

# Naturezones Volunteer Management Policy

## Updated 14.05.2025

### Why is a volunteer policy important to Naturezones?

- Ensures a positive volunteering experience for all those involved.
- Recognises and rewards the invaluable contribution that volunteers make to your organisation and the local community.
- Provides a framework in which volunteers can contribute to your organisation safely.
- Defines roles and clarifies the responsibilities and expectations of both volunteers and staff.
- Provides consistency and demonstrate best practice.
- Ensures the involvement of volunteers should complement and supplement the work of paid staff.

<p><b>Introduction</b></p>	<p>Naturezones is unique and the only one of its kind on the Isle of Wight. It is a living natural history museum. Its main aim it to explain through education why it is so important to look after, protect and enhance the habitats of wildlife. Our education programmes are for all – a wide variety of people and communities including school children, home educated children, college students and adult learners. We also support people with learning difficulties and mental health issues with the aim of restoring their confidence, health and wellbeing.</p> <p>The projects land is controlled by the benefactor and as a nature reserve it has restrictions on accessibility. It will be open to the public on specified days only. On all other days it is closed to the public. And reverts to private property and is used for the benefit of organised groups, volunteers’ day and school visits.</p> <p>We very much welcome and appreciate volunteers that can help us manage the nature reserve to further our aims and objectives.</p>
<p><b>Definition</b></p>	<p>As a volunteer you will work within the Aims and Objectives of the project.</p> <p>Be able to recognise and fulfil your commitments to the project and the young people who use it. This will include attending agreed sessions and to let Conservation Volunteer coordinator (CVC) know when you are unable to do so.</p> <p>Be responsible not only to the project as a whole but also to the people of all age groups who use it.</p> <p>Adhere to the policy of confidentiality within the staff team and in all your work with young people.</p>
<p><b>Our vision for volunteering</b></p>	<p>As a volunteer at Naturezones we are committed to offer you support from all of our staff. We will respect you as an equal member of the staff team but not expect you to take on the responsibilities of a full-time worker.</p> <p>The project fully supports and recognises the important contribution of its volunteers to the projects aims.</p>

<p><b>Roles and Responsibilities</b></p>	<p><b>Your role</b> We offer various different roles at Naturezones including onsite maintenance, field surveying and fundraiser/events ambassadors to represent us at community gatherings.</p> <p>You could be working around the site repairing paths, planting trees, preparing habitat and helping our staff team keep on top of the weeds, whilst also tackling the main projects that come about each season. This is a hands-on physical programme. While helping to manage the 10-acre nature reserve volunteers will learn a range of conservation skills. Activities will include, hay making, coppicing, horticulture, fence building, habitat creation, DIY, in fact anything required to keep the reserve in good working order.</p> <p>You could be accompanying or representing us at fairs, shows and education events to raise awareness for Naturezones and Nature itself.</p> <p>You could be assisting us to deliver our education programmes along with dedicated trained staff onsite.</p> <p><b>Our role</b> The Conservation Volunteer coordinator will support your role at Naturezones and will be there as a first point of contact. In the event of the Conservation volunteer (CVC) coordinator not being available the owner and founder of the organisation will be available to assist.</p> <p>You will be invited to attend and contribute to some staff meetings where relevant. Volunteers may be asked to contribute their time on open and specified non-open days.</p>
<p><b>Equality and Diversity</b></p>	<p>Equality and diversity are central to the work of Naturezones.</p> <p>Naturezones will treat all people with dignity and respect, valuing the diversity of all. It will promote equality of opportunity and diversity. It will eliminate all forms of discrimination on grounds of any of the protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act, or other characteristics irrelevant to the purpose in view.</p> <p>It will tackle social exclusion, inequality, discrimination and disadvantage.</p> <p>Naturezones’ goal is to work towards a just society free from discrimination, harassment and prejudice. Naturezones aims to embed this in all its policies, procedures, day-to-day practices and external relationships.</p>
<p><b>Recruitment and Selection</b></p>	<p>On completion of your successful application form you will be contacted by the CVC.</p> <p>Volunteers will work for an initial three-month period to give both the project and the volunteer the opportunity to see if they wish to progress with the work.</p> <p>Volunteers are not required to complete a DBS check</p>

