



**Gloucestershire**  
Wildlife Trust

# Volunteer Handbook

Sapperton Valley © Nick Turner





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# Welcome



**Welcome to Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust. As a volunteer, you will be playing a major role in securing nature's recovery in the county and I am delighted that you have become part of our team.**

**We have volunteers from all ages and backgrounds who support our reserve management, community engagement surveys, fundraising, administration and so much more!**

**Whatever your interests, I hope we can find a role that suits you. Your feedback really matters, so tell us about how you get on and ways we can improve the quality of your experience.**

**Thank you for making a difference for nature.**

**Andrew McLaughlin - CEO**

**Hello! Thank you for offering us your time to volunteer with Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust and be a part of really wonderful change in our precious county.**

**We have lots of opportunities for volunteers, ranging from outdoor practical, to helping our teams with day to day running of the charity. We are a friendly team of staff and volunteers and we want you to get the most out of your time with us.**

**Our volunteers were the start of this significant charity, and are just as important today. We hope you enjoy your time with us!**

**Ellie Murray - Volunteer Coordinator**



# Useful contacts

Your first point of contact in most cases will be the Volunteer Coordinator. Should you need to contact someone more urgently, or you do not think it is appropriate to speak to the Volunteer Coordinator, then you might find the contact information below helpful.

## **Volunteer Coordinator: Ellie Murray**

volunteering@gloucestershirewildlifetrust.co.uk  
07485 307236

## **Main office contact**

info@gloucestershirewildlifetrust.co.uk  
01452 383333

## **Safeguarding team**

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Andrew McLaughlin (CEO)  
Officers: Lucy Moriarty (Head of Engagement), Karina Taylor-Smith (HR Manager) and Claire Garrity (Learning Manager)  
safeguarding@gloucestershirewildlifetrust.co.uk  
01452 383333 (and request to speak to one of the individuals named above)

## **Livestock lead (East Gloucestershire): Dan Winter**

daniel.winter@gloucestershirewildlifetrust.co.uk  
07464 486842

## **Livestock lead (West Gloucestershire): Kevin Caster**

kevin.caster@gloucestershirewildlifetrust.co.uk  
07485 307219

## **GDPR/Data handling contacts**

Liz Parker - liz.parker@gloucestershirewildlifetrust.co.uk  
Hannah Lewis - hannah.lewis@gloucestershirewildlifetrust.co.uk



# Who are we?



Field scabious at Kilkenny © Clare Alley

**We have a vision where each year there is more wildlife, more wild places and more people with a connection to the natural world.**

GWT was formed in 1961, set up by a group of volunteers led by Sir Peter Scott, who recognised that local wildlife was under threat. We are a medium-sized charity working throughout Gloucestershire. As of 2024, we manage more than 45 reserves across Gloucestershire, are supported by 29,000 members, have a team of over 500 active volunteers, and have more than 110 members of staff. Our work of protecting Gloucestershire's wildlife is funded through our members, appeals, funded projects and our limited company, Gloucestershire Wildlife Enterprises Ltd.

[Click here](#) to see our 2030 strategy or scan the QR code if viewing a paper version of the handbook



# Who are we?

Our three main goals from our ambitious 2030 strategy are to:

- 1 Stop and reverse wildlife declines
- 2 Get more people to take action for nature
- 3 Normalise natural solutions to climate change

We run a whole range of projects that will help us on our mission to create wildlife corridors, engage with members of the public, support regenerative agriculture and to lead on an ecological evidence base in Gloucestershire. These include great projects such as

- Severn Treescapes
- Operation Give a Dam
- Eelscapes
- Conservation grazing
- Do One Thing
- HabiMap

We are very proud of all the work that we do here at Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust. Did you know...

- GWT has approximately 27,000 individual members supporting our work, plus another 13,500 households collectively donating to us
- We have over 45 nature reserves that we manage
- We are part of 46 Wildlife Trusts in the country as part of the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts (RSWT)
- We have over 650 active volunteers working on various activities, recording just shy of 40,000 hours of volunteering each year; this equates to about 22 members of full-time staff!



[Click here](#) to watch our 2030 strategy video, or scan the QR code if you are reading a paper version of the handbook





# Why volunteer?

Volunteering has so many benefits! You will learn so much about the natural world being out on reserves, chatting to other volunteers and staff or working on our projects. You will learn some great skills, which could aid you if you are looking to enter a career supporting wildlife, but are also great life skills. You will meet like-minded people (we're a friendly bunch!) which is great from a social point of view, but also for networking within our great community. Our outdoor opportunities especially are great for your physical and mental health, and let's not forget- you will have a lot of fun along the way!

