



MIDDLETON HALL
— & GARDENS —

Volunteer Handbook



Registered charity number 1101315



MIDDLETON HALL

— & GARDENS —



Thank you for volunteering with us

This is your volunteer handbook to refer back to whilst
volunteering with us at Middleton Hall and Gardens.

We hope you find this useful.

Visit our website & social media for live updates on events.

Note from our Trustees

Middleton Hall and Gardens welcomes thousands of visitors and hosts many events throughout the year to allow us to maintain this wonderful property, and we could not do any of this without our Volunteers.

Volunteers restored the Hall and recreated the Gardens, and now volunteers maintain it and bring it to life for visitors and the community. So, to all you who welcome visitors, serve in the tea rooms, work in the garden and grounds, maintain the buildings, make craft for our stalls, research our history and use multi-media to promote us – the Board of Trustees would like to say a big thank you!

Trustees are also volunteers, and our task is to ensure that Middleton Hall Trust meets the charitable objectives and can survive, develop, and improve. Like you, we come from a variety of backgrounds, and although we have formal board meetings every few months, many sub-groups meet in between times to cover things such as finance, business planning, tenant matters, projects, and to support both staff and volunteers on whatever topic needs our support. I'm honoured to work with such dedicated and passionate volunteers across the full spectrum of life at Middleton and I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible during the year.

We hope you find your time with us enjoyable and rewarding, and remember, we could not do it without you. Thank you.

Our Story

Middleton Hall is now situated on a 42 acre site, but the estate used to cover thousands of acres including Middleton Village and what is now Middleton Lakes RSPB Reserve. The oldest building on site dates back to 1285 and the Walled Garden was built in 1717.

Our lake is the oldest man-made lake in North Warwickshire. The area surrounding the lake is rich in diverse fauna and wildlife which led to it being designated a 'Site of Special Scientific Interest' in 1974. The Hall has been home to many interesting families and individuals, including two highly regarded seventeenth century naturalists, Francis Willughby and John Ray, who conducted experiments on site.



Middleton Hall Trust is a charitable trust led by a Board of Trustees and run by a small team of staff. The Trust was founded in 1980 when a group of ramblers stumbled across the Hall in its derelict and abandoned state and wanted to take action. The Hall had been a lived in family home until 1966 when it was sold to Amey Roadstone Corporation. They were only interested in using the estate for gravel extraction and completely abandoned the Hall. Over the past 40 years, the Trust has come so far and we have so much to be proud of. We currently have around 60 volunteers who give up their time to regularly support our work and allow us to continue moving forward



New Opportunities Through Volunteering

We want our volunteers to benefit as much as possible from our site

This means that many volunteers opt in to helping us in numerous ways.

One to one support for volunteers is offered with the volunteer manager. In these one to ones you can use them to speak about personal issues that may be affecting your volunteering or use it as a time to branch out how you volunteer.

Outreach opportunities are open to all volunteers, this is an example of a secondary volunteering role that many do alongside front of house and gardening.



“

‘I enjoy everything about volunteering! The gardening, crafting, fabulous company and even the cleaning!’

Information for you

Don't be out of pocket

You are already giving us your time and energy. We do not expect you to pay for things for Trust purposes such as tools or materials. You are advised to claim for any pre-agreed expenses that have been approved by a senior member of staff.

You may also claim travel expenses at 30 pence per mile.

Please see a member of staff for an expenses form.

Volunteering whilst receiving benefits

In most cases, volunteer work should not impact your benefit claim.

