



Volunteer Handbook

All our volunteers are asked to register with us by filling in the registration form, this information is securely held and only used by appropriate staff members. The information stored will allow us to contact you and support you with volunteering and to contact your appointed person in case of an emergency. All details are kept confidential and will not be passed on to any third party.

As a volunteer you are informally representing the partnerships to the public, whether as an events volunteer or even as a work party volunteer who happens to be chatting to a walker passing through the site. As you get more involved you will learn enough about the partnership to be able to chat to people about the basics of what we do. You can always refer the public to a member of staff or other appropriate person if they are asking about difficult or sensitive issues and media enquiries should always be referred to a member of staff.

All tasks are led by a member of staff. All volunteers have the opportunity to ask questions, raise any concerns and can discuss work you are involved in.

The partnerships are always looking to offer new opportunities to our volunteers. If you have been with us for a little while and think you would like training in skills such as brushcutter use or in the operation of plant machinery such as dumper trucks and mini excavators, or to become a volunteer task leader, please let us know. When we have enough interest, we can organise our own training courses for certain skills. Courses are free to volunteers who regularly attend our tasks. Volunteers are required to sign to acknowledge their training as a record that they have received it.

If a volunteer has any issues they would like to raise, their main points of contact are the Senior Partnership Officers at Downlands, Downlands Grazing and Lower Mole Partnerships (also covers Surrey Heathland Partnership). We encourage each team to have a volunteer representative who can gather feedback from the volunteers to give to the staff and vice versa to relay messages to the volunteers.

The partnerships work across a wide area on a range of habitats doing a range of jobs. This means that it is important to understand the risks of Tetanus, Weil's disease and Lyme disease. We ask that all volunteers are up to date with their Tetanus jabs and that you are aware of Weil's and Lyme. We supply hand sanitiser for every task.

We ask that volunteers wear steel toe caps/sturdy footwear to every task and suitable outdoor clothing, including waterproofs as required. Any additional PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) that is required will be provided by the Partnerships. This is all covered in our risk assessments and covered by the introductory talk at the start of each session.

Safeguarding is the protection of members of society who may be more vulnerable due to age, illness, capacity or position in society. Surrey County Council, as the host authority of our service, is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

The partnerships only accept volunteers aged 16 or over, unless accompanied by an adult aged 18 or over. We welcome vulnerable adults to volunteer with us via a third-party organisation such as Surrey Choices, where a member of their staff will accompany the volunteer on site until its mutually agreed that the volunteer is able to join in unsupervised. We actively avoid any one-to-one situations between staff/volunteers and vulnerable volunteers. As we advertise for volunteers to join us in a variety of ways there is potential for an individual to turn up on site without any prior introduction, in that situation the member of staff on site would ask the volunteer to complete a contact details sheet on site.

Surrey County Council is committed to the fair treatment of its employees, potential employees, and volunteers, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background. The Council will treat all volunteers fairly and will not discriminate unfairly against volunteers based on a conviction.