## Who can volunteer?

Anyone over the age of 18 can volunteer for any of our opportunities (with the exception of our Youth Advisory Group and Youth Rangers). You don't need prior experience (unless outlined initially, such as for our GIS data processing work), and you don't need to bring any tools or PPE to take part in an opportunity. We currently have limited opportunities for 16-17 year olds, but are looking at ways to offer more in the future. Please speak directly to the Volunteer Coordinator about volunteering for under 18s. Our practical conservation work parties require a moderate fitness level, as the work can be physically intensive. Volunteering won't have an impact if you are on benefits.

## Accessibility

We want to encourage anyone wanting to engage with wildlife through volunteering to get involved. Where possible we will try and find a volunteering opportunity that suits your needs, but some roles might present barriers to getting involved. For example, our practical conservation work parties are mostly in remote locations, not accessible by public transport, and can be on steep slopes and require a bit of a walk to get to the specific working area of the day. We can use loud machinery such as chainsaws which could be distressing for those with hearing sensitivity, and the majority of our practical work is quite labour intensive. If you have a desire to get involved in an opportunity, but are unsure whether it will suit any support needs you may have, then please contact the Volunteer Coordinator.



# Volunteering Opportunities



## Outdoor Habitat Management Groups

Join expert Land Management Officers to undertake practical tasks to restore and enhance habitats on nature reserves, and work with private landowners to connect priority landscapes.

## Surveying and Monitoring

We have a strong team of volunteers who help us carry out surveys to assess habitats and monitor wildlife in need.



## Visitor Engagement

With visitor engagement you could inspire new people to connect with nature at our visitor centres or events by chatting to the visitors and helping them with activities.



## Livestock Checkers

Livestock checkers carry out welfare checks on grazing animals, such as checking water levels, signs of obvious injuries or infections and ensuring they are where they are supposed to be!



## Wild Trainees

Each year we take on a team of trainees to gain insight and skills needed for a career in supporting wildlife.





## Reserve Wardens

Our wardens are our eyes and ears on the reserves, monitoring the reserve and reporting issues that might arise. We also have designated wardens that help protect the large blue butterflies.



## Learning

Volunteers support us with hands-on educational sessions for toddlers, primary school children, and help us run the famous Primary Schools Wildlife Quiz!



## Wilder Champions

Our Volunteer Wilder Champions act as ambassadors for Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust, helping to build local movements of positive change for wildlife.



## Office-based roles

Office based opportunities includes administration tasks, helping the membership team arrange postal packs, going through wildlife camera footage, creating educational resources for visitors and school visits and more.



## Youth Advisory Group

Our Youth Advisory Board are a group of 16 – 25 year olds who help us to identify and overcome barriers to engage young people with wildlife.



## Trustees

Our Board of Trustees are volunteers who are responsible for overseeing our vision and strategy for the organisation.



# Getting started

## Your first volunteering session

Once you have registered and signed up to your first session through our volunteering system, you will have one or more staff members who will oversee your volunteering. They will advise on where to go, parking arrangements, what tasks you will be involved in, and what to bring. They will be responsible for supervising you whilst you carry out your duties (except for lone working roles like wardening and livestock checking, which will be carried out independently after your initial meeting). They will take you through the correct use of any tools, PPE, databases, computer programs and procedures relevant to your role. They will be your first point of contact for questions regarding your role, but you can also reach out to Volunteer Coordinator for general advice and questions about volunteering too.

## What to bring on your first day

Your activity leader will advise on what you should bring to your first session. If you are working outside, for example working on our conservation work parties or surveying, then it's good to bring the following:

- Lunch, drinks and snacks to keep your energy up
- Weather appropriate clothing that covers arms and legs due to ticks and thorns
- Sturdy, closed shoes
- Protective items for the sun, such as sun screen, sun glasses and a hat
- Any medication you need to keep you safe (e.g epi pens, inhalers etc)

If you are an office based volunteer then bring your lunch, and you may want to bring a notepad (GWT can provide) and pen if you learn best by taking notes.

If you are a volunteer supporting us in the community then we may have branded resources to take with you. If this is the case then we will discuss this with you ahead of time.

Please note that, other than Robinswood Hill, Crickley Hill, Greystones Farm and Lower Woods, none of our reserves have toilet facilities.