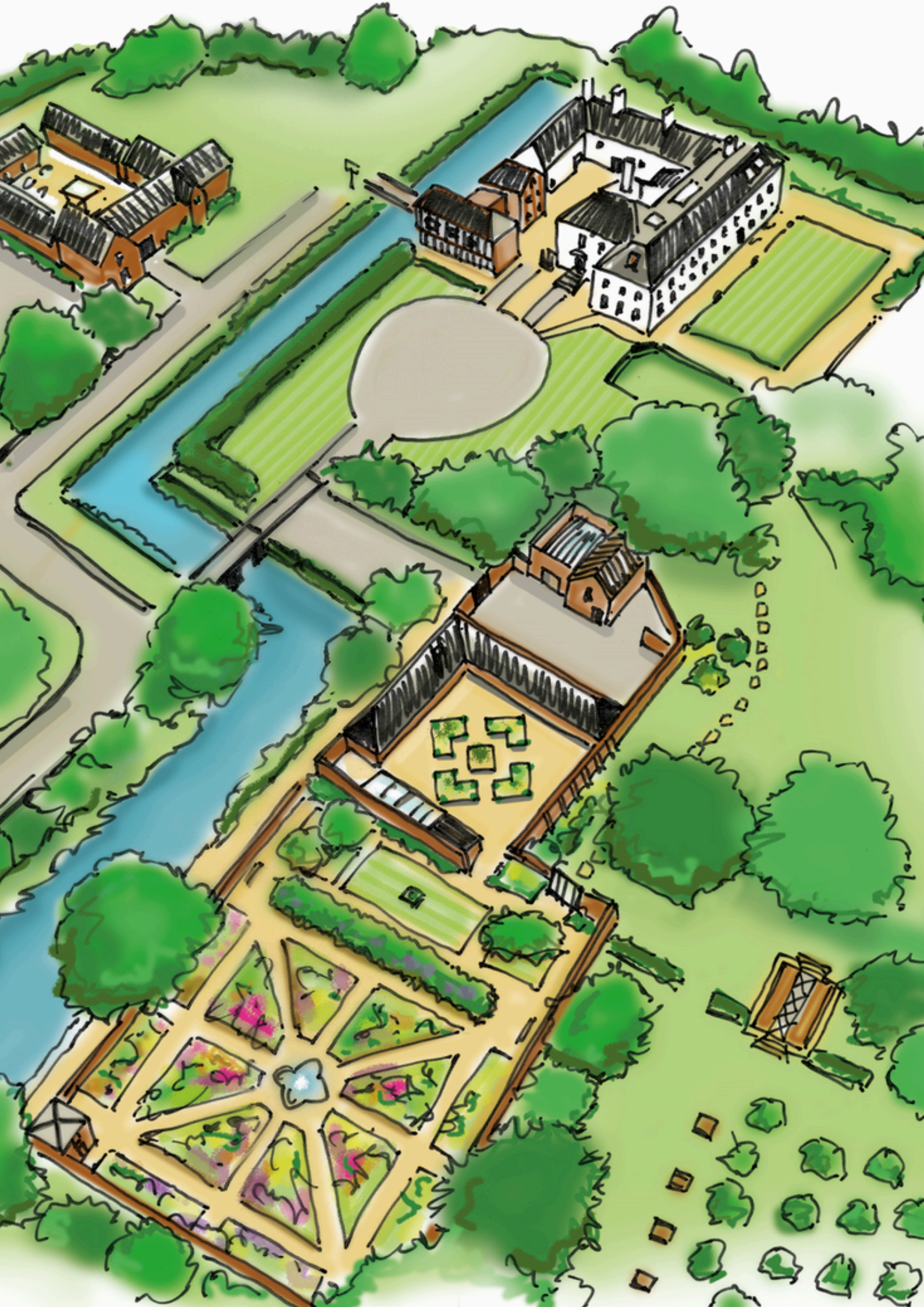
If you are receiving benefits, we recommend speaking to your advisor before starting your work with us.

Taking time away

If you are unable to volunteer with us for a period of time due to holiday, illness or simply because you want a break, you do not need to book the time off.

Taking time away is perfectly fine! We simply ask that you let your line manager know in person, via email or over the telephone.





Finding your way around

Toilets

Toilets are located in the main Hall; opposite the Coach House, and in the Courtyard next to the car park. The Courtyard toilets do not have an accessible toilet, but the other toilets do.

The Coach House

The volunteer room is located in the old Coach House. This is where you can leave your belongings, have breaks and lunch and to sign in/out.

The Office

The office is located in the old cottages, just 30m from the volunteer room. In an emergency, someone will usually be in here.

Signing in and out

You must always sign in and out. It is important that we know if you are on site in case of an emergency. There are sign in and out books in the Jettied Building and in the Coach House. If you leave site, even if it's only for half an hour, you must sign out then back in again.

