



Marlens' Volunteers' Code of Conduct

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Volunteers' Code of Conduct

Clevedon Marine Lake wouldn't be what it is without the work of our volunteers. Volunteering with Marlens (the charity that looks after the lake) should be fun and gratifying.

This Code of Conduct has been written for volunteers by volunteers to keep you and everyone else safe and happy. Please read this code and sign it at the bottom to show that you agree to follow it while you're volunteering at Clevedon Marine Lake.

1. Staying safe at the lake
2. Using Marlens' buildings and equipment
3. Dealing with the public
4. Working with others
5. E-conduct

1. Staying safe at the lake

Clevedon Marine Lake is a public space that belongs to North Somerset Council. Marlens leases the space and its volunteers work to keep it clean and safe for all. While volunteering, you should:

- Read the risk assessments before volunteering
- Know where to find the first aid kit
- Know where to find the rescue equipment by the lake
- Always wear a blue Marlens hi-vis jacket
- Work in a group or with a 'buddy'
- Let somebody else know where you are and what you're doing
- Wear protective gloves, sturdy shoes and weather-appropriate clothing (sun-screen, hat, waterproofs etc)
- Work within your physical capabilities – don't attempt to lift, move, reach things that might hurt you
- Use a litter picker and don't touch glass or sharps
- Take regular breaks and stay hydrated/warm/cool as the weather conditions dictate



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- Don't drink alcohol while volunteering

2. Using Marlens' buildings and equipment

As a charity, we can't afford to lose equipment or suffer damage to our buildings. However, wear, tear and breakages are to be expected. Please help us by:

- Keeping all buildings locked while not in use
- Not passing on the code to people who don't volunteer with Marlens
- Taking care with tools and equipment
- Not using power tools or maintenance equipment without training
- Not using the Hoist unless trained
- Not drinking alcohol in the Hive
- Not storing personal belongings in the Hive
- Reporting any losses or breakages using the incident book, WhatsApp group or by emailing volunteer@clevedonmarinelake.co.uk

3. Dealing with the public

While volunteering for Marlens you are representing the charity. You should:

- Answer queries and questions if possible – if you don't know the answer, refer them to the website
- Be courteous and polite to members of the public at all times
- Avoid conflict – walk away and report if necessary
- Respect people's privacy – don't take photos or share information about people unless reporting them to the authorities

A note on dogs: Anyone who's cleaned up dog poo by the lake will know how frustrating it is to see people walking their dogs on the lower promenade. The dog wardens do patrol. If you see a dog, **do not** feel that you have to tell them to move on. Most dog owners are fine, but some react with hostility. You can either ignore them or tell them that the dog warden operates in the area and hands out £75 fines.

4. Working with others

While volunteering, you'll meet lots of friendly people who love the lake as much as you do. To keep the volunteer group happy and thriving, please:

- Read the safeguarding policy before volunteering



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- All under-18s and vulnerable adults should work with their parent, guardian or carer
- Avoid working along with an under-18 or vulnerable adult unless you're their parent, guardian or carer, or a designated DBS-checked volunteer mentor
- Avoid conflict with other volunteers – if you disagree with a volunteer, please discuss it privately
- Treat others with respect
- Don't swear or use offensive language, including racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic or religious jokes or banter

People volunteer for lots of different reasons. Remember that someone else may be having a bad day or dealing with something difficult in their private lives. Marlens has a zero-tolerance approach to bullying, harassment and any discrimination or 'banter' based on a person's age, race, gender, identity, sexuality, disability or religion.

If you are a victim of, or witness, any kind of bullying, harassment or discrimination, please email volunteer@clevelandmarinelake.co.uk All complaints will be treated confidentially by trustees.

5. E-conduct

We use a WhatsApp group called Love the Lake to communicate about volunteering. Please consider the number of people in this group by thinking before you message. Please restrict your messages to the hours of 9am-6pm (except in emergencies or for early meets). Only include messages about:

- Volunteering meets
- Jobs to do
- Problems or issues relating to the lake environment that need support, advice or opinions
- Events (such as drain downs)
- Questions about volunteering
- Other ways in which volunteers can help, eg with events like Light Up the Lake and Lake Day

Please refrain from:



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- Sending messages intended for specific people – contact them directly
- Advertising your own events or services
- Arguing with other volunteers
- Using offensive or inflammatory language
- Swearing
- Indulging in banter or in-jokes

If you're finding the volume of messages too much, you can mute them:

- tap on the name of the group in WhatsApp
- scroll down to 'mute notifications'
- slide the button to the right

What happens if there's a problem?

Safe and happy volunteering is contingent on everyone treating everyone else – other volunteers, trustees, members of the public – with dignity and respect. We look after each other and the lake community just as we look after the lake. Lots of the people who use the lake and volunteer to look after it make friends here for life.

On the rare occasion that somebody behaves in a way that's contrary to this ethos, we have a three-step approach:

1. An independent and impartial trustee will speak to all concerned to resolve any issues through conversation.
2. An independent and impartial trustee will formally deal with the complaint or issue by email. This email will set out any actions that the people involved might be expected to take, such as a warning or asking a volunteer to stop volunteering.
3. The trustees will initiate a formal investigation. This will be carried out by an independent and impartial trustee and witness and will involve reviewing evidence and interviewing those involved. The results of the investigation will be reviewed by a third trustee who will decide on actions to take.

We hope you love volunteering for Marlens. This code is designed to help you feel safe and protected within an organisation that will respect you for who you are and for the skills and time that you so generously offer.



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Please sign below to show that you understand and agree to abide by the code of conduct:

Signed _____ Name _____

Date: