

Guiding Etiquette and Protocols

For a volunteer organisation to be efficient and for its members to derive the most enjoyment, there must be an accepted etiquette i.e. conventional rules of personal behaviour in polite society. We must be considerate of others by maintaining a pleasant environment which others can enjoy. Dr Harry Pearson 2006, retired KPVG

It is important that you make yourself familiar with and understand a number of documents including:

- The **Volunteer Code of Conduct**, which you have signed.
- The **Volunteer Handbook** which contains useful information about each of the volunteer groups in Kings Park.
- The **Kings Park Guides' Procedures Manual** which is on the Guides Resource Hub and a copy is also kept in the Visitor Information Centre (VIC.) It is a handy "go to" reference and updated annually. Please read when you have time in the VIC.

In addition, there are some protocols in dealing with the public, Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority (BGPA) staff and other Guides.

The Public

Guides are the friendly face of Kings Park and demeanour is important. Guides need to be positive, pleasant and professional when dealing with members of the public and information provided must be accurate. Guides should not make public comment about the BGPA or its operators, or speak negatively or on behalf of the park without authority.

BGPA Staff

All contact with staff of the BGPA must be through the President, except interaction with the Park Management Officers (PMO) while on duty.

Other Guides

Guides need to be positive, enthusiastic and respectful to other Guides in the VIC and when on walks.

The Visitor Information Centre (VIC)

Protocols for the VIC are outlined in the Guides' training course handout entitled *Visitor Information Centre (VIC)*.

Rosters

Protocols for rosters are also outlined in the VIC document.

Attending a walk by another Guide - as a Peer Observer, for WAG Walks and for Trainees

Attending walks by other Guides is a great way to improve your knowledge and style of guiding. If you would like to attend another Guide's walk, you will need to arrange it with that Guide, or two Guides - as is sometimes the case. Please do this well ahead of time by phone or email. Do not just turn up on the day and expect to be included.

If you are on another Guide's walk, you must not wear your uniform. Wear casual clothes that do not identify you as a Guide.

Arrive at least ten minutes early and introduce yourself to the Guide if you do not know them, otherwise simply identify yourself to the Guide as a Perth local.

Do not dominate any pre-walk chat between the visitors and the rostered Guide. This is the Guide's time to greet and get to know the visitors.

Walk at the back of the group and remember you are a respectful, quiet observer. You must stay with the group and do not lag behind to form a splinter group.

It is appropriate to be friendly to others, but please do not engage with other visitors as a Guide. Please refrain from speaking to the Guide or interrupting.

If you have questions, then ask the Guide when the walk has been completed.

If you are a trainee, please observe all the noted protocols; however, as you will not have contact details for all Guides yet, nor will you have access to the roster, you may arrive for a walk without forewarning the rostered Guide. Remember it is very important that you are early, discrete and in some cases prepared to be declined. It might be useful to plan these trainee observation walks through your mentor. Chat with your mentor to find out who might be a good fit for what you are focussing on. These could be informally arranged during the course as you meet other mentors.

Sharing a Walk with a Guide

On some walk duties, you will be rostered to share a walk with another Guide.

As with all walks it is good practice to do a recce. Arrange this with your partner a few days before your walk so you can plan to be **good hosts**.

It can be useful to decide who will present at which locations and share the commentary on the walk. One Guide might Open/Welcome, the other Close/Farewell.

As with all walks remember do not interrupt the other Guide during their presentations, or correct them on any point, unless they ask for your help. Save any feedback or comments for your partner until after the visitors have left.

Enjoy the exchange of ideas and mutual learning with other Guides as this is one of the joys of being a Kings Park Guide.

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