

# Earth Trust Report - Volunteering 2025 For National Lottery Community Fund



**The story of your project this year/ What has the funding helped you to do? Tell us in your own words, or the words of the people you support.**

## Overview

The funding we received in 2025 enabled us to maintain and improve our established Volunteer Programme. Volunteers are a vital part of the way we run our organisation and deliver our charitable work which includes:

- caring for wildlife-rich habitats
- maintaining public access to those green spaces
- running events and festivals for the public
- delivering a full-time education programme for mainstream schools
- running specialist courses and programmes for children and young people with an EHCP.

Some examples of specific impact are given below.

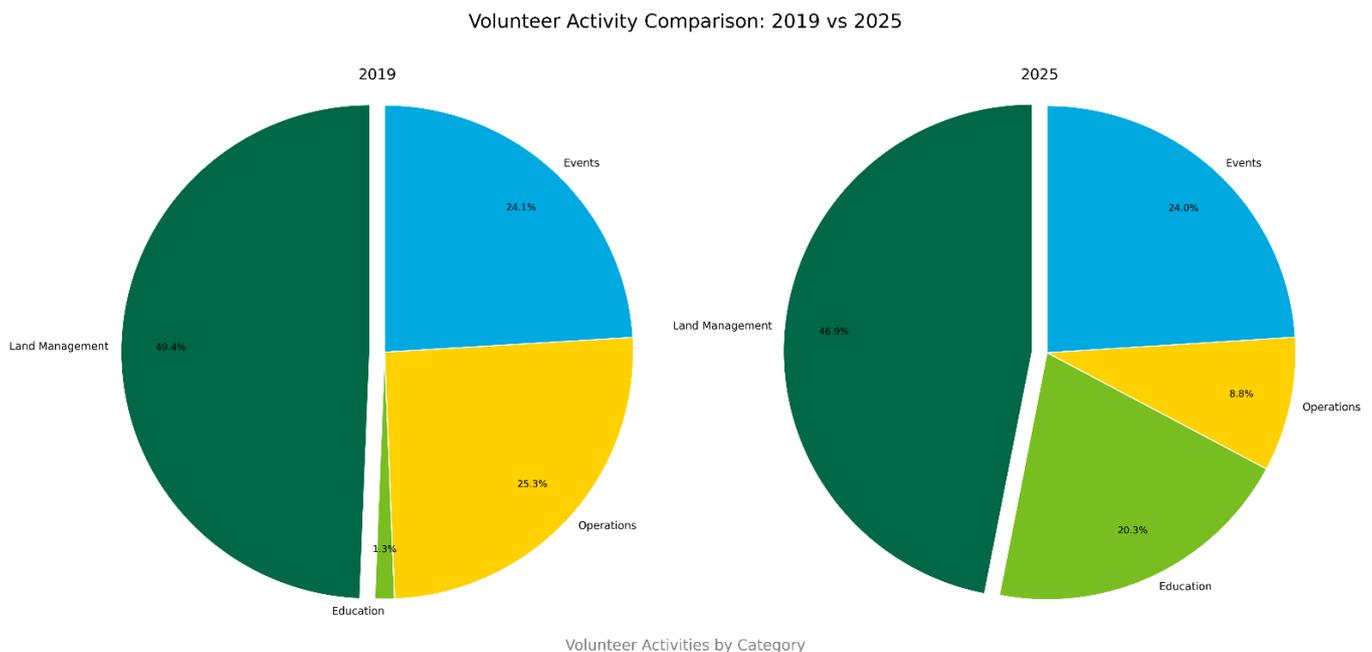


## Success Metrics

In 2025 we have expanded and diversified our Volunteer Programme in a number of ways. The total volunteer hours is up from 18,123 in 2024 to 21,190 in 2025. The total numbers of both registered and active volunteers have continued to show year on year growth (see table below).

