

# Knox Environmental Volunteer Guidelines



**knox** your city



Knox City Council has an active community of volunteers who are dedicated to preserving our beautiful natural environment. These people are extremely important to the Knox community, and we are committed to supporting them and making sure they are safe while they volunteer.

We understand that being part of an environmental volunteer group can also bring a range of benefits to volunteers. For example:

- » Learning more about the environment.
- » Developing a sense of community and belonging.
- » Strengthening community partnerships.
- » Making like-minded friends.
- » Having lots of fun.

To support our volunteers, we have developed a range of useful information to help environmental volunteer groups continue their tireless work in the best and safest way possible. The information is designed to cover a range of important topics including how we can support groups, the roles and responsibilities of group members, and essential information regarding Occupational Health and Safety.



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# Environmental Volunteers in Knox

**An environmental volunteer group is a group of people who work together to conserve native plants or animals, reserves, parklands, bushlands, trails, roadsides and waterways on public or private land.**

Environmental volunteer groups in the Knox municipality undertake a number of different activities depending on the group's interest and the site location. Activities may include any of the following:

- » Site maintenance
- » Habitat restoration
- » Weeding and weed mapping
- » Flora and fauna monitoring
- » Seed collection and plant propagation
- » Water monitoring
- » Case study reporting
- » Mulching
- » Graffiti removal
- » Management planning
- » Environmental advocacy
- » Citizen science
- » Education
- » Community engagement

- » Special environment events and festivals for days such as Bushcarer's Major Day Out, Clean up Australia Day, National Tree Day and World Environment Day
- » Attending training sessions conducted/recommended by Knox Council

## Joining an environment group

Joining a group is a wonderful opportunity to network and connect with your local community. To find out about groups in your area contact the Biodiversity Team on 9298 8000.

If you find there are no relevant groups or you have a specific site in mind, you might consider starting your own group.

For more information on existing groups and group locations, see [knox.vic.gov.au/FriendsGroups](http://knox.vic.gov.au/FriendsGroups)

## Starting an environment group

To start a group, all you need to do is get together with like-minded people, consider the information provided within these Environment Volunteer Guidelines, gather the required information outlined below and contact Council.

Information you will need to consider and have on hand when initially contacting Council is as follows:

- » Outline why you wish to form a community group and what you hope to accomplish.
- » On a map, define the area you wish to work in. Is there remnant vegetation present? Are there rare/threatened plant or animal communities?
- » Explore community interest from existing groups in the area (e.g. Local residents, schools, social groups, scouts).
- » Determine the support for your group, who you would like to get involved, how many people have registered interest.
- » List the types of activities you would like to undertake.
- » Think about when your group would want to undertake activities and for how long.



# Council Support for Environmental Volunteer Groups

The Biodiversity Team is responsible for supporting environmental volunteers to achieve and protect the biodiversity values and ecological integrity of the region. This team looks after Councils' biological significant areas on managed roadsides, trails and reserves – the places where many of our environmental volunteer groups work.

Knox Council provides ongoing support for environmental volunteer groups. Administrative assistance is available with paid Facebook advertising/promotion, support through social media, website updates and community newspaper articles.

Tools, marquees, outdoor tables, and other materials can be borrowed for working bees and other events, along with barbeques and tea and coffee kits.

## Community Infrastructure Department - Biodiversity Team

The Biodiversity Team aims to actively:

- » Support Knox Council volunteers.
- » Raise community awareness of environmental values.
- » Foster environmental stewardship and encourage appreciation and enjoyment of the natural environment.
- » Promote best ecological practice within Council and the community.
- » Provide advice to environmental volunteer groups, Council departments, internal and external committees and agencies.

- » Provide regular updates, communicate important information and promote group events.
- » Identify training opportunities.
- » Promote upcoming grant opportunities identified by Council internal departments. Promote upcoming funding opportunities with new/interested funding partners.

## **Bushland Team**

There are a number of Bushland Management Officers (BMO) in the Biodiversity Team. Each BMO manages a defined set of sites of biological significance (bushland reserves) and can assist environmental volunteers with the following:

- » Conducting site assessments with environmental volunteers as required.
- » Developing Agreed Work Plans and Declared Activity Lists.
- » Providing technical guidance, advice and support to groups.
- » Providing tools and materials to be used for environmental improvement works.
- » Liaising with external grant funded contractors to ensure consistency in on-ground works.