# What we will do for you

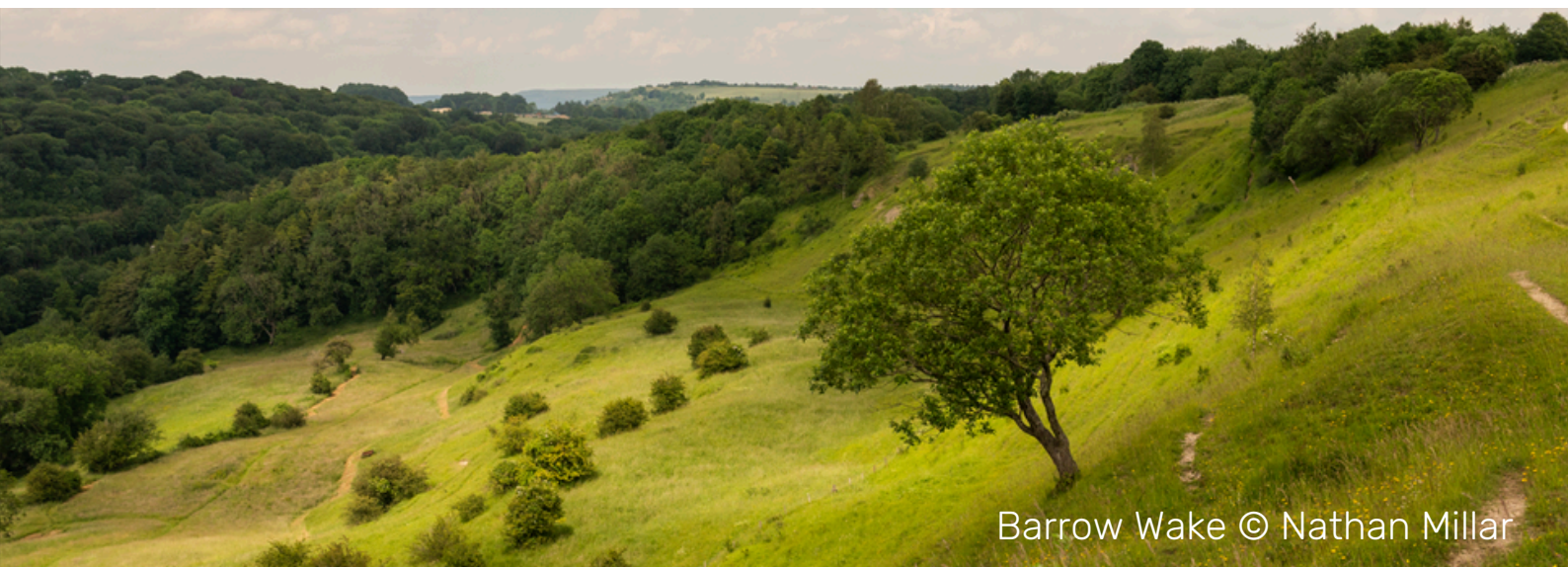
We are incredibly grateful for the support we get from our volunteers. We want to ensure that you have what you need to make your volunteering a worthwhile and enjoyable experience. As a Trust we will...

- Have designated staff to support you
- Provide tools, equipment and PPE needed to carry out requested tasks
- Carry out health and safety checks to ensure environments, tools and equipment are safe for you
- Offer travel expenses
- Aim to offer training and informative talks to help you grow your knowledge and upskill
- Show our appreciation to you through thank you events, and keep you informed on our progress through the annual Volunteer Conference
- Be here to listen to you, your goals, feedback or concerns that you may have with your volunteering to give you the best experience whilst you are with us

# What we ask of you

As part of this two-way working relationship we would like you to...

- Follow the Volunteer Agreement (see page 19)
- Be open and honest about your experience with us - if we can improve things, tell us
- Be respectful to other volunteers, staff and to members of the public that you may engage with
- Keep us informed on any important health information that could impact your volunteering through staff and our volunteering system



# Giving thanks

Volunteers play a vital role in the success of our charity and are a hugely valued part of our team. It's important to us that we recognise and reward your commitment to help us and your local wildlife, so at Gloucestershire Wildlife we are proud to offer the following.