## Diversity

The diversity of our volunteer community has also increased. We gauge this by measuring the uptake of different roles, which offer opportunities for people with different interests and skills. The increase in diversity has been achieved by creating 7 new roles in 2025: Creative Hub (making props etc for events), Field surveyor, Bird Surveyor, Edibles Grower, Stock Watcher, Orchard Volunteer and Young Ranger. The results of this diversification can be seen by comparing the proportion of volunteers involved in the various types of roles in 2019 with now:



Education Volunteers now make up nearly 21% of our volunteer community. These are people who have previously worked with children in some way, whether that be teachers or scout leaders. Together they have donated approx. 2,100 hours during 2025 supporting the education team.

Looking at volunteer hours, back in 2019, 83% of hours were spent on land management; in 2025 land management hours were 66% with education 11%. This shows how increasing and diversifying our roles has enabled people to engage with us in other than land management activity.

A second key success in increasing diversity of our Volunteer Community is due to our **Young Volunteers Programme**. 20 young people, aged 13-18, volunteered with us in 2025. They logged a total of 431 hours over the course of the year monitoring wildlife, monitoring our community reserves and supporting our communications & education teams.

## Administrative Improvements

During the summer of 2025 we moved to a new CRM database, this was a great opportunity to tighten up our processes and give us much cleaner data as to the stage each person has reached in their volunteer journey. The table below shows that the number of active volunteers

has increased each year along with the hours donated. We are also now able to differentiate between whether a volunteer has actively donated at least one hour in the last year, therefore making them an active volunteer, or if they are registered and receiving our volunteer bulletin but are yet to attend their first session. This also enables us to follow up with volunteers in this category in a timely manner for further positive engagement and connection.

Year	Active Volunteers	Hours donated	Registered, not active
2021	78	7,958	
2022	125	15,281	
2023	169	17,413	
2024	188	18,123	
2025	221	21,190	52

### **Volunteer Management, Training and Health & Safety**

Our staff team of c24, including a full-time Volunteering Manager, led and managed the work of volunteers, ensuring they were supported with training and any health and safety requirements.

In 2024 our Volunteering Manager created the Volunteer Experience Team, a Community of Practice made up of all the staff members who manage both individuals and teams of volunteers. The need for this came from the understanding that many of these staff members have very different roles, some office based and others outdoors and although they need very different support from their volunteers, there must be similarities in the quality of delivery and certain processes to ensure a cohesive volunteer programme and that each volunteer receives the same level of welcome, induction, support, training and feels part of our community.

The team meets monthly, which they continued to do during 2025, sharing ideas and stories of things that had gone well and not so well so that we could learn from one another. Your funding also enabled us to deliver a day-long workshop for the team, with an external trainer on Effective Communications & Inspirational Leadership; encouraging the staff to build confidence in their volunteer teams, to actively listen and engage, be inclusive and to understand what kind of leaders they are.

This was an enormous learning curve for some of the team who had never thought of themselves as leaders and how important their role is in leading teams of volunteers. It instilled confidence and gave them time outside of their usual role to consider how they lead and what they could do to improve their relationships with our volunteer community.

The monthly meetings work well as they are a mixture of Senior staff and more junior and we can discuss difficult situations, proactive engagement and model behaviours.

*“Good that we connect with others who deal with volunteers so there is support and shows a professional approach to volunteers.”*

Matthew, staff member who leads the gardening and office volunteers.

## How we spent the grant

Key aspects of our Volunteer Programme which have been supported by the National Lottery Community Fund grant were:

- our Volunteering Manager's time,
- our branded uniform which are both practical, give presence at the public locations and make our volunteers feel valued and part of our team,
- our annual Volunteer Social,
- equipment and uniform for our young volunteers and some sundry costs including our membership to Oxfordshire Community and Voluntary Action and the Volunteer Programme mobile phone. All our beneficiaries and especially Earth Trust Volunteers have benefited from this funding.

With a review of our Safeguarding policy taking place in 2025, it was decided that a larger proportion of our volunteers should receive DBS checks to ensure they are safe to volunteer with both children and vulnerable adults. This now covers all of our education volunteers and our session leaders and was an unexpected cost which we were able to meet due to the support of the Lottery funding.

2025 culminated in our 'best ever' annual social and to celebrate the achievement of 2 volunteers who had given over 10 years of service to Earth Trust. A highlight was the ceilidh band which got everyone dancing, meeting with new people and feeling very welcomed and valued.



