



Volunteer Information Handbook



**Make a difference to your Community and
become a District Council of Loxton Waikerie
volunteer**

Influencing Today...Shaping Tomorrow

Welcome

.....

Mayor's Message

On behalf of the District Council of Loxton Waikerie and my fellow Councillors, I would like to thank you on becoming a volunteer within our region.

Volunteers have been part of the District Council of Loxton Waikerie for many years and play a vital role in the delivery of many essential community services.

More than 70 volunteers are actively involved in our region's community programs – contributing more than 3,600 voluntary hours every year.

We are very proud of the significant contribution made by our volunteers who generously give their time and skills to serve the local community.

Council is committed to best practice standards for our volunteer programs to provide a safe and supportive environment.

The District Council of Loxton Waikerie's Volunteer Handbook has been developed to offer new and existing volunteers' guidance on our volunteer policies and procedures.

It also aims to reflect the needs of volunteers and our community.

I encourage you to take the time to read the information provided in the preparation for volunteering.

Once again, thank you for considering volunteering for the District Council of Loxton Waikerie. I hope that your time with us is enjoyable, rewarding and meets your expectations.



Trevor Norton
Mayor



Welcome to the team!

Councillors

Our Council comprises of ten Councillors as well as a Mayor. The Councillors are responsible for policy making and decisions that impact on our district, our community, our businesses and our environment.

The roles of our Elected Members are to:

- Participate in the deliberations and civic activities of our Council
- Keep the Council's objectives and policies under review to ensure appropriateness and effectiveness
- Keep the Council's resource allocation, expenditure and activities and the efficiency and effectiveness of its service delivery under review
- Represent the interests of residents and ratepayers, provide community leadership and guidance and facilitate communication between the community and the Council.



*Trevor Norton
Mayor*



*Cr Clive Matthews
Deputy Mayor*



Cr Sonya Altschwager



Cr Kent Andrew



Cr Craig Ferber



Cr Jody Flavel



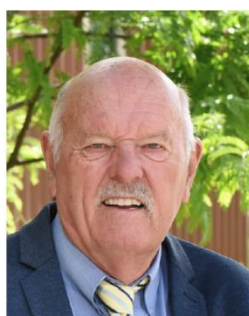
Cr Sonia Fowler



Cr Michelle Hill



Cr Ian Light



Cr Gary Pfeiler



Cr Michael Vowles

Our Vision and Values

Our Vision

Our vision statement is our inspiration and provides us with purpose, strategic direction, motivation and purpose.

Influencing today ... Shaping tomorrow

Our Mission

Our mission aligns with our strategic objectives and indicates how we will achieve our vision. It provides an indication of how we are going to get to where we want to be.

We are committed to:

- Actively enhancing the quality of life of our communities by encouraging health, wellbeing and safety
- Encouraging and supporting a strong diverse economy that will provide prosperity, growth and employment opportunities for our community
- Responsible for managing our built and natural environment
- Providing genuine and accountable leadership that inspires confidence within our community and ensures the responsible management of our resources
- Being an organisation that has a constructive culture and the capacity to be innovative, effective and efficient in delivering quality services to the community

We are

GENUINE

Adhering to moral and ethical principles, being honest, accountable, trustworthy and authentic.

We are

UNITED

Working as a team in an inclusive, co-ordinated and collaborative manner to achieve our common goals.

We will aim for

EXCELLENCE

Consistently delivering quality service outcomes and endeavouring to be a high performance organisation.

We will

LISTEN

Communicating as well as engaging the community in an open, honest and constructive manner at all times.

We will be

INNOVATIVE

Seeking out and making use of new ideas and opportunities, showing initiative and being progressive, proactive and creative.

We are

CARING

Showing respect, compassion and empathy and being supportive of each other and our community.

