

SECTION 1.5

DON'T PANIC FESTIVAL

Volunteer Handbook & Advocacy Guide

Event Date: Monday 25 May 2026

Location: Stalbridge Parade Route & Recreation Ground

Organiser: Guggleton Farm Arts CIC (GFACIC)

Welcome!

Thank you for volunteering at the DON'T PANIC Festival. Volunteers are the heart of this event. Your role helps create a safe, welcoming and memorable day for the community while supporting a festival that celebrates creativity, sustainability and collective action.

This handbook explains:

- What the festival is about
- Your role and responsibilities
- Health & safety expectations
- Safeguarding responsibilities
- Emergency procedures
- How to answer public questions about the event

Please read carefully and ask questions if anything is unclear.

PART 1 – FESTIVAL OVERVIEW (Volunteer Advocacy Guide)

This section helps you confidently explain the festival to others.

What is DON'T PANIC Festival?

DON'T PANIC is a family-friendly community arts and environmental festival celebrating Douglas Adams' connection to Stalbridge, where he was inspired to begin writing The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy after witnessing an historic building demolished behind his family home on Grove Lane.

See this video on YouTube for more information: https://youtu.be/Hc_IsKaYDvk?feature=shared

The festival uses humour, creativity and environmental action to help people feel hopeful and empowered about the future.

Why is the festival happening?

The event aims to:

- Celebrate Stalbridge's cultural history
- Bring the community together
- Encourage creativity and storytelling
- Address climate anxiety with optimism and action
- Promote sustainable living and local collaboration

It is about pride of place and positive community action.

What happens on the day?

Key elements include:

- Fancy dress parade through town
- Blue Plaque unveiling at Lydden Cottage
- Live music and performances
- Environmental and community stalls
- Science & innovation tent
- Storytelling and creative activities
- Youth performances and competitions
- Local food and artisan stalls
- Sustainability workshops
- Community art installations

As it is a 'school night' the event finishes by early evening.

Who is the festival for?

The festival is designed for:

- Families and children
- Young people
- Older residents
- Local community groups
- Visitors interested in arts and sustainability

It is welcoming, inclusive and community-led.

How can volunteers advocate for the festival?

If people ask you about the event, then please say:

- It's a free to the immediate community festival celebrating creativity and sustainability.
- It brings people together in a positive way.
- It supports local groups, artists and organisations.
- It promotes optimism and action on environmental issues.

Encourage people to attend, volunteer or get involved in future projects.

PART 2 – VOLUNTEER ROLE & EXPECTATIONS

Your Role - Volunteers help ensure:

- Visitors feel welcomed and supported
- Crowd movement is safe
- Hazards are reported quickly
- Safeguarding standards are maintained
- Emergency procedures run smoothly

Volunteer Expectations - Volunteers should:

- Be friendly, calm and approachable
- Wear volunteer identification
- Follow instructions from supervisors
- Report hazards and incidents
- Treat everyone respectfully
- Stay within their assigned role

Volunteers Must NOT

- Attempt physical intervention
- Put themselves in danger
- Investigate incidents
- Give medical treatment unless qualified
- Leave their post without informing a supervisor

PART 3 – HEALTH & SAFETY

Key Principles - Everyone shares responsibility for safety.

Volunteers should:

- Watch for trip hazards and unsafe behaviour
- Keep exits and access routes clear
- Report problems immediately
- Look after their own wellbeing

Common Hazards - Watch for:

- Slips or uneven ground
- Crowd congestion
- Vehicle movement areas
- Cables and equipment
- Weather impacts

If unsure, report concerns.

PART 4 – SAFEGUARDING

All volunteers have safeguarding responsibilities.

Safeguarding Principles

- Children and vulnerable adults must be protected.
- Volunteers must act responsibly and respectfully.
- Concerns must always be reported.

If Someone Discloses a Concern

Do:

- Stay calm and listen
- Reassure them they did the right thing
- Report immediately

Do NOT:

- Promise secrecy
- Ask leading questions
- Investigate yourself

Lost Child Procedure

1. Stay calm.
2. Escort child to Lost Child Point.
3. Notify control via radio.
4. Keep child supervised.

5. Log incident.

PART 5 – INCIDENT REPORTING

Report immediately:

- Injuries
- Hazards
- Crowd problems
- Safeguarding concerns
- Lost children
- Fire or safety risks

Provide:

- Location
- Nature of incident
- Any assistance required

Record details afterwards.

PART 6 – EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In emergencies:

- Follow Safety Officer instructions
- Stay calm
- Guide people safely
- Keep emergency routes clear

Do not create panic.

Fire

- Report fire immediately
- Do not fight fire
- Help guide evacuation if instructed

Severe Weather - Possible responses:

- Pause activities
- Move people to safer areas
- Event suspension or closure

Follow instructions calmly.

PART 7 – ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The festival promotes sustainability.

Volunteers help by:

- Directing people to recycling stations
- Promoting reusable cup returns
- Encouraging refill water use
- Protecting grass and habitats

PART 8 – COMMUNICATION & TEAMWORK

Volunteers are part of a team.

Remember:

- Ask for help when unsure
- Support fellow volunteers
- Keep communication calm and clear
- Take breaks when needed

PART 9 – PERSONAL WELLBEING

Volunteers should:

- Stay hydrated
- Wear suitable clothing
- Take breaks when required
- Inform supervisors if unwell

Your safety matters too.

PART 10 – THANK YOU!

By volunteering you are:

- Supporting community pride
- Enabling a safe event
- Helping celebrate creativity and sustainability
- Making the festival possible

Thank you for being part of DON'T PANIC Festival 2026.

Email: galactichq@dontpanicfestival.org