



## **Beryl Harvey Field Conservation Field Report April 2026**

### **1. Council Policy**

Council Policy AGREED 18 September 2025:

The Council AGREED to adopt the Ecology Report for the Beryl Harvey Field as Council policy and accepted the ecologist's recommendation for volunteer support, without ecological supervision, as follows:

#### Grassland & Scrub

- Hand-pull or dig up common knapweed in spring or autumn (small-scale, phased).
- Help with spot control of creeping thistle or invasive species as they appear.
- Participate in bramble removal using hand tools outside of nesting bird season (Sept–Feb).

#### Woodland

- Join walkovers to check for regrowth of cherry laurel or dense bramble (remain on paths).
- Assist in building hibernacula using logs, rocks and turf
- Construct bird, bat, or hedgehog boxes using online resources or kits.
- Install bat/bird boxes on trees with appropriate guidance.

#### Wildlife Monitoring & Education

- Join/lead wildlife activities like:
- Bird watching
- Wildflower ID
- Butterfly/invertebrate surveys
- Tree ID in winter
- Build bug hotels from natural materials or pallets with community/children.
- Support nature-based crafts and education (e.g., collages, family-friendly walks).



## **2. Council Minuted Decisions**

- Council minutes 16 October 2025 - Beryl Harvey Conservation Field – The Clerk wrote to the conservation volunteers to notify them of the Council's adoption of the Ecology Report for the Beryl Harvey Field and to invite them to suggest areas of work the volunteers would like to undertake and to extend the Council's invitation to them to a meeting of the Council's Property and Asset Committee.
- Council minutes 20 November 2025 - Beryl Harvey Conservation Field – There has been no reply from the volunteers, so Council will continue following the ecologist's maintenance plan.
- Council minutes 18 December 2025 - Beryl Harvey Conservation Field – To be discussed at the next meeting of the Property and Asset Committee.
- Council minutes 15 January 2026 - Beryl Harvey Conservation Field – To be discussed at the next meeting of the Property and Asset Committee.
- Property and Asset Committee minutes 05 February 2026 - The Committee AGREED to arrange a meeting with the volunteers wishing to help at the Beryl Harvey Field on site.
- Council minutes 19 February 2026 - Beryl Harvey Conservation Field – The Property and Asset Committee will meet with the volunteers.
- Council minutes 19 March 2026 - Beryl Harvey Conservation Field – The Property and Asset Committee are meeting with the volunteers on Monday at 1.00pm.

## **3. Meeting with the Beryl Harvey Field Conservation Volunteers 23 March 2026:**

### **Volunteer Duties**

The conservation volunteers would like the following items from the previous conservation plan added to the current duties for volunteers, in addition to those described in the 2025 Ecology Report:

- Cut back invasive scrub, saplings and blackthorn.
- Cut back any tree branches that overhang pathways.
- Lay sections of the central hedge on a rotational basis.
- Clear invasive weed/plants from in and around the pond.
- Build dead hedges and wildlife friendly log piles.
- Repair newt hibernaculars.
- Install nest boxes.
- Repair and replace benches as required.
- Preparing and maintaining a wildflower area
- Keeping access pathways in a good condition, especially with a view to promoting access for those with disabilities.
- Any other repair of maintenance work to gates, paths or surfaces as necessary.

**Action:** Parish Council to discuss at their April meeting.



### **Insurance**

- The conservation volunteers need to advise the Parish Council of the names of their volunteers and adopt the Parish Council's risk assessment for the Beryl Harvey Field.

**Action:** Conservation volunteers to notify Parish Council of volunteers annually and adopt risk assessment.

### **Volunteer Register**

- Council to provide Online Club Manager for the Conservation Volunteers to manage the emergency contact details and attendance registration of their volunteers.

**Action:** Parish Council to purchase Online Club Manager and train volunteers to use it.

### **Health and Safety**

- Conservation volunteers to be provided with training by the Parish Council on the use of power tools and to adopt a risk assessment for their use.

