



The Haycop Conservation Group

Charity number: 1137884

Location: 3, Dark Lane, Broseley, Shropshire. TF12 5LH.

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Volunteer Welcome Pack.

(Adapted from the Shropshire Wildlife Trust).

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1. Welcome to Volunteering with the Haycop.

a) Volunteering Opportunities.

The Haycop Conservation Group (the Haycop) is a nature conservation group dedicated to maintaining the Haycop Nature Reserve in Broseley, Shropshire. We welcome Volunteers who have an interest in the natural environment and nature conservation. Volunteering on the reserve is open to all people, irrespective of their backgrounds. We are a non-political organisation.

The work of the Haycop includes the following, some of which may offer volunteering opportunities:

- Conservation work for wildlife on our nature reserve;
- Work on maintaining the site – e.g. maintenance of paths, removal of invasive plant species, mowing of meadows & grasslands, making the site safe etc;
- Education, including work with school children and working with young people in the community;
- Surveying plants, insects, birds & animals in the nature reserve and other local wildlife sites;
- Recording of biological information.



Some of these volunteering activities may involve working with children and vulnerable adults, and in such cases, background checks, including criminal record checks, will be made via the DBS system (Disclosure & Barring Service) to comply with the Children's Act (updated 2004), the Care Standards Act 2000 and the Criminal Justice & Court Services Act (updated 2015).

The Haycop has specific Policies which are specifically relevant to working with children and vulnerable adults:

- **Child Protection Policy;**
- **Safeguarding Policy.**

On volunteering their services, the Volunteer will be asked to supply their contact details to a member of the committee and this information will be passed on the Haycop Secretary for entry into the contact list. This is done via the **"Volunteer Contact Details"** form.

2. Volunteer Charter & Statement.

The Haycop values Volunteers and accordingly Volunteers will:

- Receive an induction appropriate to the work they are asked to undertake;
- Initially have another Volunteer/Committee Member to guide and help them in their work, until they become more familiar with the Volunteer role;
- Have access to basic training and development on-site, where it is relevant to their work;
- Be supplied with adequate equipment & tools and safety protective wear;
- Be given the opportunity for rest & refreshment;
- Be covered by the Haycop's insurance for their work.

Volunteers need to be aware that they:

- Are Volunteers and are valued as such, but are not employees;
- Are expected to comply with the Rules and Policies of the Haycop, including relevant Health & Safety Policies. Any accidents or near misses need to be immediately reported to a Member of the Committee;
- Cannot receive payment for any work done in their capacity as a Volunteer by or on behalf of the Haycop, but may be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses when this is deemed appropriate;



- Are expected to fulfil any commitments they have given to carry out work or communicate with the Committee if they are unable to do so;
- Should complete their allocated tasks to the best of their ability;
- May agree not to continue as a Volunteer by mutual consent with the Committee.

Whilst every effort will be made to maximise use of Volunteer's time in a way most beneficial to the Haycop and most enjoyable to the Volunteer, the decision to allocate work amongst Volunteers is a matter for the Committee.

Volunteers can be involved on as many days as are allocated or may decide to only work on a few days. Volunteers will decide for themselves when they want to work. Whether they take on a more key role or are just another "pair of hands", all Volunteers will be valued equally.

a) Volunteer Recruitment.

Volunteers are recruited through various routes. These may include:

- Personal contact with a Committee Member or another Volunteer ("Word of mouth");
- Referral to posters in shops in and around Broseley, advising of "Volunteer Days";
- From the Haycop Facebook page or website;
- Any other source.

Volunteers can request further information by contacting a member of the Committee via the Haycop's email address.

Volunteers who work with children or vulnerable adults will be subject to DBS checks (as advised previously) to comply with the Children's Act (updated 2004), the Care Standards Act 2000 and the Criminal Justice & Court Services Act (updated 2015).

b) Volunteer Management.

If a Volunteer is unhappy about any aspect of their work, they should discuss this with a Committee Member, who will attempt to resolve the matter. Likewise, if the Haycop Conservation Group is unhappy with the conduct of a Volunteer, the matter will be discussed with the Volunteer, and this could result in the Volunteer not being asked to carry out any future work.



c) Communication.

The Haycop Committee endeavours to collaborate closely with Volunteers and to communicate with them as required. You will be notified by your preferred means (phone, email, text etc.) of any events that may be relevant to your work. The Committee welcomes any feedback on how your volunteering is going and will try to resolve any issues.

