

A-Z of Conservation volunteering opportunities in the National Forest

Ashby Canal Association

We are a charity looking after the Ashby Canal, and working to restore the canal back to water northwards to Measham. We welcome any kind of volunteer help.

During the autumn, winter and spring months we hold regular work parties – usually on the third Sunday of each month. We usually start around 10am. Our regular meeting place is Snarestone Wharf, off Quarry Lane, Snarestone, DE12 7DD, though sometimes we work elsewhere along the canal.

If strenuous physical work is not for you, there are many less active support and administrative roles you might wish to consider, such as helping with our publicity, assisting with our archive of documents and photographs, maintaining contact with our magazine advertisers, liaising with schools, helping at events, and so on.

Contact: volunteer@ashbycanal.org.uk

Website: <http://www.ashbycanal.org.uk/volunteering/>

Burton Conservation Volunteers

Local wildlife and conservation group dedicated to improving the environment, promoting wildlife conservation, encouraging community awareness for over 30 years in and around Burton upon Trent and further afield. Normal workdays are Sundays.

Contact: Lawrence Oates – bcvflowerman@gmail.com or 07432 608931

Website: <http://www.bcv.org.uk/>

Bradgate Park Trust

Various volunteering opportunities at Bradgate Park and Swithland Woods, in particular for visitor centre, conservation (particularly dry-stone walling) and education volunteers.

Website: <https://www.bradgatepark.org/volunteer>

Contact: volunteers@bradgatepark.org or 0116 236 2713 ext. 26

Charnwood Conservation Volunteers

Charnwood's many green spaces are cared for by the Ranger Service. Their role is to manage both public enjoyment and to improve their value for wildlife and eco system services.

The Ranger Service offers opportunities to become a volunteer ranger. This will involve undertaking practical conservation tasks, leading wildlife walks, organising countryside events, wildlife recording or simply patrolling our green spaces.

Charnwood Conservation Volunteers take part in a whole range of conservation events throughout the year, working on some of Charnwood's most important wildlife sites, including The Outwoods. We supply all the tools, training and help lead the tasks.

Website: <https://www.charnwood.gov.uk/pages/rangerservice>

Contact: charnwood.rangerservice@idverde.co.uk

Circularity

Do you want to change your community for the better? Would you like a new hobby, or to be a part of something new? Maybe you'd like to meet new people and make new friends for life?

At Circularity.org we provide spaces and places for people to have experiences and for charities and non-profits to provide their services.

We've got a lovely library. We've got an ace allotment. We've got a nifty Wellbeing Wagon. We run a thriving repair cafe. We're a friendly bunch. We love providing free resources and opportunities for people in the community to come together. We'd love you to get involved. Why wait?

Be a part of Circularity as a volunteer here <https://www.circularity.org/>

Coleorton & New Lount Volunteer Group

Twice weekly conservation task days throughout the year (**Tuesdays** and **Saturdays**) at Coleorton Wood and New Lount Nature Reserve.

Website: <https://cnlvg.weebly.com/>

Contact: Ian McCormick, Secretary – coleorton11@gmail.com

Forestry England Volunteer Rangers

Sence Valley:

Variety of opportunities, including as wardens, litter pickers, or practical conservation and maintenance. The group meet on the third Sunday of every month from 09:30 - 12:30.

Visit <https://www.forestryengland.uk/sence-valley/volunteering-sence-valley> or <https://public.forestryengland.uk/EOI/> and select Sence Valley for more details.

National Forest Community Woodlands:

Roving Rangers meet monthly (Thursdays) and carry out conservation projects and site maintenance across community woodlands in the National Forest, including Bignall's Wood, Seale Wood, Gresley Wood, Poppy & Robin Woods and more!

Visit <https://www.forestryengland.uk/volunteering-national-forest-community-woodlands> or <https://public.forestryengland.uk/EOI/> and select 'National Forest & North Staffordshire Beat Wide' for more details.

Contact: info_nationalforest@forestryengland.uk

Hicks Lodge Volunteers:

Meeting meet weekly on Tuesdays, 9.30am until lunchtime, tasks undertaken are a mixture of conservation project work and site maintenance. A friendly and welcoming group, no previous experience is needed to join in.

Bird hide wardens

Helping with the opening and closing of the bird hide and being a friendly face to visitors. Please get in touch if you're interested in being a part of our team of wardens at Hicks Lodge.

Visit <https://www.forestryengland.uk/hicks-lodge/volunteering-hicks-lodge> to register interest

Heartwood Community Woodfuel group

Our Vision - To become the voluntary workforce of choice for woodland management in the National Forest

Our Mission – “The purpose of Heartwood Community Woodfuel Group is to increase the supply of sustainable wood fuel, promote a woodland culture enhancing local woodland habitat and provide broader opportunities for community engagement.”