## **Biodiversity Officer**

The Biodiversity Officer working within the Biodiversity team supports the BMOs and the environmental volunteer groups across Knox Council. The Biodiversity Officer can assist volunteers with the following:

- » Assistance with equipment booking (e.g. marquees, tables and temporary signage).
- » Guidance, advice and support to groups.
- » Providing training opportunities to volunteers.
- » Assistance with Council insurance cover claims (when required).
- » Advocating and support with grant opportunities.
- » Facilitating Knox Friends Group networking events each year (February, July, November).



## Agreed Works Plan

An Agreed Works Plan is designed to help you, Council and contractors plan and manage Council land together.

An Agreed Works Plan is developed with the Bushland Team so that projects can be documented and followed. All groups will be required to provide an Agreed Works Plan to Council along with a Declared Activity List. The Agreed Works Plan will need to be approved at the discretion of a Bushland Management Officer.

This Plan identifies the group's management goals, planning the next 12 months of work and identifies any community events you would like to run or be a part of. This then enables Council to identify group needs and the risk level of the activities you intend to perform, and follow up with alternative methods, training and Council support where required.

## Declared Activity List

The Declared Activity List is designed to help you, Council and, when relevant, the insurers, to understand what activities the environmental volunteer group will be undertaking as part of their environmental improvement works.

This is a comprehensive list of activities that the environmental volunteer group and Council have agreed upon. In the event that the group intends to undertake any activity not specified in the Declared Activity List or Agreed Works Plan please contact the Biodiversity Team 9298 8000 as soon as the activity is identified. The volunteer group is responsible for declaring all activities.

Groups with Council insurance will not be covered from any activities undertaken that have not been declared. If declaring a new activity, ample notice must be given to allow time to seek approval from the insurance provider.





# Best Practice for Volunteer Groups

## Group leadership and governance

Group leadership is essential to the effective running of an environmental volunteer group and is crucial to making sure volunteers remain safe. Some groups have a very basic structure while others are more complex depending on the needs of the group. A group may elect to become incorporated or remain unincorporated. Regardless of the governance structure, it is important to ensure you have appointed some form of leadership or someone that is able to make strategic decisions for the group, be the main point of contact and deal with any issues that arise.

Each group will need to be able to provide a vision that sets out the group's purpose and goals. This will be the basis for all future activities, and will also be needed when dealing with any disagreements about the group's direction and activities.

Those acting in group leadership are accountable for all activities of the group, including finances. As part of being accountable, it's important that you keep good records, including copies of all your forms, transactions and other information so that if an incident occurs or questions are raised, you are covered and have the documentation to support you and your group.

## Group incorporation

Incorporation is a form of registration that gives an association or community group certain legal advantages in return for accepting certain legal responsibilities. Incorporation of an association means that the group becomes a legal entity in its own right, separate from the individual members.

Incorporation is something that can be considered once a group has become well established.

Benefits of becoming incorporated are to:

- » Create a legal entity separate from the individual member that provides a level of legal protection.
- » Continue to exist regardless of changes in membership.
- » Enter into contracts including buying and selling property.
- » Attract and apply for grant funding more easily.
- » Apply for status as a charity or formally register as an environmental organisation.

In becoming incorporated the group needs to be prepared to satisfy the ongoing reporting and procedural requirements of an Incorporated Association. There is a requirement to lodge an annual return.

It is recommended that groups operate with some level of protection and should your group not wish, or be able, to become incorporated, it is recommended that your group operates under another organisation's incorporation such as the Farm-tree and Landcare Association (FTLA) or local network.

Advantages to this include the same protections, less paperwork and other member benefits.

Volunteer groups need to be incorporated if the group:

- » Wishes to receive funds from a government body or other funds that requires incorporation (i.e. grants).
- » Does activities that involve any real risk of personal injury or any other claim for damages.
- » Wishes to hold property.
- » Proposes to enter important contracts.

It is important to note that usually for a group to be eligible to receive grants, it must be incorporated or be able to make arrangements with another incorporated association to auspice their application.

When a group has incorporated status this protects the personal assets of the committee members in the event an incorporated volunteer group is sued. The incorporated group can only be sued for the value of the incorporated body's assets (e.g. property, cash in bank, tools, equipment and other assets).

## How to become incorporated

Incorporated Association status is achieved by following the procedures set out in the *Associations Incorporations Act 1981*.

If a group has insurance with another organisation the group needs to meet the requirement of that insurance also.

Contact **Consumer Affairs Victoria** for further information or assistance with becoming incorporated.

## Group structure for incorporated groups

The best way to determine leadership and appoint a committee to ensure proper governance is to hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM) in which volunteers can be elected for positions. Although a committee is not required it is seen as good practice. If you elect not to have a committee you will still need to designate a leader that will be the primary point of contact for the group.

