

Volunteering in Colchester's Countryside
***MONDAY VOLUNTEER RANGER *VISITOR CENTRE VOLUNTEER**
*** WEEKEND VOLUNTEER RANGER**
***VOLUNTEER WALK LEADER**

1. Weekend Volunteer Ranger (18+ yrs)

Time Usually one Saturday or Sunday a month, 10am - 4pm.

Location The start and finish base for the days activities is High Woods Country Park but throughout the day you could be working on any one of our many sites in and around Colchester.

The Role A very varied role. Volunteers will mostly work in pairs and be given a list of tasks to work on independently throughout the day. These tasks could include the following; carrying out practical maintenance and conservation work, assisting visitors, patrolling, litter picking, removing graffiti, helping on guided walks & activities. Some tasks are quite physical and will involve carrying, bending and lifting. A wide variety of hand tools are used, on the job training will be provided. The terrain can be rough, muddy and slippery. We work in all weathers. Please be aware that toilet facilities are only available at High Woods Country Park.

Qualities Good people/interpersonal and communication skills, enjoy outdoor, practical work/dealing with the public. You need to be relatively fit and mobile.

Benefits to you Meet new people, gain the sense of giving something back to your local environment, fresh air and exercise, learn new skills. Hot drinks and biscuits provided. As a volunteer you become a member of the Colchester Countryside Volunteer Rangers (CCVR), a constituted voluntary 'Friends' Group that has worked in close partnership with the Countryside Team for many years. <http://www.highwoodsvolunteers.org.uk>

Training 1 day training programme. (Dates arranged throughout the year depending on demand)

2. Volunteer Walk Leader (18+yrs)

Time Walks take place on alternate Fridays and Sundays from 11am to 12.30pm

Location High Woods Country Park

The Role Help lead walks and motivate walkers. The Friday walks are short, up to 2 miles, and a great form of low impact exercise, suitable for most people's abilities, where attendees walk at their own comfort pace. About 20 participants of varying ages and some with health needs attend. The Sunday walks tend to be more of an informal stroll around the Country Park of up to 3 miles. The tea, biscuits and chat afterwards seem to be a very popular part of the activity!

Qualities enjoy being with people and walking.

Benefits to you support people to get active and meet new people. Be a part of the Healthy Walks programme run by Colchester Borough Council. As a volunteer you become a member of the Colchester Countryside Volunteer Rangers (CCVR), a constituted voluntary 'Friends' Group that has worked in close partnership with the Countryside Team for many years.

<http://www.highwoodsvolunteers.org.uk>

Training You will need to attend a free one day training course.

3. Visitor Centre Volunteer (18+yrs)

Time weekends throughout the year and some weekdays in the summer. Volunteers commit to at least one day a month. 10am to 4pm winter months, 10.30am to 5pm summer months.

Location High Woods Country Park Visitor Centre.

The Role Working in the Centre you would deal with visitor enquires, in person and on the telephone. Carry out retailing activities such as stock replenishment, till operation, merchandise display, making hot drinks. Some cleaning is required including emptying the bins, washing and wiping up, to maintain the cleanliness of the facilities for visitors.

Qualities Able to work efficiently on own initiative and enjoy engaging with the public. Confident with cash handling and till operation (training given in both).

Benefits to you gain experience of customer service; be part of the small and friendly Countryside Team. Hot drinks and biscuits provided. As a volunteer you become a member of the Colchester Countryside Volunteer Rangers (CCVR), a constituted voluntary 'Friends' Group that has worked in close partnership with the Countryside Team for many years.

<http://www.highwoodsvolunteers.org.uk>

Training You will need to attend a general volunteer one day training programme. (Dates arranged throughout the year depending on demand) and a half day visitor centre specific training session.

4. Monday Volunteer Ranger (16+yrs)

Time 10am to 4pm Mondays. Starts at 10am at the Visitor Centre at High Woods Country Park or at approximately 10:20am at other sites. Volunteers do not have to commit to coming out every Monday.

Location A variety of sites including High Woods Country Park. A three month programme of task activities and locations is available in advance.

The Role A very varied and practical role which involves working on conservation and general park maintenance jobs for example coppicing, fencing, path work, wildflower management and much more. Between 8 to 15 volunteers attend and all work together under the supervision of a ranger. Tasks are quite physical and will involve carrying, bending and lifting. A wide variety of hand tools are used, on the job training will be provided. The terrain can be rough, muddy and slippery. We work in all weathers. Please be aware that toilet facilities are only available at High Woods Country Park.

Qualities You need to be relatively fit and mobile. Good at working in a team, enjoy outdoors/practical work.

Benefits to you Be part of a team of people, the sense of giving something back to your local environment, fresh air and exercise, learn new skills. Hot drinks and biscuits provided. As a volunteer you become a member of the Colchester Countryside Volunteer Rangers (CCVR), a constituted voluntary 'Friends' Group that has worked in close partnership with the Countryside Team for many years. <http://www.highwoodsvolunteers.org.uk>

Training 1 day training programme. (Dates arranged throughout the year depending on demand) Training in the safe use of tools is given on the job.

5. Work Experience / Duke of Edinburgh Award Volunteering

Specifically for younger people currently in education seeking work experience or volunteer opportunities. More information is available on request.

If you are interested in one of the above roles please download an application form from www.colchester.gov.uk/countryside; visit High Woods Country Park to speak to a member of staff or ring the park on 01206 853588.

Who is the Countryside Team?

The team comprises Countryside Rangers, Education & Visitor Centre Officer, Community Enabling Officer, Countryside Sites Manager & Seasonal Visitor Centre Assistant. All work for Colchester Borough Council's Parks and Recreation Service. **The team is responsible for:**

- Maintaining High Woods Country Park - a 370 acre park with woodland, wetland, grassland and a fishing lake.
- Maintaining 15 other sites including Salary Brook Local Nature Reserve, Colne Local Nature Reserve, Gosbecks Archaeological Park, Cymbeline Meadows and Hilly Fields.
- Managing a team of volunteer rangers, visitors centre volunteers, health walk leaders and conservation volunteers. There are over 70 regular volunteers. In 2012 volunteers provided over 1,000 volunteer days.
- Managing High Woods Country Park Visitor Centre. The Centre is open 7 days a week in the summer and at weekends during the winter. In 2012 the centre had over 41,000 visitors.
- Providing environmental education programmes for visiting schools. In 2012 over 3,500 school children took part in our programmes.
- Providing children's activities during the school holidays.
- Managing the Health Walks programme. This volunteer led programme attracted over 760 walkers in 2012.
- Working with and supporting many local community groups.