**Action:** Parish Council to identify training opportunities. Conservation volunteers to undertake training and adopt power tools risk assessment.

### **Young Persons**

- The Parish Council will contact its insurers about young people volunteering at the conservation field.
- Volunteers may require a DBS check.

**Action:** Conservation volunteers to check safeguarding policy of guest organisation. Parish Council to check insurers requirements and organise DBS checks if needed.

### **Knowle Park**

- Work in partnership with Knowle Park to share knowledge, experience and possibly equipment (subject to insurance).

**Action:** Parish Council to contact Knowle Park about collaboration.

### **Communications**

- The conservation volunteers agreed to operate under Cranleigh Civic Society who will provide communication with the Parish Council.

**Action:** Parish Council to liaise with the Civic Society.



## 4. HSE Advice

### When health and safety law applies

If your organisation has at least one employee, or if you are self-employed and employ others, you will have duties under health and safety law.

This means you must protect your employees but also others, including volunteers, from any risks arising from your work activities.

The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 (HSWA) protects employees and others who may be affected by work activities. This includes those volunteering for, or on behalf of your organisation. It is enforced by HSE or the local authorities depending on the location and type of the activity.

You must include volunteers, as well as employees, in your [risk assessment](#) to identify significant risks and implement effective control measures.

You should provide the same level of protection to volunteers where they carry out similar activities and are exposed to the same level of risk as employees.

### Managing risks to volunteers

Most health and safety law sets out measures employers should take to protect employees. However, your preventive and protective measures should reflect the individual risks both employees and volunteers face in their respective roles.

Good health and safety management is not a barrier to volunteering. It should help enable volunteering roles to be carried out safely and effectively. Risk assessment is not about eliminating all risk or generating a lot of paperwork, it is about taking practical steps to protect people from real harm.

Risk assessments should be sensible and proportionate to the level of risk involved in the activity. A sensible approach means focusing on significant risks with potential to cause real harm and suffering.

### Factors to consider if you engage volunteers

- Plan and prepare your activity effectively so you know how volunteers will be deployed
- Make sure your volunteers are covered by your insurance policy
- Match the task to the individual by checking they have the capability to do the activity
- Make sure effective supervision and monitoring arrangements are in place
- Make sure accidents and near misses involving volunteers are recorded and followed up



## **Training and equipment**

- Volunteers must be provided with the right information, instruction and training to make sure they can carry out their activities safely. You should provide a full induction, including information on hazards they may be exposed to.
- Provide appropriate tools and equipment (including personal protective equipment where required) and ensure volunteers are trained to use them safely. Ensure tools and equipment are regularly maintained and safely stored after use and advise volunteers to report any damage or defects promptly.

## **5. Health and Safety Responsibility**

The Council has delegated authority for the responsibility for the health and safety of employees to the Clerk. Employees include volunteers.

If the Council chooses to disregard the advice contained in this report in relation to health and safety, maintenance of equipment, training on use of equipment and vehicular access to the public recreation ground, then personal liability will pass from the Clerk to the individual councillors. It does not negate the responsibility of the Clerk under the Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007 and could place the Council in vicarious liability under employment law.

See Appendix 1 for further HSE guidance

## **6. Insurers Advice**

Thank you for your email, and please accept my apologies for the delay in responding.

Volunteers play a vital role in many organisations, and it is quite common for activities such as grounds maintenance to be carried out by them.

Volunteers should be afforded the same level of consideration as employees, and you have a duty of care to ensure that any tasks they undertake can be completed safely.

For grounds maintenance specifically, it is important to confirm that volunteers are competent to perform the tasks assigned and to operate any equipment required. You must also provide appropriate PPE, such as suitable footwear, gloves, and eye protection. These requirements should be clearly addressed within your risk assessment.

