

Role description:

The Belfast Hills Partnership conservation volunteers meet every Thursday and once a month on the last Saturday to carry out a wide range of practical conservation tasks throughout the stunning Belfast Hills, from Carnmoney to Slievenacloy.

Purpose:

Volunteers help conserve the natural beauty of the Belfast Hills by assisting the Belfast Hills Partnership team with the practical management of the Hills with varied tasks to suit a wide range of ages, abilities and motivations. Everyone who is capable of a little light work and enjoys spending time outside is welcome to join us.

Tasks and duties:

Some of the tasks and duties we carry out across the Hills:

- Invasive species control
- Tree planting
- Hedge laying and maintenance
- Pond creation and maintenance
- Litter picking
- Path maintenance
- Gorse control
- Surveys (wildlife, wildflower, tree and visitor)
- Scrub clearance
- Wildflower seed collection
- Wildflower meadow creation and maintenance -
- Woodland maintenance

When:

All year round – task days are:

- Every Monday & Thursday 10:30-13:00

Location:

The Belfast Hills Partnership office is based on Hannahstown Hill, just off the Glen Road in West Belfast. However, the tasks take place at various locations around the Hills. The Volunteer Officer will keep you up to date.

Why volunteer:

- Help protect your local environment
- Learn new skills
- Feel more connected to nature
- Gain valuable experience
- Meet new people
- Keep fit without the gym



Who will you volunteer with:

The conservation tasks are led by our Volunteer Officer. You will work as part of a wonderful team of volunteers of diverse ages and backgrounds who come together to help improve the environment for the local community, visitors and wildlife. We have a core of experienced and friendly volunteers who help provide a welcoming and supportive atmosphere to help you find your feet.



Support, supervision and training:

Full training and demonstration of safe tool use will be given for each task by experienced staff who are qualified first aiders. You will not be expected to take the role of a member of staff, operate machinery or carry out any task which you feel uncomfortable doing. Volunteer feedback and input is always welcome and is treated with respect and enthusiasm by the Volunteer Officer. Volunteers can also request a reference from our Volunteer Officer.

Commitment:

This role is flexible to suit everyone. Volunteers can decide how much or little time they commit. We have a turn up and try policy for those of you wanting to find out what it is like to volunteer with BHP before becoming a regular volunteer. We do ask that you let us know when you are planning to come along on a task, so we can bring the appropriate amount of equipment and, more importantly, enough tea, coffee and biscuits!

Skills, qualities and abilities needed:

No specialist skills are needed (though certainly welcomed if you have any!). Most conservation tasks are simple and well demonstrated by the task leader. Having an interest in the natural environment and a willingness to learn new skills is important. Flexibility and enthusiasm is essential as well as the ability to work closely with others. Tasks vary on their physical fitness and ability levels. If you are unsure whether you will be able to do the tasks, please don't hesitate to call

our Volunteer Officer to find out more about the physical demands of the activity. Volunteers can always refuse tasks and demands they find unrealistic or that they feel uncomfortable with.

What to bring:

We ask all volunteers to dress appropriately for the weather – wearing layers is the best way to prepare for the ever-changing weather! Waterproofs and sturdy boots or wellies are essential. It is also a good idea to bring a cold drink and snack if you wish.

We provide:

The task leader will give you training in work techniques and safety before each task. BHP also provides all tools, materials and necessary safety equipment, and most importantly: tea, coffee and biscuits!

Although we would like to, we currently cannot afford to cover expenses for volunteers. Volunteers will be notified of any future changes to this policy.

Insurance:

As a volunteer you will be covered under Belfast Hills Partnership Employer's Liability insurance whilst actively engaged with a Belfast Hills Partnership task or activity.

Get in Contact:

If you want to come and join our lovely bunch, email our Volunteer Officer at aodhan.o'kane@belfasthills.org or call 028 9060 3466

