

Surrey Countryside Partnerships



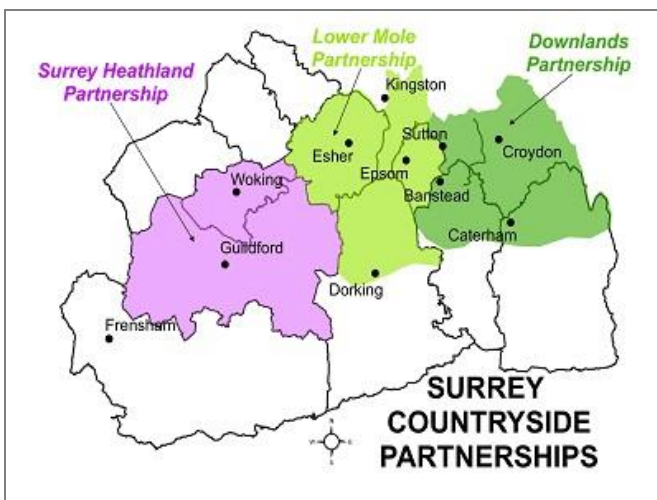
Our corporate employee volunteering opportunities in the great outdoors

Volunteering with us is great for health, happiness & habitat

Who we are, where we work and our corporate offer per partnership

We provide an established countryside management partnership service, which is vitally supported by our dedicated conservation crews of practical countryside volunteers.

The essence of our service is working within and for local communities, for biodiversity, wildlife, public access, environmental education and countryside enjoyment by all.



We work seasonally on a large number of countryside areas across northeast Surrey (Tadworth to Tatsfield, including Chipstead, Caterham, Sanderstead) and in the urban fringe of Croydon and Sutton with our Downlands Partnership.

We work across north Surrey (including Dorking, Epsom, Esher, Oxshott) and into Kingston with our Lower Mole Partnership.

Both the Downlands Partnership (Mon to Thurs) and Lower Mole Partnership (Tues to Thurs) run weekly scheduled volunteering task programmes throughout the year. Up to six corporate employee volunteers can usually join in on most of our scheduled task days, working alongside our great regular volunteering crews.

Downlands Partnership's Monday task sessions are held at the Sanderstead to Whyteleafe Countryside Area (SWCA). Some Sunday countryside volunteering sessions are also offered at the SWCA. Downlands Partnership runs a busy conservation grazing service, which also welcomes corporate volunteers by special arrangement during the summer and winter months, principally at our private 90 acre holding farm base Old Lodge Farm, which is owned by our host partner Surrey County Council and is located near Carshalton/Banstead.

Our Surrey Heathland Partnership works principally with countryside contractors on a number of heathland sites in the Woking and Guildford areas, but can offer bespoke corporate volunteering opportunities for larger groups (minimum fifteen attendees) during autumn or winter. Monthly Monday heathland volunteering sessions are also offered on set dates during the winter and summer months.

Please kindly note that not all of our scheduled tasks are suitable for groups, so please get in touch and we can discuss the best options for your specific group size and needs together.



**Surrey County Council employee volunteering days clearing scrub:
Waste Operations team on task at Brooklands Community Park and Transport Policy team at Chipstead Downs**

What types of countryside tasks are best for corporate volunteers to join in with?

We carry out targeted countryside management to maintain, restore and improve rare special habitats of chalk grassland, ancient woodlands and heathland, plus rivers, wetlands and pond work.

Seasonally these are the best types of countryside work for corporate groups to enjoy:

- **Spring:** countryside access improvements (footpath surfacing), small scrub clearance*, litter picking
Please kindly note that during April and May we do carry out a lot of signage and bench installation tasks that are not usually suitable for groups.
- **Summer:** helping to control non-native invasive species - ragwort and Himalayan Balsam pulling; grassland species monitoring sessions
- **Autumn:** scrub clearance*, riverside management, traditional coppicing
- **Winter:** scrub clearance*, traditional coppicing, hedge planting

** scrub clearance is like gardening en masse, cutting down encroaching shrubs, bushes and small trees with hand tools and raking up to open up the habitat to let light in so that rare species can thrive. Scrub clearance is ideal for teamwork and for those new to countryside volunteering. Autumn/winter is the best time for larger groups to volunteer, as we have many suitable scrub clearance task days on offer across our partnerships' area.*



Staff from Greggs enjoying a coppicing & pollarding task in Harholt Wood, Banstead



Nationwide Addlestone branch employee volunteering team day at Norbury Park, joining in with traditional coppicing

