



Manx
Wildlife Trust
Treisht Bea-Feie
Vannin

Manx Wildlife Trust Volunteer Handbook

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www.mwt.im



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Manx Wildlife Trust Volunteer handbook

Volunteers are the heart of Manx Wildlife Trust (MWT), which began as a completely volunteer run organisation in 1973. Since then, MWT has grown into a charity employing many paid staff, but our work wouldn't be possible without our incredible team of almost 300 volunteers.

From managing our shop and Nature Discovery Centres, to maintaining our nature reserves, helping in the office, or carrying out ecological surveys, there is something for everyone to get involved with. It is a crucial time for our natural environment and biodiversity conservation, and by volunteering you will be making a positive impact on nature in the Isle of Man.

As well as giving their time, our volunteers are ambassadors for MWT, informing people about our work and encouraging more people in the Island to care for nature. There is so much happening at MWT, find out more at <https://www.mwt.im/about-us>. MWT Trustees and our colleagues in the staff team are hugely appreciative of the contribution made by our volunteers and we all aim to make any volunteering with us a rewarding and enjoyable experience. This MWT Volunteer handbook is an important part of how we support you and should be used as a reference throughout your volunteering experience with us.

Thank you for being part of our team!

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Leigh Morris - CEO



1. Our promise to you while you volunteer with us

MWT has responsibilities to you, many of which are covered in more detail later in this handbook or will be discussed with you when you start. In summary, we will always do our best to:

- Provide a friendly welcome, and a thorough induction to the organisation and your role within it.
- Provide proper supervision and support to you and will seek your feedback about your volunteering experience.
- Make good use of your skills, knowledge, and abilities to further our aims and objectives.
- Provide volunteers with a clear description of the work you will be doing, instruction, and any relevant additional training in all tasks we ask you to undertake.
- When you start to volunteer, you will be assigned a first point of contact. This may be another volunteer or a member of MWT staff. MWT staff are also available for you to talk to during office hours on 01624 844432 or by emailing enquiries@mwt.im
- Handle volunteer data properly and in accordance with the law.
- Take your health & safety in relation to your role seriously and ensure all registered volunteers are covered by our insurance policies.
- Ensure wherever possible everyone has equal opportunity to be involved.
- Help you to deal with any problems that arise in connection with your volunteering.



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- Show our appreciation and to celebrate and recognise the contribution of volunteers wherever we can.

2. What we ask of you

Each volunteer role entails different tasks, offers different benefits, and carries different responsibilities whether that is Mid-week Muckers, seal sitting, or in the shop. These are outlined in the relevant role descriptions that may be provided verbally or in writing. However, we expect all volunteers to:

- Inform MWT if you do not feel confident that you have received the guidelines and information necessary to carry out your role.
- Make sure you are aware of MWT policies and guidelines that are relevant to your role.
- Meet the general commitments necessary to carry out your role.
- Be mindful of your status as an MWT ambassador in the community.
- Ensure that no illegal or criminal misuse of MWT assets takes place.
- Respect confidentiality of information which you may become aware of whilst volunteering for MWT.





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3. Representing MWT

As a volunteer, you are an ambassador for MWT. While volunteering, you are representing MWT to the public, whether you are giving a lecture or chatting to a dog walker on a reserve. As you get more involved, you'll learn more about MWT and become more confident in talking about some areas of our work, but if you'd like to know more about a particular topic, please speak to your first point of contact. You can always refer members of the public or media enquiries to a member of staff or to the MWT office if they are asking about difficult or sensitive issues. Formal representation with other organisations, the media or individuals can only take place if authorised by your first point of contact.

4. Identifying you as a volunteer.

For some roles you will be asked to wear a badge indicating that you represent MWT. These roles include our shop and Nature Discovery Centre volunteers. You will also be entitled to purchase MWT branded items which are not available to the public. To take a look, visit <https://mwt.teemill.com/>

5. Library.

We have a small library in our Peel office stocked with books and journals on wildlife in the Isle of Man and the UK. Volunteers are welcome to come in and browse through the library to learn more about their own areas of interest.

6. Policies and Procedures.

MWT has policies and procedures in place to ensure we work effectively, fairly, and consistently and to provide a roadmap to deal with any concerns or issues that may arise. Our policies are available to read on request from your first point of contact and we will let you know which ones are most relevant to you.





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7. Equal Opportunities

MWT does not discriminate unfairly based on race, gender, sexual orientation, age, language, religion, physical, mental, or emotional disability, financial, family, or other personal disadvantage; or any other factor unrelated to a person's ability to carry out their volunteer role. This applies to the selection of volunteers, carrying out your role and to training & development opportunities. We will not accept such discrimination by staff or volunteers.

8. Health, Safety & Welfare

MWT has a duty of care to staff and volunteers, and to members of the public visiting MWT property and events. MWT has a responsibility to provide a safe working environment for all. Staff and volunteers have a responsibility to look after themselves and consider the safety of others, who may be affected by their actions. A copy of MWT Health and Safety policy will be made available to you, and your first point of contact may ask you to sign a form to say you have read and will comply with its contents during your time as a volunteer. A copy of the full MWT Health and Safety handbook is available on request.

