



Volunteering with GWT in 2021

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 of the procedures GWT has put in place to ensure the safety of volunteers, staff and visiting members of the public.

This document contains information on how we will continue to restart our volunteer programme in 2021 and what measures we will continue to put in place to ensure volunteer safety as we move out of lockdowns and restrictions on gatherings both outdoors and indoors.

Size of volunteer groups

Between 29th March – 12th of April Volunteering outdoors resumed but was limited to groups of 6.

Between 12th April – 16th of May outdoor volunteering remained in maximum groups of 6 and office volunteering restarted

As of 17th May we will move back to normal outdoor volunteer group size in line with the government's rule of up to 30 people meeting outdoors. We will also re-open our Welcome Hubs, but restrict number of visitors into the Hubs. From this date GWT will allow lift sharing but volunteers must read and follow government advice on lift sharing which can be viewed [here](#)

As of 19th of July we hope to be able to run our volunteer groups and activities as we did pre-lockdown. Restrictions such as social distancing, hand sanitizer and face masks worn indoors are likely to still be required.

Outdoor volunteering

- 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, unless disinfected first. To reduce the need to share, where possible GWT will provide a set of tools for each volunteer, for some tools such as rakes we may not have enough for one each
- 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
- From the 17th of May GWT will be able to supply refreshments for volunteers. If the government imposes further restrictions, then GWT has the right to stop supplying refreshments. Volunteers must sanitize their hands before eating or drinking



- The Trust will provide hand sanitizer, but we recommend you bring and use your own where possible. Disinfect your hands regularly and especially on arrival and before eating and drinking
- 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 returned to working at our head office, office capacity is 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 at our head office.

- Please bring a face covering with you
- GWT has a new sign in system at HQ, there is a tablet next to the kitchen, please sign in as a volunteer via guest. Sanitize your hands before signing in and please wipe the screen down with the available spray. We need to keep a record of who is in the building
- GWT asks volunteers where possible to sign in using the NHS track and trace app. If a volunteer cannot use the app then we will use data on our sign in tablet. We will only use this data to contact those who may have been exposed to the virus
- GWT has completed a COVID-19 risk assessment for working and volunteering safely at HQ. Please ask the Volunteer Coordinator if you would like to see a copy
- 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
- Regularly and thoroughly clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water
- 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.
- Volunteers may bring their own mugs and cutlery for use at HQ
- Volunteers may bring their own pen and paper if they need to take notes
- No more than two people can be in the kitchen at the same time to ensure social distancing is maintained



- The corridor between the Welcome Hub and offices must not have two people walking in opposite directions down the corridor as it is too narrow for passing each other safely
- Once finished at a workstation or at a Welcome Hub, use the provided surface cleaner, sanitise the desk and any shared keyboards, mice etc (by spraying onto paper tissue and wiping the surface)

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 volunteer. You should get tested as soon as possible and inform the Trust, if you believe other volunteers or staff are at risk.

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.

If group sizes are restricted again

As of the 17th of May 2021, we will be able to run our outdoor volunteer groups at their usual group sizes of between 12-20. If the government decides to delay this date or imposes future restrictions on group size, then we may need to return to the rule of 6 for volunteering. In this scenario GWT will restrict its outdoor volunteer groups as follows:








- A maximum of 6 volunteers per group. 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 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.
- 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.
- GWT may take the decision to close Welcome Hubs and stop indoor volunteering.

On the next page there is a handy guide to our Coronavirus Volunteer Code of Conduct:



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 tools, without proper disinfection**
-  **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