



What volunteering activities do we offer?

Depending on the time of year, we offer different volunteering opportunities and activities. The autumn and winter are our busiest seasons, where we can carry out the most practical conservation work. We still offer volunteering days throughout the spring and summer, but our opportunities are much more limited due to restrictions on practical work due to ground nesting bird season.

Please see below for a flavour of the activities that you can get involved with for each of the seasons throughout the year.

Autumn

- Tree popping

Appropriate habitat management is incredibly important to create a diversity of key habitats within the Surrey Hills. On chalk grassland and heathland sites, we need help removing inappropriate tree species (such as hawthorn and silver birch) to restore these habitats and benefit wildlife.



Employees of DEFRA and Environet Tree popping at the Hampton Estate near Puttenham.

- Digging Wildflower beds

Digging turf and turning over soil to create wildflower beds will help to benefit a whole range of pollinators.



Allianz environmental volunteering day digging wildflower beds at West Horsley Place.

Winter

- **Hedge and Tree Planting**

Hedgerows are invaluable habitats for wildlife, providing food and shelter throughout the year. They also help to connect high-quality habitats, such as ancient woodland, ensuring species such as dormice can travel safely through the landscape. Not only this but they also provide a whole range of ecosystem services, including carbon absorption, filtration of harmful air pollutants and mitigating flooding and agricultural runoff.



Hedge planting with WSP and National Highways at Clandon Wood Nature Reserve and Honeymead Farm in Bramley.

- Tree popping
- Scrub clearance

Spring

- **Hedgerow Surveys**

We need your help to survey hedges, feeding into the Great British Hedgerow Survey. This provides important data to relay into hedgerow management plans, helping to better manage them for wildlife.



Hedgerow surveys with National Highways employees at Denbies Hillside near Dorking.

- Litter picking
- Digging wildflower beds

Summer

- **Removing invasive weed species, such as Himalayan Balsam and Canadian Goldenrod.**

In June and early July, it is important to remove fast-growing invasive species to allow other native flora and plants to survive. This is often done by hand-pulling the plants out of the ground.



Allianz and Atkins employees pulling up Himalayan Balsam and Canadian Goldenrod at Fox Corner Wildlife Area and Banstead Downs.

- Clearing drainage ditches
- Butterfly monitoring
- Signage installation.

Corporate volunteering day - donation rates - 2024

To enquire about our costs for corporate volunteering days please email volunteering@surreyhillssociety.org.

Please note that for all enquiries we will need to discuss with you whether we have suitable opportunities for your group size. This particularly applies to group sizes over 40 people.

Our costs include the number of task leaders required to support and deliver your volunteering day safely, as well as a risk assessment, activity and health and safety briefings, tea/coffee and biscuits, tools, and personal protective equipment (in certain cases we may ask you to provide your own gloves). Donations also go towards supporting community groups to connect with the

Surrey Hills and participate in conservation volunteering activities, by supporting with transport and tool costs.

Timings and what to bring:

Our standard task days usually start at 10am and end at 2:30 or 3pm. However, we can alter the timings slightly as to what works best for you. Within the day we will usually have a 30-minute lunch break and will offer hot drinks, water, and snacks (usually biscuits). We ask that everybody brings a packed lunch with them.

Please wear suitable clothing for being outdoors, including appropriate footwear (old trainers or walking shoes). Depending on the weather conditions you may need to bring waterproofs, or suncream and a hat with you. In certain situations, you may be advised to wear long sleeves and trousers or bring additional items with you.

Health and Safety and Insurance:

Before each task day, a full risk assessment will be sent to you, including the details of the nearest accident and emergency centre. On the day, you will be given a full health and safety briefing and a demonstration of the activity. Everybody will be given the opportunity to ask questions.

The task leader will be first aid trained and there may be other members of staff/volunteers who are also first aid trained.

Surrey Hills Society has both Employer's and Public Liability insurance which covers all volunteer activities.

Whilst practical conservation work can be physically strenuous at times, this is supposed to be a fun and enjoyable experience and we ask everyone to take it at their own pace and take breaks as required. If members of your group have additional needs, please get in touch and we will try our best to cater for what is required.

Some feedback from previous corporate volunteering days:

“From the outset the Surrey Hills Society responded promptly, providing all the information that we requested, and offered to put together a day that factored in everyone’s needs.” – National Highways

“Working with the two charities, SHS and BCC was the clear highlight for all involved. It was incredibly rewarding to work with such a knowledgeable team and broaden our understanding of the local environment and importance of its conservation for the direct wildlife involved.” – Atkins – [Read more here](#).

“We all had a glorious, purposeful day. We proudly helped. And hope to get invited again.” – WSP

“What a great day to spend on the hills and the weather certainly made it better” – Environet

“We all had a fantastic day and everything was so well organised. Everyone said how lovely it was to be out and about with their colleagues whilst also helping the local community.” - Allianz

To discuss anything further please contact our Project and Volunteer Coordinator, Christa Emmett by emailing volunteering@surreyhillssociety.org