9. Insurance

All registered volunteers are insured by MWT for their volunteering so long as they are undertaking an activity agreed by MWT, have followed our policies and procedures and any instructions or guidance we have given. This includes cover if you are injured by another person or if you accidentally injure someone or damage something. Personal equipment and belongings are not insured.





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10. Finance

If specific equipment and/or resources are needed for your role, this should be purchased by your first point of contact. If this is not possible and you need to purchase the item, you can claim back the money for this. However, before purchasing anything, please check this with your first point of contact.



11. Logging your volunteering hours

Volunteers collectively give an enormous amount of time every year and we couldn't do what we do without them. Having a reasonably accurate record of the hours volunteers have contributed is very valuable to us, both to celebrate and share the importance of volunteers and also when applying for funding for projects that involve volunteers. Please discuss how best to log your hours with your first point of contact.

12. Confidentiality

Whilst volunteering for MWT you may become aware of, or be tasked with handling, information which is of a confidential nature. This might be information about a protected species or a new project, or some financial or personal data. We expect you to respect this confidentiality and to check with us if you are unsure about the status of any information you are party to. When you registered as a volunteer, you will have confirmed you will adhere to our confidentiality agreement.





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13. GDPR & Data Protection

Every active volunteer should hopefully have filled out an electronic volunteer registration form. If you have not done this, do not want to, or are having difficulty, please speak to your first point of contact. MWT will then hold these details securely. Data protection laws apply to personal data whether it is stored electronically or in a retrievable paper format. For more information, please look at our privacy policy on our website: <https://www.mwt.im/privacy-policy>.

14. Safeguarding

Your first point of contact will discuss any safeguarding matters related to your role. If you have any concerns about safeguarding, please contact your first point or contact MWT and ask to speak to the safeguarding leader.

15. Copyright and Intellectual Property

Through your volunteering you might produce new materials, data, or ideas of use to MWT; perhaps including educational materials, interpretation, photographs or other media, survey results, project ideas or new procedures. You retain copyright and intellectual property rights over this material. However, we ask you to give us the right to use this material free of charge, in perpetuity and for the furtherance of our charitable objects. This voluntary agreement is incorporated into the registration and application forms, so you don't need to take any further action. If you produce something where

you'd prefer to make a more formal arrangement, just let us know and we can make the necessary arrangements.





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16. Supervision & Support

Following your induction to the organisation, the amount of ongoing supervision and support you are offered will vary depending upon the individual and the role. However, all volunteers should have the opportunity to ask questions, raise concerns and discuss the work they are involved in. For practical conservation volunteers this may only require an open discussion over the tea break. For surveying and citizen science volunteers a phone call may do. Others will find regular one-to-one meetings with their first point of contact useful. This is up to you and your first point of contact to discuss and agree.



17. Staying in touch

We organise meetings for volunteers to get together in various ways; we aim to have an annual volunteers event and individual teams might also organise social events for their group. Sometimes there are special training events which we hope are also fun and sociable. We will email you occasionally with news of what is happening at MWT and with any new volunteering opportunities. You have the option to opt out of these at any time by emailing enquiries@mwt.im. Our website and social media posts are also a great way of keeping up to date with MWT news and events. Some of our volunteer groups stay in contact using WhatsApp groups. You can follow us on twitter: @manxnature, Instagram: Manx nature, like our Facebook page: Manx Wildlife Trust, or visit our website: mwt.im



18. Feedback

We hope to make all volunteering experiences positive and enjoyable. If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions on how we can do better, please talk to your first point of contact or our Team Wilder Coordinator lucy@mwt.im 01624 844432.





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19. Helping to inspire others

We are always looking for stories about our volunteers. It might be a 'day in the life of', a description of your role, a volunteer profile, or a special achievement. These help us to paint a picture of volunteering for our newsletter, website, press releases and members magazine and crucially to help inspire more people to get involved. Please get in touch if you'd like to see your story in video or print!



20. Finishing volunteering with MWT



We understand that circumstances change. If you decide to stop volunteering with MWT please let us know, either by telling your first point of contact or emailing lucy@mwt.im. It would be very helpful to us if you also tell us why you are leaving, which we will treat in confidence.



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21. MWT contact details:

Tel: (01624) 844432 (office hours, Monday to Friday)

Email: enquiries@mwt.im

Post: Volunteering, Manx Wildlife Trust, 7-8 Market Place, Peel, IM5 1AB

For an up-to-date list of staff and trustees please visit

www.mwt.im/the-team

www.mwt.im/meet-team-trustees

Thank you!

All that is left to say now is a huge thank you to you for your time, your hard work, your ideas, and your commitment to Manx wildlife for the future. The strength of MWT revolves on the partnership between volunteers and staff, working together. So whatever time you give - many thanks!