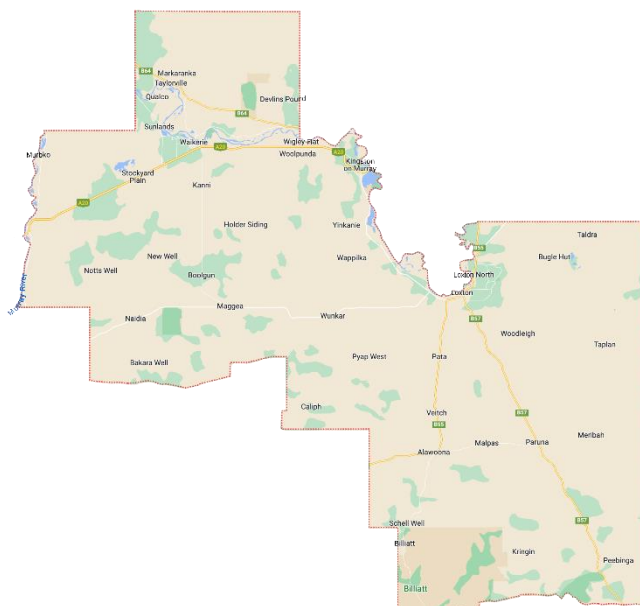
Our core values are the principles, attributes and qualities we hold as important that we will display in the way we go about our business.






Our Core Values

Our organisation has a shared set of values which guides our day-to-day activities within the Council.

All Council staff and volunteers are expected to demonstrate these Values and recognize that they, as individuals, have a responsibility to contribute to the creation of an organizational culture in which these Values can be realized.

Your Council



-  **Population:** 11487
-  **Size:** 7957 square KMs
-  **Main Towns**
Loxton: 4568 Waikerie: 2684
-  **Rateable Properties:** 8037
-  **Road Network**
Sealed: 396km Unsealed: 1947km

About Us

The District Council of Loxton Waikerie is located on the Murray River in the Riverland of South Australia, spanning from the Blanchetown Bridge in the west to the Victorian border in the east. The townships of Loxton and Waikerie are our main service centres and our district also contains many smaller towns and communities.

Our main industries include agriculture and horticulture with the district contributing significantly to the national output of food and beverage. Important value added activities also occur locally with food and beverages being processed; packaged; stored; and distributed within and from the local area.

Tourism also plays an important part in the mix of our local economy, with an increasing and coordinated effort evident in this sector in recent years.

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Whilst our district is faced with several population, economic and environmental challenges our community continues to show resilience. Council is proud of the 'can do' attitude of its communities and the extraordinary spirit that makes the district such a great place to live.

Council is comprised of two principal directorates, which report to the Chief Executive Officer.

The directorates include:

- Infrastructure Services
- Commercial and Community Services

Our Volunteer Programs

The District Council of Loxton Waikerie offers a number of exciting and diverse ways to volunteer your time, skills and enthusiasm.

Volunteers play an integral role within our community by initiating and enhancing services provided by employed staff, without being a substitute for paid work. Our volunteer programs include:

Loxton Christmas Lights

- Christmas Tree Festival
- Committee
- Garden Display/Maintenance
- Street Decorating
- Tour Guide



Loxton Library Services

- Library Technology Tutor (iPad and Broadband for seniors)
- Local History

Waikerie Library Services

- Library Technology Tutor (iPad and Broadband for seniors)



- Loxton Rose Carer Group



“The Pines” Loxton Historic House and Garden

- Customer Service/Tour Guide Volunteer
- Event Coordinator
- Hospitality/Food Preparation/Catering/Bar Tender
- Cleaner
- Gardener/Nursery Volunteer



Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities

As listed in the District Council of Loxton Waikerie Volunteer Policy and Code of Conduct, volunteers have rights and responsibilities to each other.

As a volunteer you have the right to:

- be respected and valued in the role of volunteer
- choose the type of activities you are to be involved in, recognising your skills, interests and needs
- be appreciated and recognised for your volunteer contribution
- be recruited in a manner that fits with equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation
- be managed within a structured volunteer management framework
- receive an orientation and induction to the District Council of Loxton Waikerie and individual program areas
- receive training to undertake your volunteering tasks
- have your ideas welcomed and acknowledged
- be able to raise any grievance or issues in accordance with the grievance procedure
- work in a healthy and safe environment
- be reimbursed for pre-approved out of pocket expenses
- be kept informed about the volunteer program and council activities
- be supported and given direction from your coordinator
- have your skills, experience and qualifications acknowledged
- have your confidential and personal information managed in a sensitive manner that is in line with the Privacy Act 1988
- have the equipment and resources required to do your volunteering tasks
- be appropriately covered by insurance policies

