Volunteer Meeting Minutes
Meetings held in October and November 2018 in West Stoke, Henfield, Rye, Seven Sisters and Crawley.

We covered a few updates about Wildlife, People and Awards. The main focus of the events was to provide an opportunity for volunteers to offer feedback and make suggestions, as well as some training. There are three things to fill in if you would like:

1. Your favourite thing about volunteering or what volunteering has inspired you to do...
2. Vote for how we celebrate volunteers in 2019, or share an idea.
3. Any suggestions to improve volunteering, in particular training requests

Please email swtvolunteering@sussexwt.org.uk with any suggestions.

There are 612 active SWT volunteers and they contributed 35,670 volunteer hours in 2017-18. We also taught 10,546 students at our nature reserves and visiting schools. Area of nature reserves is 4,500 acres across Sussex.

The Sussex Flow Initiative is a landscape scale project which has practical advice for landowners and works on projects to create natural flood management across the county.

As you know, SWT work across Sussex and we have been lucky enough this year to receive funding for conservation and community projects.

Woods Mill celebrated its 50th year. This was celebrated with a number of events as well as wetland restoration work.

The Heritage Lottery Fund is supporting a two year project in Seaford to connect the community with nature. Plus, of course, we continue to work with Sussex Recovery College on a Wellbeing in the Wild project based at Friston Forest. It is an eight week programme to build confidence and support people through forest-based practical projects.

The Gatwick Greenspace Partnership is managed by Sussex Wildlife Trust with the strong involvement and support of our local authority partners and Gatwick Airport. The project area includes not only part of West Sussex but also South Surrey - recognising that wildlife does not acknowledge our administrative boundaries. 7 local authorities, SWT and airport.
This year the area received the National Biodiversity Award for the 5th year, demonstrating improvements in habitat management.

Training: Overview

Please ensure you know who the First Aider is on your activity. This is not for your benefit, but for the benefit of the people you are volunteering with, so that the First Aider is easily notified. If there is anything you are not sure of, for example, possible fly tipping on a site, injured wildlife, or you have a great marketing idea, please talk to your Volunteer Manager. They will ensure the right person at SWT or the local council is informed.

What to do in an emergency:

**Injured person**- notify first aider on site and Volunteer Manager- even if after the event

**Fire**-if bonfire- check with volunteer manager. If fire is spreading, call fire brigade first, then volunteer manager

**Hanging tree, strong winds or flood**- if over path, call Volunteer Manager for that site, or Reserves Manager if that is who you work with

**Health and Safety:**
Conservation Volunteers:
Daily Risk assessment from SWT Staff or Volunteer Reserves Manager: please listen to daily risk assessment- sites change.
Take breaks! Wear sunscreen in summer and lots of layers in winter
Have fun- socializing also important
If your circumstances change: new grandchildren, health, new job, let us know. There are likely to be other volunteer roles you could move too, or you can take a break. Keep us in touch.

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**WildCall**
wildcall@sussexwt.org.uk
01273 494 777

for wildlife advice and information

If you don't know what something is and would like it identified: www.ispotnature.org
To help record any wildlife: www.brc.ac.uk/irecord

**Training Planned for Spring (dates provisional)**

**Customer Service**: Useful for volunteers in a shop or event, education. General customer service, how to defuse aggressive situations, what to do in emergencies and being an ambassador for the Trust.

**Volunteer Induction**: General information about Sussex Wildlife Trust reserves, the different volunteer roles, volunteer policy, health and safety, Sussex Wildlife Trust vision and projects. As well as some forest school or wild beach, (depending on location) hands-on activities to ensure everyone understands our work.
**Over to you:** tell us what training would be useful for your volunteer role e.g. wildlife identification

Booking will be open from December. Courses will be repeated throughout the year and in different locations in response to demand. Or email [SWTvolunteering@sussexwt.org.uk](mailto:SWTvolunteering@sussexwt.org.uk) for information