



Nature Connections Volunteer

Nature Connections volunteer role is a new and exciting opportunity to assist the Nature Based Wellbeing (NBW) team in facilitating and delivering a full programme of nature-based group activities and providing support to the participants accessing these groups.

Nature-Based Wellbeing is all about helping people to improve their general wellbeing by engaging in nature-based activities and green spaces. This role suits people who are interested in nature and community based/alternative health provision - you will gain training and experience in developing and delivering nature-based group activities that enhance wellbeing, confidence and skills, and in managing group dynamics and maintaining the safety and comfort of individuals participating in peer-support groups. Please note: this is a peer-support, social role, we don't expect any professional counselling or therapy to be undertaken.

The NBW programme will include a mix of longer-term peer-support groups to encourage participants to make connections to nature and to one another, alongside a diverse range of short-term skills-based groups and courses that will change seasonally – the common thread in all our groups is a focus on nature connections. Types of activity will include – practical conservation, gardening and horticulture, creative or heritage crafts, ecology and citizen science. Our programme is about to relaunch, and the current outline below will expand to cover additional morning and afternoon activities running Monday to Thursday. We are looking for multiple volunteers, so if you'd like to express an interest in days/types of activity, we will try to accommodate this. Currently, confirmed groups are as below:

- Tuesday – 'Time to Garden' group (am) and 'Evergreen Arts' creative group (pm)
- Wednesday – 'Ecocrafts – Upcycling' creative group (pm)
- Thursday – Gardening/allotment groups am and pm (both to be delivered offsite across the city) and 'Stepping Out' walking group (am)

Responsibilities of a Nature Connections Volunteer include:

- Welcoming and integration - greeting group members, creating a friendly atmosphere, initiating conversations, welcoming new participants into the group
- Safety and boundaries – upholding group agreements about behaviour/boundaries, ensuring equal participation, keeping groups on topic, and following safeguarding policies to report any concerns
- Co-Facilitation and development – supporting the facilitation of group activities across the NBW programme, working with the lead facilitator to develop and deliver engaging sessions that meet the needs of participants
- Experience and feedback - supporting the group lead in capturing participant experience and feedback to meet the monitoring requirements of funders



Length of commitment: – 6-months (with possibility to extend)

Volunteer days: 1-2 days per week (to cover activities running Monday to Thursday)

Skills and abilities needed for this role:

- Interested in the benefits of nature connection to enhance wellbeing
- Some experience of facilitating groups and group discussions would be beneficial but not essential
- Experience and understanding of mental health and emotional wellbeing
- Good levels of communication skills, including active listening and empathy
- Able to maintain professional boundaries and safeguard participants in line with St Nicks policies and processes
- Friendly and approachable nature with the ability to get along with people from all backgrounds
- Reliable and committed to attending scheduled sessions consistently
- Able to use initiative

Benefits of the role:

- Opportunity to gain experience in a Nature Based Wellbeing environment providing group activities
- A chance to learn new skills and gain practical experience in group facilitation within an emerging sector
- Regular supervision and ongoing support to help with personal development throughout the role to achieve personal goals
- Opportunity to improve skills through on site and external training with other providers as well as in house training
- Opportunity to gain experience making connections within the Voluntary and Community Sector in York
- Experience working in a collaborative environment, being embedded in a team providing a key part of the Nature Based Wellbeing programme
- References and help with job applications upon satisfactory completion of volunteering placement

Anna Perrett, Nature Based Wellbeing Manager
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To apply: submit your CV and covering letter outlining your interest in the role and how your skills and abilities match the role description to the NBW Manager anna@stnicks.org.uk by Wednesday 29 April.

Closing date: Wednesday 29 April at noon

Interviews: Tuesday 12 May