- We have signed up to the Room to Reward scheme, so our volunteers\* have the chance to be nominated for a bed and breakfast stay for two people at participating hotels, B&Bs and holiday parks. (\*Restrictions surrounding length of service and volunteer role apply, set by Room to Reward).
- For those of you who volunteer to build up experience to support your career, we have registered to the Charity Mentoring Network, which allows volunteers the opportunity to receive mentoring from other professionals in the charity sector. (Alternatively, sign up to become a mentor yourself!)
- We run a variety of thank you events. This has included talks on topics such as Pine Martens, Fungi and soil health, guided walks at our nature reserves or partnering wildlife-friendly farms, barbeques and our Christmas get togethers, which usually involve a quiz or game of sorts!
- GWT volunteers can get 20% off at our cafés and source other discount opportunities such as with Cotswold Outdoor and Mountain Warehouse. Find the up-to-date offers in the Resources and Help section of your volunteer account.
- The digital badge system on our volunteering platform offers us the chance to give individual shout outs.
- We also reflect on our achievements and give thanks to volunteers at our annual Volunteer Conference, which takes place in the summer.





# Volunteer admin

## Registration

We require all new volunteers to officially register their details with us through our [volunteering system](#). This is important so that we can understand the sort of volunteering you are interested in, have emergency contact details in case something happens whilst you are volunteering with us, and we can keep you informed according to your contact preferences. It is also a requirement of our insurance to collect this information. See more of our new system on page 14.

## Induction

Once you are booked onto a volunteering opportunity with us, you will be assigned one or more members of staff who will oversee your activity. They will pass on information on what to bring on your first day, take you through the tasks being undertaken with demonstrations, and brief you on any health and safety information. Depending on your role, you might also be taken through more in depth information regarding things such as safeguarding and data handling.

## Recording hours

We record the amount of hours carried out by volunteers, which is about a whopping 40,000 hours a year! This can be used for information for our funders, and is also used at the end of financial year in our annual report. The hours from group activities, such as HabiMap Blitzes and conservation work parties are recorded by the staff lead, but if you are working independently or doing a role without many other volunteers (e.g livestock checking, wardening, or supporting with admin) we would ask that you keep a track of your hours and submit through our volunteering system regularly. All hours for the year need to have been sent by the end of March, ahead of the new financial year.

## Expenses

We can reimburse you for your travel expenses. We pay 40p per mile, up to 40 miles per day for carrying out volunteering activities. We can pay a maximum of £16 for public transport per day, and will require receipts for this expenditure. To claim, you will need to fill out a copy of our expenditure form and return this to the Volunteer Coordinator. We would appreciate you emailing this wherever possible. You can download the expense form [here](#).

## Uniform

Should you want it, we have a variety of branded items, including polos, t-shirts, sweatshirts, fleeces and hats that can be ordered. Unfortunately we cannot cover the costs of uniform as we have 500+ volunteers, however we do subsidise the cost to make it cheaper. We order uniform a few times a year, advertised in our volunteer newsletter. You are not expected to have our uniform; it's up to you if you would like it.

## Equal opportunities

Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among its workforce, and eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The Trust's policy is to provide equality, fairness and respect for all staff and volunteers, whether temporary, part-time or full-time; ensure no unlawful discrimination against the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation; and to oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination.

## Safeguarding

GWT is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults engaged in the breadth of its activities. GWT acknowledges its duty to act appropriately to any allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse or neglect. Volunteers working with these groups will be appropriately trained. DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks will be taken out for volunteers spending time regularly with vulnerable people if it constitutes a 'regulated activity'. We will always ensure volunteers are working with staff or with another volunteer and never alone. A copy of our safeguarding policy can be sent on request by the Volunteer Coordinator.







# Our Volunteer Management System

In 2024 we moved onto a new Volunteer Management System (TeamKinetic). Adopted by Wildlife Trusts across the UK, this system aims to bring significant benefits to both volunteers and staff.

The new system offers multiple benefits, including:

- Access to more volunteering opportunities – You'll be able to browse open roles for one-off or regular involvement.
- Self-service capabilities – Update your personal details, track your volunteer hours, and close your account if needed.
- Centralised volunteer information – Staff can easily access key information, such as emergency contact details.
- Resource bank – Access essential documents in one place.
- Improved admin efficiency – We can focus more on projects and less on admin.
- Streamlined sign-up process – Reduces manual tasks, making on-boarding faster.
- Enhanced planning for staff – Allows for better collaboration and coordination on volunteer activities.

**Need some support using the site? No problem!** Here are your options for further help:

- Access the user guide in the help and resources section of your profile to troubleshoot (an offline version can be found by [clicking here](#)).
- Speak to your volunteer leader, who can help guide you on what to do for your specific role
- Email/call the volunteer coordinator who has a broader understanding of the platform to help with any issue you might be facing.

## Share your feedback!

If you have any feedback on our new system, please get in touch! It's still relatively new to us so we are continually looking at new ways to improve it.



