors.

All health and safety incidents involving an individual volunteer, colleagues, visitors or members of the general public are to be reported through section leaders and recorded on the appropriate incident form.

## **Royal Norfolk Show Organisation**

### ***Organisation***

The Memorandum and Articles of Association outline the purpose, governance and organisation of the Royal Norfolk Agricultural Association. The Association is a members' organisation with a Council and Board of Trustees, plus a full-time executive team. There is a Show Committee which is responsible for the organisation and management of the Royal Norfolk Show. The Chairman of the Show Committee and Head Stewards work closely with the Show Director and other members of the executive team to plan and deliver the Show.

Head Stewards are responsible for the organisation of their respective sections during the period of the Show. They are supported by Assistant Head Stewards and stewards. Any

queries which stewards may have regarding their work at the Show should be made direct to the Head Steward of their section. Head Stewards should refer any queries to the Show Director.

All Head Stewards and full stewards are invited to attend the Judges and Stewards' Dinner immediately prior to the Show and assist with hosting visiting judges.

All volunteers are invited to attend the Annual Stewards' Evening.

## **Practices, Procedures, Policies, Rules**

### ***Attendance***

If you are a volunteer steward at the Royal Norfolk Show you will normally be asked to attend on both Show days and usually the half day prior to the Show (some sections ask volunteers for a greater commitment). If you are unable to attend for the whole of this period, you are requested to discuss alternative arrangements with your section leader. There may be other times in the year when you are invited to attend briefing and debrief meetings, health and safety workshops, and training days. Volunteers who accept positions of responsibility such as Assistant Head Steward and Head Steward will be asked to attend other meetings as necessary to ensure the smooth running of the Show.

You may also be invited to support other RNAA events if you are willing to give more time.

### ***Location***

Most volunteering activities takes place at the Norfolk Showground. There may be occasions when volunteers are invited to support other Association events and the location will be specified in the Event Management Plan.

### ***Dress***

At the Royal Norfolk Show, traditional attire for stewards has included a bowler hat or equivalent (the Association may be able to loan hats) and an RNAA tie. Current guidance requests that volunteers are smartly dressed. The Association will provide badges identifying the volunteer role. At other events, volunteers should dress in accordance with the direction in the Event Management Plan.

### ***Meals and Refreshments***

You will be provided with vouchers for meals and refreshments when on duty for the duration of the Show and other Association events. Head Stewards or section leaders are responsible for organising their teams so that breaks can be taken at regular intervals.

At the Show, meals and refreshments are normally taken in the Judges and Stewards' Marquee or St Walstan's Hall. By exception, arrangements can be made for meals and refreshments to be taken by volunteers at their place of duty, but this is not encouraged.

It is Association policy that staff and volunteers do not consume alcohol whilst on duty.

### ***Volunteers Property***

The Association does not accept liability for the loss of or damage to personal property brought on to the premises, whatever the cause, although investigations will be carried out on matters brought to the attention of the Show Director. In the interests of security, the Association would advise volunteers not to leave their personal possessions unattended.

### ***Association's Property***

Volunteers are not permitted to remove from the Association's premises any equipment, materials, or other association property, without the prior permission of an appropriate representative of the Association.

### ***Car and Bike Parking***

You will be advised of where you may park in the Event Management Plan or pre-event joining instructions. All vehicles are parked at the owner's risk.

### ***Use of Telephones, Computer Systems and Radios***

The Association will provide appropriate systems to enable staff and volunteers to carry out their roles effectively. There are certain obligations with regard to the use of these, and in simple terms, they should only be used for the purpose for which they were provided. You will not normally have access to the Association's computer systems, but where this is necessary, you will be briefed on the Association's IT policy.

You will most likely be issued with a management radio during the Show and other Association events. These are to be operated in accordance with the instructions detailed in the event management plan.

### ***Information Security and Data Protection***

The Association processes personal data in relation to its own employees, volunteers and clients in accordance with the principles set out in the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulations. You have the right to be notified about the data that is held on you and the right to access that information. The data is removed when no longer relevant.

### ***Acceptance of Gifts and Hospitality***

It is the policy of the Association that staff may not accept a gift or hospitality from a business contact (e.g. customer, supplier, actual or potential) without the written consent of the Show Director. Volunteers when on duty and representing the Association are expected to comply with this policy.

### ***Confidentiality***

There must be no disclosure of any Association information, other than that contained in authorised and publicly available documents, to any unauthorised person. Only those individuals who are specifically authorised to do so may speak publicly on behalf of the Association.

### ***Cash Handling Policy and Procedures***

Only those volunteers who are specifically authorised by the Association to do so may handle cash or receive payments from customers or guests on behalf of the Association. Only those volunteers specifically authorised by the association to do so may have access to cash tills. Volunteers who are required to handle cash will be briefed prior to each event.

### ***Financial Authority***

Unless specifically authorised, volunteers have no authority to make purchases or commit expenditure on behalf of the Association (except individual use of refreshment vouchers).

### ***Expenses***

The association does not normally reimburse any travelling or other expenses incurred by volunteers.

## **Progression**

On satisfactory completion of a probationary period (usually two years), assistant stewards are confirmed as stewards by their respective Head Stewards.

As and when a vacancy occurs, stewards may be invited to become Assistant Head Stewards. All Assistant Head Steward appointments will be referred to the Show Committee for approval.

The Chairman of the Show Committee is responsible for managing succession planning for Head stewards. All nominations for Head Steward appointments will be reviewed by the Association's Nominations and Governance Committee for approval by the Board of Trustees.

## **Recognition**

### ***Long Service Awards***

Stewards are eligible for long service awards on completion of 25 years and 40 years' service at the Royal Norfolk Show.

### ***Retirement***

On retiring, all stewards who have completed at least 25 years' service qualify for life honorary membership of the Association with Head Stewards being offered life honorary vice president membership.

Stewards who have completed at least 5 years' service qualify for honorary membership of the Association for a period calculated according to their time served as a steward. The formula is one year of honorary membership for the first 5 years' service and thereafter one additional year of honorary membership for every three years served. Therefore, an individual who has served as a steward for 8 years would be awarded 2 years' honorary membership.

## **Conclusion**

Thank you for your time and commitment to volunteering with the Royal Norfolk Agricultural Association. Your enthusiasm and dedication is crucial to the delivery of the Royal Norfolk Show and the Association's other events.