As a volunteer you are required to:

- adhere to the Volunteer Code of Conduct* and all procedures and guidelines which apply to volunteer positions
- adhere to all relevant legislation such as Equal Opportunity, Disability, Discrimination and Work, Health and Safety (WHS) and Injury Management
- immediately notify your supervisor or manager if you sustain an injury while engaging in voluntary activities
- immediately report any unsafe situations and any hazards to your supervisor or manager
- maintain confidentiality regarding council business, program information or any sensitive, private information you come across during your volunteer activities
- operate under the direction of your coordinator and within the boundaries of your position description
- undertake required training to assist you in your volunteer role
- be punctual, reliable and undertake your volunteering duties on the agreed days and times
- inform your supervisor or manager if you are unable to undertake your voluntary activities
- raise issues with your supervisor or manager when they arise
- communicate openly and honestly with your supervisor or manager and other volunteers.

** The Code of Conduct is provided at the council volunteer induction and is also available on Councils website.*

Organisation Rights and Responsibilities

As an organisation we have the right to:

- retain the personal information of volunteers in line with best practice standards
- make decisions about the placement of volunteers
- review volunteer performance according to Council policies and procedures
- expect volunteers to perform given tasks to the best of their ability
- expect from all volunteer's respect and courtesy towards clients, paid and voluntary staff and other stakeholders
- establish the parameters and guidelines of volunteer roles
- refuse a volunteer placement or to end a placement if:
 - there is a perceived risk to the customers' or volunteer's health or welfare
 - suitable volunteer duties are not available or no longer available
 - the volunteer does not comply with Council policy and procedures, including this Code
 - the volunteer does not comply with the role or position statement
 - the volunteer is not covered by the Councils personal accident insurance or other relevant insurance.

Our responsibility is to:

- approve any reasonably practicable budgetary expenditure necessary for the effective and efficient management of volunteers
- implement a volunteer management system that meets the best practice
- management of volunteers and meets audit and legislative requirements
- ensure the staff supervising volunteers have the skills and capacity to do so effectively
- retain volunteer personal information in a secure and safe system to ensure volunteer privacy
- provide any necessary training to volunteers or staff with the responsibility for managing volunteers
- set clear lines of communication about complaints and conflict resolution procedures
- provide working conditions that meet safe work standards
- include volunteers in relevant decision making processes
- provide supervision and support by an appropriately skilled staff member
- provide emergency procedures guidelines
- provide clear policies relating to the role of volunteers and their management within the Council
- recognise the vital role volunteers have within their organisation

Volunteer Induction

Recruitment, registration and induction of all volunteers are carried out in two stages. The first is a Corporate and WHS induction to volunteering with council and the second is a program site induction where you learn the specifics of your day to day activities.

Volunteer process

Prospective volunteers are required in the first instance to complete a volunteer application form.

Before appointed, volunteers may be required to have an informal interview with the Volunteer supervisor or manager to discuss the position and assess whether the role is suitable for the applicant to be placed in activities or program to match their skills, interests, knowledge and experience.

Volunteer Corporate & WHS induction process

All volunteers will be required to undergo a mandatory Corporate and WHS Induction to volunteering. In addition, a National Police Clearance Check is required or a current check that has been completed in the last 12 months.

This check is then renewed every three-five years for the term of service. Volunteers providing transport in programs are also required to have their licence and registration information sighted before they can commence in their role. Driver's licences are then checked on an annual basis.

At the Council induction volunteers are provided with:

- The Volunteer Information Handbook and induction paperwork (including the code of conduct and information regarding Council's policies, procedures and Work Health and Safety practices)
- Advice on procedures for reporting any incident/injury encountered in the course of carrying out volunteer duties.

Site induction

Volunteers are provided with a mandatory orientation and induction into their selected program by their individual supervisor or manager.