# Health and Safety

## Keeping us informed

Please keep us informed on any medical information or support needs that could affect your volunteering, including pregnancy. This is to keep you, and others, safe. Not all of our volunteering activities are suitable for all, so if you are up front with us regarding any support needs you may have then we can ensure your experience with us is good from the start, and that we have appropriate tasks to offer you. We have the right to refuse volunteering to any individual if we have a concern around the safety of the tasks being carried out. You can find more information on Health and Safety in your resources section on the volunteer management system.

## Risk Assessments

All tasks will be risk assessed. When volunteering outside you will be asked to sign the risk assessment after being informed of the relevant risks. Training will be provided for volunteers required to complete risk assessments.

## Accident reporting

It's the responsibility of all to report any accidents or near misses (whether to themselves or others) to their supervisor. Staff will report any accidents you raised when required to RIDDOR.

## Fire procedure

All Trust buildings have fire exits and alarms. You will be informed of fire procedures on arrival to a building. For fires on a reserve, group leaders will highlight the entrance/exit points onto the reserve and volunteers should follow the instructions and any risk assessment provided.

## Emergency on site

All reserves have an emergency access point in the event of an emergency. The task leader knows where these locations are and can direct emergency services. This information will also be provided on the Risk Assessment which staff will leave out should it need to be accessed by non-staff members.

## Tool safety

Training will be provided on how to use each tool correctly and safely. If you identify any issues with our tools please report to the group leader.



## **Weather**

Generally the Trust's reserve management and activities will go ahead regardless of the weather. However, weather such as gale force winds or extreme temperatures may mean we will cancel a reserve task or an event. You will be notified.

## **Lifting and carrying**

Before manually handling heavy objects consider if it needs moving at all; if so, can it be moved using machinery or split into smaller loads? When lifting, stand close to the object and keep a wide stance, be sure that footing is secure. Bend knees and assume a safe lifting position by keeping back straight and chin in, pull the load close in to the body, ensuring the use of legs, not the back, to power the lift. Ask a staff member to demonstrate the correct technique if needed.

## **Food hygiene**

Volunteers working within a public environment and handling food must undergo food hygiene training. This will be provided as part of your role. Bringing food to volunteer groups for sharing is permitted, as long as it is not sold. GWT holds no responsibility for food poisoning or allergies from food provided by one volunteer to other volunteers within the group.

## **Desk-based volunteering**

The head office operates a hot desk system. Your supervisor will ensure you have a desk allocated for your day. If you require any adjustments such as a raised screen or wrist rest for carpal tunnel please do inform us. Hot desks are available on both floors and we have standing desks available on the ground floor.

## **Lone working**

Some of our volunteering opportunities are carried out independently, so we need you to take some extra steps to ensure your safety.

- Make sure you have a mobile phone with you with good battery. There may not be great signal or internet access at all the reserves, but usually it should be ok.
- Have a lone working buddy in place, who knows where you are going, and what time you are due to be back. They can raise the alarm should they not hear from you.
- If you ever experience anything that makes you feel uneasy (i.e suspicious or poorly behaved individual, bad weather conditions) then leave the volunteering and let us know about the incident. Your safety is the highest priority.
- Volunteering activities at Barrow Wake nature reserve are to be carried out in pairs due to anti-social behaviour on site.

## Use of machinery and herbicides

Volunteers are not allowed to use machinery or herbicides without prior training, correct tickets/licences and approval from GWT. Machinery includes brushcutters, chainsaws, tractors, and knapsack packs. Tools such as drills can be used after training provided by your volunteer supervisor. Use of a trailer can only be used with an appropriate UK driving licence. The only permitted application methods of herbicide is backpack with hand-held application for stump treatment. Trained volunteers must read our pesticide codes of practice before use.

## Stinging and biting insects

Stings and some bites can cause anaphylactic shock in some people. Please notify us if you are allergic to stings or bites.

## Livestock

We use livestock on some of our reserves to help manage habitats. Please keep your distance and do not feed the animals. If you are a volunteer stock checker you will be given appropriate training in livestock management.

## Adders

Adders may pose a risk on some sites. Adders are a venomous snake found on heaths, bogs, coastlands and woodlands, active from late February to late autumn. If bitten, inform your group leader immediately.

## Dogs

Dogs on leads are allowed on our reserves that are open to the public. Should a dog show you aggression keep your distance and speak to your volunteer supervisor who can speak to the dog owner. We only allow assistance dogs while volunteering, at the discretion of the volunteer task leader.