Gates

To keep our site secure you will encounter lots of gates and you will be given codes for the gates you need to open. Try to memorise these codes and keep them secure. It is important that if you open a locked gate, you should always lock it behind you.

How can I help?

Below are the different voluntary opportunities we offer at Middleton.



Visitor Experience Volunteer

Visitor experience roles range from front of house, events, car parking, tidy up Tuesday.



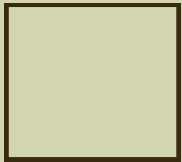
Tea Room Volunteer

Tea Room volunteers allow us to open our tea room across the week. Our volunteers also bake on site to sell homemade cakes and scones to visitors.



Volunteer Tour Guide/ History Group

Tour guides add value to our group visits, sharing their knowledge about the Hall to many keen listeners.



Crafters Group

The crafters make various items to sell at our markets, as well as props and decorations for our children's trails and themed events.



Garden Volunteers

It takes a large team and a whole lot of dedication to keep on top of our wonderful gardens. Our volunteers work alongside our Gardener, taking on new tasks together each week, both horticulture and conservation-based. We appreciate that our volunteers have different interests and abilities so we always make sure everyone has a task that makes them feel fulfilled.

Gardens & Grounds volunteers meet Thursdays and Fridays every week—whatever the weather!

Volunteers 15- 25



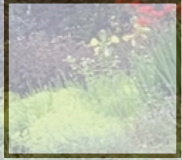
Work Experience

Work experience placements are throughout the open season, and placements include a variety of departments so that the volunteer can gain a rounded view of what it's like to work in the heritage sector.



Youth Panel

This is a new scheme, anyone interested please samantha.kirman@middlton-hall.co.uk



Internships

Internships are will be advertised when available, and offer someone the chance for hands on heritage and horticulture experience.



DofE Volunteers

We offer temporary volunteering placements for those completing their DofE. All voluntary opportunities are available to all volunteers.

First Aid

Alert the first aider on site immediately via radio. Do not put yourself at any risk, we do not need additional casualties.

All accidents or near misses must be reported to the member of staff in charge who will record them in the accident book.



What to wear

- We advise that you do not wear your best or favourite clothes or footwear when volunteering here. You may get your clothes dirty, especially if you are working outside.
- You should always wear appropriate footwear that protect your feet, especially if you are doing a practical job such as gardening or lifting and carrying items.
- You should always wear weather-appropriate clothing. This is to avoid sunburn and sunstroke in the summer, and to make sure you are wrapped up warm for the winter.
- You should always wear your lanyard or name badge when on site.

Keeping you safe

Health and safety at work

Your safety is our priority. When working on site, we ask that you do not put yourself or anybody else at risk.

Your health and safety on site is the concern of the Middleton Hall Trust but it is your responsibility. Whilst on site you are responsible for ensuring that your actions do not threaten colleagues, visitors, contractors or tenant's health and safety. You will be provided with the required training to undertake jobs or use machinery asked of you and are not permitted to undertake these tasks without having received this training. Inappropriate use of machinery or tools will be dealt with swiftly and firmly.

- You should inform the member of staff supervising you if you have any medical condition or disability either permanent or temporary, or if you are taking prescribed medication which may affect your physical ability or mental judgement in completing the set task.
- Always use the right tool for the job.
- Personal, non-electric tools, may be brought and used on site but must be inspected prior to use on each occasion by a member of staff.
- Always leave tools in a safe place when not using them, always return them in the condition you found them to their appropriate store. Any defect must be reported immediately to a member of staff.
- Never work close to water by yourself. Never put yourself at risk when attempting to help anyone in difficulties in water. Never enter the water yourself, use the buoyancy aids around the site by throwing them to the person in difficulty. Report any missing or damaged lifebuoys.

We want everyone at the Hall feeling happy, comfortable and fulfilled

It is important to us that all of our volunteers feel a sense of purpose, therefore we only take on volunteers when there is work for them to do.

We aim to support our volunteers by:

- making you feel welcome and supported
- ensuring you know your opinion is listened to and valued
- regularly communicating with you
- delivering good quality and regular training
- making sure you are safe and protected at all times.

