

# Volunteer induction handbook

## ***Introduction***

### **The Special Trees and Woods Project (STWP)**

Hosted by the Chiltern Woodlands Project, the STWP aims to record the heritage of special trees and woods throughout the Chilterns to promote them and secure their protection and sustainable management.

### **Funders**

The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), Chilterns Conservation Board and The Chiltern Woodlands Project (CWP) fund this three and a half year project.

### **Contact**

If you have any concerns or queries call Liz Manley, on 01844 355 525 or 07979 497 688 or email on [lmanley@chilternsaonb.org](mailto:lmanley@chilternsaonb.org)

## ***Responsibilities***

### **Ours**

The Chiltern Woodlands Project staff aim to:

- Provide clearly defined, achievable tasks which will benefit the project
- Provide a key contact to support you in your volunteer tasks
- Reimburse pre-agreed expenses
- Ensure equal opportunities
- Provide safe working conditions
- Keep you informed of changes and developments which affect you
- Encourage and support and value your volunteering efforts

### **Yours**

As a volunteer we ask that you:

- Work with us to achieve the aims and objectives of the STWP
- Are committed and reliable
- Air problems and issues as soon as they arise
- Complete timesheets
- Attend relevant training
- Are an ambassador for the CWP and STWP at all times
- Provide the STWP with all relevant information and artefacts discovered in the course of your volunteering eg reports, photos, oral histories etc.
- Provide notice of your intention to stop volunteering

## ***Recruitment***

We hope to engage and select committed and enthusiastic volunteers to help staff deliver the aims and objectives of the STWP.

Web links, press releases and public talks aim to recruit volunteers. Interested parties then apply as a registered volunteer using the form available on the website or by post.

## **Registration**

Those who return a completed registration form are eligible to being a registered volunteer. On receipt of the form Liz will make contact to arrange an interview to discuss roles, suitability and tasks. Successful candidates will become registered volunteers for the STWP.

## **Awarding tasks**

When a task arises Liz will contact suitable registered volunteers. These will be selected using their interests as outlined on their registration form, previous contact and experience and geographic location.

If a volunteer agrees to undertake a task Liz will provide all the necessary documents and support.

## ***Training***

All new volunteers will go through an induction session with Liz covering the project, the role of volunteering and health and safety.

Training events will be held throughout the year to deal with the needs of the project and the volunteers. Volunteers will be told of each event and a list is available on the website.

## ***Equipment***

Any equipment provided by the CWP must be signed for and returned by the agreed date.

## **Communication**

### **Feedback**

Liz will contact you regularly to discuss progress on tasks and will be relying on feedback from volunteers to improve aspects of the project. Please let Liz know if you need assistance.

### **Volunteer communication**

Training events will provide an occasion for volunteers to swap their news and progress. The project pages in The News of the Woods newsletter will illustrate progress and celebrate completed tasks. Volunteers can contact each other by joining a group at <http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/STWproject> Sending One email sent to [stwproject@yahoogleroups.co.uk](mailto:stwproject@yahoogleroups.co.uk) will then reach all volunteers and Liz.

### **Recording progress**

#### *Timesheets*

To receive funding from the HLF the STWP must produce documentary evidence of donated volunteer time. Therefore, it is crucial that any time you volunteer towards the project must be recorded on a timesheet. Download a copy of the timesheet from the website.

#### *Diaries*

Task diaries can be used to produce guidance notes for new volunteers.

## **Travel and transport**

Wherever possible use public transport, car share, walk or cycle.

### **Expenses**

Approved travel costs incurred through the STWP can be reimbursed to registered volunteers. The mileage rate for cars is 36p/mile and for bicycles, 20p/mile. (These figures may be subject to change). Costs can only be reimbursed if the Volunteer expenses form is complete. A copy can be downloaded off the website.

Public transport costs can be reimbursed on production of receipts and/or ticket.

### **Your movements**

Let Liz know, by phone or email, where you plan to be for your volunteer work. This is crucial for Health and Safety for visits away from your home, likewise it is more efficient.

## ***Legal issues***

### **Chiltern Woodlands Project**

The CWP is a registered charity, N° 1002512. Volunteers must follow guidelines set out by the CWP in order to follow best practice and meet insurance and funders requirements.

### **Insurance**

Registered volunteers are covered by the Chiltern Woodlands Project public liability insurance. Timesheets must be completed as an insurance requirement.

Please ensure that you are covered by your own car insurance when driving for your volunteer work.

### **Health and Safety**

The Chiltern Woodlands Project aims to anticipate risks and remove or avoid potential hazards during volunteer tasks where practicable.

Volunteers are also responsible for health and safety and must use both their own judgement and advice from the Chiltern Woodlands Project when carrying out volunteer tasks.

### **Lone working**

Ideally, work with another volunteer or a member of staff rather than on your own. Where lone working is unavoidable tell someone where you are going (eg Liz or your partner) and when you expect to return. Carry a mobile phone if you have one, Liz can be contacted on 07979 497 688.

### **Weather**

Working outside comes with risk of exposure. Always wear appropriate clothing for outdoor work, use sun cream and drink plenty of water.

### **Clothing**

Trousers, rather than shorts, and boots are recommended, as are sun hats and waterproofs whichever the weather suggests.

### **Safety equipment**

Where applicable, specialised safety equipment (eg hi-vis jackets) will be provided.