



Volunteering - Frequently asked Questions

How much time will I have to commit?

There is no set time commitment. Most volunteering opportunities are flexible and you can fit them around your own schedule, whether you're working or not. Some roles may entail attending committee meetings at set times to organise Society's activities.

What training and information will I be given?

It varies according to the role. Sometimes a current volunteer will train up new volunteers, for other roles there will be a guidance pack and the Society may consider running training sessions for specific volunteers. External organisations occasionally offer specialised training to Groups if requested, such as working with people with particular disabilities. If the Society engages in active working parties, i.e. clearing paths and these require the use of suitable tools then the Society will ensure that training in the use of any tools is given and that volunteers are aware of any Health and Safety requirements. The Society is keen to provide advice and information to its volunteers.

What support will I be given?

Again, it depends on the activity. Some will be set up as team activities, so support will come from peers. For others support may come from a specific person designated by the Society.

Do I have to be a member of the Society?

No. The Surrey Hills Society is a membership organisation and, as such, most of our active volunteers are members because they believe in supporting our work through their membership subscription. However, we welcome the support of non-members as volunteers. Whilst there will be some activities where being a member is necessary, particularly if insurance is an issue or it involves financial responsibility – non-members could get involved in lots of other activities such as setting up a website, designing a leaflet or organising events.

How do I apply?

Initially by contacting the Society via e-mail at info@surreyhillssociety.org and a member of the Society will be able to tell you which volunteering opportunities are available near you. They can give you a brief explanation of what is involved in that particular role. The Society operates an equal opportunities policy and believes that volunteering should be open to all.

Will I receive out-of-pocket expenses?

Currently the Society is normally unable to pay expenses. The Society's ability to pay expenses is dependent on resources being available and volunteers will be informed immediately if the situation changes.

Do I have to join a committee?

No. You could volunteer as a walks leader, or join a practical working party, distribute leaflets, assist at a Society stand at an event or help to run social media pages – none of these activities would require joining a committee.

Do I have to go to lots of meetings?

No. If attending meetings isn't how you would like to offer your free time, there are plenty of other activities that don't involve going to meetings.

Is this voluntary work office-based?

No. Most volunteers work from home or out and about: leading walks, practical work or running stands at events, for instance.

Do I need to have use email?

Yes. For contacting volunteers and organising events it is required that volunteers do have access to email.

Am I covered for Insurance purposes?

All volunteers working with the Society are covered by the Society's insurance policies whilst on Society's premises and/or activity engaged in Society business or activities.

If I use my car for volunteering, will it affect my insurance?

No. We advise anyone using their car to volunteer, to inform their car insurance company of this in writing. It shouldn't make any difference to your insurance in terms of cost, but it covers you in the event of a claim should you have an accident whilst using your car to volunteer.

What if I want to stop volunteering?

You don't have to commit to volunteering for a specific period of time; you can stop volunteering whenever you want. It is helpful if you can give as much notice as possible of your intention to stop volunteering, so that the opportunity may be publicised before it becomes vacant again, but this isn't essential.