We ask that you support the Trust by:

- behaving in a responsible, professional and reliable manner
- following Middleton Hall Trust's policies, procedures and legal requirements whilst take part in all necessary training and ask for additional support when needed
- be open to praise and constructive criticism
- be polite, friendly and helpful to our visitors, staff and fellow volunteers.

Keeping you Informed

Communicating with you

You are part of the team and therefore it is important you are kept up to date with changes and our plans. Our volunteers receive a monthly newsletter that will tell you all you need to know and also celebrate what the team have achieved. We also regularly send email updates and post news on our website and Facebook page.

We have a closed Facebook group just for Middleton hall Staff and Volunteers. To join the group, search 'Middleton Hall Staff' in the Facebook search bar. Add 'Middleton Hall Staff' as a friend. We will accept your friend request and add you to the group.

Garden volunteers have monthly team meeting to keep them updated on what is happening.

It is important you keep your personal contact details up to date so that we can keep you in the loop.

We ask that all staff and volunteers communicate with each other respectfully.

The guidelines set out in this handbook are there to protect volunteers, staff, visitors and the Trust. You will be covered under our insurance policy providing you follow the given guidelines and are being directed by a member of staff.

- Members of staff are responsible for risk assessing all tasks before asking volunteers to start working on them.

- If you work on a task that the member of staff responsible for you has not assessed or approved, you are not covered by our insurance policy and therefore you should not undertake any task that a member of staff has not directed you to do.

- Personal belongings are not insured on site, including cars parked in our car park. Although we hope that we can trust everyone in our place of work, you are advised not to leave your personal belongings unattended. Speak to a member of staff if you wish to leave your personal belongings in a locked room. Do not leave your personal belongings on site over night.

The Team



Steve - General Manager

steve.davies@middleton-hall.co.uk



Sam - Volunteer &

Engagement Manager

samantha.kirman@middleton-hall.co.uk



Daniel - Head Gardener

daniel.puicar@middleton-hall.co.uk



Volunteer Reps

We value your opinions as volunteers, and want to make sure your voice is heard. We have 4 volunteer reps who share feedback from volunteers with staff and trustees in regular meetings.

If you want to get in contact with the Rep for your department, please use their Middleton email addresses.

Julie Melling, Visitor Welcome and Events

Juliemellingmiddleton@gmail.com

Jean Davies, Museum, Research & Tour Guiding

jeandaviesmiddleton@gmail.com

Julie Sharman, Crafters Group

juliesharmanmiddleton@gmail.com

Jean Harris, Gardens & Grounds

jeanharrismiddleton@gmail.com



Fire safety

Prevention is the most important thing. Turn heaters off when finishing for the day, don't put anything near any sources of heat, keep the workshop tidy and as dust free as possible, keep all flammable liquids in their proper containers and away from any ignition sources that aren't engines or cooking stoves!

Ensure you are familiar with the exit points in the Hall, and the designated place in the grounds where personnel should gather in case of any emergency evacuation.

What do you do if you notice a fire?

Raise the alarm using your radio (or manual call points in the Main Hall) using the code name 'Mr Trumpton' to avoid distressing visitors. Evacuate yourself and anyone that you can see in the immediate area to the fire assembly point. Do not stop to collect personal belongings. The responsible person on site will call the fire service if the fire cannot be safely tackled with fire extinguishing materials on site.

Protecting children and vulnerable adults

Never put yourself in a position where your actions could be questioned or challenged. Top tips, make sure you are never alone with a child or vulnerable adult, and ensure that you never physically touch a child or vulnerable adult. Never refer to a child being lost over the radio. Make yourself aware of the agreed codes used on the radio to notify colleagues of any issues concerning children. Full details of these are on the back cover of this handbook.



Leaving us

We understand that many of our volunteers will choose to move on to new opportunities or due to a change in circumstances. If you choose to leave us, please return your lanyard and/or name badge. We would welcome your feedback on the time you have spent volunteering with the Trust.

Supporting your new ventures

We will happily write a reference for you based on the time you have volunteered with the Trust.