# Naturally Occurring Hazards

## Lyme Disease

An infection caused by *Borrelia* bacteria which is passed by infected ticks via their bite. Ticks can be picked up by walking through long vegetation. You are most likely to encounter them between April-October on habitats including grassland, woodland, marshland, heathland and moorland. Please consider wearing long sleeves and long trousers on reserves, tuck trousers into socks in areas known to have lots of ticks, and check yourself over when you get home. Ticks can be removed with a tick removal tool, or tweezers if need be. Signs of the disease can include a bullseye-like rash around the bite and possibly flu like symptoms. If symptoms appear, immediately consult your doctor (or call 111) and bring the tick with you if possible.

## Poisonous plants and fungi

Our reserves may have poisonous or irritating plants and fungi. Please ensure you wear gloves when handling vegetation especially bracken and wash hands before eating or drinking. Do not eat any plants or fungi found on site. Your group leader will inform you of any dangerous vegetation on site. Some of our sites do have giant hogweed and wild parsnip, the sap of which, on contact with skin and exposure to sunlight, burns the skin. Do not handle these plants.

## Leptospirosis or Weil's disease

Leptospirosis is rare in the UK. There are two strains, and are associated with water where rats (and other rodents) are present, and cattle. When working around water or cattle, keep wounds covered with waterproof dressings, wear gloves and wash your hands with hand sanitizer before eating or drinking. Do not drink the water and avoid it coming in contact with your mouth and eyes. If you develop flu-like symptoms after working near water or cattle visit your doctor and mention Weil's disease.

## Tetanus

Dormant bacteria in soil can infect humans through open wounds in contact with the bacterium. Tetanus can cause a fatal illness by attacking your central nervous system. We advise you renew your tetanus vaccine every 10 years. Talk to your doctor for more information.

A full list of our policies accessed [here](#),  
or via the Volunteer Coordinator.



Red and white elf cups © Ellen Winter

## Public liability

All volunteers are covered by our Public Liability insurance up to £5 million. A copy is available on request.

## Motor vehicle insurance

Volunteers over 21 with a full, clean driving licence may use GWT vehicles for business purposes, on and off Trust land. Before using Trust vehicles a copy of your driving licence needs to be provided, a copy will be stored securely by GWT. You must disclose any medical condition that may impact driving. GWT will ensure the vehicle is road worthy but if you notice a problem please notify your supervisor and do not drive the vehicle until cleared to do so. A copy of traveling on Trust business code of practice will be provided.

## Using your own vehicle

We encourage staff and volunteers to use sustainable transport where possible. Driving to and from a volunteer group will be covered by your insurance. If you are asked to use your own vehicle for additional uses such as transporting Trust equipment or transporting other volunteers between sites then it is advised that you check your insurance covers this. You will need to produce your vehicle insurance document and driving licence prior to undertaking driving for GWT business use as a volunteer. For business use you must read GWT's Travelling on Trust Business Code of practice, available by [clicking here](#) or via the Volunteer Coordinator.

## Alcohol and drugs

The possession or consumption of alcohol and drugs when volunteering is prohibited. Volunteers must not be under the influence whilst volunteering. If found under the influence the Trust reserves the right to ask you to leave site. If you are in possession of an illegal substance the Trust has the right to contact the authorities.





# Volunteer agreement

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 GWT are clear about expectations in regards to support, communication, health & safety and other procedures.

This agreement is binding in honour only, is not intended to be legally binding contract between us and may be cancelled at any time at the discretion of either party. Neither of us intends any employment relationship to be created either now or at any time in the future.

## **Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust** **will:**

- Provide a designated supervisor for each task.
- Provide information into how the organisation works and your role within it, through our volunteer handbook, our website and through optional events and monthly newsletter (opt-in required).
- Provide relevant induction and training for the tasks that we ask you to carry out.
- Provide Employer's Liability insurance.
- Provide safety clothing and equipment as appropriate.
- Ensure you are in a safe working environment, including carrying out and sharing with you our Risk Assessment ahead of activities where necessary.
- Ensure that voluntary opportunities are open and inclusive, as far as is practically possible.
- Provide out-of-pocket expenses as agreed with your staff contact in-line with the expenses policy.
- Aim to reply to any queries within 10 working days. Please note this might not be possible if the Volunteer Coordinator is on holiday or ill.
- Hold required personal data securely, confidentially and in-line with all current legislation.
- To endeavour to resolve in a fair and just manner any problems, grievances or difficulties which may be encountered while you volunteer with us.
- Continue to find ways to show our appreciation to volunteers for their on-going support.

