Penwith Landscape Partnership

Kynsa ha Diwettha – Agan Tirwedh Bewa ha Gonis'
First and Last – Our Living Working Landscape

Volunteer Handbook

Cornwall Council

Cornwall Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Gwrys galladow gans Arghas Ertach

Made possible with Heritage Fund

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Welcome - Cllr Jim Mckenna

Volunteers are a fundamental part of the First and Last - Our Living Working Landscape scheme. We aim to support and encourage a sense of pride in the landscape, enable greater understanding and connection, and help to restore traditional skills across Penwith. Much of the programme has been designed to attract, nurture, and develop volunteers. Volunteers have an essential role to play, and the programme will be a far greater success with your involvement. We hope it offers a great opportunity for people who have the time and inclination to make a change – not only to the landscape but also to themselves.

The Penwith Landscape Partnership has the team, resources, networks, and vision to provide great opportunities for anyone who would like to join us but of all of these, our most valuable resource is our volunteers.

Jim McKenna

Chair of Penwith Landscape Partnership Board

First and Last – Our Living Working Landscape

The ancient landscape of Penwith is exceptionally diverse. This rocky, cliff-faced peninsula, embraced by the Atlantic Ocean, is a landscape with enormous environmental, agricultural, historical, cultural and community value. Living and working in Penwith has huge benefits but also holds major challenges. In 2014, the Penwith Landscape Partnership (PLP) agreed a shared vision:

"A resilient living, working Penwith landscape where farming prospers while protecting natural resources, restoring habitat connectivity and enhancing the archaeological heritage; a landscape that is loved, enjoyed and supported by local communities and visitors".

The Partnership has also identified three main issues:

- Fragmented landscape management
- Lack of appreciation and understanding
- Loss of traditional skills

The First and Last programme will help to overcome these issues. The way in which we hope to achieve this is set out in our Landscape Conservation Action Plan which was approved and funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund in 2017.

Map of Area

The map shows the full extent of the Penwith Landscape Partnership scheme area which covers a total of 227.8km2. Our main focus of activity is on the rural landscape of Penwith; starting in the north and working our way towards the south (more detailed maps are available in the PLP office).

Penwith Landscape Partnership

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First and Last – Our Living Working Landscape

Meet the Penwith Landscape Partnership Team

Richie Smith
Practical Tasks Officer

Chandelle Randall
Volunteer Coordinator

Matt Watts
Access Officer

Nick Taylor
Ecologist & Cornish Hedges

Nicole Broadhurst
Community Coordinator

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Laura Ratcliffe-Warren
Ancient Penwith Project Officer

Claire Backhouse
Programme Officer

Victoria Hole
Programme Manager

Phil Pengelly
Farm Environment Officer

Katie Giles
Digital and Communications Officer

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Volunteering

There are many ways you can get involved in the First and Last programme. We have a variety of different tasks covering a wide range of interests and abilities.

Overgrown footpath near Chûn castle

Practical Outdoor Tasks – The Practical Tasks Officer leads several open volunteer sessions. Groups carry out a whole range of tasks including clearing ancient sites of vegetation, repairing, and maintaining Cornish hedges, creating, and restoring wildlife habitats as well as improving and managing public rights of way.

Common Blue Butterfly

Wildlife Surveying - There are opportunities for volunteers to be trained in how to identify the flora and fauna of Penwith and undertake surveys via Penwith Wildlife Recording Group led by the PLP Ecologist.

Path Surveying - There are opportunities for volunteers to be trained in path surveying and maintaining rights of way.

Archaeological Surveying – Volunteers can be trained to undertake archaeological surveys of some of the ancient sites across Penwith.

Archaeological Survey at Mulfra Vean

Research - We have two main research projects in which you can get involved. The first focuses on archaeological sites and finding information and historical records.

The second project involves researching old place and field names. We want to ensure these records are kept for future generations by archiving reliable material.

LLCA - Landscape Character Assessment - We would like volunteers to get involved in carrying out Local Landscape Character Assessments of some of the parishes in the PLP area. These surveys look at the features within each parish to identify all the aspects that make the landscape special and interesting.

What is it like to volunteer?

Carolyn Kennett

Volunteering for The Penwith Landscape Partnership has been so much fun. We were volunteering at Mulfra Vean which is the location of an Iron Age settlement, with several courtyard houses.

On arrival, the site was very overgrown and with a group of other volunteers we helped clear the site in preparation for an archaeological survey. Richie was fabulous in leading the clearance and gave all the training needed so we could have a go with all the hand tools. The ancient site's expert was regularly on hand to answer all our questions about the heritage of the site.

