

Volunteer Speaker Task outline

Summary of task

As the UK's largest woodland conservation charity the Woodland Trust is a well known name and we frequently receive requests for talks from all sorts of clubs societies and organisations wanting to know about who we are and the work we do. In the majority of cases staff members are unable to accommodate these requests so as a Woodland Trust speaker you would play a key part in helping us to increase our audience reach.

As a volunteer speaker we will support you in promoting and providing talks in your area. Being a volunteer in this role allows you to share your passion for the environment, woodlands and the work of the Woodland Trust in particular, with the wider community.

Time commitment

Ongoing and variable depending on the number of talks you do and the level of involvement you wish to have, the number of talks can vary from 6 up to 20, depending on your availability and on the level of talk request in your locality. We would expect you to strive to achieve at least 6 talks per year.

Location

Anywhere within the UK, although you will usually give talks within a reasonable distance of your home, e.g within a 20 mile radius from your home.



Equipment required

- Access to the internet and a current, regularly checked email address is essential as this is how we will contact you with talk requests and important information updates.
- Access to a data projector would be advantageous but is not essential as some groups can provide this equipment, and the Trust has a pool of equipment which can be loaned to speakers for occasional use
- Access to a laptop is required to play video clips as part of your talk.
- Telephone
- An extension lead is useful to take along to talks but most groups can provide one

Experience required

- Previous experience as a public speaker
- The ability to present inspiring talks
- An understanding of our aims and objectives
- If based in Wales the ability to converse in Welsh would be extremely useful

Qualities required

- Enthusiasm for woodland conservation and woodland creation
- A positive and pro-active personality
- Good communication skills with an ability to manage persistent audience members.
- Self confident and calm manner
- Willingness to travel a reasonable distance to give talks
- Good organisational skills
- Willingness to ask for assistance if required, especially with queries

- The ability to actively promote yourself as a volunteer speaker and to generate talks as well as deliver them

Key duties and responsibilities

- To give presentations to groups specifically about woodland creation but also about the work of the Trust on a wider level and to represent us in a positive manner.
- Keep up-to-date with our activities via our family of websites, members newsletter, Broadleaf, the volunteer newsletter and other relevant publications as required. We also advise signing up for our e-newsletter.
- To arrange and manage the payment of donations from by the organisations you provide talks to and to forward donations to us.
- To keep the Volunteer Speaker Officer fully informed of the details of any talks that you arrange. **This is very important** we need to be aware of what you have organised for a number of reasons including for the purpose of arranging cover should you be unable to attend a talk through illness. We also find it useful to monitor which types of groups are approaching us for speakers and we can only do this if we know who you have been presenting to.
- To respond in a timely manner to requests that you receive for talks, whether these are forwarded from the Woodland Trust or are requests that you receive personally.
- To regularly check and respond to emails as this will be our primary method of communicating with you and for sending talk requests through to you.
- Attend an initial induction, and participate in occasional skills development opportunities facilitated by the task manager to support your continuing delivery of quality presentations.
- Queries from talks provided – the ability to make a note of the query together with the contact details of the person and relay it to your task manager within 48 Hours of the talk. This will enable an answer or a follow up call to be provided to the person.

Expenses

Travel expenses will be met and we will pay mileage or public transport costs to and from the venue on receipt of a completed expense claim form. Claims for all other items of expenditure associated with the task should be agreed in advance with your task manager.

Key Contact

Karen Fisher – Volunteer Speakers Officer

As Volunteer Speakers Officer Karen is your task manager and should always be your first point of contact. Karen deals with requests from the public for speakers, requests from speakers for literature and talk materials, donations from talks, development of new talk material, marketing and promotion of the Volunteer Speaker Scheme, finding new leads for talks, and speaker recruitment and training. Please feel free to contact her with any queries you have about your presentation or any of your speaking engagements. Karen can be contacted Monday – Friday on 08452 935 752 and is available to support you as a speaker.

Karen manages a network of Volunteer Speakers throughout the UK

Health & safety

This role may involve a considerable amount of lone working therefore as a volunteer will need to feel comfortable working in this situation. If working alone ensure someone knows where you've gone and when you'll return home. Any concerns regarding safety should be discussed immediately with a member of the volunteer team or with your task manager.

Assess weather conditions, dress appropriately and travel safely. Do not put yourself in any unnecessary risk if travelling conditions are dangerous. It is far better to cancel the talk if you are in doubt about your safety in relation to travel but please do give as much notice as possible to the group concerned and keep us informed if you intend to cancel any of your appointments.

Particular care should be taken when dealing with anyone who may be considered vulnerable e.g. young, old, disabled etc. we have guidelines which we ask you to adhere to and a copy is enclosed for your information.

The role may also pose individual risks to both yourself and your audience whilst you are giving the talk, please be sure you are aware of these risks and ask if you need help managing them. Please ensure that cables from your equipment are kept away from the main areas where people will be walking so that they do not cause a tripping hazard.

A final point to consider is that people will assume you are representing the Woodland Trust so please bear in mind in your interactions with people as you are the public face of our work in this respect, handle situations politely and please do alert us to any potential concerns. It is best not to get drawn into any form of political debate or to comment on the work or practices of other organisations.