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## **As a volunteer, we ask that you:**

- Carry out your task(s) to the best of your ability.
- Follow instructions set out by your designated supervisor, in particular taking note of risk assessments and adhering to any Health & Safety directives issued as part of the training for any task.
- Speak to a member of staff should you require further clarification on a task.
- Report any incidents, accidents or near misses to your designated supervisor or a member of GWT staff.
- Tell us what skills and experiences you can bring and what you want to gain from volunteering. This will help us deliver a satisfying and rewarding experience for you.
- Represent the Trust in a professional manner, and interact courteously with the public when carrying out GWT business/activities, both in person and online.
- Be respectful towards other volunteers, staff and anyone you may be liaising with as part of your volunteering, in line with our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy. We will not tolerate any form of offensive language or offensive comments.
- Take good care of GWT resources and equipment.
- Inform your supervisor if you can no longer carry out a voluntary task, or undertake it at the agreed time.
- Inform your supervisor if there are changes in your circumstance including medical conditions or other situations that may affect your ability to undertake your volunteer tasks.
- Keep us informed with up-to-date personal information, such as contact details and emergency contact details.
- Undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service check at the appropriate level, such as if you will be working with children or adults at risk, or be responsible for Trust money.
- Give as much or as little time as they consider appropriate to them.

Your designated point for any questions or concerns regarding volunteering is:

Ellie Murray (Volunteer Coordinator)

Email: [volunteering@gloucestershirowildlifetrust.co.uk](mailto:volunteering@gloucestershirowildlifetrust.co.uk)

Phone: 07485 307236

**All volunteers participating in our activities must adhere to our volunteering agreement. If you have any questions about our agreement, please discuss with the Volunteer Coordinator before starting any volunteering activity.**



# Kate's volunteering experience

I started volunteering with Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust at the start of 2022. I wanted to support the work of Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust and help preserve the places and wildlife that I have loved since I was a child.

I regularly volunteer with the Robinswood Hill work group, doing tasks such as clearing and cutting back scrub, plus fence building in the summer. I have also helped out with a couple of the events which have been held at the hill, getting involved in crafts and seed planting.

I love my time volunteering; it's a highlight of the month! It's been so rewarding to feel like I'm part of something and actively help to keep Robinswood a welcoming place for wildlife and people. There's a real sense of achievement at the end of the day when you look back and see all of the hard work has paid off. I work mainly in an office so having this dedicated time to get up and be outdoors is essential for my well-being, I feel so much better just being there.

The group I work with are so welcoming, and we have a lot of fun and a good laugh along the way. When I first contacted the Wildlife Trust to start volunteering I was worried that I wouldn't have much to offer, but I definitely found that I was more capable than I thought! With the guidance from the staff and other volunteers I have picked up so many practical skills along the way, I'm now a lot more confident in my abilities.



# Barry's volunteering experience

I don't remember how old I was when I first became fascinated by living things, but I was certainly very young when it happened. I discovered any number of questions about living things that both fascinated and bewildered me at the time. So it was inevitable, I think, that the study of nature would become a life-time activity and passion of mine.

My current role is that of County Quiz Master for the annual primary school wildlife competition. I thoroughly enjoy the role, especially as my knees would no longer survive the challenging work of clearing scrub on a reserve. I prefer a mental challenge to a physical one now.

I love working with and encouraging children. Young people are the future of the planet and they deserve all the encouragement they can get. My generation have had their turn and a right mess we seem to have made of the environment.

There are lots of opportunities for volunteering and not all of them are going to suit you or your temperament. But there's bound to be one and it's just a case of finding the one that's right for you.

I have learned that children will never cease to amaze you about what they can do and what they know. Don't expect everyone (parents or children) to share your enthusiasm, but encourage those who do.

The wildlife of Gloucestershire is very important to me, I look on every living thing as sacred... because it is. Every living thing. That's why I support Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust.





# Further policies and insurance

## Confidentiality

As a Trust volunteer you may become aware of or volunteer directly with information which is of a confidential nature. This might be about protected species, new projects, financial or personal information. You are expected to respect this confidentiality and to check with us if you are unsure about the status of any information you are party to. For some roles, volunteers will be asked to sign a Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement.