Committee positions may include:

The **President** is ultimately responsible for overseeing and ensuring the smooth operation of the group. The president is usually the person who:

- » Is the spokesperson and contact person for the group.
- » Provides leadership.
- » Oversees the day-to-day running of the group.
- » Ensures that the group members are aware of OH&S and other safety requirements.

The **Chairperson** is responsible for managing the smooth running of committee meetings. The President can also act as Chairperson.

The **Secretary** deals with many things and acts as a support to the President. The Secretary:

- » Deals with correspondence.
- » Takes and distributes meeting agendas and minutes.
- » Books facilities such as meeting rooms if required.
- » Assists the President in the smooth running of the group.

The **Treasurer** is responsible for all financial activities and maintains all financial records and bank accounts.

## Tax exempt status

The **Treasurer** is encouraged to achieve tax exempt status for their group. ie. If you are attempting to create or encourage donors to contribute to the group, by making a donation more attractive you may achieve this.

## Legal responsibilities

Several legal obligations affect environmental volunteer groups working on public land. These responsibilities include:

- » Lawful and responsible governance
- » Member safety
- » Safe storage and use of dangerous goods and machinery
- » A zero tolerance policy to discrimination and sexual harassment.

## Managing members and committee

As a committee, you have a responsibility to manage and take care of your volunteers. This includes addressing issues of:

- » Volunteer safety.
- » Conflict management and dealing with grievances.
- » Ensuring proper conduct when acting on behalf of the group.
- » Avoiding trading while insolvent (which applies to non-profits as well as businesses). This means making sure you are able to pay your debts.
- » Avoiding conflicts of interest and acting in the best interest of the group.

All volunteers have the right to raise any dissatisfaction, complaint or other grievance with the committee. If adequate action is not taken, volunteers have the right to seek legal advice and action if deemed necessary.



# Responsibilities of an Environmental Volunteer Group

## Volunteer Group

### Legal responsibilities

Several legal obligations affect environmental volunteer groups working on public land (Council land). For volunteers and the committees of environmental volunteer groups, the relevant Victorian Acts are:

#### Associations Incorporation Act 1981

The Associations Incorporation Act 1981 identifies the responsibilities and requirements of the committee of any incorporated association. Non-incorporated groups can also follow these guidelines to ensure sound, successful governance. The Act mostly addresses the responsibilities of the managing committee.

It requires:

- » All members in the committee to take care and be diligent when making decisions, in the best interests of the association and its vision, and not to act for self-interest.

- » All members in the group to work with good faith and proper purpose.
- » Avoidance of trading while insolvent.
- » The committee to give adequate information to members on their rights and other documentation, and a grievance procedure to address complaints.
- » The committee to maintain a register of members for the association.

#### Dangerous Goods Act 1985

Dangerous goods are substances that are corrosive, flammable, explosive, spontaneously combustible, toxic, oxidising or water-reactive. Petrol, LPG, paints, pesticides and acids are examples of commonly used dangerous goods.

Incidents involving dangerous goods typically result in explosions or fires and have the potential to cause serious or fatal injuries as well as large-scale damage to property and the surrounding environment.

Unsafe use of dangerous goods can also cause poisoning, chemical burns and other serious health problems.

These types of goods are widely used in industry, so it's vital that they are stored, handled and transported safely.

### **Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 & Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2014**

The Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 requires Knox City Council and volunteer groups to provide:

- » A safe working environment and conditions
- » Safe systems of work as identified in **Appendix 1**
- » Provide instruction and training as set out in these guidelines

### **Equal Opportunity Act 2010**

The Equal Opportunity Act 2010 addresses discrimination and sexual harassment within volunteer groups. Volunteers now have rights and responsibilities under this Act.

This Act states that:

- » All group members understand actions which constitute sexual harassment.
- » Sexual harassment in any form is not tolerated.
- » All volunteers understand how to report incidents of sexual harassment.

» All volunteers understand that appropriate legal action will follow any incidents.

» Sexual harassment and the law

Changes to the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 mean that sexual harassment law now applies to volunteers and employees.

All groups now have a legal responsibility to inform their volunteers that sexual harassment is never acceptable, in any form. If you turn a blind eye, and sexual harassment does occur within your group, your organisation and the people in it may be liable.

Every volunteer, staff member and supervisor has a responsibility to ensure that sexual harassment does not occur. Anyone found to have sexually harassed another person will be subject to disciplinary action.

This information has been adopted from Volunteering Victoria '*Volunteers and the Equal Opportunity Act, 2010 Information Pack*'.

For more information on defining Sexual Harassment and the complaints process see **Appendix 2**.