*“What a great evening, thanks to all of you who worked so hard to make it such a success. The Ceilidh was such fun!”* Patience Conie, Gardening volunteer



## A Volunteer Story

Matthew Beard is a great example of a volunteer who sought us out as his values and interests aligned with that of Earth Trust and once he had started with our land management work parties, he found there were many more ways to get involved, learn new skills and share his own. Joining us in 2025 meant that he accessed 5 new roles/projects and started his own group once trained as a Session Leader.

*2025 was always going to be a year building on my introduction to the Trust midway through 2024, following the move from Sussex to Wallingford.*

*I have been fortunate to undertake a wide range of activities and training throughout the year, which started off by completing the coppice coup in Little Wittenham Wood. It was great to be involved in a project to regenerate a neglected coppice and by excluding deer, give the hazel stools and newly planted saplings a chance to thrive; early signs are that the fencing has worked although the coppice delivery team are on constant look out for deer that have broken in. The hazel coppice is growing well and now being harvested for stakes and binders, which are to be harvested in a 7-8 year rotation.*

*Late winter / early spring had me out hedge laying with [Earth Trust's] Hartley's hedge layers at North Farm; a tricky over mature hedge , which needed a lot of thinning but is now rejuvenated and looking terrific.*

*In April, I took part in the wildflower seed sowing at Bessie's Field, which was an amazing experience- how do you organise sowing of seed in around 20 acres of land? A long line of people with buckets and sowing by hand-scattering of seeds; an inspiring and interesting experience. A very dry summer inhibited germination, although 2 day's thistle pulling in August indicated that the thistles were doing well. Those that know tell me that some of the desired species are coming through; this is a long term project which I will watch with interest.*

*Midsummer saw me do quite a lot of training on rapid field assessments and soil surveys, to assist in monitoring of field and soil conditions to establish how farming practices are affecting biodiversity. I look forward to doing more surveys in 2026.*

*July was hedge survey time - I walked every hedge at North Farm - all 31 of them and collected data for the Great Hedge Survey. I averaged around 17,000 steps every Wednesday in July, when it was very hot. I like to think of myself as a hedge champion and learnt a lot about the assessment and condition of hedges. Just don't ask me to lay many at North Farm!*

*Come late summer/autumn , I did more training - First aid, Volunteer session leader and chainsaw refresher; always interesting to meet volunteers from other groups and hear how it is for them.*

*In August, I signed up to be a Community Warden at Riverside Meadows, which gives me the excuse to get out of the house and connect to the land. There is always something to see by the river, even if it is not always the flash of a kingfisher.*

*November was the start of the 3rd Hedge Laying Group which I lead on – tackling one of the tamer hedges at North Farm with a great bunch of people, who have picked up coppicing and hedge laying skills very quickly.*

*Where possible I still do a Thursday or Friday Group and enjoy meeting the variety of people and undertaking a mix of tasks. On one such day I was involved in the hedge planting near the arboretum, which was inspiring, as was assisting with the planting of fruit trees.*

*Meeting other volunteers has been a big plus for me, moving from Sussex, the equivalent of emigrating. I am amazed how talented and accomplished those that volunteer for the Trust are; the range of skills is enormous from butterfly experts, artists, modern languages, photography, singing, baking, to name a few. I have found volunteers to be welcoming, friendly and helpful.*

*It would be remiss of me not to mention the ranger team , who are very professional, competent, knowledgeable and friendly- what more could you ask of a ranger leading volunteers?*

*Hopefully more of the above for 2026 !*

**How you've involved people from your community in the work you do/ How have they changed the way you work? How have you joined up with what others are doing locally? How are you making the most of the strengths of your community**

Our volunteer programme is all about linking our organisation and the green spaces in our care to our local community. Our project gives people a chance to take part in their local green spaces – either through caring directly for habitats, or by supporting the work we do to engage school children, the public and specialist audiences with nature and farming. Land Management work parties, social/learning events and working towards the shared charitable purpose of Earth Trust enables people to make connections and develop a stronger sense of belonging. Volunteers contribute to positive environmental impacts in their own local green spaces enhancing local connections and sense of community.