Completing work in the public space means you must also consider risks of interaction with the public/traffic. It may be that the area in question is cordoned off to prevent the public accessing this area.



## 7. Volunteer Log

The Clerk proposes to use Online Club Manager which the Council uses to log other volunteer activity. Costs are £50 per annum. Volunteer contact details and their emergency contact details will be logged in OCM and a register taken at each volunteering session so that the lead volunteer knows who is on site and their emergency contact details. OCM is GDPR compliant.

## 8. Tools

The Grounds Manager has provided the list below of equipment some with links, to the type of equipment the volunteers have either mentioned or what would be required to independently undertake maintenance within the conservation field. The Parish Council has no storage for any of this equipment, and storage within the site metal shed at the field is a major security issue.

### Mowers

Scythe mower £1599

<https://www.cranleighgardenmachinery.co.uk/products/484?page=1>

Field and scrub mower £4299

<https://www.cranleighgardenmachinery.co.uk/products/575?page=1>

Collection and side discharge mower £1099

<https://www.cranleighgardenmachinery.co.uk/products/606?page=1>

### Multi Tools

#### Electric multi tool

Ap300s battery X2 £570

Ap500s battery X1 £364

Rapid charger £129

KMA120r power unit shell £293

Extension pole £84

145 degree hedge cutter £283

Strimmer attachment £152

Brush cutter attachment £131

Pole saw attachment £206

Total £2,216

Petrol version of same system with same attachments £1,213



## 9. Training

### South East Land Based Training Courses

Most cost effective with groups of 4 operatives on one piece of machinery or 2 operatives per day course for 2 pieces of machinery. Typically £245 + VAT per day course.

They offer training on pedestrian mowers, hand held blowers, brushcutters, trimmers and hedgecutters.

## 10. Budget and Finance

The Council has no budget for the purchase of equipment for the use of volunteers at the Beryl Harvey Field.

Scythe mower £1599	£1,599
Field and scrub mower £4299	£4,299
Collection and side discharge mower £1099	£1,099
Electric multi-tool £2216	£2,216
Petrol multi-tool £1213	£1,213
Training	£245
PPE - footwear, gloves, eye protection, first aid kit	
OCM	£50

The Council will need to consider safe storage of equipment, access to fuel if petrol versions are purchased and access to battery charging for electric equipment.

## 11. Young Persons

Conservation volunteers to check safeguarding policy of guest organization and provide details to the Parish Council.

Parish Council to check insurers requirements and organise DBS checks if needed.

## 12. Knowle Park

Parish Council to organise collaboration with Knowle Park.



### **13. Correspondence from Cranleigh Civic Society**

25 March 2026	CCS request for covenant details.
25 March 2026	CCS request to meet on Friday to go through tools in shed.
26 March 2026	CCS agreed to help with the Beryl Harvey volunteers.
30 March 2026	CCS request a copy of the Council's safe systems of work and details of the rights and responsibilities of the volunteers.
02 April 2026	CCS email requesting a response to the email of 30 March 2026.
07 April 2026	CCS email about hand tools, use of power tools by two volunteers and taking a van to the conservation field. CCS request no work undertaken by contractors or grounds staff without one week's notice to the CCS.
07 April 2026	CCS email with notes for Council meeting, including their amended version of 2018 Conservation Plan, their notes of the meeting with the Parish Council and CCS meeting notes.
10 April 2026	CCS email to ask what actions we need to take to ensure that the council give permission for volunteer work in early May 2026.
10 April 2026	CCS email - Regarding you waiting to get a reply from the council's underwriters - does this mean that nothing can move forwards? What are the barriers to hand tools work on May 10th by the volunteers?