Any suggestions for improvements to the work will be gratefully accepted and considered and discussed with you and other Volunteers by the Committee.

3. Health & Safety Information.

Our policy is to provide and maintain Safe and Healthy working conditions, equipment and systems of work for our Volunteers and to provide such information training and supervision as they need for this purpose.

Duties include:

- All Volunteers should make sure they know who to report any accidents or near misses to. This will usually be a Member of the Committee, of which there is always at least one who attends each event;
- Whilst Volunteers are expected to do their own minor First Aid (e.g. putting plasters on minor cuts etc.). A First Aid kit will be available on site during activity days, which will be held by the designated Committee Member. The Committee is responsible for making sure the First Aid kit is fully stocked with approved First Aid materials;
- Volunteers who may be trained First Aiders should advise the Committee Member on site of this fact;
- Committee Members present on the day will hold emergency numbers for the **Emergency Services** (Fire, Police, Ambulance). The Air Ambulance is authorised to land on the FAIR FIELD close by;
- Arrangements will be made to get the Volunteer to medical attention or the closest A&E department as soon as possible.

Failure to comply with the Haycop Committee's guidance on H&S can result in the Volunteer being stopped from working for their own safety and the safety of others working with them. Failure to comply could also result in any insurance claims being negated.

The Haycop has a set of Safety Policies which can be requested from the Committee via the email contact or by direct communication with a Committee member. These Safety Policies include:



- **Health & Safety Policy Statement;**
- **Lone Working Policy.**

The Haycop Conservation Group also conducts **Risk Assessments** for the specific tasks undertaken by Volunteers. Only those with the specific training will be allowed to undertake certain hazardous tasks – e.g. the use of a chain saw or brush cutter.

Information for Volunteers Working on the Haycop site:

1) Tools:.

- Every tool has a specific use and may only be used for that intended purpose. Using tools in the wrong way can be dangerous to yourself or other workers;
- The Task Leader will instruct you, as required, in the safe use, storage & transport of hand tools;
- As advised above, for the use of power tools like chain saws or brush cutters, the designated trained users can only use these.

2) Protective Clothing.

- Strong boots or wellingtons must always be worn. (These can be steel toe-capped);
- You are advised to bring a waterproof jacket, as weather conditions can quickly change;
- On cold days wear warm clothing in layers, rather than a single, bulky, protective item that can restrict free movement;
- In strong sunshine protect the skin with sun lotion and wear a hat;
- Always tie back long hair and remove loose jewellery;
- The Haycop will provide additional safety wear (such as goggles, hard hats etc.) where applicable, especially for those using power tools;
- A good pair of gloves is also recommended.

3) General Health Issues.

- Always inform the Task Leader or a Committee Member if you have any health conditions, allergies or concerns;
- Never overwork yourself and only do as much as you feel able to do. Take frequent breaks and do not allow yourself to get too hot, cold or too tired;



- Always take sufficient food, drink and water with you on site. (The Haycop Group does often provide a hot drink and snacks and some food, but this is not always guaranteed).

4) **Specific Health Issues.**

- **Tetanus** lurks in soil & dirt and can be contracted through a dirty wound. It is a potential killer. You are at risk of infection if you sustain an open cut or graze but are protected if you have up-to-date inoculation. If concerned, check your tetanus inoculation status with your doctor;
- **Weil's Disease (Leptospirosis)** can be contracted via human exposure to infected urine, (particularly rats). It can enter the body through cuts & abrasions in the skin or by the mucous membranes of the nose, mouth & eyes. It is common in water in rivers, ponds & ditches.

Precautions include:

- + Washing your hands before eating & keeping cuts covered;
 - + Avoiding touching your eyes and nose with wet hands;
 - + Taking care when working in or near water.
- **Lyme's Disease** can be passed to humans by ticks. If a tick bites, remove the tick as soon as possible, making sure you have taken out the mouth parts. Symptoms can occur from 1 week to several weeks after the bite. Symptoms include a rash at the bite site, an elevated temperature (or feeling hot and shivery), headache, muscle and joint pain, tiredness and loss of energy;
 - **Hypothermia** is a condition arising from a dangerous loss of heat, caused by being exposed to very cold, wet or windy conditions. Wet jeans, for example, can be a major cause of heat loss. Symptoms include staggering, slurring of speech and difficulty with vision. Prevention is best, so make sure you are adequately dressed and avoid getting wet if such cold & windy conditions are present;
 - **Heat Exhaustion** results from overheating, high humidity and loss of body fluids. Wear a sun hat and, if affected, sit in a cool, shady and breezy place and have plenty of cool drinks. Stop working!
 - **Umbellifer plants** – e.g. hogweeds. These can cause a rash or blisters. Wear protective clothing & gloves if doing a weed clearance;
 - **Blue-green algae** can accumulate on water, especially during late summer. It produces toxins and water containing it should be avoided;