### **Listening to our volunteer community**

We conduct an annual survey amongst our volunteers about their experience of volunteering with us and we feed in their ideas to how we support, recruit and manage our volunteers. The survey enables us to understand the make-up of our community, measure satisfaction and invite ideas for improvement. As we diversify our volunteer base, through increasing our roles, it makes it more important than ever to take account of everyone's views. It helps us to know people's reasons for volunteering and their needs as volunteers.

In the survey, we ask about what motivates our volunteers to support us. Their comments included:

*“Great bunch of people doing amazing things to inspire people of all ages to care about and protect nature and heritage.”*

*“Camaraderie and being outdoors as well as supporting nature”*

*“The ethics. The sense of community. Giving something back. The people and social opportunity.”*

*“Working with the education team supporting children and families to embrace the outdoors has been very motivating”*

Volunteers told us what have particularly enjoyed:

*“The ceilidh, the edible garden and helping at the explorers holiday camp.”*

*“I’ve enjoyed so many things but especially getting involved with family events and school visits”*

*“Being accepted as part of a team, being able to see the difference our work makes and being invited to events, whether as a volunteer or a participant.”*

*“Every session is different which is one of the nice things about them.”*

...And what they learned or found challenging:

*“Training including first aid and cross cutting skills was good”*

*“Being invited to join one of the hedgelaying teams means that I could learn a new skill from scratch, as well as forming friendship groups with people in the same situation”*

*“Physically challenging is good so hope to keep that up this year”*

*“Learning about the way natural materials harvested can and are put to use”*

We invited their suggestions as to how we can continually improve their experience of volunteering with us. Their suggestions and comments were:

*“It would be nice to have the odd session for volunteers to share experiences and reflect on what’s working or could be better. Share knowledge too.”*

*“I think the 10 year recognition award is a great idea. Could there be case for a shorter term recognition as well which might be a bit of fun such as having completed x hours and getting awarded a little badge or pair of socks or something ? (Some of us might not last the full 10 years !)”*

*“Keep doing what you are doing. There are so many roles in which volunteers can get involved with the Earth Trust.”*

*“A suggestion I made to a long-standing volunteer about recommending roles for in/experienced volunteers was fed back to the staff team and this was followed up.”*

*“Fantastic how the volunteer base has developed over the years.”*

*“Earth Trust management of Besselsleigh Wood [community reserve] has been a real benefit to the local volunteers.”*

*“So many different groups, covering different aspects of all the work the Earth Trust does locally, and in the community.”*

*“Thank you for helping me get back to normal after vast life changes resulted in everything being turned upside down for me!”*

### **Involving Volunteers – making the most of the strengths of our community**

Many of our volunteers bring skills to us – for example most of our Education Volunteers are former teachers or people with experience of working with young people with special needs.

Our Volunteer Manager meets with each volunteer personally to find out what common ground there is in terms of values, skills and experience and where we can support each other. This approach has huge benefits. For example, in 2024, Volunteer Peter Tetlow, trained as a Land management Session Leader meaning he could run land management work parties without a member of staff due to role specific training, DBS checks & first aid training. In 2025 Peter also started to volunteer for the education team and showed an interest in supporting young people further. As a next step in our Young Persons Volunteering programme, launched in 2023, we were keen to start a [monthly weekend work party for 16-18 year olds only](#). This year, we approached Peter, gave further training then together recruited 2 young people who started attending the work party in November.

*“It was the year when I broadened my involvement to include assisting the teams working with children and younger people. Whilst my work background was not relevant, I found I could bring along my own life experience [from time spent with] my own children and grandchildren. These are age groups with which Earth Trust is definitely trying to better engage. The kids do seem to get a lot out of it and at the same time it’s energising for the organisation.”*

Peter Tetlow, Session Leader

*“I’m enjoying the young ranger position immensely; it’s a great opportunity to get out and about while also doing something positive. The other volunteers are as friendly as one could hope for”*

Max, Young Ranger Volunteer

*“I have been volunteering with the Earth Trust for a couple of months now and am really enjoying my time spent doing this. It is very satisfying to complete a task from start to finish and see the results, for example: clearing brambles in the arboretum, or repairing and re-instating a bench. The Earth Trust team has been really welcoming and I feel that the volunteering sessions have been meaningful. It is nice to spend time outdoors with other like-minded people.”*

Jack, Young Ranger Volunteer (age 17)

## **Links to other organisations in our community**

We also make links with organisations in our community, including through Oxfordshire Community & Voluntary Action, OCVA, ([Homepage - Oxfordshire Community & Voluntary Action](#)), an umbrella organisation for volunteering. They run a monthly meeting for Volunteer Managers/Coordinators across Oxfordshire which provides a network and access to knowledge & expertise from other charities. They also provided free training courses to which our volunteers have access.

