

ORN Webinar



Returning Volunteers Safely

Starting soon...

Welcome to Webinar

Chris Scott, ORN Secretariat

ORN webinars will form part of our response to sharing information, fostering joined-up thinking and helping organisations to work together in a coordinated fashion during this challenging time.

Webinar Running Order

Overview of key issues

Pippa Langford, Principal Specialist Recreation and Access,
Natural England and ORN Joint Vice-Chair

Restarting volunteering across the nation's forest

Helen Connor-Walton, Volunteering Manager – England,
Forestry England

Protocols for returning non-visitor facing volunteers

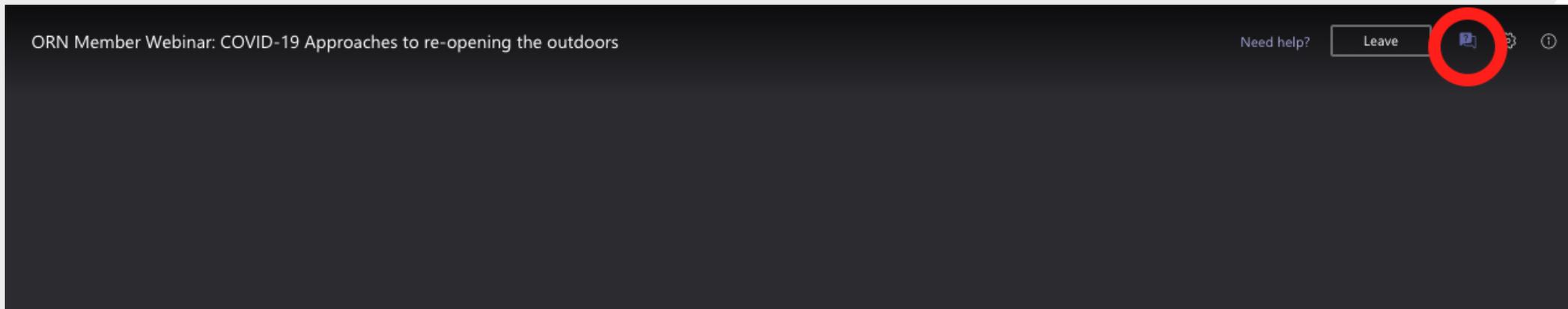
Nick Hall, HS&E Manager, The Woodland Trust

Protocols for returning visitor-facing volunteers

Jo Parry, Volunteering Innovation Manager, National Trust

Engage in discussion

To submit questions to presenters during the webinar, click on the questions pane



Tips for asking (and answering) a question

Question: Presenter's Name – Topic – Question (e.g. Nick – Tea Preference – One lump or two?)

Response: Topic – Answer (e.g. Tea Preference – I find one lump is best)



The screenshot shows a Microsoft Teams Q&A session. The main video area displays a scenic outdoor path with people walking and a child on a bicycle. The text "Live Q&A" is overlaid in the bottom right corner of the video. On the right side, the Q&A chat window is open, showing a moderator's welcome message and a question from Marie Beaudouin. The chat window includes a search bar at the top, a "Q&A" header, and a "Post as anonymous" checkbox at the bottom.

Search or type a command

Activity 2
Chat 1
Teams 1
Meetings
Calls
Files
Help
Store

Live Q&A

Q&A All My questions

Jayne Woodrow (Moderator)
Welcome to the webinar! You can ask questions for the presenters here.

Marie Beaudouin 12:32 pm
Will there be a recording available after this session?

Jayne Woodrow (Moderator)
Yes, this session will be recorded and it will be made available for on-demand viewing.

Ask a question
 Post as anonymous

VIP Breakout Room (member-only)

- 12:00 – 12:45 (log in 11:55)
- Separate meeting link emailed to members
- More interactive format
- Q&A with presenters
- Information exchange with other members
- If you have not received the unique access link please email elizabeth@outdoorrecreation.org.uk

Membership opportunities

Benefits of Membership	Support Membership	Full Membership
Collaboration		
Membership of a UK and Ireland wide industry network	✓	✓
Collaboration on join initiatives e.g. research	✓	✓
Eligibility to be elected onto ORN Executive Committee		✓
Events		
Number of free tickets to Annual ORN Conference	1	2
Number of free tickets ORN Seminars (2 per annum)	1	2
Hosting priority for ORN events		✓
Seminar & conference content <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insights • Presentations • Case studies / journal 	✓	✓
Networking		
Number of spaces for representatives at ORN Member's Meetings (3 per year)	1	2
Access to key insights and outworking from ORN Member's Meetings	✓	✓
Information		
Annual ORN E-Journal	✓	✓
Bi-Annual ORN E-zine	✓	✓
Contribute and share information via ORN communication channels e.g. Twitter & LinkedIn	✓	✓

Overview of key issues

Pippa Langford

ORN Joint Vice-Chair

Principal Specialist Recreation and Access,
Natural England

Key issues:

- The value of volunteers to the sector
- Inclusivity
- Volunteers' motivations
- Health and safety

Restarting volunteering across the nation's forest

Helen Connor-Walton

Volunteer Manager – England
Forestry England

Overview of volunteering in the nation's forest



Volunteers support the nations forest in a wide range of roles and through a variety of relationships with Forestry England

- Forestry England directed volunteers
- Partnership programmes
- 3rd party volunteer activity

In 2019/20 this equated to a total of 38,700 volunteer engagements.