Serious misconduct

If there is concern that a volunteer may have behaved in such a way that constitutes serious misconduct the line manager will immediately investigate the matter and will discuss this with the volunteer.

The line manager will notify the volunteering sub-group who are responsible to the Board of Trustees. Any decisions or actions will be documented and a copy given to the volunteer. It may be appropriate to ask the volunteer to stop volunteering until the investigation is complete and this decision will be made by the line manager with the volunteering sub-group.

If you are concerned that a member of staff, fellow volunteer or visitors is committing any form of malpractice, we encourage you to report this to another member of staff or Trustee. You will always be listened to.

Equal Opportunities

All staff and volunteers in the Middleton Hall Trust have the right to work in a safe environment devoid of discrimination, harassment or victimisation. Therefore neither members of staff nor volunteers should participate in any form of inappropriate behaviour or activity, or cause recognisable distress to a fellow colleague. This will include bullying and verbal or physical harassment. All personnel should be mindful that they should not to act in any way that brings Middleton Hall Trust into disrepute.

Middleton Hall is determined to ensure that no one is discriminated against based on their age, gender, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, medical condition or pay rate, and is dedicated to maintaining a climate in which everyone can raise issues and problems with the expectation that these will be taken seriously and resolved in an atmosphere of mutual trust. It is expected therefore that most staff problems will be resolved without recourse to our formal procedures.



Data protection

The Trust will never share your personal information with any third party without your prior permission. We ask that you respect your colleagues' right to privacy by not sharing any of their personal information without their prior permission.

What is deemed to be personal information? Ethnic background, political opinions, religious beliefs, health, sexual health, criminal records, contact details such as address, phone number, email, etc.

It is important you keep your details up-to-date so that we are able to contact you or your next of kin when necessary.



Concerns about a volunteer's conduct or performance

Another volunteer, staff member or a member of the public may raise concerns about the work of a volunteer. These cannot be anonymous complaints.

These concerns may relate to:

- **Capability:** a volunteer's ability to undertake the role.
- **Performance:** how well a volunteer is performing the role.
- **Conduct:** behaviour when taking part in volunteering.

If there are concerns about a volunteer's behaviour or performance, the matter will be discussed informally by the staff member who manages the volunteer in their role. This discussion is intended to establish facts so the line manager can decide whether further action is necessary.

If the evidence shows that the volunteer's behaviour or performance does not meet the standards expected, the line manager and volunteer will agree steps to address this. These may include additional training or mentoring. Notes will be made of any discussion, and volunteers will be provided with copies of the notes. A date will be set within six months when the volunteer's performance will be reviewed.

If the performance has not reached the required standard by the date of the review meeting, the line manager will consider whether further training, support and supervision should be provided, or alternatively, the volunteer may be invited to explore other volunteering opportunities or be asked to stop volunteering.

If the volunteer is dissatisfied with this process they may use the appeals procedure.

Corporate volunteering

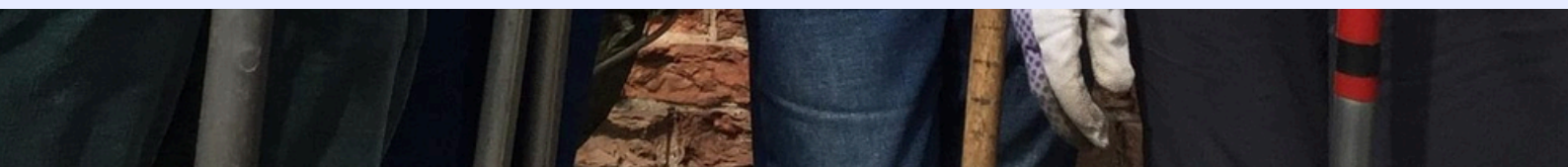
We now offer corporate groups the opportunity to make a difference as a team. Many businesses have volunteer days as a company in order to give something back to the community. Over the last year we have welcomed teams to garden with us from HSBC, Natwest, Bristan taps & more.

If your team are interested in making a difference please contact samantha.kirman@middleton-hall.co.uk to find out more.





Thank you to volunteering
with us, we would not be
here without your support.





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