This includes:

- A Role Statement that clearly sets out their duties, requirements, organisational relationship, training requirements, accountability, authority, responsibilities and benefits of their role
- A site orientation that outlines Council's operations, policies and safety requirements
- Any training that is required prior to commencing the role
- Any personal protective equipment and clothing relevant to the role
- Arrangement of an identification badge

Role Statements

Volunteers will be provided with a clear role description that includes the volunteer position title, key tasks, any specific skills and checks required to perform the role that will be undertaken.

Role Statements will be reviewed regularly or whenever the work involved in the position changes substantially.

Your Volunteering

Personal information and privacy

Council manages a volunteer personnel database that complies with legislative and council privacy expectations.

Attendance and Time Activity Sheets

Your volunteer contribution helps to support our programs, services and activities.

When making a commitment to volunteer you are required to be on time and reliable. Please let your Program supervisor or manager know as soon as possible if you are running late or unable to attend a particular shift.

It is important that you sign on when you arrive to undertake your volunteer activities and log off at the end of your voluntary period.

This assists us to know where you are in case of an emergency and to make sure that we record your attendance for insurance purposes.

We also collect the number of volunteer hours contributed, to recognise our volunteers' contribution and for reporting requirements.

Communications

Your program will have its own way of keeping you up to date with anything new that is happening in your area.

This may include:

- Program team meetings
- Newsletters
- Morning or afternoon tea information sessions
- Email messages or letters

Training

It is important that we provide you with the necessary training to undertake your volunteer role.

Some training will be mandatory to comply with legal or Risk Management requirements (e.g. Safe Environments for Children and

Young People or Work Health and Safety updates).

Other training may provide you with opportunities to refresh or gain skills which will support you both within and outside your volunteering role.

Holidays

Taking holidays is an important part of looking after your wellbeing. Please let your Program supervisor or manager know in advance for planning purposes.

Please note – if you are away for extended periods of time (i.e. longer than three-six months), your volunteer shift may not be guaranteed upon your return.

If you are absent from volunteering for more than 12 months, you will be asked to re-apply and be included in all screening and orientation expectations.

Changing Roles

If you are finding that your volunteering role is no longer fulfilling your needs, but you would like to continue volunteering, please let Volunteer Management know, as other roles may be available within the council volunteer program.

Volunteering with Vulnerable Groups

It is a legal requirement for certain positions engaging with vulnerable groups to undergo a Department for Communities & Social Inclusion (DCSI) Screening Assessment.

Vulnerable groups include children, frail aged and disabled. Volunteers cannot undertake their activities until a satisfactory DCSI Screening Assessment has been completed, and will be required to renew their Screening Assessment as required by the relevant legislation.

If your volunteering duties involve children under 18, you will also be required to participate in a Safe Environments for Children or Young People training course.

Resignations

A volunteer may decide to finish their volunteering for a variety of reasons. Notice of resignation should be communicated as soon as possible, preferably two weeks.

Identification badges, uniforms and safety items are requested to be returned at the time of resignation.

Exit Interview

If you do decide to leave, we would like to seek your feedback via an exit interview to update Volunteer Management.

Your feedback helps us to identify areas in which we can improve our services and is an important part of developing our volunteering programs.

Motor vehicle usage

When using either a council vehicle or your own motor vehicle, a valid driver's licence will need to be shown to your Volunteer supervisor or manager.

Volunteers will also need to produce proof of comprehensive insurance for their private vehicle and current vehicle registration.

Please note: *All volunteers, whether driving their own or council vehicle, will be responsible for payment of their own fines.*

Safety and Wellbeing

Work Health and Safety

We offer a healthy and safe workplace to all staff and volunteers. Every person has a duty of care to all persons in the workplace as far as is reasonably practicable.

As part of your role specific induction to a volunteer role, you will be instructed in safe work procedures and provided with any appropriate personal protective equipment.

Volunteers and staff have a duty to be mindful of their own safety and the safety of others around them.