<p><b>Induction and Training</b></p>	<p>Volunteers will prepare for and attend agreed supervision/training sessions and be willing to discuss practice issues and raise any items of concern.</p> <p>Volunteers will undertake training where it is deemed to be relevant and appropriate by both yourself and the CVC.</p> <p>Volunteers will adhere to the policy of confidentiality within the staff team and in all your work with young people. This will be discussed in more detail during your initial supervision session.</p> <p>The CVC will offer access to training and keep you informed of any training opportunities that arise. Wherever possible the project will meet the costs of the training.</p> <p>The volunteer will agree to undertake training where it is deemed to be relevant and appropriate by both yourself and the project leader</p>
<p><b>Support, Supervision and Recognition</b></p>	<p>The Conservation Volunteer coordinator (CVC) will have responsibility for organising volunteers' contribution to the project. The CVC will be your first point of contact for any queries, questions or complaints. Your CVC will also be responsible for following up any issues raised and liaison with other staff members.</p> <p>Naturezones will ensure that that volunteers are recognised and appreciated with informal thank you events held during the year.</p> <p>Positive news stories, videos and photos of our achievements including volunteers are highlighted in our regular newsletters</p>
<p><b>Evaluation</b></p>	<p>The CVC will manage the volunteer programme and it will be monitored and evaluated.</p> <p>The CVC will ask volunteers to fill out a feedback form.</p> <p>Feedback will be acknowledged and improvements be made will be discussed and agreed on a regular basis.</p>
<p><b>Leaving Naturezones</b></p>	<p>On leaving the organisation and exit interview for final feedback from both sides will be offered.</p> <p>Naturezones will provide a reference's for ongoing employers if contacted in a timely manner.</p> <p>The CVC will keep a log of volunteer hours for individuals.</p>
<p><b>Volunteer expenses</b></p>	<p>The Conservation coordinator will offer access to training and keep you informed of any training opportunities that arise. Wherever possible the project will meet the costs of the training.</p> <p>The volunteer will agree to undertake training where it is deemed to be relevant and appropriate by both yourself and the project leader.</p>

<p><b>Health &amp; Safety</b></p>	<p>All staff are made aware of the health and safety policy at Naturezones. This should be made available on induction and at any point for reference thereafter.</p> <p>All employees and volunteers are responsible for health and safety within their area of work. They will put right a hazard or unsafe work practice as soon as they notice it or if a hazard cannot be put right safely and following health and safety policies, it should be reported to the supervisor onsite or directly to the CVC as soon as possible.</p> <p>Risk assessments are available to volunteers prior to carrying out work and regularly updated with health and safety policies.</p> <p>A volunteer may lose their position if health and safety policies are not adhered to or broken.</p>
<p><b>Insurance</b></p>	<p>Naturezones will provide employers liability insurance.</p>
<p><b>Safeguarding</b></p>	<p>Safeguarding is about protecting the safety, independence and wellbeing of people at risk of abuse, and is everybody's responsibility.</p> <p>Naturezones believes that children and adults have the right to protection from abuse, and should be able to live free from the fear of abuse.</p> <p>Naturezones is committed to ensuring that disclosures of abuse and safeguarding concerns are taken seriously and acted upon appropriately.</p> <p>Any issues should be reported to the CVC as soon as possible.</p> <p>Training will be provided to all volunteers so that all staff and volunteers are aware of their roles and responsibilities and appropriate information is provided to this end.</p> <p>Breaking safe guarding policies of Naturezones will result in termination of their position.</p>
<p><b>Data protection and confidentiality</b></p>	<p>Naturezones recognises the importance of data protection and confidentiality.</p> <p>No data from the volunteer's personal information will be shared with a third party without their consent.</p> <p>The volunteer must also recognise the importance of volunteer's confidentiality, their responsibilities and how they protect others. Volunteers will be made aware of the Naturezones' confidentiality policy and volunteers will be expected to adhere to it.</p> <p>Volunteers' information will be confidential and kept on our data base for just one month or until you cease to be a volunteer. After which it will be deleted.</p> <p>Data breaches or concerns must be reported to the CVC asap.</p> <p>If a volunteer breaks the confidentiality procedures at Naturezones they may be terminated.</p>

<b>Problem solving</b>	If there are disputes or concerns or differences arise during the work day then please bring this to the attention of the CVC as soon as possible who will strive to ensure a fair outcome for all parties. If the issue concerns the CVC then please go directly to the Founder of Naturezones where all complaints will be dealt with, fairly and without prejudice.
<b>Social Media</b>	Volunteers will not be expected to promote Naturezones on social media.
<b>Review</b>	Volunteer policy 14.05.25 Reviewed and updated by Michalle Martin, Conservation Volunteer coordinator at Naturezones and approved by Naturezones Founder and owner,  Angela Hewitt  _____Date_____. Next review due by 14/05/2026