### **Correspondence to Cranleigh Civic Society**

25 March 2026	Draft notes of the meeting with the Parish Council and update on actions
25 March 2026	Covenant details as requested and further update on actions
26 March 2026	Email about shed and tool details being worked on by the Grounds Manager
02 April 2026	Email advising that the Council is waiting on its insurer and a report will be compiled for the Council.
10 April 2026	Email to CCS acknowledging two emails of 02 April 2026 and two emails of 10 April 2026.
14 April 2026	Email to CCS for permission to circulate their notes and notification that this report will be shared with all Councillor, CCS and placed on the Council's website.



## **14. Cranleigh Civic Society Requests**

1. Adopt their updated version of the 2018 Conservation Plans excluding the Council's Adopted policy prepared by a licensed ecologist.
2. Volunteers to work in the field on the second Sunday of the month.
3. Volunteers ask that no work by contractors or grounds staff takes place without a week's notice and discussion – so that both sides can learn.
4. Power tools to be used by two volunteers ,who will use their own tools.
5. Volunteers to drive their van into the Beryl Harvey Field.
6. Safe Systems of Work

## **15. Council Decisions**

### **Council Policy –**

1. **CCS request - Adopt their updated version of the 2018 Conservation Plans excluding the Council's Adopted policy prepared by a licensed ecologist.**

Council Policy is the adopted Ecological Report of 2025 prepared by a licensed ecologist. Does the Council wish to revert to the 2018 Conservation Plan prepared by volunteers initially and updated by Council staff?

### **Volunteer Duties Extension**

The Clerk has contacted the Council's ecologist to ascertain if the request by the Conservation Volunteers to extend their schedule of works falls within the remit of a qualified ecologist or could impact any habitat, wildlife or environmental legislation.

The Clerk sought the advice of the Council's licensed ecologist to incorporate the additional tasks identified by the Conservation volunteers in the meeting on 23 March 2026, item 3 of this report. Into the Council's adopted policy. The ecologist said:

All of that would be fine for the volunteers to carry out, however you would need to avoid the active bird season on the scrub clearance works and the hedge cutting, unless someone with some experience with nesting bird checks can do a check prior to the works taking place.

I would also avoid removing any pond plants until after the newt breeding season as even though they may be invasive, they could have newt eggs on. So I would avoid the period in-between March 15<sup>th</sup> and May 31<sup>st</sup>.



The last thing would be make sure you are checking any of the branches to be pruned for anything that could be a bat feature. Although I would imagine any branches the volunteers would be cutting would be small and not large enough to have rot holes suitable for bats, but just something to keep in mind.

The Clerk advised that access pathways are within the remit of the Council's grounds maintenance team to maintain and should be maintained by the Parish Council to comply with its public liability insurance to maintain safe access to this public open space.

The Beryl Harvey Field is oversailed by high voltage power lines. Any works to overhanging tree branches must be carried out by the Council's tree surgeons.

### **Volunteer Days**

- 2. CCS Request - Volunteers to work in the field on the second Sunday of the month.**

Volunteers request the second Sunday of the month

**No contractors or grounds staff to undertake work without a week's notice to the volunteers.**

- 3. CCS Request - Volunteers ask that no work by contractors or grounds staff takes place without a week's notice and discussion – so that both sides can learn.**

The Council needs to decide whether the Council's contractor and/or grounds staff or volunteers will be undertaking mowing operations at the conservation field. The Council cannot predicate when external contractors are available to attend site. Weather and ground conditions also impact work schedules. The Parish Council remains responsible for safe public access so it would be prudent for the Council to continue to maintain the access paths.



## **Power Tools**

### **4. CCS Request - Power tools to be used by two volunteers ,who will use their own tools.**

Referring to HSE advice, power tools should be maintained and operators trained in their use.

The Council needs to decide if it wishes to provide and maintain power tools and to provide training for volunteers in their use.

The Council needs to decide if it wishes to provide and maintain mowing equipment to be used by volunteers, training for the volunteers and safe storage of mowing equipment.