The mental health benefits of time spent in green spaces is now widely acknowledged. We welcome and build links with other charities in our local community which work with people with particular needs. For example, in 2025, we were approached by an Oxford based charity called [Restore](#) which supports people towards their mental health recovery. One of their members, having been supported with gardening and who had been through the majority of their programme, was keen to move on to independent volunteering to continue their journey combatting social anxiety. Following a meeting, we discussed our normal onboarding process of completing an online registration form followed by the volunteer receiving a weekly email with information on logistics of the volunteering. This usual process wasn't possible as the Restore member could not read. We were able to support him with completing the form and, after that, we called him every week to tell him where the volunteering would take place. The individual volunteered with us for 9 months. He stopped volunteering without any further communication with either himself or Restore, this gap in our evaluation of the success of this individual within our volunteering programme is something we plan to focus on during 2026 in a review of our digital onboarding process and ongoing communication with volunteers.

Building on this experience and with a view to making our volunteering more accessible, we approached [My Vision](#), an Oxfordshire based charity called which supports visually impaired people. Working together, we have identified that one of their regular groups could attend a land management work party at one of our community reserves in Abingdon (Abbey Fishponds). Our Countryside Manager has identified appropriate tasks for the group and we hope to take this forward in 2026.

## **A dedicated forum for our Volunteer Community**

In 2022 we launched a volunteer Facebook group following feedback in our annual volunteer survey. This is a hidden group for Earth Trust volunteers only to be in touch with one another, share stories and photos of their volunteering and other environmentally linked experiences, events and wildlife sightings. In 2025 we added the option to join the Facebook group to our registration process making the group 108 members strong.

**The differences you're making (both big and small)/ How has your project helped people and your community? And how do you know it's helped? Make sure the information you collect is from lots of different voices in your community (so, the people you support, staff and volunteers). And tell us about the differences you're making with numbers and stories. We also know that the difference you planned to make at the start of your project might change. That's absolutely okay – we like to hear about changes too.**

## **Impact Overview**

In 2025 our volunteers enabled Earth Trust to:

- care for a 500 hectare landscape including a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAC) and for seven community reserves in Abingdon, Wallingford, Didcot and other parts of South Oxfordshire;
- facilitate over 250,000 free visits by members of the public to those green spaces; run events and festivals attended by c6,000 people/year;
- deliver 7,130 immersive education experiences for c6,337 pupils including weekly visits for children and young people with an EHCP.

In 2025 our programme supported 213 local people, enabling them to:

- take part in purposeful charitable activity in their local area
- join a supportive diverse community offering learning, social events and interactions
- be physically and mentally active, including enjoying health-giving contact with nature

## **Projects supported by Volunteers**

We have also undertaken a range of special projects in 2025 and volunteers have been integral to the success of these. For example,

- **Edible Classroom.** We established a working market garden project run by Year 10-12 students who visit Earth Trust as part of their school curriculum and which has delivered 13 different types of vegetables sold to the Earth Trust community in Autumn 2025.
- **New Silvoarable.** On our farm, volunteers have been integral to the creation, with dedicated funding, of a new area of silvoarable. This involved creating six 6-metre wide wildflower strips in the field and planting 150 fruit and nut trees of over 60 different varieties, including heritage varieties originating in Oxfordshire and Berkshire.
- **New Chalk Grassland.** A new 9.5 ha chalk grassland was created in a field formerly under arable crops. The field was hand sown by volunteers with seed sourced by brush harvesting from species-rich calcareous meadows in the Cotswolds. Hand sowing from buckets was necessary as the brush-harvested wildflower seed contains seed heads etc that would block a mechanical seed drill.
- **A new 380-metre hedgerow** was planted comprising 2,100 shrubs and trees of a diverse mix of 15 UK-grown native species of local origin. In addition, 6 species of hedgerow trees were planted at 30 metre intervals in the new hedgerow.

