

Practical Conservation Volunteer (Central Area)

The South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) needs volunteers to assist with practical conservation tasks in a variety of different habitats (woodland, coppice, chalk grassland, heathland, and freshwater). This is a fantastic opportunity to work across the landscape, in an area stretching from Chantry Hill in the East, to Harting Down in the West, and Black Down in the North.

Role Description:

Our volunteering schedule is very varied, and includes tasks such as:

- Coppicing
- Scrub clearance
- Tree popping
- Invasive species management
- Hedgelaying
- Tree planting
- Meadow cutting/raking
- Community engagement
- Access improvements on the South Downs Way
- Bracken scything
- Ecological monitoring

We also offer opportunities to volunteer with some of our partner conservation organisations, e.g. National Trust Slindon, RSPB Pulborough Brooks, Natural England Kingley Vale.

Compulsory Training:

All Practical Conservation Volunteers will undertake an SDNPA induction, this will provide an overview of SDNPA volunteer policies and procedures, risk assessments, and safe working practices which must be adhered to at all times.

Any other specific training requirements will be met.

Equipment Provided:

Relevant personal protective equipment (PPE) and required tools are provided.

Further volunteer clothing will be issued once three task days have been completed.

However, please get in touch if you have any particular clothing needs to support your attendance on task.

Training Opportunities:

Our volunteers have the opportunity to gain the following qualifications:

- Outdoor first aid
- Brushcutter
- Off-road 4x4

The SDNPA also organises hedge laying training, ID courses, and ecological survey training (butterflies, birds, ground flora) as per the requirements of the role.

Transport:

Access to own vehicle is preferable, but not required. Volunteers meet either at the task site, or at the Weald and Downland Museum. Pickups from public transport links (e.g., Midhurst Bus Station, Barnham Station, Worthing station etc.) are offered when operationally viable.

Responsible to:

Assistant Rangers: Dominic Sunderland & Gemma North
Volunteer Support Officer: Chloe Beckerson

Preferred/Est. Hours: Flexible

No minimum commitment required



Key Skills & Qualities:

- Friendly, reliable, and self-sufficient
- Willing to accept direction and guidance
- Ability to work with people from all backgrounds
- Ability to communicate with staff
- Ability to adhere to all SDNPA volunteering policies and procedures

No previous knowledge or experience is required, just an enthusiasm to learn new skills & a commitment to improving nature within the National Park.

