

Myplace Ecotherapy Volunteer Role Description

About the Lancashire Wildlife Trust

We are part of the Wildlife Trusts movement, the UK's leading conservation charity dedicated to all wildlife. We are your local charity, working hard to improve your local area for wildlife and for you.

The Trust manages over 2,000 acres of some of the region's most precious wild places in the form of 37 nature reserves and 20 Local Nature Reserves. These provide places where wildlife can thrive and people can relax and enjoy the wealth of our natural heritage.

LWT is committed to the principle of valuing diversity. We recognise the benefits that can be secured through working with a diverse staff and voluntary workforce and harnessing the individual talents of those from different backgrounds and with different skills.

About the Myplace Project

Myplace is an exciting new project that will be working with people who have physical or mental health issues and/or are experiencing long-term unemployment. Participants will be supported in their recovery and/or to improve their employability. The Project aims to empower people, encouraging them to take action, participating in environmental activity that has positive benefits for their own health and mental wellbeing, as well as for their local community.

We do this through the delivery of environmental challenges using an ecotherapy approach. Examples of activities that we might deliver within the 5 themes of ecotherapy include:

- Mindfulness: mindful walking, meet a tree, wild orchestras, environmental art
- Growing: composting, seed collection and propagation of native flora, food growing
- Bushcraft: cooking over an open fire, wood carving, knots, building furniture and dens
- Practical conservation: increase biodiversity, invasive species removal, access and boundary work, habitat management
- Nature walks: wildlife ID and biodiversity monitoring, photography competitions, foraging

Weekly sessions are delivered at Myplace hubs located throughout East, West and Central Lancashire and are aimed at people aged 13+. The project is split into 4 age brackets – Young People aged 13-25, Young Adults aged 16-25, Adults aged over 25 and a project called Men in Sheds working with Men over 50.

“I've had a very wonderful time with some of the most amazing people and that made me feel good”,

Myplace participant

What is an Ecotherapy Volunteer?

All Myplace volunteers are valued members of the team, working alongside Project Officers delivering environmental activities to participants. In addition to the outdoor based opportunities, volunteers can also get involved in: supporting participants to complete personal development plans, social media activity, promotion and evaluation of the project. There are opportunities to volunteer with all of the 4 age brackets or select which you prefer to work with (13-25, 16-25, 25+ and 50+).

What's in it for you?

- The chance to make a difference in a person's life
- Enjoy new experiences & develop new skills
- Be a part of an amazing project team and make new friends
- Reasonable expenses reimbursed
- The chance to contribute to the work of the Trust
- A full induction and access to volunteer training including: Mental Health First Aid, Health and Safety, Safeguarding
- Eligible to apply for internal vacancies (once induction has been completed)

What's involved?

- Assisting with the preparation and delivery of environmental project work to participants
- Participating in ecotherapy based activities
- Supporting participants, staff and fellow volunteers
- Maintaining confidentiality of sensitive information
- Representing the Trust and Myplace project at events
- Help is sometimes needed driving our minibus vehicles (but this isn't essential to apply for the role)

This role will suit people who:

- Are aged 18 or above
- Have empathy with those who are unemployed or may experience poor mental health
- Have good interpersonal skills and are able to work with people from all walks of life including children, young people or vulnerable adults who are potentially from challenging backgrounds
- An understanding of ecotherapy would be useful
- Would like to develop new skills and knowledge
- Are reliable, approachable and friendly
- Would like to contribute to the work of the Trust
- Enjoy working as part of a team

Myplace is a Lancashire Wildlife Trust and Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust partnership project, funded through The Big Lottery Fund via the Our Bright Future campaign and European Union Social Fund.

Extra information

Your place	Volunteer opportunities available at Brockholes (Preston), Mere Sands Wood (West Lancashire), East Preston, South Chorley, Skelmersdale, Accrington, Bacup, Blackburn
Time commitment	At least half a day on a regular weekly basis. We hope people will volunteer with an interest in benefiting LWT in the long term.
Volunteer Manager	Rhoda Wilkinson rwilkinson@lancswt.org.uk 01772 872017/2007
Staff Contact	To be confirmed on induction
Training/Resources	LWT Volunteer Induction Access to the Volunteer Training Programme Health and Safety Training Manual Handling Training Mental Health First Aid Training Safeguarding Training Eligible to apply for internal vacancies (once induction has been completed)
Expenses	Out-of-pocket travel costs between home and volunteering place will be paid up to a maximum of £5 per day, and other reasonable subsistence/expenses agreed in advance.
Requirements	The Trust will apply for a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check for volunteers undertaking this role which is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 because it involves working with children and young people or vulnerable adults. In the second stage of the volunteer recruitment process we will ask you to provide two references.

This volunteer role is completely voluntary and as such this document is not legally binding nor can it be considered to be a Contract of Employment