



Role Description - Visitor Experience Volunteer

Bedgebury National Pinetum

About Us

Forestry England is a part of the government Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and is tasked with the sustainable management of the Public Forest Estate for timber, recreation and wildlife.

Bedgebury National Pinetum is home to a world-leading collection of conifers. It is unique in the UK and of global significance for the purposes of species conservation, scientific advancement and the understanding of conifers.

Bedgebury is also a popular visitor attraction with an increasing number of visitors looking to enjoy the outdoors - whether cycling in the wider forest, searching for the Gruffalo sculptures, spotting wildlife, or finding out more about our internationally important tree collection.

Role Description

Working under the guidance of the Volunteer coordinator and the Visitor Services team, our Visitor Experience Volunteers (VEVs) play a key role in welcoming our visitors to Bedgebury National Pinetum and Forest. Your role will be to help visitors orientate themselves around the site by sharing visitor site information, giving directions, handing out maps and selling activity packs - ensuring they get the best experience during their visit.

Providing visitors with a warm welcome is a vital part of Bedgebury receiving a VAQUAS Welcome Merit award.

You will also be asked to litter pick, gently remind visitors to keep dogs on leads and guide visitors to the recreation areas when necessary.

When?

- During busy periods such as weekends, bank holidays and school holidays
- A commitment of 1-2 sessions per month
- Shift times are generally- mornings 9.30am - 12.30pm or afternoons 12.30pm - 3.30pm, covering the busiest times on site.

Visitor Experience Volunteer

Typical tasks include

- Meeting and greeting visitors as they arrive at Bedgebury, sharing your enthusiasm for all it has to offer in the forest and the pinetum - home of the National Conifer Collection.
- Help our visitors orientate themselves, find out what they would like to do and provide information about possible activities, such as cycling, children's play, dog-walking and orienteering.
- Provide information about what's happening on site that day and future events.
- Hand out walking leaflets, sell trail maps and activity packs.
- Undertake a walking patrol of the Play trail offering a friendly presence sharing your knowledge of Bedgebury.

We'd like you to

- Enjoy working outside
- Have a friendly personality and be willing to answer public queries
- Be reliable, patient and keen to share your enthusiasm
- Use an on-site radio for communication
- Be willing to follow guidelines set including health and safety and Covid-19 guidance
- Attend relevant training courses and be willing to learn from specialist partners and staff

We will provide

- A volunteer registration prior to taking up the role (not applicable to existing volunteers)
- A volunteer induction or information meeting
- Full training and support
- Volunteer uniform
- A daily briefing from the visitor services team at the start of each volunteering session
- Appropriate tools and PPE if needed e.g. litter picker, high vis, hand sanitiser etc.
- An on-site radio and mobile phone for use during your volunteering shift for communication with the visitor services team.
- Free parking on your volunteer day
- A free cup of tea or coffee from the café on your volunteer day
- A volunteer's membership for free admission to Bedgebury throughout the year after 35 hours of regular volunteering (reviewed annually)
- A volunteers' newsletter

Visitor Experience Volunteer

- An invitation to annual events such as the 'Thank you' BBQ and other volunteer events.

Who to contact?

If you are interested in volunteering for this role please register your interest via our website www.forestryengland.uk/volunteering-bedgebury or email bedgebury@forestryengland.uk for more information.

For more information about volunteering at different Forestry England sites please visit our website. www.forestryengland.uk/volunteering

Covid19

Please note that the most important thing is for Forestry England to keep the public, our staff and volunteers safe. We will be following government guidelines with regards to Covid-19 restrictions and will be asking you to agree to do the same when taking up any volunteering position with us.