Key issues

1. Reviewing volunteer activity in line with government guidance
2. Staff capacity
 - Furloughed staff
 - Redeployed staff
 - Volunteering is only a small percentage of most of our staff's job role
 - Implementing guidance we have put in place
3. Managing expectations
 - Staff and volunteers
4. Considering the return of volunteers who are classified within vulnerable groups
5. Working across multi-organisations to support restart of 3rd party and partnership volunteers
6. Provision of personal equipment
7. Cleaning of shared resources
8. Travel to site (previously shared transport)
9. Provision of appropriate welfare facilities

New challenges and opportunities

We are:

- Building a strong local, regional and national volunteer network
- Showing the benefit of systems and processes
- We have grown our knowledge of who are volunteers are
- Building stronger, positive relationships between teams
- Looking at opportunities of how volunteering can be done remotely
- Finding skills in volunteers and our staff on how to do things differently
 - Video tools box talk
 - Online inductions
- Brew time! Our latest discussions...



Protocols for returning volunteers

- Volunteer activity may restart as restrictions are relaxed AND only after Forestry England is satisfied that capacity exists to support them safely
- Districts must, develop and follow a district 'restart volunteer plan', which works in line with the national phased restart plan.

Phase 1 From 8 th June	Phase 2 From 22 nd June	Phase 3 To be reviewed 1 st Sept
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solo Habitat Survey/Ecology 	<p>Roles which can be completed solo or meeting with no more than 6 individuals where social distancing can be maintained.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat survey / Ecology • Home working roles • Archaeology • Shadows • Trail / facility inspection • Wardens 	<p>Group activity and those where they are public facing will be reviewed against government guidance and staff capacity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event support • Group conservation and woodland management • Learning • Trail maintenance • Office roles

Protocols continued...

- A contingency plan must be in place should further restrictions / local lockdown occur
- Volunteer supervisors must review risk assessments for all activities
 - Social distancing while working and traveling to site
 - Providing PPE identified in the risk assessment individually for volunteers, including eye protection, hard hats and gloves can be personally issued to volunteers
 - No tools and equipment can be shared between staff and volunteers during the day. These must be cleaned at the end of the session and records kept.
- The returning volunteer/s must be registered on the Volunteer Management Software, with the appropriate agreement in place.

Protocols continued...

- Where lone working is taking place, all volunteers must be registered on the approved FE system
- Complete vulnerable group risk assessment:
 - Clinically vulnerable
 - Clinically extremely vulnerable
- Keep records of when volunteers have volunteered to support NHS Test and Trace
- For all 3rd party and partnership groups
 - Inline with our permission guidance restart plan
 - Ensure up to date agreements in place
 - Review all paperwork e.g. risk assessments, insurance and emergency plans.
 - Lead contact details are updated in our CRM system
 - Welfare provisions have been reviewed against FISAs guidance and COVID-19 requirement

Protocols for returning non-visitor facing volunteers

Nick Hall

HS&E Manager

The Woodland Trust

Overview



The Woodland Trust has around UK 3800 volunteers

Over 40 different volunteer roles that vary from individual specialists to Wardens to Working Groups

Around 100 Woodland Working Groups

Most volunteers are older and therefore more at risk from COVID-19



Lockdown on our Estate

1300+ sites that generally remained open throughout lockdown.

Huge foot traffic – lots of antisocial behaviour, vandalism, fly tipping etc.

Hardly any maintenance work carried out for 3 months, so lots of potential risks to visitors once lockdown eased.





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Returning Volunteers

Volunteer Wardens in England and Northern Ireland were the first to be re-activated – helped get Estate back on its feet.

This has now been repeated in Wales and Scotland as the 5-mile rule has been lifted.



Our General Approach



One considered step at a time – rather than ‘welcome back everyone’

Re-introduction is manageable, effective and gives volunteers a sense of achievement – they are helping us recover from lockdown.

Volunteer safety is our absolute priority. We’ll do this in our own time.



So far, so good....

- Used National communications to keep our volunteers informed
- Made it clear why some roles are starting again and some are not
- A clear risk assessment and safe way of working has been shared with all volunteers before they return
- Clear 'Task Outlines' for everyone that makes it very clear what they can and cannot do – clarity is key to keeping people safe
- Volunteers have understood that it is not 'business as usual'.





Food for thought



If you change a volunteer's role, it's crucial to ensure that you don't become so focused on COVID-19, that you miss other risks.