- **A funded Biodiversity Monitoring Programme** has recruited and trained volunteers to create a baseline of biodiversity surveys and establish an ongoing programme of monitoring for future years. In 2025 this involved a range of surveys and techniques: habitat quality (Rapid Habitat Assessment), Breeding bird survey transects, Butterfly transects, Flower-Insect timed counts (FIT), Reptile refugia (mats), bat surveys (static detector), small mammals (footprint tunnels), 30 minute worm counts and Visual Evaluation of Soil Structure (VESS).

### **Benefits to Volunteers, Staff and our Audiences**

The benefits of volunteering are well-described including by the National Council for Voluntary Organisations in ‘Impactful Volunteering’, 2018, which identifies benefits to volunteers in mental health and wellbeing, physical health, social connections, and employability and skills. Our Volunteering keeps people active, offers social contact and we offer many opportunities for skills development and learning. Many Earth Trust Volunteers particularly value contact with nature, the sense of purpose they feel by taking part and that they are themselves ‘doing something’ about climate change and biodiversity loss. Their stories can be found on our website at: [Volunteer stories - Earth Trust](#). Below, volunteers describe the benefits they feel in terms of mental stimulation and sense of purpose/ personal contribution:

*“One aspect of the Earth Trust I value most is the approach to “training”. It isn’t just about learning a set skill; the Trust allows volunteers to tackle complex problems where the answer isn’t always known, encouraging us to research and find our own solutions. This intellectual challenge has been incredibly rewarding.*

*“The benefits of my time have definitely extended beyond my formal sessions. I have continued my work as a volunteer hedgelayer and have recently started training a new team in my home village. Preserving this ancient skill and passing it on to a wider community of like-minded groups is vital to me. As I see it, one organisation alone cannot solve the challenges our planet faces, but by sharing skills and working together, we can make a real impact”*

Volunteer Martin Barrett

*“For me, this year introduced a fascinating new dimension to my volunteering: analysing hedgerow survey data. ... My hope is that when we repeat this survey in a few years, the data will clearly show the [hedgerow biodiversity] improvement resulting from our adjusted management.”*

Long-time Hedgelaying Volunteer

People who come to our events and teachers who bring their school groups value the difference that is made by our volunteers:

*“Just wanted to drop a quick email of thanks to you and the team. Our class had a fantastic time on their trip this week and you were a huge part of that, keeping them going even as their toes froze off! I also wanted to send over a message of thanks for Jacqui who made it her mission to make sure Joey in my class had a good day after he struggled a little with the hill and the activities up there. She was excellent and really made sure he left the day with some great experiences. A good volunteer to keep around! Thank you! ”*

Andy Langley, Year 5 Class Teacher, Woodcote Primary School, following a visit

Our staff receive invaluable support from the Earth Trust Volunteers whose input with every activity enables them to achieve much more.

*“This year we received some funding to embark on a survey of the biodiversity in our hedgerows and the project has flown due to the incredible enthusiasm of the volunteers in our long-standing hedge-laying team – who have been working together laying hedges at Earth Trust for over 15 years. They embraced summer surveying alongside their winter hedgelaying.”* Simon Atkinson, Director of Green Infrastructure & Nature Recovery, Earth Trust.

**What you’ve learned/ What’s gone well? What’s not gone well or been challenging? What’s been unexpected or interesting? What have you learned that would be useful to others? What did you think of trying but didn’t? These could be things you’ve learned about: the way you work, the way you support people and your community, the way you work with others, your context or community. Make sure to speak to lots of different people (colleagues, volunteers, community members, partner organisations) to see what they think as well.**

It’s been an unprecedented year in the introduction of so many new roles. The new roles have brought with them vital training for the volunteers which has been hugely appreciated by all those that took part. The roles eg. Surveying, are the types of role people look to us to provide so have been enthusiastically filled. There is always the need to plan the journey of a new role with the staff lead so that they take into account every element of the relationships they make with volunteers and the time it takes to make sure the entire experience is planned and thought through from induction and training to evaluation and ongoing support.