## **Vehicular Access to the Beryl Harvey Field**

### **5. CCS Request - Volunteers to drive their van into the Beryl Harvey Field.**

Referring to the Council's insurers advice, the insurer advises conning off the field to public access to consider risk of volunteers interaction with public/traffic. The Council needs to consider the impact to the wide public if they con off public access for the volunteers to work in this public open space.

The Council needs to consider conning off this public access open space and separate risk assessment for volunteer's vehicular access to the conservation field, impact on the field surface and risk of vehicles getting stuck and removing them. The Council would also need to request evidence of business insurance cover for the vehicles and request driving licence check annually.

## **Safe Systems of Work**

### **6. CCS Request - Safe Systems of Work**

Safe Systems of Work will be provided with the Council's updated risk assessment once the Council has decided:

- Who is providing power tools and who can use them.
- Who is undertaking mowing operations.



## **Appendix 1**

### **HSE Advice**

#### **Volunteering: Guidance for employers**

##### **1. Overview**

This guidance will help all those involved in volunteering understand their health and safety responsibilities.

It is mainly for employers or organisations who engage volunteers, such as charities, and will help them keep volunteers and any employees who work with them, healthy and safe. It explains when health and safety law applies and also covers civil law, so you can understand which type of law applies to you.

There is guidance on including volunteers in your risk assessment. Volunteering can involve a wide range of activities, with different levels of risk. Although many volunteers will be engaged in low-risk activities, there have been fatalities and major injuries involving volunteers engaged in higher-risk activities, such as working at height or using machinery. The guidance covers the types of activity where there could be higher risks and examples are provided to show how these can be managed to protect volunteers.

There is also advice on the following specific areas:

charity retail and fundraising

village and community halls

There is separate advice for volunteers themselves. It covers their rights and their own responsibilities under health and safety law.

##### **2. Health and safety law: Your duties to protect volunteers**

###### **When health and safety law applies**

If your organisation has at least one employee, or if you are self-employed and employ others, you will have duties under health and safety law.

This means you must protect your employees but also others, including volunteers, from any risks arising from your work activities.

The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 (HSWA) protects employees and others who may be affected by work activities. This includes those volunteering for, or on behalf of your organisation. It is enforced by HSE or the local authorities depending on the location and type of the activity.

You must include volunteers, as well as employees, in your risk assessment to identify significant risks and implement effective control measures.

You should provide the same level of protection to volunteers where they carry out similar activities and are exposed to the same level of risk as employees.



### **When health and safety law does not apply**

In most cases, health and safety law does not apply where volunteering does not involve an employer. However, there are some exceptions, such as where a volunteer: is in control of non-domestic premises, such as a village or community hall procures or controls construction work, for example if a village hall management committee employs a builder to carry out renovation work

### **When civil law applies**

If you have volunteers carrying out activities for your organisation and you have no employees, then health and safety law will not normally apply to you. However, you may still have duties under civil law.

Under the common law, voluntary organisations and individual volunteers have a duty of care to each other and others who may be affected by their activities. Where something goes wrong, individuals may, in some cases, sue for damages using the civil law if they are injured as a result of another person's negligence.

You can find more information from HSE on criminal and civil law which will help you manage this risk, or from Citizens Advice.

### **3. Include volunteers in your risk assessment**

As an employer, you must carry out a risk assessment to identify significant risks to volunteers, as well as employees, and implement effective control measures.

You should provide the same level of protection to volunteers where they carry out similar activities and are exposed to the same level of risk as employees.

You must include volunteers in your risk assessment. This will help you manage any risks that specifically apply to them.

You must consult employees and should also include volunteers in a two-way process to allow them to raise concerns and influence decisions on managing health and safety.

Our advice on how to do a risk assessment will help you identify the hazards in your workplace and put the right controls in place. There are examples of assessments covering typical workplaces and a template to help you complete your own.

### **Managing risks to volunteers**

Most health and safety law sets out measures employers should take to protect employees. However, your preventive and protective measures should reflect the individual risks both employees and volunteers face in their respective roles.