It was exciting to expose the stones from the undergrowth and see the site come back to life. We were lucky enough to expose some new additional features, which were recorded in the survey. The days were always lots of fun with plenty of great company and tea breaks. It was such a fabulous location to have started volunteering as it had wonderful views of Mounts Bay.

Robin Knight

West Penwith is unique, with its moors and sea cliffs, barrows and cairns, its stone field boundaries as old as the pyramids and still in use for their original purpose, scattered with ancient settlements and rare wildlife habitats. Being able to get out into this amazing environment be it in sunshine or mizzle, to help conserve these special places is a privilege.

The rewards for doing so are many, and everyone who volunteers will have their own reasons for doing so. I enjoy the more physical, practical work of keeping sites clear of invasion by common species such as bracken and gorse, and invasive plants like Himalayan balsam. It's an opportunity to meet other volunteers; it keeps me fit and gets me out to sites that I wouldn't otherwise know about. Also, it is a learning experience. I come home having learnt something new or wanting to delve into the history of a site or find out more about the different species of rushes found in acid bogs! In short volunteering keeps both body and mind healthy. Having a cup of tea standing in the middle of an Iron Age Courtyard House discussing with friends …perhaps the latest series of Poldark… is an experience as unique as the setting. And at the end of a sweaty, or damp, day to stand back to see how much our small band of volunteers has accomplished is another reward that few other activities can offer.

Our promise to you…..

- The Penwith Landscape Partnership will treat you with respect and aims to offer a wide range of roles to a diverse array of people in line with the 2010 Equality Act.
- We aim to ensure you will have a good understanding of the aims and objectives of the First and Last programme.
- A member of the PLP team will make regular contact with you and will actively gain feedback from you.
- You are covered by Cornwall Wildlife Trust's insurance when acting under PLP instruction as the Trust acts as Accountable Body for the Partnership.
- Your health and safety is of utmost importance and we will work in line with Cornwall Wildlife Trust's health and safety policy. You will receive an induction in health and safety procedures and risk assessments.
- You will be offered regular training opportunities relevant to the tasks and duties that you will be undertaking.
- We will provide you a volunteer benefit package and we will organise social events.

Your promise to us….

- Work alongside us to achieve our aims and objectives.
- Inform us if you do not feel you have received the guidelines and information necessary to carry out your role or a particular task.
- Respect confidentiality, equal opportunities and health and safety policies.
- Be honest and mindful that you are ambassadors of the Landscape Partnership in your local community.
- Be reliable and have good time management skills. Advise us as soon as possible if you are no longer able to volunteer at a previously agreed time.
- Tell us immediately about any health problems or injuries that may impair your ability to carry out the task you are undertaking.
- Communicate clearly and always listen to members of the team and other volunteers with whom you are working.
- Attend any necessary training courses required for the role.
- Enjoy yourself – you don't have to promise this, but we hope you do!

Volunteers at Chûn castle

Induction

All new volunteers are asked to register as a volunteer with Penwith Landscape Partnership via the online form or paper form (downloadable from the website). Once registered, you will be contacted by the Volunteer Coordinator who will advise how you can join in with various volunteering opportunities. The Volunteer Coordinator will also cover subjects such as volunteer benefits, health and safety, training, and insurance. The Volunteer Coordinator will also signpost you to a package of documents including:

- information about Penwith Landscape Partnership
- a mileage claim form
- a health & safety advice sheet

When you join on to any volunteering activity there will also be an induction by the Project Officer leading the task which will include

- why we are undertaking the activity
- how to use the tools we provide
- health & safety advice

The depth of the induction will depend on your role, current experience, and interest. Periodic, in person, induction days may also be offered to volunteers.

Your details will be kept strictly confidential, in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation[1].

[1] GDPR means that we keep your details securely and only use them for the original purpose stated. We pledge to hold your data securely within the UK,

Support

The Volunteer Coordinator is there to offer you support and guidance, so you feel confident in your role. Please let them know if you have any concerns or questions regarding your role.

Training

The First and Last programme aims to help to restore traditional skills in Penwith that people can pass on to future generations. For this reason, we aim to offer high quality training to volunteers that want to develop their skills and use these skills to help us achieve the programme's objectives and aspirations. We want you to feel capable and confident to undertake your volunteer role and help you invest in your future. We have developed a training programme for various volunteer roles. This training is delivered in a range of ways including formal accredited courses, refresher training, in-house training sessions, coaching, mentoring and group supervision.