How our great corporate partnership offer can help your company meet your Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Employer-Supported Volunteering (ESV) targets

- We have been providing a public service of varied, enjoyable countryside volunteering opportunities, led by our small team of knowledgeable trained staff, for over 35 years, so you are guaranteed a fully insured, risk assessed and well organised local conservation experience
- We work in close partnership with our 11 local authority core funding partners, including host authority Surrey County Council and various private partners to meet their corporate, environmental and health & wellbeing strategies, engaging and inspiring local communities across our widespread partnerships' area. We are well established to greatly help you to meet your local CSR targets, to support the local environment and the local residents in close vicinity of your office and the wider borough/district/county/urban fringe.
- Countryside volunteering has many proven health and wellbeing benefits, both mentally and physically, and is a great social, rewarding activity in glorious settings. It is becoming increasingly recognised by the NHS and healthcare professionals that getting out in the great outdoors is good for everyone's mind, body and spirit. Our service offers the ideal ESV activity for staff to get out in the fresh air, away from the demands of technology and targets, to work together in a fun but physically challenging way and to see the fruits of their labour at the end of the day.
- Be it a day for staff to just let off steam and enjoy and learn about local habitats, their flora and fauna and countryside management techniques or a structured team building exercise, we can offer suitable tasks and locations to meet all of your corporate ESV needs.
- Our service is directly supported by our two small, independent, registered charity partners, both run by a small group of voluntary trustees. Both [Downlands Trust](#) (1126535) and [Lower Mole Countryside Trust](#) (1095771) work in close partnership with us to raise further awareness of our service and the local countryside and we work on fundraising and outreach initiatives together.
- There are many options for your company to consider to further support our service directly or through our charity partners to develop great corporate partnerships, through corporate donations, staff mini fundraisers, sponsorship branding opportunities (such as on-site infrastructure, vehicles or donating towards the purchase of livestock and tools/equipment) and much more.

Why not get involved and get inspired?

Our corporate group volunteering day rates for 2023-2024

- Up to 6 volunteers can join in on scheduled task days at no charge
- For 7-12 volunteers on a scheduled or bespoke task day: £172 + VAT for the group per day
- For 13-24 volunteers on a scheduled or bespoke task day: £343 + VAT for the group per day
- For 25-40 volunteers on a bespoke task day: £572 + VAT for the group per day
- For 41+ volunteers on a bespoke task day: £858 + VAT for the group per day

Please kindly note that these net day rates have been kept as low as possible in these difficult financial times. The costs reflect the number of extra task leaders needed over and above a scheduled standard task day to manage larger groups. The costs include for the extra outlay required for refreshments, PPE (gloves, hard hats etc) and the provision of a portaloos if required, subject to site.

We acknowledge that not all companies or other local government organisations have a budget for paid ESV activities. We are pleased to always discuss potential fundraising options instead, to ensure all organisations have the option to get involved by being able to support our countryside service delivery through alternative means of funding - see fundraising/sponsorship options above. Please contact us to further discuss if applicable.

Our standard task day timings and what you should wear and bring with you

- Our task days start at 10am and finish around 3.30pm-4.00pm (weather/season dependent)
- Corporate groups can join in for half day am or pm sessions only if preferred
- There are scheduled tea and lunch breaks
- You need to wear suitable outdoor, comfortable clothing (layers are good and old clothing you are happy to get dirty in!) and decent footwear (no sandals, high heels or flip flops please!)
- Waterproof clothing is essential if it is a bit rainy and hats/sunscreen should be brought along for sunnier days
- Please bring a packed lunch to enjoy a picnic alfresco together (under cover if it rains!) and we recommend a bottle of water too

What we provide and our health and safety and insurance information

- All tools, gloves and PPE (hard hats if required etc)
- Tea, coffee, squash and the essential biscuits!
- All of our task leaders are first aid trained and a full introductory/health & safety/ task and site briefing will be given at the start of your volunteering session
- You will be shown exactly what to clear/cut etc, how and why, including how to correctly and safely use the hand tools provided; also bonfire safety on winter scrub tasks
- Everyone can work at their own paces and take extra breaks as required throughout the day
- Most tasks are suitable for all ages and abilities, but please be mindful that you do need to be fairly fit for countryside volunteering as it is a green gym workout! However, through ensuring you are careful with bending/stretching/pacing etc, anyone can give it a try!
- As our service is hosted by Surrey County Council, all corporate volunteers that join in with us are covered by Surrey County Council's public liability insurance and a copy is available upon request
- Our volunteering offer is in accordance with Surrey County Council's Volunteer Promise – please see the end of this brochure
- All employee volunteers should read our Surrey Countryside Partnerships' Health & Safety information leaflet for full guidance on volunteering in the countryside with us - a copy will be provided when you book your volunteering session with us and a copy is also available on our website
- Task specific parking, public transport and toilet facilities information will be provided for your chosen activity
- You will be sent a link to our online corporate volunteering feedback survey to complete after your task day with us, to help us to continually monitor and improve our corporate offer