Good health and safety management is not a barrier to volunteering. It should help enable volunteering roles to be carried out safely and effectively. Risk assessment is not about



eliminating all risk or generating a lot of paperwork, it is about taking practical steps to protect people from real harm.

Risk assessments should be sensible and proportionate to the level of risk involved in the activity. A sensible approach means focusing on significant risks with potential to cause real harm and suffering.

Many of the activities carried out by volunteers will be low risk. However, volunteers may also be involved in higher-risk activities such as:

working at height

- construction and/or demolition
- using machinery
- lone working

Where the risk is higher, your risk assessment should be proportionate and consider the additional hazards that volunteers and employees may be exposed to.

### **Factors to consider if you engage volunteers**

Plan and prepare your activity effectively so you know how volunteers will be deployed

Make sure your volunteers are covered by your insurance policy

Match the task to the individual by checking they have the capability to do the activity

Make sure effective supervision and monitoring arrangements are in place

Make sure accidents and near misses involving volunteers are recorded and followed up

### **Training and equipment**

Volunteers must be provided with the right information, instruction and training to make sure they can carry out their activities safely. You should provide a full induction, including information on hazards they may be exposed to.

Provide appropriate tools and equipment (including personal protective equipment where required) and ensure volunteers are trained to use them safely. Ensure tools and equipment are regularly maintained and safely stored after use and advise volunteers to report any damage or defects promptly.

### **Examples of ways you can manage risks for volunteers**

The following examples illustrate simple steps that you can take to effectively manage risks to volunteers. They may help you make the right decisions for your workplace and highlight further guidance if required.

#### **Safe use of work equipment by volunteers**

A volunteer cut their hand while working alone using electric hedge trimmers. They had not received any training on use of the equipment and had not been issued with any PPE. This could have been prevented if they had been provided with the right information, instruction and training to carry out the activity safely. They should have received an induction before starting to cover any hazards they may be exposed to, and provided with PPE such as heavy duty gloves.



The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER) 1998 require employers to ensure tools and equipment are used only by people who have received adequate information, instruction and training.

Where employers provide volunteers with work equipment while doing activities on their behalf, the employer will have duties under PUWER, even if the volunteers are not directly under their control. For example, if a conservation group made up entirely of volunteers is provided with equipment or tools by the local authority.

#### **4. When to report incidents involving volunteers**

The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) require the responsible person to report certain incidents involving employees or those affected by their work activity, including members of the public and volunteers.

The responsible person can be the employer or the people in control of the premises. Incidents involving volunteers are only reportable where the accident arose from a work-related activity and:

the incident resulted in a fatality or

the injured person was taken directly from the scene of the incident to hospital for treatment

Examinations and tests do not qualify as 'treatment' and there is no need to report incidents where people are only taken to hospital as a precaution.

Incidents involving volunteers where there is no work activity are not normally reportable. The requirement to report over-7-day injuries only applies to employees, not volunteers.

#### **Examples of incidents involving volunteers**

##### **Not reportable**

A volunteer in a charity retail injures their back while lifting a heavy object but they are not taken to hospital for treatment, even if they were unable to return to their duties for 7 days or more

A blood-bike volunteer suffers multiple fractures after being involved in a road traffic accident and is taken direct to hospital. Injuries on the public highway are dealt with under the Road Traffic Act (RTA) so are not reportable under RIDDOR

A volunteer litter-picker for a local community group (with no employees) sprains their ankle on uneven ground and is taken to hospital for treatment. The incident is not reportable as there is no employer and no work activity



## **Reportable**

A volunteer on a farm amputates their finger while using heavy machinery and is taken direct to hospital for treatment

A volunteer assisting at a fund-raising event run by a charity which has employees, breaks their foot when struck by a heavy falling object and is taken to hospital

A volunteer suffers fatal injuries following a fall from height while carrying out roof maintenance work on behalf of a church.