



GWT's Return to Volunteering

Dear Volunteers

Thank you for your understanding and patience over the past year and during times where we have had to put all or part of our volunteer programme on hold due to COVID-19. This was for the safety of all our volunteers and staff. This document has been created to ensure that all volunteers are aware and agree to follow the procedures GWT has put in place to ensure the safety of volunteers, staff and visiting members of the public.

If you would like to start volunteering again with Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust, then please read this document in full and complete our return to volunteer form. There is of course no pressure to return to volunteering if you currently do not feel comfortable doing so. Please put your own safety first.

Return to volunteering form

We require all volunteers, who would like to volunteer during social distancing, to complete the following short online form. Paper copies can be sent on request or the form can be completed over the phone.

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/JT8Q79W>

This form will ensure we know who is returning to volunteering and that they are happy with and understand the additional risks to volunteering during the Covid-19 pandemic. The form also asks for contact details to ensure we have updated information in case the worst happens, and we need to contact volunteers about an individual within their group testing positive for the virus. The form should take less than 5 minutes to complete and will be stored securely and confidentially.

Size of volunteer groups

From the 29th of March 2021 the government will lift the stay at home order and allow groups of up to 6 to meet outdoors. Further information on the roadmap out of lockdown can be read [here](#).

Until the government allows larger groups than 6 to meet outdoors, GWT will restrict its outdoor volunteer groups as follows:

- A maximum of 5 volunteers per group plus one staff member/volunteer leader. If some volunteer tasks require working in close proximity to each other the maximum number may need to be reduced.
- Two people from the same household can volunteer but the maximum number of volunteers and staff/volunteer leader onsite still needs to be no more than 6.
- Volunteers will need to be at least 2 meters apart from each other at all times, unless they are from the same household.
- Whilst social distancing measures are in place, volunteers under 18 will need to attend with an adult.
- You must let the group leader know in advance if you would like to attend, to ensure the group's numbers do not go over 6 individuals. If you do not book in advance and



turn up and there are more than 6 individuals, you will be asked to volunteer on a different day.

When the government allows larger groups than 6 to meet outdoors, volunteers will still need to follow social distancing rules.

During a volunteer session

- Staff will run through the risk assessment at the start of each session. Volunteers will be required to verbally confirm they understand and accept the potential risks.
- Volunteers may request a written copy of the risk assessment to be sent to them in advance by email or post.
- Social distancing (2m) to be maintained at all times.
- The Trust will provide any equipment for the volunteer session at the start of the day.
- This equipment must not be shared between volunteers.
- GWT will ensure equipment is disinfected before they are next used, this may require volunteers to disinfect the equipment they have been using at the end of the day.
- For volunteers who require gardening gloves for their role, they will be issued with a pair at the start of their first session back. It will be their responsibility to take the gloves home and wash them after each session.
- For safety reasons GWT will not be able to supply refreshments for volunteers while social distancing is in place. We also ask volunteers to not share food between different households.
- The Trust will provide hand sanitizer, but we recommend you bring and use your own where possible.
- Volunteers must not lift-share between separate households for volunteering.
- For community events and school groups we will ensure social distancing between participants, staff and volunteers. Attendees must book in advance to ensure safe numbers. Activities while social distancing measures are in place will be self-led.

Indoor volunteering

As of 12th of April staff will return to working at our head office, but office capacity will be limited to ensure social distancing. We have already put procedures in place to ensure our head office is COVID secure. Office volunteers if they feel comfortable, can also return to volunteer from HQ as of the 12th of April. Please note this date is subject to change if the timeframe of the government's roadmap out of lockdown changes.

- GWT is ensuring the head office, café, Welcome Hubs and events space are cleaned more often. The cleaning services has been extended to include handrails, door handles and a deeper clean of other facilities
- GWT will maintain good ventilation in all its buildings. Our HQ has wind catchers as part of its ventilation. This system is throughout the building ensuring that no air is recirculated, and that fresh air is constantly being drawn in. Windows and doors when required will also be opened at other GWT building to ensure good circulation of air
- GWT will ensure hand sanitiser is accessible for all volunteers and staff, this will be at pinch points such as entrances, by the toilets and around communal facilities such as printers and scanners
- GWT will ensure staff, volunteers and visitor numbers do not exceed the number deemed safe at each GWT building to ensure social distancing can be maintained.
- Desks have been setup so no one can sit opposite or next to each other



- There is a one-person max for each toilet area and in the shower/changing area.
- GWT will follow in NHS Test and Trace and will inform all volunteers if someone test positive that they may have been in contact while volunteering
- GWT asks that while moving around all indoor areas including the office, Welcome Hubs and cafe, that visitors, staff and volunteers are wearing face coverings.

Showing signs of Covid-19

Any volunteers who think they may have Covid-19 or believe they may have come into contact with an individual who has the virus, must not attend the group. You should get tested as soon as possible and inform the Trust.

If you test positive, please let us know, especially if you have recently volunteered with others, as we will need to follow the [NHS Test and Trace process](#) and let those who may have come into contact know. In this scenario, we will not inform the other volunteers who out of the group has tested positive, just that someone has tested positive.

If a volunteer starts showing symptoms of Covid-19 whilst volunteering, staff will politely ask the individual to leave and to get tested. They can return to volunteering if they test negative; if positive they must follow government guidelines of self-isolating for two weeks.

Below is a handy guide to our Coronavirus Volunteer Code of Conduct:

Gloucestershire
Wildlife Trust  

Coronavirus Volunteer Code of Conduct

All volunteers should read and follow the precautions below

-  **Maintain minimum 2m social distancing at all times**
-  **Sanitise hands before entering and leaving site**
-  **Maintain hygiene standards as defined by activity coordinator**
-  **Strictly adhere to the risk assessments provided**
-  **Support staff by notifying them of any issues that arise**
-  **No sharing of vehicles, tools, equipment or refreshments**
-  **Do not attend if you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19**



Again, we want to thank you for your patience and understanding during this difficult time. Whilst we are keen to return to volunteering as soon as possible, we need to ensure we do so safely. As I am sure you are fully aware, government guidelines about the pandemic and social distancing are regularly changing. We will continue to update you of any changes that may affect volunteering and the Trust.

In the meantime, if you have any questions about the above or concerns, please do contact me at volunteering@gloucestershirowildlifetrust.co.uk or call 01452 383333.

Kind regards

Donna Cavill
Volunteer Coordinator