A review of the Young Persons Volunteering programme in 2025 led to some of the less popular roles no longer being offered. It was clear that two of the roles worked well for 13-15 year olds so the focus should be on these:

- iRecord Surveyor – wildlife recording and monitoring
- Community Warden – litter picking and monitoring of our community reserves.

This led to another role being created for 16-18 year olds – Young Ranger – as the focus shifted from the number of young people we wanted to engage with to the journey we could take them on, encouraging young people to complete their Bronze, Silver & Gold Duke of Edinburgh awards with us. We saw more value in this approach, encouraging young people to have a lifetime relationship with nature and their environment and hopefully, once over 18, become lifelong supporters of Earth Trust.

In our recent survey we asked volunteers if there was anything we could do to improve their experience of volunteering with us. We already recognise 10 years of service and have celebrated 13 volunteers over the last few years for reaching this milestone with us. We will also be recognising our first 20 years of service during 2026.

We had a few suggestions in the survey for recognition of 5 years of service:

*“I think the 10 year recognition award is a great idea. Could there be case for a shorter term recognition as well which might be a bit of fun such as having completed x hours and getting awarded a little badge or pair of socks or something ? (Some of us might not last the full 10 years !)”*

This is a lovely idea and something we will look into further during 2026. It is something we had considered in the past but were not able to get the data, however, with the introduction of our new CRM, this will be much easier and the idea of something more light hearted would be a welcome addition to our annual volunteer social.

Another change we have made due to our experiences in 2025 is to run less learning & development events for volunteers. We ran over 10 events during 2025 which became poorly attended and were a drain on resources. We have decided to focus in on 3 main learning events during 2026 – Bird Identification, Basic Navigation and a talk on Insects with macro photography. We learnt that some volunteers do not like driving in the dark so all events will be held between April – October.

**How you’re changing what you do/ Have you made any changes based on your experiences and what you’ve learned? What are your plans for the coming year - and beyond? How will your plans help your community to thrive? And is there any support you need to do this?**

We will be growing our volunteer community further with new roles to support us with our centre development plans. In due course these plans include creating a nature-focused adventure playspace designed to attract people who are less confident in accessing nature and to open a Gateway to Nature for all our visitors at our main landscape. This will offer more roles in Education, maintenance and gardening and create new roles with the introduction of a café and the playscape. We anticipate we may be up to 475 volunteers by 2030.

Many of our new roles have been really successful this year:

**Young Persons Programme** – we plan to grow the programme further following the success this year with the introduction of the Young Ranger role. There will be more opportunities with the growth of our Edible Classroom, where young people could learn horticultural skills. We will also be opening a café as part of our Gateway project where young people could learn barista and customer service skills.

We have learnt this year that we have volunteers in our community who are wanting more responsibility and training and are passionate about giving young people the skills they need to be successful in their chosen career path.

Focussing on the recruitment and training of Volunteer Session leaders will be key to the success of our young persons programme. It may be that a session leader brings with them a specific skill in which we could then involve young people.

**Office Volunteers** - There will be a real focus on our office volunteers this year as this group has grown from 2-10 volunteers this year. More structure is needed around their induction and

training. There needs to be more focus on the IT provision and a dedicated space in the office for them and a regular follow up session with the Volunteer manager to check in and make sure they are enjoying the role and feel supported. So much of what these volunteers are looking for is the social aspect of being in the office so we need to make sure we are providing this environment for them.

We are digitising more of our volunteer onboarding process and creating training videos to make the knowledge we need volunteers to be familiar with more accessible, including a video about Earth Trust, giving all volunteers the tools to be our ambassadors in the wider community.

**What you've spent this year**

**We don't need to know everything you spent money on. We just need to know:**

- **how much you budgeted for**
- **how much you ended up spending**
- **the difference between your budget and how much you spent.**

**For both revenue and capital costs.**

**If it's easier for you, send us an updated version of the budget you sent to us when you first applied.**

See Doc sent separately: A4A GM Reqs email - AFA Expenditure Spreadsheet - Earth Trust Volunteering - ref 20307634 – Final Jan 2026

Our actual expenditure has deviated very little from our budget. The budget was £20,000; we spent £20,027.30.