Heartwood are a fully inclusive group and have a base (Heartwood Hub) at Rough Park, Lount where group activities, green woodworking and charcoal making take place. We manage several woodlands in the National Forest (Foxley Wood, Linton; Nether Hall Wood, Hartshorne; Woodcote Wood, Smisby) and carry out woodland management work.

Community Woodfuel project – a membership scheme operating various task days and offering training opportunities throughout the year. Come and spend a day in the woods helping with woodland management in the National Forest, and you get to take wood home with you!

Join us – There is no formal commitment needed from you, the group is managed very informally, although health and safety in the woods is our highest priority. With around 130 members we are a growing group, so please contact us for more information.

Contact: chairman@heartwoodhof.org.uk

Website: <https://www.heartwoodhof.org.uk/>

Heart of the Forest Heritage Group

We are a group of volunteers who share an interest in our local heritage. We work together to tell the stories of our past; our industries; the everyday lives of families and the unique story of the landscape change across the Heart of the National Forest.

Website: <http://www.hfheritage.org/>

Contact: hfheritage@gmail.com

Leicestershire County Council conservation volunteers

Various conservation groups operate around Leicestershire undertaking conservation tasks on most days of the week, including at Beacon Hill Country Park, Snibston Country Park, New Lout and Coleorton Wood, and Donisthorpe Woodland Park.

Website: <https://www.leicscountryparks.org.uk/regular-groups/>

Contact: countryparks@leics.gov.uk or 0116 305 5000.

Melbourne Footpaths Group

Local footpaths group operating in and around Melbourne village to help look after and maintain the Parish footpaths. There are regular guided walks and occasional task days.

Website: <https://melbournefootpathsgroup.wordpress.com> or Facebook
www.facebook.com/MelbourneFootpathsGroup

Moira Furnace Volunteers

If you can spare a few hours, or more contributing to the upkeep and continued success of the Furnace, whatever your skills or wishes to learn new ones - we would be pleased to welcome you to our small but dedicated team. Ages, genders and abilities are no barrier to joining our crew.

Activities include working within the grounds, helping at events, also during our open season supporting visitors in the museum and shop. Closed season work continues with maintenance of our buildings, woodland, boat and canal side.

Contact: office@moirafurnace.org or 01283 224667

The National Forest volunteers

Heart of the Forest volunteers: Help us look after the sites, wildlife and communities within the Heart of the National Forest. Regular volunteer days will be held on a fortnightly basis, from 10.00am to 2.30pm on Fridays, and there will also be occasional weekend sessions.

<https://www.nationalforest.org/get-involved/volunteer-national-forest-company>

Meta Garden volunteers: Do you have a passion for plants, and have a day a month to spare? Help us to care for the gold medal-winning RHS Chelsea garden, designed by Joe Perkins and rehomed at Conkers Discovery Park.

Wildlife Recorders: if you are interested in any type of wildlife from birds to beetles, or flowers to fungi, then we need you! We are growing a network of people who can help us to gather data about the wildlife in the National Forest. Join us for an annual programme of guided walks, and training for skills such as identification and photography.

National Forest Way volunteer Rangers: join our team of footpath guardians, and carry out self-led audits and inspections of the National Forest Way and other promoted walking routes.

Occasional task days are held (usually Thursdays) to carry out maintenance and repair work.

Contact: enquiries@nationalforest.org

Website: <https://www.nationalforest.org/get-involved/national-forest-way-rangers>

National Memorial Arboretum, Alrewas

For those of you who enjoy being outside, planting, pruning, doing grounds maintenance, then we recommend our working weekends. These are the first full weekend of each month and you are most welcome to come along.

For more information about our volunteer opportunities, visit the website:

<http://www.thenma.org.uk/get-involved/volunteer/>

National Trust (Calke Abbey)

Have you ever thought of becoming a volunteer? Well at Calke Abbey we believe that we have a volunteer role that caters just for you. Do you have free time on your hands and wish to spend it engaging with eager visitors as they visit our country house in decline? Or possibly the outdoors is more your calling, where you can spend a sunny Saturday helping in our gardens?

Find out more: <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/calke-abbey/lists/join-our-team-of-volunteers>

Overseal Footpaths Group

Local footpaths group operating in and around Overseal village to help look after and maintain the Parish footpaths. The group also holds weekly walks on Tuesday afternoons from various locations, and occasional task days on Wednesday mornings.

Contact: "Get Active in the Forest" – Dot Morson: dorothymorson@btinternet.com

Rosliston Rangers Volunteer Group

Join in with the Rosliston Rangers and help out with a wide variety of tasks to help manage the amazing habitats at Rosliston Forestry Centre including tree work, conservation and wildlife surveys. We meet on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month between 10.00am - 3.00pm.

Contact: Environmental Education Project – rosliston@southderbyshire.gov.uk or 01283 535039

Sinai Park House Trust

Sinai Park House is a hilltop site (near Shobnall, Burton upon Trent) overlooking the Trent Valley, used as a sacred meeting place and a strategic outpost from earliest times. The Paget family reinvented the timber-framed shooting lodge as a stylish Elizabethan manor house with a 13th-century moat, and a host of extensions and refinements have been carried out every century since, all in the Medieval and Tudor style.