Any hazard, incident or near miss must immediately be reported to a member of staff

General safety issues:

- If you are unsure of a particular task or do not feel safe do not continue with it. Seek advice from your supervisor or manager.
- Be aware of leaving items such as bags or equipment where people could trip over them.
- Look after your back by lifting items correctly. Use lifting equipment or lift with another person.
- If you are feeling unwell, let your volunteer supervisor or manager know and stay home. We would much rather you take some time out to get better, than 'soldier on'.

Equal and Diversity

Equal Opportunity law is applicable to all staff and volunteers.

We respect diversity in others such as different values, beliefs, opinions and ways

of doing things. We are firmly committed to creating an environment which is safe from discrimination, sexual harassment and workplace bullying.

If you feel that you have been discriminated against, harassed or bullied, please contact volunteer management.

Discrimination

Unlawful discrimination means treating someone differently and less favourably because of the person's sex, sexuality, marital status, pregnancy, race, disability, age and other legislated reasons.

Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment covers many forms of unwelcome behaviour of a sexual nature or having sexual connotations. It is important to note that the key word in this type of harassment is unwelcome. Both men and women can sexually harass or be harassed. Humour, friendship and relationships based on mutual consent are not sexual harassment.

Workplace bullying

Sometimes discriminatory behaviours are referred to as bullying. Bullying is behaviour which causes a person to feel offended, humiliated or intimidated. Workplace bullying involves the persistent ill treatment of an individual at work by one or more other persons. Legitimate comments on performance or work-related behaviour is not unfair treatment.

Victimisation

Victimisation is treating people unfairly for complaining, or supporting others to complain, either within the council or to the Equal Opportunity Commission.

If you feel you are being treated unfairly, the following staff are available to discuss your situation before deciding what action you want to take:

- Volunteer coordinator
- Program supervisor or manager
- Human resources officer

Smoke Free Workplace

We are committed to providing a safe and healthy working environment and to complying with the requirements of the Work Health and Safety Act. Under this framework smoking is not permitted in any council owned building or vehicle.

Alcohol and Drugs

The District Council of Loxton Waikerie is a drug free organisation and has a zero limit for illicit drugs. Volunteers must not use or be under the influence of alcohol when volunteering for Council. Volunteers may be subject to 'for cause' testing for illicit drugs or alcohol with refusal being equal to a positive result.

Improving and Developing

We have adopted the Volunteering Australia National Standards for Volunteering to make sure that we are providing safe and satisfying volunteering opportunities.

To keep us on track we need you to tell us how well things are going, what could be improved and any new ideas that you may have.

You will have opportunities to provide feedback via the annual catch up process, bi-annual surveys, through the Volunteer Advisory Group or by contacting Volunteer Management directly.

We welcome your involvement in decision making that affects your volunteer role.

Insurance

We have arranged for personal accident insurance to cover volunteers if they are injured in the course of their duties.

Personal accident cover

The provision of personal accident insurance ensures that a volunteer is not out of pocket in the event of injury but should not be confused with private medical cover.

If you are injured, you should still seek treatment under Medicare or your own private medical cover. Pain and suffering is not claimable under the personal accident insurance.

The Volunteer Protection Act 2001 protects volunteers from personal liability for loss, injury or damage caused as a result of an action on their part while performing volunteer activities. Exclusions are applicable in cases where a volunteer has been deliberately negligent.

Please note: *There is limited personal accident insurance cover provided to those volunteers who are over the age of 90.*

Public Liability Insurance

While undertaking voluntary duties under the care of Council, all volunteers are protected against public liability claims under Council's public liability insurance cover.

Motor vehicle insurance

If using your own car, you are required to have your own comprehensive car insurance policy. All claims will be put through your supervisor or manager and assessed by Council's insurer.

Please note *No cover is provided for those medical expenses covered by Medicare or other health benefit funds. Where treatment is sought, volunteers should always notify medical practitioners that the injury was sustained during a volunteering activity.*

Grievances and Complaints

We make every effort to maintain an atmosphere of trust and open communication for staff and volunteers so that grievances are resolved promptly and in a constructive and respectful manner. We focus on the reestablishment of good relationships and positive outcomes. Every effort will be made to resolve a grievance informally. If you are not satisfied with the result of any informal discussions, you may make a formal complaint in writing.