Where to find out more about our service and volunteering task days in action

Surrey Countryside Partnerships website: to find full information on our service/team, including a selection of our latest quarterly seasonal volunteer task sessions on offer and direct contact details for each partnership, plus further details on our two charity partners

www.surreycc.gov.uk/surreycountrysidepartnerships

Our email address for corporate volunteering & general enquiries is:

countrysidepartnershipsteam@surreycc.gov.uk

Downlands Partnership Facebook: showcasing our volunteering days and team news and events

[Downlands Partnership - Home | Facebook](#)

Lower Mole Partnership Facebook: showcasing our volunteering days and team news and events

[Lower Mole Partnership - Home | Facebook](#)

Downlands Partnership Grazing Facebook & Downygrazers Twitter: showcasing our conservation grazing news and events and all things livestock

[Downlands Partnership: Grazing - Home | Facebook](#)

[DownlandsLivestock \(@Downygrazers\) | Twitter](#)

Explore Surrey Twitter: for everything countryside including Surrey Countryside Partnerships' tweets

[ExploreSurreyUK \(@ExploreSurreyUK\) | Twitter](#)

What some of our corporate partners have to say about volunteering with us



"We've really enjoyed volunteering with the Lower Mole Partnership over the last few years. Everyone has been really welcoming and helped us to feel that we've made a difference in our local area.

We look forward to continuing to work with you in the future!"

Aon Hewitt, Epsom, Surrey

Photo shows Aon Hewitt staff enjoying their annual summer local community volunteering day with the Lower Mole Partnership.

In June 2018 they helped at Esher Common, joining in with pulling up invasive Himalayan Balsam, to open up targeted areas to bring in light to benefit the native flora and fauna.

"Morgan Sindall Construction's local team in St Bede's (Redhill) really enjoyed having the opportunity to volunteer with the Downlands Partnership over several days during summer & autumn 2018.

This was a brilliant, enriching experience for our team. It is always wonderful to have the opportunity to give back to the community, and very rewarding to take part in projects like this which support local natural habitats and our wildlife - improving diversity and securing these environments for people living locally and for future generations.

We believe in making a positive difference to the communities we are a part of and partnerships such as this are a great opportunity for us to offer our expertise to reflect the local priorities and needs of the areas in which we work. Our business has formed a strong link with the Downlands Partnership and we look forward to working with them in the future."

Morgan Sindall Construction & Infrastructure Ltd, based in Brighton



Photo shows Morgan Sindall staff helping with ragwort pulling (using ragforks) at Nork Park, Banstead in July 2018

"We got to have a go with a variety of tools including brand new loppers donated to the Downlands Trust charity by Fidelity. It was tough work but there was no pressure to push yourself. There was a real sense that any and all help is genuinely appreciated, and the results were great to see. It was a fantastic day, sharing a

common goal with others from Fidelity to help the local community, habitats and wildlife. Thank you to all those who took part and to all those who made it possible."



Fidelity International, FIL Investment Management Ltd, Kingswood, Surrey

Photos show Fidelity staff enjoying small scrub clearing at Addington Hills, Croydon, on scheduled & bespoke team task days

Our volunteer promise

We value volunteering and our volunteers

Making it easy

We will:

- work to provide volunteering opportunities that are valuable and beneficial
- give you a point of contact for your volunteering activities

Keeping you informed

We will:

- respond to you as soon as possible

Getting it right

We will:

- provide clear information, support and advice that explains your volunteering role
- use your experience and feedback to improve how we do things
- recognise the impact of volunteering in our communities

Treating you in the right way

We will:

- continue to be welcoming and ensure you feel valued
- consider your needs, safety and wellbeing in your volunteering
- listen, be helpful, polite and treat you fairly and with respect
- be open, inclusive and communicate early
- keep your personal information confidential and GDPR compliant

In return, we ask you to:

- let us know when you are unable to keep to volunteering commitments
- keep in regular contact with us
- give us your feedback so that we can learn from your experience
- do all that is needed to keep yourself and others safe
- adhere with any confidentiality requirements
- treat everyone politely and with respect