**If this is the end of your funding, think about:**

- **If you have any thoughts about the overall project. For example, did you learn anything new about the work you're doing, or about your community, that was unexpected or interesting?**
- **Any other evidence or learning – like an evaluation or a piece of research - that you haven't already shared with us.**

2025 was another great year for our Volunteer Programme. We have seen strong growth across each metric – ie numbers of volunteers, the amount of time each volunteer gives, the diversity of people volunteering and the range of different roles that we have been able to offer. We are very grateful for the support we received from the national Lottery which has enabled us to go from strength to strength.

## Acknowledging the Grant

We publicised our grant with displays of National Lottery flags and bunting at our Volunteer Social.

On social media we have used the Community Fund logo: Most recently in this post on Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn of 26-1-2025 about our Young Rangers programme:

**Earth Trust**  
2,853 followers  
1d • 🌍

Our Young Rangers are getting stuck in and making a real difference across our green spaces 🍀  
... more

From clearing brambles in the arboretum and repairing benches, to hedge planting, habitat creation and practical conservation work, these monthly sessions give young people the chance to learn new skills, work safely outdoors and see the impact of their efforts. Having the right equipment and uniform helps our Young Rangers feel confident, included and part of the team from day one.

As one of our Young Rangers, Jack, shared:  
"It is very satisfying to complete a task from start to finish and see the results... The Earth Trust team has been really welcoming and I feel that the volunteering sessions have been meaningful. It is nice to spend time outdoors with other like-minded people."

Whilst Max added:  
"I'm enjoying the young ranger position immensely; it's a great opportunity to get out and about while also doing something positive."

The programme is supported by dedicated volunteers and session leaders who help create a welcoming and inspiring environment. As Peter, one of our volunteers, reflected:  
"The kids do seem to get a lot out of it and at the same time it's energising for the organisation."

We're grateful to the National Lottery for supporting our volunteering programme - helping us expand and diversify the roles on offer, fund essential equipment and uniform for young volunteers, and invest in the moments that bring people together, including the all-important Volunteer Social!

Our project was made possible thanks to [#NationalLottery](#)

🗨️ 📌

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Great to see future generations following the footsteps of us rather 'older' volunteers - in both senses of that word !

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Earth Trust

Yesterday at 5:26 PM · 🌐



Our Young Rangers are getting stuck in and making a real difference across our green spaces 🌱

From clearing brambles in the arboretum and repairing benches, to hedge planting, habitat creation and practical conservation work, these monthly sessions give young people the chance to learn new skills, work safely outdoors and see the impact of their efforts. Having the right equipment and uniform helps our Young Rangers feel confident, included and part of the team from day one.

As one of our Young Rangers, Jack, shared:

"It is very satisfying to complete a task from start to finish and see the results... The Earth Trust team has been really welcoming and I feel that the volunteering sessions have been meaningful. It is nice to spend time outdoors with other like-minded people."

Whilst Max added:

"I'm enjoying the young ranger position immensely; it's a great opportunity to get out and about while also doing something positive. "

The programme is supported by dedicated volunteers and session leaders who help create a welcoming and inspiring environment. As Peter, one of our volunteers, reflected:

"The kids do seem to get a lot out of it and at the same time it's energising for the organisation."

We're grateful to the National Lottery for supporting our volunteering programme - helping us expand and diversify the roles on offer, fund essential equipment and uniform for young volunteers, and invest in the moments that bring people together, including the all-important Volunteer Social!

Our project was made possible thanks to [#NationalLottery](#) players



On our website we acknowledge the National Lottery, alongside other funders, on our main volunteering landing page: [Volunteer with Earth Trust - Earth Trust](#).

Acknowledgement will also be included in our 2025 Impact Report and Annual Accounts. This is not out yet but you can see where the credit will show by looking at P40 of the 2024 report at: [Earth-Trust-Annual-Report-2024.pdf](#)

For any queries about this report please call one of us on 01865 407792:

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