

Resource - Volunteer Case Studies

Included here are a set of example activities and projects with volunteers. These are all real-life volunteers and groups but without personal details. Hopefully, it gives you some idea of what is possible with the right skills, qualifications and support.

1. Canal Restoration Group

Task: Restoring a filled-in canal route.

Volunteer Manager: Engineer (paid) from the organisation that owns the land.

This is a group of volunteers who are undertaking a construction project that is required to meet the Construction Design and Management Regulations (2015).

Within the group are a number of retired engineers with experience of this type of project. One of which is the named lead volunteer. They have a number of written procedures to ensure that the volunteers are consistent in their approach. Many of the volunteers have taken industry-recognised practical training/qualifications to use excavators and other construction vehicles/equipment.

All of their procedures have been agreed with their volunteer manager who undertakes regular site visits to ensure these are being followed and that the works meet the required standards.

2. Volunteer Rangers

Task: Maintaining Countryside Parks.

Volunteer Manager: Parks Manager (paid) working for the Local Authority who owns the land.

A team of volunteers, who are largely independent, undertaking tasks such as maintaining fences, laying hedges, planting trees, picking up litter and greeting visitors. They have an agreed list of tasks and lone working procedures as well as risk assessments for the task. They manage their own workload and hours and priorities. Training is largely informal, with group courses for tasks like hedge laying.

3. Friends of x Church

Task: Running Events and Community activities.

Volunteer Manager: Volunteering Officer (paid) working for the charity who owns the building.

A team of 15 active volunteers from the local area who meet every two months to plan events and activities. They put on an annual music festival, take part in Heritage Open Days, arrange a Christmas carol service (the church does not have regular services) as well as one-off themed events. They agree the activities and appropriate risk assessments with the volunteer manager, who attends their meetings. Training largely consists of courses provided by the charity with in-house staff, such as cleaning techniques for heritage material.

4. Youth Leaders

Task: Running weekly youth activities.

Volunteer Manager: Group Team Leader (Volunteer).

A small team of three volunteers running weekly youth activities. Their Volunteer Manager is responsible for three different teams, providing activities for different age groups. The Youth Leader

agrees their planned activities and writes written risk assessments which are saved in a shared online location. All leaders are DBS checked and undertake training in safety and safeguarding. A larger scheme of training is provided by the organisation, but take-up of that varies.

If leaders are not available the sessions cannot run. However, absences can be covered by other members of the wider team and additional helpers can be recruited from the parents to ensure that the ratio of adults to minors is appropriate to the activities.

5. Visitor Welcome Stewards

Task: Greeting visitors, guided tours & selling souvenirs.

Volunteer Manager: Volunteer Officer working for the charity who owns the building.

A team of volunteers, on a rota, keep the heritage building open and improves the visitor experience for casual visitors as well as organised groups. The tasks are set by the volunteer manager, who provides the risk assessments. Training is provided by the charity.