Volunteer Benefit Package

The work carried out by yourself, and other volunteers is incredibly valuable and to thank you we have put together a volunteer benefits

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not to share or sell it on to others. You have the right to withdraw this consent at any time. You also have the right to ask to see any data we hold on you, to have it corrected if necessary, or to have it deleted. To make any of these requests please contact us by writing to the Volunteer Coordinator.

package. Please contact the Volunteer Coordinator for more details. Please note the current Volunteer Benefit Package is under review.

Expenses

All volunteers are entitled to claim 'out of pocket' expenses. You can claim your travel expenses to cover the cost of the return trip from your home to the site/office where you are volunteering. We encourage measures to reduce the environmental impact; this includes using our pick-up points, sharing transport with other volunteers, and using public transport.

Please contact the Volunteer Coordinator for details on how to claim expenses as they should be agreed with the Volunteer Coordinator in advance. Expense claims should be submitted to the Coordinator within three months of incurring the expense.

Health and Safety

While you are volunteering with us your health and safety is paramount. Please let us know if you see anything you don't think is safe or if you can think of a safer way we can do something.

Risk Assessment

The staff you work with will have put together a risk assessment for the task and the site you are working on and will go through the relevant hazards with you. The risk assessment may identify personal protective

equipment you need to wear to prevent an injury. This will always be provided unless stated prior to the session.

A 'Tool Talk' from the Practical Tasks Officer will start any practical group session. This will demonstrate the correct and safe ways of using tools and will address any health and safety issues identified by the risk assessment.

Emergency Details

While you are volunteering it is important we have the correct emergency contacts and relevant medical details. Please note it is your responsibility to let the Volunteer Coordinator know if your health changes in a way that may impact on your ability to volunteer or the first aid you may receive.

Accidents

Obviously, we all do our best to avoid accidents but when accidents happen it's important they are dealt with quickly and effectively. In case of an accident, inform the designated trained first aider. In a serious accident they will call the emergency services and use the risk assessment to assist them. Once the injured person is safe, they must fill out an accident form so we can see if there are any lessons to be learnt to prevent accidents from happening in the future.

Welfare Facilities

Volunteering can offer you access to the most beautiful remote locations but unfortunately, we are often unable to provide welfare facilities.

Lone Working

Lone working when you are volunteering should always be avoided. Sometimes however, it may be required. If this is the case, we will ask you to set up a 'buddy' system with a member of staff. Your buddy must know where you are going and how long you will be. If you are volunteering for longer than 4 hours, you must check in with your buddy to let them know you are safe at pre-agreed intervals.

Insurance

When volunteering with us you will be covered by the Cornwall Wildlife Trust's Public and Employers Liability insurance. Although you are not employed by the Trust, volunteers are covered in the Employers Liability insurance so long as you have completed a Volunteer Registration Form. However, your car will not be covered by the Trust's insurance. So, if you need to use your vehicle while you are volunteering for the PLP we

recommend you let your insurance company know to ensure you are insured to carry out volunteer tasks.

Personal items are not covered by the Trust's insurance, and you are advised not to bring expensive personal items unless they are covered by your own insurance.

Difficult Situations

If you have any problems or concerns while you are volunteering, please let the Volunteer Coordinator know as soon as possible. All issues will be dealt with in total confidence.

How Volunteering Affects Benefits

Currently volunteering doesn't affect your benefits and you can volunteer as often as you like. If you are claiming Jobseekers Allowance you must ensure you are actively looking for work and should be available for an interview within 48 hours' notice. Volunteering can count as 'actively looking for work' if the volunteer role is likely to help you find work or give you more experience and make you more employable. Check with your local job centre if volunteering counts as looking for work or if you need any further information.

If you claim housing benefit, council tax reduction or universal credit tell your local council you are volunteering as they might want to see your expense claims.

References

We are more than happy to provide references for our volunteers where appropriate. Please ask the Volunteer Coordinator.

Questions

If you have any other questions, please get in contact with the Penwith Landscape Partnership Volunteer Coordinator, Chandelle Randall. Chandelle.Randall@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk on 07442 538959 or visit us at: Penwith Landscape Partnership First Floor Office, above the Dog and Rabbit, North Row, St Just, Cornwall, TR19 7LB.

Thank you for choosing to volunteer with the Penwith Landscape Partnership, we hope you enjoy volunteering with us and find it an enriching experience.

Partners

Please see our website for more information about our partners.