# Environmental Guiding Principles

## Fauna and Flora Guarantee Act 1988

The objectives of this Act are:

- » To guarantee that all taxa of Victoria's flora and fauna ... can survive, flourish and retain their potential for evolutionary development in the wild
- » To conserve Victoria's communities of flora and fauna
- » To manage potentially threatening processes
- » To ensure that any use of flora or fauna by humans is sustainable
- » To ensure that the genetic diversity of flora and fauna is maintained
- » To provide programs:
  - of community education in the conservation of flora and fauna
  - to encourage co-operative management of flora and fauna through, amongst other things, the entering into of land management co-operative agreements under the Conservation, Forests and Lands Act 1987
  - of assisting and giving incentives to people, including landholders, to enable flora and fauna to be conserved
- » To encourage the conserving of flora and fauna through co-operative community endeavours.

## Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994

The following are the objectives of this Act are:

- » To establish a framework for the integrated and co-ordinated management of catchments which will;
  - maintain and enhance long-term land productivity while also conserving the environment; and
  - aim to ensure that the quality of the State's land and water resources and their associated plant and animal life are maintained and enhanced;
- » To establish processes that can be used to assess the condition of the State's land and water resources and the effectiveness of land protection measures;
- » To establish processes to encourage and support participation of land holders, resource managers and other members of the community in catchment management and land protection.

## Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999

The objectives of the EPBC Act are to:

- » Provide for the protection of the environment, especially matters of national environmental significance
- » Conserve Australian biodiversity

- » Provide a streamlined national environmental assessment and approvals process
- » Enhance the protection and management of important natural and cultural places
- » Control the international movement of plants and animals (wildlife), wildlife specimens and products made or derived from wildlife
- » Promote ecologically sustainable development through the conservation and ecologically sustainable use of natural resources
- » Recognise the role of indigenous people in the conservation and ecologically sustainable use of Australia's biodiversity
- » Promote the use of indigenous people's knowledge of biodiversity with the involvement of, and in cooperation with, the owners of the knowledge.



# Managing Volunteer Participation

**Environmental volunteers are not Council volunteers, but are rather volunteers supported by Council. Council provides the following advice on managing volunteer participation using best practice for groups.**

Before performing any volunteer works see **Appendix 3-6** – forms and checklists.

It is recommended that participants sign Volunteer Participation Agreements; the agreement covers the responsibilities of a volunteer, and is guided by legislation put in place to protect volunteers when working with an environmental volunteer group.

It is important to ensure that volunteers read each point carefully. For more information request a copy of the related policies from a committee member or group leader. Biodiversity Officer is available to discuss any questions or concerns you may have.

## Safety

The personal safety of every volunteer is a very high priority. Each group is expected to help its members to understand that site safety is the responsibility of each individual participant. When members of the group are volunteering, they need to consider all other people. This includes people who may be indirectly involved, such as walkers, bike riders and other public space users. It is the responsibility of the group to provide clear information, instruction and supervision for its members. This includes making sure that:

- » The work-site is as safe as possible and that any hazards are reported to the Activities Leader.

- » All tools and equipment are well maintained and in safe working order. Please report damaged or broken equipment to the designated Bushland Management Officer for the site on 9298 8000.
- » All members adhere to the safety prompts in this guide.
- » Each activity or working bee must be overseen by a designated Activities Leader from the environmental volunteer group. Before each activity, the Activities Leader must check that the site is safe and all tools are safe to use.
- » Checks that the first aid kit is stocked properly, on site and all participants know of its location.
- » Demonstrate how to do the job safely and monitor activities throughout the course of the event.
- » Explains details of the day's tasks.
- » Conducts a tour of the site identifying key areas (e.g. emergency evacuation points, first aid equipment, amenities).
- » Checks that volunteers are aware of emergency planning procedures (e.g. how to get out if required).

## The Activities Leader/key contact person

At each group event there is to be a designated volunteer who acts as the Activities Leader and is responsible for safety and directing the planned works. This person is responsible for addressing, communicating and managing any potential hazards identified on-site by the group.

The Activities Leader:

- » Is responsible for planning the works to be undertaken.
- » Ensures that all participants have the Activities Leader's contact number.
- » Ensures all participants have been introduced to key personnel for the day (e.g. Council staff, first aid person).
- » Ensures everyone knows the exact location (Melways reference) with the nearest cross street or safety marker if you have one.
- » Identifies any risks and checks that all volunteers are aware of them.
- » The Activities Leader must then:
  - » Ensure personal protective equipment is being worn correctly when required.
  - » Ensure all volunteers have read and understood the Code of Conduct and signed in using the Volunteer Registration Form (see **Appendix 6**).
  - » Ensure volunteers do not work in isolation, on total fire ban days or in extreme weather conditions as identified in **Appendix 1**.
  - » Report all hazards identified on site to Council immediately.
  - » Undertake any incident reporting required.

