**Introduction**

Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust (GWT) was founded by a group of volunteers in 1961. Over the past 50 years the Trust has grown considerably and expanded the scope and impact of its work. Inevitably this means that GWT has had to introduce the structures and procedures which are necessary to ensure good management of a larger organisation. Volunteers are still integral to the work of Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust and a valued part of the organisation.

We want your volunteering role to be both rewarding and enjoyable and for you to feel valued and part of the GWT team. This agreement has been created to ensure that both you as the volunteer and Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust are clear about expectations in regards to support, communication, health and safety and other procedures.

**This document is not in any way legally binding, but is an agreement in honour only and does not create any employment relationship between you and Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust.**

**At Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust we will:**

**Introduce you to the Trust**

We will strive to make you feel welcome and part of the organisation. We will induct you to the Trust, introduce you to staff and explain how your role fits into the organisation and its work. You will be given a role profile and clear instructions on what you will be doing as a volunteer.

**Provide support and training**

We will provide you with an assigned staff member or volunteer leader who will support and instruct you in your role. As part of this we will explain the standards that we expect and we will encourage you to achieve and maintain them. We will also explain the support you can access and what to do if the support received does not meet the standards we expect.

You will receive support documents that will help you to understand your role as a volunteer and undertake your role in accordance with our health and safety policy (made available in volunteer documentation).

Any training required for your role will be provided. For regular volunteers (once per month or more) further training requirements should be discussed at an annual review meeting with your assigned member of staff of staff or the Volunteer Coordinator.

As part of your voluntary role you may enter into a trial period (depending on role and responsibilities) this is your opportunity to find your feet and decide if the role is for you, this also give us the chance to find the most suitable role for your interests, skills, hopes and expectations of volunteering and to smooth out any issues that arise.

It is important that you are not left out of pocket because you are volunteering and therefore the Trust will pay you any out-of-pocket expenses that you may have accrued as a direct result of your voluntary role.

We aim to keep you in the loop with news and changes that may affect your voluntary role, and about the work of the Trust in general through regular communication, primarily through your assigned member of staff, the volunteer newsletter and the volunteer conference.

**Health and Safety**

We will provide you with a safe place of work and provide the PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) necessary for you to undertake your role. Any tools used as part of your role will be in a safe and working condition and we will inform you of any health and safety issues, risk management procedures and policies relevant to your role. All volunteers will be insured through our Public Liability Insurance whilst undertaking their voluntary role for Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust.

**Personal information**

We will require you to fill out an emergency contact details form before volunteering. This will held by the Volunteer Coordinator and shared with your assigned activity leader. The purpose is to ensure that we are aware of any relevant health conditions and know who to contact in the unlikely event that something goes wrong. Your personal information will stored securely in line with the Data Protection Act and will not be disclosed to any third party organisation. You may choose to share your contact details with other volunteers.

**As a volunteer you will be expected to:**

Be honest and open with us from the start, tell us what skills and experiences you can bring to the organisation and what you want to gain from volunteering, if you communicate this from the beginning we are better able to deliver a satisfying and rewarding volunteer experience for you.

Undertake your voluntary role to the best of your abilities, be punctual and reliable, and inform us in reasonable time if you are unable to attend something you have committed to.

You will follow the Trust procedures and maintain expected standards when volunteering and all volunteers will consider relevant policies when undertaking your role, these include; Equal Opportunities, Health and Safety and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults and Child Protection policy.

When volunteering you must consider that you are a representative of the Trust and anything that you say and do can be interpreted by members, other volunteers and the public as the views of Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust. When volunteering for us please be especially conscious of anything you say or do that could be misinterpreted, interpreted as the opinion of Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust or have a negative impact on the image of Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust. You are of course entitled to have a personal opinion but please make it clear when this is the case.

If you hear anything about the Trust that concerns you please discuss it with your assigned member of staff or the Volunteer Coordinator to ascertain the facts before discussing it with other volunteers or the general public. We would much rather hear negative feedback, first hand, and be able to right any issues before we hear it from outside the Trust.

Confidentiality and GWT’s Data Protection Policy must be adhered to if you are processing or come into contact with confidential and personal information as part of your voluntary role, whether this is about the organisation, staff, members or other volunteers.

**Conflict resolution**

If you encounter any issues during your time volunteering with the Trust you should discuss this with your assigned member of staff or volunteer leader. If the issue is not resolved satisfactorily you can contact the Volunteer Coordinator. Finally the issue can be raised with the Trust’s Senior Management Team via the Head of Community Programmes. The decision of SMT is final.

If you feel unable to adhere to the guidance laid out in the volunteer agreement you should notify your assigned member of staff and the Volunteer Coordinator, explaining why this is the case. A decision on how to resolve this will be made by the Senior Management Team which if required can be appealed through GWT’s Governance Panel via the Director of Finance/Assistant CEO. The decision of the Governance Panel is final.

**Contact details**

Volunteer Coordinator

Donna Cavill - donna.cavill@gloucestershirewildlifetrust.co.uk

Head of Community Programmes

Lorna Fox lorna.fox@gloucestershirewildlifetrust.co.uk

Director of Finance/Assistant CEO

Elaine Ward – elaine.ward@gloucestershirewildlifetrust.co.uk