## How we hold your data

We will only ever collect, store and use your personal data when we have an identified purpose and reason to do so. The ICO refers to this as a 'lawful basis'. If you are a Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust volunteer, we collect your personal data so that we can keep in touch with you, for example:

- Changes to planned volunteer work programmes that you may be taking part in
- The positive impact you have on our work, by sending you our volunteer newsletter (opt in required)
- Dedicated volunteer thank-you events
- Details of other volunteering opportunities

Your data will be held securely and you can request to see what information we hold about you at anytime, ask to stop being contacted by the Trust and have your details removed. View our full privacy policy [here](#).

## Insurance

All registered volunteers are insured by the Trust for their volunteering, so long as they are undertaking work agreed by the Trust, have followed our policies and procedures and any instructions or guidance that have been given. This includes cover:

- If you are injured by another person
- If you accidentally injure or damage someone or something else
- If you injure yourself by accident

Personal equipment and belongings are not insured. If you are using your own car to carry out volunteer work on behalf of the Trust your insurer may consider this to be 'business use'. It is your responsibility to check with your insurer that you have adequate cover for any use of your car related to your volunteering. If you drive as part of your role (not just commuting), you will need to complete a driver declaration form.

## Dealing with difficulties

Let us know if something isn't working with your volunteering. Although changes aren't always possible to make, we would want to see if there are changes that we can make to give you the best experience possible. If you decide you no longer wish to volunteer with us, then any constructive feedback you can offer will help us with our continual mission to make volunteering at the Trust the best it can be.

If we identify a difficulty that involves you as a volunteer (e.g we have concerns around you carrying out tasks safely, if you don't follow our code of practice etc) we will follow the following process:

- Informal discussion: your supervising staff member or the Volunteer Coordinator will have a chat with you to discuss the issue that has arisen.
- Formal meeting: If the informal discussion has not been able to resolve the issue, or if the issue is of a more serious nature, then we will invite you to a formal meeting to explore further.
- Potential dismissal: if a suitable agreement can't be reached then we will look to bring your volunteering to a close.

More information on this can be found in our [problem solving policy](#).

## Representing the Trust

Working with the public: you are a representative of the Trust, anything that you say and do can be interpreted by members, other volunteers and the public as the views of GWT. When volunteering please be especially conscious of anything you say or do that could be misinterpreted, go against GWT views or negatively affect GWT's image. You are entitled to your own opinion, of course, but please make it clear when this is the case.





# Want to support us further?

## There are loads of ways to help!

### Membership

Join our **27,000** members to get involved with activities, discover wonderful wild places and directly contribute to safeguarding Gloucestershire's vulnerable wildlife over 1,000 hectares of land.

### Team Wilder

Team Wilder is a movement where you can be proactive with wildlife friendly activities. The aim is that individuals and communities around the county will realise they too have the power to stand up and take action for nature and wildlife.

### Legacies

Remembering us in your Will could help us purchase and restore a new nature reserve, or even help save a threatened species such as the dormouse or nightjar.

### Write to your MP

By writing to your MP or meeting them in person, you can help them to understand more about a local nature issue you care passionately about.

### Amazon purchases

We have an Amazon Wishlist for items that would be beneficial to our work, which is another way to offer a one-off donation.

### Social media

By following us on social media and sharing our content, you will help us in our mission to reach one in four people in Gloucestershire. Our social media information can be found on the next page.

### Networking

By helping us network, we can connect with more land owners and supporters.



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# Stay in touch

## Your feedback is important to us.

We want to ensure your volunteering experience is the best it can possibly be. If you have ideas or feedback to improve the volunteer experience then please get in touch with the Volunteer Coordinator.

## Keep up to date on what's going on

Our monthly volunteer newsletter is the best place to find out about volunteering opportunities, and features news stories and photos from various volunteering activities at the trust. You can opt in or out of the newsletter at any point through the Volunteer Coordinator.


The Trust also runs a regular e-newsletter with further news on the work of GWT. You can sign up to it [here](#) or at [www.gloucestershirewildlifetrust.co.uk/enews](http://www.gloucestershirewildlifetrust.co.uk/enews).

 [www.facebook.com/gloswildlife/](https://www.facebook.com/gloswildlife/)


 [@gloswildlife](https://twitter.com/gloswildlife)

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 [@gloswildlife](https://www.tiktok.com/@gloswildlife)

 [@GlosWildlifeTrust](https://www.youtube.com/@GlosWildlifeTrust)

 [www.gloucestershirewildlifetrust.co.uk](http://www.gloucestershirewildlifetrust.co.uk)

 01452 383333

 [volunteering@gloucestershirewildlifetrust.co.uk](mailto:volunteering@gloucestershirewildlifetrust.co.uk)