- » Make sure hygiene materials (e.g. soap, access to hand washing area) are stocked, if needed.

The Activities Leader role does not always need to be filled by the same person. Several group members should be aware of the requirements and be competent in filling the Activities Leader role if required.

## New volunteers

When new volunteers join your group, you should:

- » Ensure the new volunteer has completed the membership sign-up and volunteer emergency details forms (for incorporated groups).
- » Ensure the new volunteer reads and signs the volunteer registration form, and is familiar with all relevant information required.
- » Demonstrate and observe the correct method/s to perform the job safely and continue to monitor activities.

## Underage volunteers

A responsible adult must always be present to accompany volunteers who are under 12 years of age. While we wish to encourage volunteers of all ages to participate in our community and environment, it is important to note that volunteers under 18 years of age are not covered by Council insurance. If an incident occurs that is caused by the

child, the responsible adult may be expected to cover all damages. A guardian must always be present and responsible for a child.

If a group plans to work closely with children and schools on a regular basis, individual members are required to get a **Working with Children Check**.

## Event promotion

Groups are encouraged to advertise all group activities and events via the Knox Council **Biodiversity Community Calendar** located on the Knox Council website. By advertising group's events via Knox's website you can promote to the wider community, increase your exposure, encourage participation and recruit new members.

## Before the working day starts

Before the working day starts, you should check that information has been provided to your group regarding:

- » Site location – unless this remains unchanged.
- » Activities planned for the day.
- » Contact details of the Activities Leader.
- » Appropriate clothing and personal protective equipment (PPE) required for the activities as outlined in the **Appendix 1**.

- » Any other requirements (e.g. drink bottle and lunch).
- » Ensure weather conditions are suitable for planned activities i.e. work is not to be undertaken on Total Fire Ban days and volunteers should avoid working during extreme weather conditions.
- » The Activities Leader and first aid person are designated and present on site during the event.

## At the end of the day

Record your achievements for the day (e.g. number trees planted) and send this information through to the Bushland Management Officer who is responsible for the area. Maintain this information as part of your own group records. This information may be useful for your group for future projects, monitoring, funding opportunities, demonstrating milestones and recognising achievements.



# Managing Risk

We measure risk to be low, medium or high. The level of risk can determine whether or not your group can perform that activity without further training or additional control measures put in place.

- » Low and medium risk works are permitted for volunteer groups on Council land; **Safe Working Procedures (SWPs) are available for each activity.**
- » High risk works cannot be performed by your group.

To find out which works are high, medium and low, and for SWPs for each activity see **Safe Work Practices and Procedures** table in **Appendix 1.**

## High-risk activities

Council does not support the undertaking of high risk activities by environmental volunteers. High risk activities must not be performed. Any exceptions to this must be formally agreed with the Bushland Management Officer and recorded within the Agreed Works Plan and/or Defined Activity Lists. SWPs for high risk activities are not included within

this document as any exceptions will be dealt with on an individual basis.

Examples of high risk activities not to be undertaken by environmental volunteers include the use of:

- » Chippers
- » Chainsaws
- » Ride-on mowers or self-propelled mowers
- » Brush cutters with blades
- » Mechanical Augers
- » Petrol-powered generators
- » Earth moving machinery
- » Working on sites near machinery
- » Working on roadsides requiring traffic management

Note: Council only supports the use of herbicide in dabber bottles provided by Knox Council. Any spraying required on public land should be directed to the Bushland

Management Officers (9298 8000) to determine suitability for spraying by Council or approved contractors.

## Personal protective equipment

Personal protective equipment (PPE) is required during volunteer working activities. The purchase and wearing of the PPE is the responsibility of the volunteer. PPE requirements will vary depending upon the activities the volunteer will be undertaking as identified in **Safe Working Procedures Appendix 1**.

General PPE includes:

- » Sturdy footwear (steel capped boots ideal)
- » Gloves
- » Long sleeved tops and long pants or gaiters (to protect from sunlight, bites and scratches)
- » Hat and sunscreen, sunglasses
- » Insect repellent
- » High visibility vest (supplied as required)

*Where required additional PPE may be necessary, such as dust mask, protective eye wear - safety glasses.*

In an effort to support group safety Council works to identify potential risks, determine acceptable activities and promote training opportunities to help equip volunteers with the required skill set.