Informal Complaint – Self help

We encourage you to resolve the issue with the person involved. This option allows you to feel that you have handled the situation yourself and keeps the issue at a local level. It also allows the person who has been complained against, the opportunity to put forward their side of the matter.

You may find it useful to seek confidential advice from Volunteer supervisor or manager or coordinator before you approach the person concerned.

Volunteer Coordinator 8584 8000

Informal Complaint – Intervention

You may prefer to ask your supervisor or manager or coordinator than to approach the person who is the subject of the complaint on your behalf.

Formal Intervention

This option is usually applied when the informal resolution process has been unsuccessful.

A volunteer grievance form is available for you to submit a written complaint.

Assistance in preparing the complaint can be provided to Volunteer Management, your coordinator or supervisor or manager.

Your supervisor or manager will investigate the matter and determine the appropriate actions to resolve the grievance.

If the grievance is against a volunteer coordinator, supervisor or manager the matter is then referred to the Director of Commercial and Community Services and/or Human Resources Officer.

Unsatisfactory Performance and Behaviour

We have a responsibility to ensure that our staff and volunteers maintain high levels of conduct and performance and carry out duties in accordance with the values of the Volunteer Code of Conduct and relevant guidelines and procedures.

Unsatisfactory performance or unacceptable behaviour will be managed in a fair, reasonable and timely manner through the following process:

Informal Action

The volunteer coordinator or supervisor or manager will advise a volunteer of the issue and work with them to identify if additional support or training is required.

Disciplinary Counselling

If the situation continues the supervisor or manager will meet with the volunteer to discuss possible solutions and identify strategies to address the behaviour and timelines to meet them by.

A support person can be present during the meeting. The agreed outcomes of the meeting will be confirmed in writing by all parties.

Disciplinary Action

If the behaviour continues the supervisor or manager will arrange a meeting to reconfirm the expected behaviour or performance and provide a written notification. A final notification will be given if the behaviour has not been amended to expected standards within the agreed timeline.

Dismissal

If the behaviour or performance does not improve after the final notification the volunteer will be removed from the volunteer program.

If the behavior/breach is deemed to be serious misconduct, volunteers may instead be suspended from council volunteering immediately or given a formal first and final letter.

Serious Misconduct

The following list does not cover all types of misconduct but is intended as a guide to what may constitute serious misconduct and result in suspension or removal from the council volunteer program:

- any deliberate unsafe act committed as a volunteer of the council
- deliberate vandalism, sabotage or damage to council property
- physical, psychological or verbal abuse by a volunteer against any other volunteer, paid staff, client or member of the general public during the course of volunteering. This includes threatening behaviour or other forms of harassment
- discriminating against, or giving preference to, any person wishing to make use of council services
- breaching confidentiality of council, client, staff and customer information
- being under the influence of alcohol or using illicit substances whilst undertaking volunteer activities for the council
- unauthorised use of a council vehicle
- theft of council property or stealing from staff, clients, residents or other council volunteers
- unauthorised private use of council equipment or facilities

The Future of Volunteering

Volunteering is constantly evolving to keep up with changes in society and technology. Find out more about national and international volunteering trends through the following sites.

International Association for Volunteer Effort

<https://www.iave.org/>

International organisation for strengthening volunteering worldwide.

Volunteering Australia

<https://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/#/>

National peak body for volunteering. Volunteering facts, research, best practice in volunteer management, national standards for involving volunteers.

Volunteering SA and NT

<https://www.volunteering-sa-nt.org.au/>

Phone 08 8221 7177

SA's peak body for volunteering, training, support and advocacy.

Office for Volunteers, Government of South Australian

<https://dhs.sa.gov.au/services/volunteers>

Phone 08 8463 4490

Promoting volunteering and providing advice to the state government for the development of policies that support the South Australian volunteer sector.

Volunteering Strategy for South Australia

<http://www.savolunteeringstrategy.org.au/>

A collaboration between the Government of South Australia, Business SA, the Local Government Association of South Australia and the peak body Volunteering SA&NT, providing a practical blueprint for action for South Australia.

Safe Work Australia

<https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/>

Phone 1300 551 832

Providing information about health, safety and volunteering.