Risk assess the *whole* role in a methodical way – what does their work actually look like?



Safety basics

Guidance on volunteers in the [Visitor Safety Group Recovery Guidance](#). Main points are:

- Personal Hygiene is key
- Enable social distancing through size of the group and work selection
- Avoid 'riskier' activities to prevent (albeit minor) injuries that require first aid and possibly medical treatment, putting pressure on the NHS
- Make sure volunteers have a clear safe way of working and the critical information they need.



**WOODLAND
TRUST**

COVID-19 Recovery
Planning Guidance

WORKING PRACTICES FOR LANDOWNERS
AND COUNTRYSIDE MANAGERS

MAY 2020



Welcoming volunteers back safely after lockdown: Visitor facing tasks

Jo Parry

Volunteering Innovation Manager
National Trust

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Our priorities throughout Covid-19



Inform, reassure and support our workforce (both staff and volunteers)



Maintain the security of the Trust workforce, reputation and assets



Maintain our ability to meet legal and financial obligations



Protect revenue



Rebuild business operations



Maintain, as far as possible, delivery of our strategic priorities

Response

Mitigation

Recovery

Managing Covid-19 impact on the Trust: Timeline



- Membership engagement
- Reopening
- Managing our costs

Our core volunteering principles for involving volunteers

Why

- Volunteers founded the National Trust and 125 years later, volunteers continue to give their time, energy and a range of skills to help us achieve our charitable purpose.
- Volunteers enable the Trust to do more and ultimately connect more people with nature, beauty and history.
- Volunteering strengthens our connection with local communities and provides meaningful experiences that benefit volunteers and wider society.

When

- ✓ We have a **CLEAR ASK**
- ✓ Volunteer has **SKILLS/MOTIVATION**
- ✓ We can ensure **SAFETY & SUPPORT**
- ✓ It's a **WIN:WIN** (benefits volunteer, manager & NT)

Unless...

- X Legal reasons e.g. job substitution/worker status
- X £ Unsustainable
- X Significant risk

How

- Volunteering is planned & resourced
- Volunteers are engaged and have a voice
- Volunteers are part of the team
- Volunteering experience is inclusive, flexible and positive

Our approach to volunteering during re-opening

- Central framework and local decision making
- Devolved Nations
- 80%+ staff team on furlough leave
- New to volunteer management
- Essential tasks and reopening tasks - maintain minimum standards and re-open safely
- 'Tasks' rather than 'roles'

Initial crisis mitigation

Pre-Opening

Re-Opening

After new systems
have been tested...

- Volunteering from home e.g. data, communications
- Specialist tasks on property
- Governance roles e.g. trustee, special advisory groups

- Non-visitor facing task

- Visitor facing tasks

Deciding when is the right time to involve volunteers

- People are priority- duty of care for volunteer, volunteer manager/ place and the organisation
- Legal, practical and ethical factors



National
Trust

Volunteers should only be brought back if:

1. If teams can comply with government and our own guidelines
1. The volunteer is not being asked to complete tasks which are replacing a core part of staff 's role on furlough leave (job substitution)
2. The volunteer has not received a shielding letter from the NHS
3. The activity does not involves external group volunteering
4. If visitor facing, the activity is outdoor



Deciding when it is the right time to involve volunteers – Visitor facing tasks



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Volunteers can support staff with essential and reopening visitor facing outdoor tasks once teams are confident;

- when the operating model that have been successfully tested in a live environment
- and clear on visitor movement
- on the ask of the volunteer and support required.

Leadership team

- Budget
- Volunteer manager
- Same protection as staff
- Safely manage People on site
- A genuine win: win

Volunteer Manager

- A clear ask, matched to volunteer
- The volunteer is happy to return
- Regular briefings/check-in
- Process for difficult situations
- Engage confidently and empathetically
- Escalation/ complaint procedures
- Risks and actions
- 'Returning Safely' eLearning



What has worked?

- Clear communication that not all volunteers are being asked to return at the moment
- Open discussions about job substitution concerns with staff and volunteers
- Including volunteers in reopening planning
- Managing expectations if tasks are changing
- Regular catch ups, record conversations
- Reopening local induction and preview day
- Support for volunteer managers
- Guidance, webinars, conversation support



What have we learnt?

Let's be honest – we have all been learning as we go!

Regular, clear,
warm, open and
transparent
communications
with volunteers -
national and local

The physical,
emotional and
psychological
impact of Covid19
and lockdown for
everyone

The spectrum of
feelings and
emotions about
returning to
volunteering (and
work)

Ask questions! Talk
to colleagues,
organisations,
sharing challenges
and learning

Opportunity to
rethink the future
of volunteering
locally and
nationally

Webinar Recording available afterwards...

- ORN e-zine
- ORN Youtube channel

Members join VIP Breakout Room 11:55

- Q&A with presenters
- Information sharing between members