## Safety: A group responsibility

Environmental volunteers put in enormous effort each year to improve our environment, campaign for change and protect our precious natural resources. It is important that all volunteers are safe and protected, and are aware of their responsibilities. As a volunteer group, it is of utmost importance that you and your members remain safe at all times. Common sense plays a big part in safety, but it isn't always enough. Volunteers have a responsibility to take care of their own and others' safety, and are advised to:

- » Disclose any pre-existing injury or medical condition, which may be aggravated by participation in any activities, to a responsible committee member.
- » Wear appropriate personal protective equipment for each activity as outlined in **Appendix 1**.
- » Participate in a site assessment (**Appendix 5**) and immediately report any hazards or injuries to the Activities Leader.
- » Listen to and follow directions from the Activities Leader, first aid person or any committee member when on site.
- » Raise any concerns or issues to a responsible committee member as soon as possible.



It is the responsibility of group leadership and the committee to ensure that:

- » Everyone is aware of the risks associated with any works that volunteers intend to perform by first referring to the SWPs.
- » Members understand that workplace safety is the responsibility of each individual participant.
- » Committee members provide clear information, instruction and supervision for your members to ensure safe operations.
- » Environmental volunteers undertake relevant training where required.
- » The worksite is as safe as possible and that any hazards are reported to the relevant group member (Activities Leader).
- » All tools and equipment are well maintained and in safe working order.

## Safe work practices and procedures (SWPs)

Safe work practices include taking general safety precautions as well as following recommended Safe Work Procedures (SWPs) see **Appendix 1**.

SWPs are guides for volunteers. They set out the best and safest practices in a range of activities, with varying levels of risk.

Each SWP describes the task, the risks, any protective equipment, risk management strategies, and where to pay special attention.

## Using SWPs to manage risk

Activities Leaders are responsible for identifying any hazards that volunteers might need to deal with on-site and must make sure members of the group follow SWP guidelines, including wearing recommended PPE as outlined in **Appendix 1**.

In addition, always:

- » consider other potential safety issues, and
- » notify all participants of any risks and the management practices in place.

## Incident or injury

- » It is essential that groups who are working on Council land report any accident, incident, property damage or near miss that occurs to Council's Health and Safety Team using a Volunteer Safety and Health Report Form (**Appendix 7**). Should an incident occur, your group will be asked to keep a copy on file in addition to the Health and Safety Teams records.

- » The purpose of the form is to protect the group and the affected person or property, as well as to assist when reconciling any claims later on. Even minor incidents should be reported, as further medical attention may be required later.
- » Report any near miss or potential incident to your Activities Leader and group to ensure your safety and the safety of others during future works.

## First aid

Council promotes training opportunities and delivers first aid training as needed. Any upcoming opportunities will be advertised to the Friends Group Activities Leader.

## Calling an Ambulance

In the case of an emergency dial 000 [triple zero] and ask for ambulance.

When dialing triple zero for an ambulance you will be asked a number of questions about the person and your location. Try to remain calm and answer the questions to the best of your ability. The questions will include things like:

- » What is the exact location of the emergency?
- » What is the phone number you are calling from?
- » What is the problem, what exactly happened?
- » How many people are hurt?
- » How old is the person?
- » Is the person conscious (awake)?
- » Is the person breathing?

Do not hang up. Follow the instructions offered by the emergency services call taker as the ambulance responds. These will help the patient and the ambulance paramedics.



# Council Insurance

## Insurance

Council will take all reasonable care to ensure that volunteers operate in a safe working environment. Volunteers are required to act in a responsible manner and in accordance with advised operating safe work procedures for activities. Any wilful or deliberate contravention of the advised procedures causing injury or damage/loss of property may not be covered by Council's insurance.

Any accident that occurs whilst under the care and control of Council should be reported to the immediate Volunteer Activities Leader or Council Officer as soon as possible.

A report must be completed by the Volunteer Activities Leader or Council Officer and returned to Council's Insurance and Risk Specialist as soon as reasonably possible.

## Personal accident insurance

The personal accident insurance policy held by Knox City Council covers volunteers while performing activities authorised by Council. The extent of the cover is limited to injuries resulting in permanent disability and/or death.

The level of cover is also limited by age; coverage is not provided for volunteers 90 years or over. Special arrangements, such as tree plantings with schools, are undertaken in conjunction with the Department of Education.

## Public liability

In October 2002, the Wrongs and Other Acts (Public Liability Insurance Reform Act, 2002) was passed. This Act includes provisions to protect volunteers from personal liability. The provisions seek to strike a balance between the need to protect volunteers and the interests of those who suffer injury. A volunteer cannot be held personally liable to

pay compensation for anything done or not done, in good faith, while providing a service within the scope of community work organised by a community organisation. Instead, the community organisation will be liable to pay the compensation.

