

Stocksfield Parish Council Equipment Use Policy

(For Use by Authorised Volunteers and Contractors – Not for Loan or Hire)

1. Purpose

This policy sets out the rules and procedures for the use of Stocksfield Parish Council (SPC) owned equipment by authorised volunteers and contractors.

Its purpose is to:

- Ensure equipment is used safely and competently
- Protect users, members of the public and the Parish Council
- Ensure compliance with health and safety, insurance and legal requirements
- Safeguard council assets

This policy does **not** permit the loan or hire of equipment for unsupervised or private use.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all SPC owned equipment, including but not limited to:

- Compact tractor
- Soil sampler
- Turf groomer
- Deep splitter
- Any future machinery, plant, tools or powered equipment acquired by SPC

It applies to:

- Volunteers
- Contractors
- Any other persons authorised in writing by SPC

3. Ownership and Control

All equipment remains the property of SPC at all times.

Equipment may only be used:

- For authorised SPC activities
- Under the direction or approval of SPC or its appointed officer (e.g. Clerk, RFO or Chair)

Equipment must not be used for private or commercial purposes unrelated to Parish Council business.

4. Authorisation to Use Equipment

Only persons who meet **all** the following may use council equipment:

- Have been formally authorised by SPC or a delegated officer
- Have completed (and shown evidence of) the required training and/or certification
- Have read and agreed to comply with this policy
- Are using the equipment solely for SPC purposes

Authorisation may be withdrawn at any time if safety, conduct or competence is in question.

5. Training and Competence

All users must be competent to operate the equipment they use.

5.1 Training Requirements

Users must:

- Hold relevant qualifications where legally required (e.g. tractor operation, towing, powered machinery, LANTRA training)
- Be familiar with manufacturer's instructions and safety guidance
- Undertake refresher training where appropriate

The Parish Council reserves the right to:

- Specify minimum training standards
- Require external certification for certain equipment
- Decline authorisation if competence is not demonstrated

5.2 Records

The Parish Council will maintain records of:

- Authorised users
- Training and certifications

6. Risk Assessment and Safe Use

All equipment use must be supported by a suitable and sufficient risk assessment.

This includes:

- Task-specific risk assessments
- Site-specific risks
- Environmental conditions
- Interaction with members of the public

Users must:

- Follow all risk assessments and safe systems of work
- Stop work if conditions become unsafe
- Report hazards or near misses immediately

7. Insurance and Liability

7.1 Insurance Cover

The Parish Council's insurance will apply only to **Volunteers** where:

- Equipment is used for SPC purposes
- The user is authorised and trained
- The equipment is used in accordance with this policy and risk assessments

Use outside these conditions may invalidate insurance.

7.2 Personal Liability

Users may be personally liable if:

- Equipment is used negligently
- Equipment is used outside authorisation
- This policy is ignored

The Parish Council does not insure personal tools, clothing or personal equipment.

8. Equipment Condition, Maintenance and Inspection

SPC is responsible for routine maintenance and statutory inspections.

Users must:

- Visually inspect equipment before use
- Not use defective or unsafe equipment
- Report faults, damage or missing parts immediately
- Not attempt repairs unless authorised

Equipment must be:

- Used only for its intended purpose
- Cleaned and returned to its designated storage after use

9. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Where required, users must wear appropriate PPE, which may include:

- Safety boots
- Gloves
- High-visibility clothing
- Hearing or eye protection
- Any task-specific safety equipment

PPE requirements must follow:

- Risk assessments
- Manufacturer's guidance
- Site safety rules

Failure to wear PPE may result in withdrawal of authorisation.

10. Conduct and Behaviour

All users must:

- Act responsibly and safely
- Follow instructions given by Parish Council officers
- Respect members of the public and other users
- Avoid misuse or reckless behaviour

The Parish Council operates a zero-tolerance approach to unsafe or abusive conduct.

11. Contractors

Contractors using Parish Council equipment must:

- Provide evidence of competence and insurance
- Comply with this policy and all health and safety requirements
- Accept responsibility for damage caused through misuse or negligence

Use of Parish Council equipment by contractors must be explicitly approved in writing.

12. Prohibited Use

Equipment must not be used:

- For personal or private purposes
- For non-SPC activities
- By unauthorised persons
- Outside approved times or locations
- Under the influence of alcohol, drugs or impairing medication

13. Breaches of Policy

Failure to comply with this policy may result in:

- Immediate suspension of equipment use
- Removal from authorised user list
- Termination of volunteer or contractor arrangements
- Referral to insurers or legal action where appropriate

14. Review and Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed:

- At least every 3 years
- Or sooner if new equipment is introduced
- Or following any serious incident or insurance claim

Adoption and Review History	
Adopted at Parish Council Meeting on	9 th Feb 2026
Revised	
Next review	Feb-2029

Appendix A – Equipment Covered

This policy currently applies to:

- Compact Tractor
- Soil Sampler
- Turf Groomer
- Deep Slitter
- Any future equipment acquired by the Parish Council

Appendix B – Declaration

I confirm that I have read and understood the Stocksfield Parish Council Equipment Use Policy and agree to comply with it.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: ____/____/____