Now developing as a heritage attraction with education visits, the Trust are looking for volunteers to help with events, conservation work, and grounds maintenance.

Contact: kate@sinaiparkhouse.co.uk

Website: <https://sinaiparkhouse.co.uk/>

South Derbyshire Parklife Project

We welcome people who would like to be involved with the development and management of the parks and open spaces in South Derbyshire. There are a number of opportunities and initiatives where you can volunteer your time – for full details please contact the Parklife Officer:

Contact: parksandgreenspaces@southderbyshire.gov.uk or 01283 228 766

Sustrans

Sustainable Transport Charity Sustrans volunteers carry out a huge range of activities, from looking after the [National Cycle Network](#), leading rides or walks, helping to transform streets into places for people and volunteering in local schools and universities.

Website: <https://www.sustrans.org.uk/get-involved/volunteer/>

Swadlincote in Bloom

Are you bored with looking at four walls?

Do you really want to go and do something interesting, healthy and good fun?

Come and help Swad In Bloom make a difference in Swadlincote!

We are looking for volunteers to help on our stalls, help with our gardening projects, help with fundraising, help with town tidy ups and so many more areas. We really want to make Swad bloom and we would love you to join us.

At the moment we have monthly stalls on the Delph, a community tree which will be displayed in Morrisons foyer and changed according to annual events, a gardening project in Morrisons bed on the High Street, Sunflower competitions, Scarecrow trail and many other projects waiting for volunteers.

It can be an hour or two once a month, a regular weekly tidy up in the Morrisons bed, litter picking or helping by fundraising. We will never let volunteers work alone on any project and can guide you in what needs doing.

Contact: treasurer@swadinbloom.org or Facebook page @Swad_in_Bloom.

Swannington Heritage Trust

Swannington Heritage Trust is an entirely volunteer run organisation maintaining 14 acres of former industrial heritage sites that are now managed as woodlands and grass heathland for the benefit of the community.

For more information about the various tasks and how to get involved, visit <https://swannington-heritage.co.uk/trust/volunteer/>

The Conservation Volunteers (TCV)

Community volunteering workdays – carry out conservation tasks such as coppicing, dry stone walling and habitat management. Weekly workdays on **Tuesdays, Wednesdays (AM), Thursdays and Saturdays** at various sites in the National Forest.

Come and join the team, learn new skills and access great training in the field of conservation and land management.

Contact: Rob Driver – rob.driver@tcv.org.uk

Website: <https://www.tcv.org.uk/midlands/tcv-national-forest>

Transforming the Trent Valley partnership

Transforming the Trent Valley is a [partnership project of 18 organisations](#) working together to restore and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the Trent Valley, with [Staffordshire Wildlife Trust](#) at the helm. There are lots of volunteering opportunities to get involved in, from community initiatives to wildlife, history and access projects.

Follow Transforming the Trent Valley on Twitter at [@TheTrentValley](#), on Instagram at [TheTrentValley](#) or on [Facebook](#).

Website: <https://www.thetrentvalley.org.uk/volunteer.php>

Wildlife Trusts

Derbyshire: Living Landscapes project, based in the Trent Valley, to look after 11 reserves including Spring Wood and Carvers Rock. The volunteer team meet regularly to undertake

practical conservation, monitoring and survey work.

<https://www.derbyshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/support/volunteer/volunteer-opportunities>

Leicestershire: various supervised groups carrying out tasks on nature reserves in the County

<https://www.lrw.org.uk/get-involved/volunteer/>

Staffordshire: details of volunteering opportunities on reserves and at the Trusts' HQ

<https://www.staffs-wildlife.org.uk/get-involved/volunteering>

Whistlewood Common, Melbourne

Whistlewood is ten acres of community-owned land in Melbourne, South Derbyshire.

The site is designed along permaculture principles (a sustainable design framework) so that it will work for people, for wildlife and be a welcoming space for people of all ages and backgrounds.

New additions to the site include a community garden and a Forest nursery.

We have an active volunteer programme, including a Duke of Edinburgh programme, and welcome people from all ages, backgrounds and abilities.

For more information about how to get involved, visit the website:

<https://www.whistlewoodcommon.org/volunteer/>

Woodland Trust

We cherish, campaign for and look after the country's woods, old and new and their associated wildlife. But we can't do it without you. Volunteers have been involved at every level of the Woodland Trust's work over the last 40 years and are an integral and valued part of our team. However long you've got, whatever your interests or strengths, you can help the UK's largest woodland conservation charity to make a difference.

Key sites in the Forest are Willesley Wood (nr Moira), Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Wood (Heather) and Martinshaw Wood (Ratby), and there is a dedicated Top Wood Working Group.

Website: <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/get-involved/volunteer-with-us/opportunities/>

Contact: volunteering@woodlandtrust.org.uk