While working under the care and control of Council, volunteers are protected against public liability claims under Council's public liability insurance cover.

Council's public liability insurance policy will not cover a Council volunteer for claims arising from an intentional, deliberate, dishonest, fraudulent, criminal or malicious act or omission.

If damage/injury is caused or an incident arises, the supervisor must be notified immediately and an incident report completed and returned to Council's Insurance and Risk Officer.

For all queries regarding insurance please call Knox Council 9298 8000.

## In the event of an incident or injury

It is the responsibility of the Activities Leader or delegated leader to:

- » Contact Council as soon as possible, talk to your contact in the Biodiversity Team 9298 800.
- » If possible, secure the site trying not to disturb any evidence or place others in harm's way.
- » Take photographs of the site and if possible draw a diagram of the site.
- » Cooperate at all times with the insurer and provide access to inspect property.
- » Do not admit liability or make any offer to pay for any damage or injury.
- » Write down the circumstances of the incident while they are still fresh in your memory including things like the time of day and the weather conditions.
- » Get the contact details of any witnesses.

# Appendix 1

## Safe Work Practices and Procedures (SWPs)



# Appendix 2

## Responsibilities of an Environmental Volunteer Group

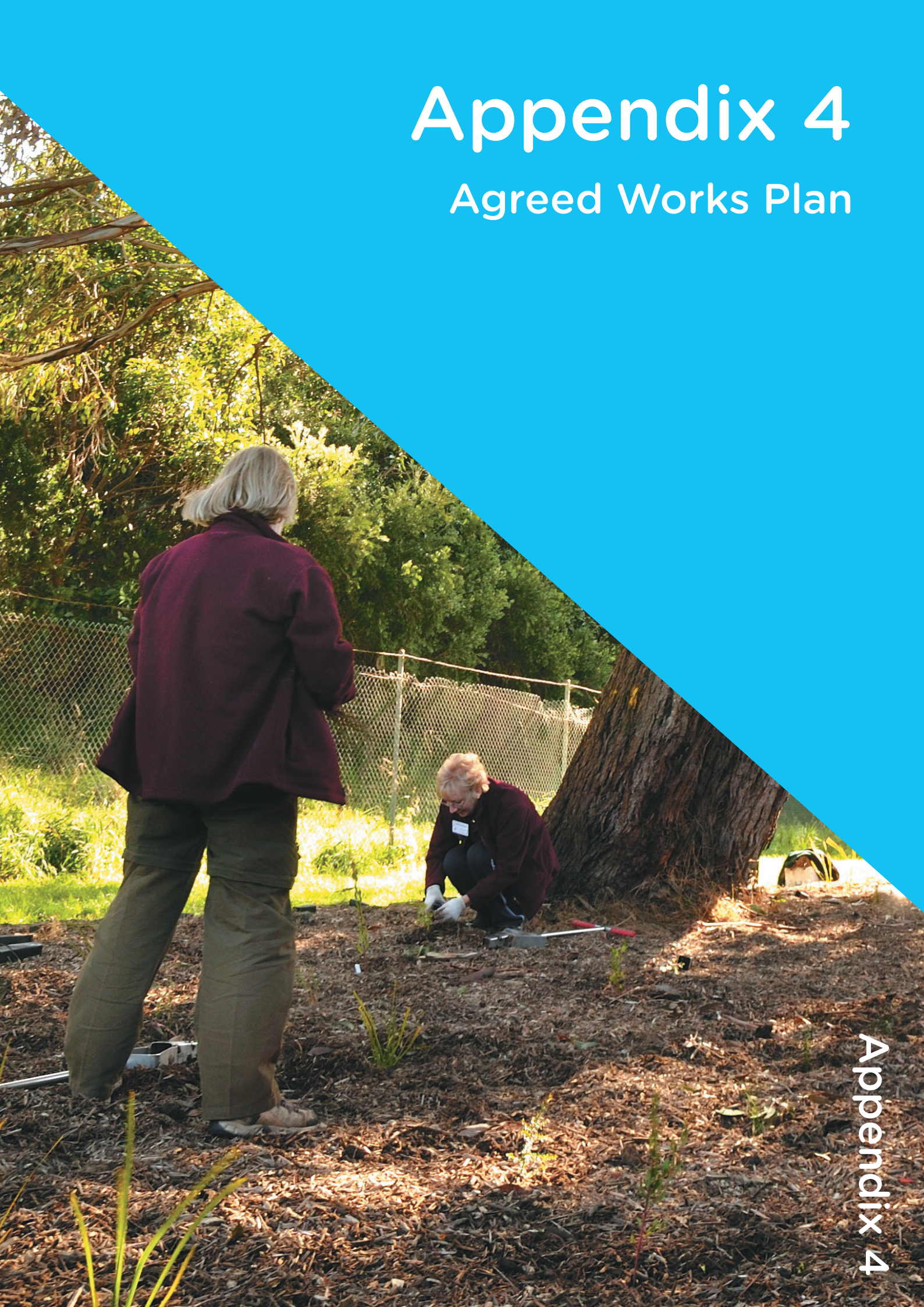


# Appendix 3

## Environmental Volunteers Partnership - Agreement

# Appendix 4

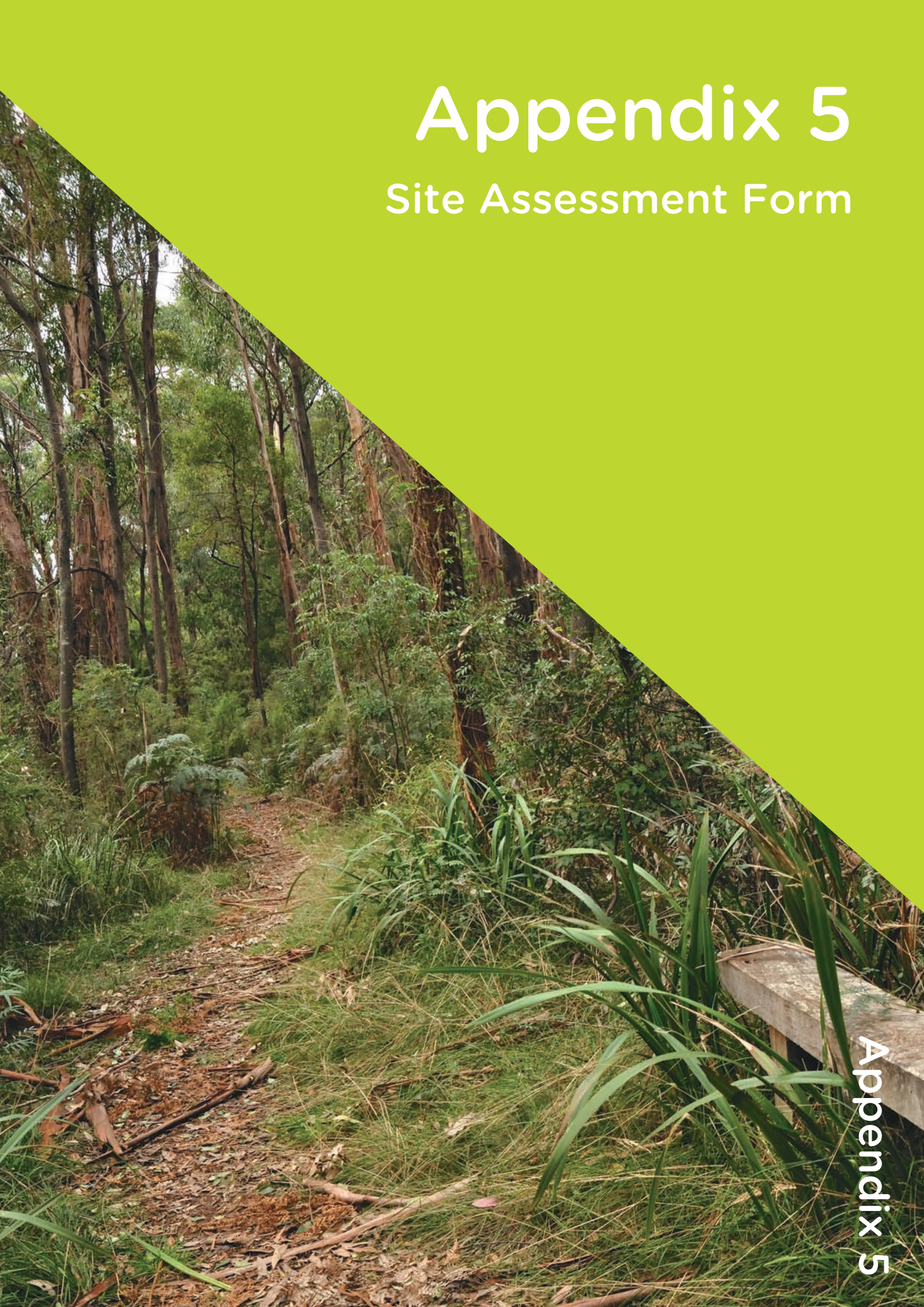
## Agreed Works Plan





# Appendix 5

## Site Assessment Form



# Appendix 6

## Volunteer Registration Form



# Appendix 7

## Safety and Health Report Form (OHS 032/1)