- **Dog faeces** can contain Taxicara, which can cause blindness in children. If you encounter dog faeces, wash your hands thoroughly;
- **Insect bites & stings** can not only be painful but are fatal for some people who can suffer a severe allergic reaction or even anaphylactic shock. If you are allergic, let a Committee Member know beforehand and state this on the **Volunteer Contact Details** form.

5) Lone Working.

The Haycop has a specific **Lone Working Policy**. If you intend to do work on behalf of the Haycop Conservation Group on your own down at the Haycop site, please request a copy of this policy via the email contact. Please adhere to this policy.

To summarise:

- Avoid any physical work that carries an elevated risk of injury. Light digging, weeding, path repair, pruning etc. would be acceptable;
- Arrange to contact someone on a regular basis, so that you can report that you are still OK;
- Avoid the use of sharp tools like saws;
- We ask for details on the **Volunteer Contact Details Form** of whom to contact on your behalf in the event of an emergency or a late return from work, whether or not you are working alone.

4. Equal Opportunities.

The Haycop is committed to the promotion of Equal Opportunities in all aspects of its work and believes that it should take positive steps to promote equality of opportunity in the delivery of its work and the use of Volunteers.

a) Diversity.

The Haycop Conservation Group is an inclusive organisation. We welcome Volunteers from all backgrounds. The Haycop is aware of the inequalities that exist in society and as a result opposes all form of discrimination on the grounds of:

- Colour;
- Race;
- Nationality;
- Ethnic or national origin;
- Gender;



- Marital status;
- Age;
- Sexual orientation;
- Pregnancy or maternity;
- Disability;
- Religious beliefs;
- Responsibility of dependents;
- Any other condition or requirement which cannot be shown to be justified.

Paths on the reserve have been upgraded in 2019 – 2023, so that they are more wheelchair accessible.

Conservation activities organised by the Haycop, take place across a variety of habitats on the nature reserve. Some of the habitats and pathways on the reserve have rough or uneven surfaces, including steps. We will do everything that is possible, within our control, to make conservation activities accessible to Volunteers with mobility problems, sight or hearing loss.

The Haycop is also committed to providing a working environment free from harassment.

The Haycop's policy applies to all activities, including the conduct of Committee Members & Volunteers. Volunteers should, always, be aware of the different and special needs of other Volunteers.

If you have any concerns that the principles of equal opportunities are not being applied, please speak to a Committee Member.

b) Inclusion and Respect.

All Volunteers on the Haycop will be made to feel equally welcome and included at all our events.

Sexist, racist, homophobic, transphobic or otherwise offensive and inflammatory remarks and behaviour are not acceptable. These constitute harassment and have no place on the Haycop.

Please refer specifically to the Haycop's **Inclusion Policy**.

c) Dealing with Discrimination and Harassment.

- If any Volunteer feels they have been discriminated against by the Haycop or harassed at an event by another Volunteer, they should raise this with the Committee;



- The Committee will investigate the complaint, listening to all Volunteers involved. (If the complaint is against a Committee Volunteer, that Volunteer will not be part of conducting the investigation);
- If the complaint is against a particular individual, this person will have the opportunity to express their point of view, accompanied by a friend. The person making the complaint will also have this opportunity;
- If the complaint is against the Haycop as a whole, the Committee must work to ensure that such discrimination is not repeated in the future and must inform the Volunteers of how they propose to do this;
- Any decision to exclude a person from the organisation due to discriminatory or harassing behaviour will be made with reference to the Haycop constitution. The Haycop will support people who feel they have been harassed or discriminated against and will not victimise or treat them less well because they have raised this.

This Welcome Pack will be reviewed at least every 2 years.

Issue: 2

Reviewed by G Pickwell: 19/03/2024.

Signed: 

Date: 19/03/24

Trustee/Committee member: GRAHAM PICKWELL

Signed: 

Date: 19/03/24

Trustee/Committee member: IAN BARRETT