

Amendment to the Volunteering Policy to include Youth Volunteering

Project overview & proposed Youth plans

Youth volunteering will initially cover 2 projects - Youth Wardens and Youth Committee.

Youth Wardens –

- Meet once a month, usually on a Sunday but during the week if during school holidays
- Aimed at those aged 15-18
- Tasks to include (but not limited to): Surveying for wildlife, planting trees, maintaining paths and access routes, participating in fun events, taking part in Youth Warden exchanges and camps with other national parks.
- Participants will: Make new friends, develop and learn new skills, discover and learn about wildlife, build confidence, add to CV, help with other volunteering awards e.g Duke of Edinburgh, have the opportunity to gain a John Muir Award; have fun in the outdoors and contribute to conservation in the Brecon Beacons National Park.

Youth Council –

- To provide opportunities for young people to be involved with and have a voice in decision making for the National Park. (The format for the youth council being developed and a paper will be written to support this proposal).

Amendments to be added to the current Volunteering Policy:

“Youth Volunteering

Purpose of youth volunteering

A youth volunteer is an individual who contributes their time, energy, and skills, without payment, to support BBNPA's objectives. This includes volunteering with the Youth Warden Scheme and the Youth Committee at present, with the scope to add additional projects offering opportunities to volunteer with BBNPA.

Volunteering for young people aims to give them a genuine experience within the BBNPA, which can be used to gain an interest in environmental issues, friendships, confidence and develop new skills. All the above can be used when applying for further education or jobs in the future.

It also gives them the opportunity to contribute to the objectives of BBNPA, as well as a feeling of contributing to society as a whole and gaining an insight into the environmental issues facing their generation.

Age range of young people engaged with volunteering

The Youth Committee is aimed at secondary school age (11) up to 25. This is to increase the broad range of perspectives from this age group which will add to the breadth and depth of discussion and debate. The Youth Wardens scheme is aimed at 15 to 18 years of age. Once a young person has reached the age of 18, they will be able to continue their volunteering through the main volunteering programme. Being part of youth volunteering does not mean they automatically join the mainstream volunteer programme. The normal process of applying to volunteer will apply.

Recruitment and selection

Youth Volunteers are recruited in accordance with BBNPA's Equal Opportunities Policy. BBNPA is committed to promoting equality and diversity and believe that volunteering should be open to all regardless of gender, race, disability, religion or belief, or sexual orientation.

Opportunities may be promoted via the National Park Authority website, local volunteer centres, local press, Volunteering in Wales website, open days and events, local networks, and / or social media. Potential volunteers may also apply speculatively.

Prospective youth volunteers must apply to become a BBNPA volunteer. Recruitment will involve completion of an online application form and may involve an informal interview (face to face or via the phone). During the application process relevant information will be gathered to enable the Volunteer Development Officer and Supervising Project Officer to assess the young persons' suitability for the role. We consider everyone as a potential volunteer according to principles of equal opportunity, objectivity, and fairness. Individuals must, however, demonstrate a commitment to the aims of the organisation and ability to undertake the role.

Monitoring and evaluation

The Supervising Project Officer will undertake quarterly evaluation, and this will feed into an annual Volunteer Development report.

We will monitor quantitative outputs such as volunteer numbers and hours, volunteer demographic, and volunteer training provided. Qualitative evaluation will also take place, and this will comprise of positive case studies, photographs, and stories. Surveys to collect volunteer feedback will be undertaken as and when appropriate.

Support and supervision of young people whilst volunteering

BBNPA is committed to investing in youth volunteers and will provide regular and on-going support and supervision. This will be provided by youth volunteer's Supervising Project Officers.

Supervision of youth volunteers must only be carried out by a member of staff who has undergone or has a current DBS check which enables them to work with young people. BBNPA staff will be required to have undertaken Child Protection training to an adequate level.

After three months, volunteers will be invited to take part in an informal review to ascertain whether any additional support or training is needed or if there are any further opportunities to support the individual in their volunteering.

Volunteers can request additional support when required.

Risk assessments

Risk assessments for each activity carried out by Youth Volunteers must be completed by an appropriately experienced member of BBNPA staff and should reflect the nature of working with young people. No activity should happen until the risk assessment has been completed and signed off by the appropriate line manager.

Risk assessments should be shared with youth volunteers prior to activities in a manner that is meaningful and using appropriate language to ensure the full understanding of the risk associated with the activity. This will take the form of a comprehensive 'toolbox' talk prior to each activity. Risk Assessments will also be sent to parents/guardians prior to each activity and the young person's attendance will be taken as acknowledgement of the risk assessments being read and understood.

Any revision of risk assessments will be shared with parents/guardians.

Volunteer recognition and feedback of views.

See main volunteer policy.

Additional forms and policies to be incorporated, see appendix:

Safeguarding Policy

Youth Volunteering Code of Conduct

Parental Consent Form