

# Get ACTIVE

walking  
for  
**life!**

# by volunteering in the countryside



Your guide to active  
volunteering in Shropshire

# Introduction



This guide will help you to find out about opportunities to get involved in active volunteering in and around Shropshire.

Active volunteering is any type of voluntary work that involves a level of physical activity. This may, for example, be helping manage footpaths in the countryside, surveying wildlife in your local patch, or assisting schools in your area to lead their walking buses.

The activities are graded in order to give you an idea of the level of physical activity involved, to help you to pick the most suitable for you.

We hope you find 'Your guide to active volunteering in Shropshire' useful.

For any further details about the information provided in this guide please contact:

## **Countryside Access Team**

Outdoor Recreation Service

Shropshire Council

Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury SY2 6ND

Tel: **0345 678900**

**[www.shropshire.gov.uk](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk)**

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# Introduction to Active Volunteering

Whether you are surveying footpaths, carrying out conservation work, or leading walks, active volunteering is a great way to get out and about, meet new people, and learn new skills.

Active volunteering is also a fantastic way to fit more physical activity into your lifestyle and move towards achieving the recommendation of at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity, on at least 5 days of the week. Moderate intensity activity is anything which involves you breathing a little faster, having a slightly faster heart beat, and feeling a little warmer.

You can use the grading system in the guide to start at a level that suits you. There is no point wearing yourself out straight away. Start gradually, set yourself small targets and goals, and build slowly from there.

Even if you currently don't do much physical activity, it's never too late to start. Whatever your age or current level of fitness, you can benefit from doing a bit more physical activity. Getting involved in some of the active volunteering opportunities in this guide is a great way to start to improve your health, without even realising it!

# Grading Explained

**This guide grades activities as:**



## **Level 1**

involves a light level of physical activity



## **Level 2**

involves a moderate level of physical activity



## **Level 3**

involves a high level of physical activity



## **All Levels**

wide range of activities to cater for all abilities

# Active Volunteering Opportunities in Shropshire

## Active Choices



Active Choices is a project run by the Community Council of Shropshire. The project recruits volunteers to act as mentors to help people, aged 50 and over, lead a more active lifestyle by helping them access local physical activity opportunities.

Initially the project is looking for volunteers to help in the Oswestry area, but in time volunteers will be needed across the county.

Full training and support will be given, and out of pocket expenses reimbursed.

For more information contact the Preventative Services Team, Community Council of Shropshire: 01743 342167 or 01743 342161

## AONB Partnership



The Shropshire Hills were one of the first areas to be designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in 1958. The main purpose of the AONB is to conserve and enhance natural beauty.

Key aspects of the way the AONB works are involving local people and seeking to integrate environmental, economic and social benefits.

*There are opportunities to get involved in the Shropshire Hills through local community groups such as:*

- Wildlife groups
- Archaeology groups
- Local history groups

For more information contact:  
The Community Officer, Shropshire Hills AONB  
Partnership, The Old Post Office, Shrewsbury  
Road, Craven Arms SY7 9NZ  
Tel: 01588 674080  
Website: [www.shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk](http://www.shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk)

## Butterfly Conservation

Butterfly Conservation was formed in 1968, and seeks to halt and reverse the alarming decline in Britain of many species of butterflies and moths.

In 2006 Butterfly Conservation bought the western half of Prees Heath Common, near Whitchurch, North Shropshire. It is the last remaining sanctuary in the West Midlands for the nationally endangered Silver-Studded Blue Butterfly. This area is now a nature reserve, and Butterfly Conservation is working to restore the site for the benefit of all the wildlife that lives there.

*As a volunteer you can help by:*



- Monitoring numbers of butterflies on the reserve (Free one-to-one training will be provided)



- Monitoring numbers of butterflies elsewhere in the county



- Tree and shrub planting



- Scrub and ragwort clearance



- Harvesting and sowing heather seed

For more information contact:  
Stephen Lewis, Prees Heath Warden  
Tel: 07900 886809  
Email: [slewis@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:slewis@butterfly-conservation.org)  
Website: [www.butterfly-conservation.org](http://www.butterfly-conservation.org)

# CAVE (Craven Arms Volunteers in the Environment)

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CAVE organise regular volunteering work parties that are open to all. No experience is necessary, just a desire to look after the local environment.

*Activities on offer include:*



● Town Tidy



● Onny Meadows work party



● Woodland management at Sallow Coppice

For more information contact Merinda on  
07870 135852

## Fordhall Farm

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Fordhall Farm near Market Drayton is the first community owned farm in England. It demonstrates that small scale farming, connected to the local community, offers a viable way of life for generations to come.

*Fordhall Farm offers you the chance to get involved in:*

- Volunteering working weekends with activities such as wildflower planting, clearing ditches, and fencing.

For more information contact Fordhall Farm  
Tel: 01630 638696  
Website: [www.fordhallfarm.com](http://www.fordhallfarm.com)

# Green Wood Centre

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The Green Wood Centre is located in the heart of the Severn Gorge, just a short distance from historic Ironbridge.

*The Green Wood Centre offers opportunities for volunteering in the Ironbridge Gorge through activities such as:*

-  ● Site maintenance tasks e.g. gardening and tool sharpening
-  ● Coppicing using hand tools
-  ● Practical woodland management
-  ● Work party activities e.g. path and step construction, erecting deer fencing and posts and extracting coppice material from woodlands
-  ● **VENTURE OUT:** scheme based within Telford & Wrekin offering opportunities within the greenspace areas.

For more information contact the  
Green Wood Centre

Tel: 01952 432769

Email: [volunteers@greenwoodcentre.org.uk](mailto:volunteers@greenwoodcentre.org.uk)

Website: [www.greenwoodcentre.org.uk](http://www.greenwoodcentre.org.uk)



# Haycop Conservation Group



Haycop Conservation Group manages a 9.1 acre, diverse habitat site on the edge of Broseley, in a former deep coal mining area. The group welcomes any new volunteers to help with the management of the site.

*Activities involved in site management are:*

- Light coppicing
- Stream cleaning
- Scrub clearing
- Tidying

For more information contact Adrian Miles  
01952 882318 or 07721 423607

## National Trust

The National Trust is a charity which protects, and opens to the public, over 300 historic houses and gardens, and 49 industrial monuments and mills across the country.

The National Trust also look after forests, woods, fens, beaches, moorland, islands, archaeological remains, castles, nature reserves, and villages for ever, for everyone.

*Within Shropshire the National Trust offers volunteering opportunities which include:*



- Management of the grounds at Attingham Park, Sunnycroft, Carding Mill Valley, and Dudmaston Hall.



- Regular volunteer work parties



- 'Dig for Victory Garden' management

For more information contact The National Trust  
Tel: 0121 753 7752  
Website: [www.nationaltrust.org.uk](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk)

# Natural England

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Natural England works for people, places, and nature to conserve and enhance biodiversity, landscapes, and wildlife in rural, urban, coastal and marine areas.

*There are many ways you can help protect and conserve the English countryside. Volunteering is one way you can get involved through activities such as:*



- Volunteer work days at Fenns, Whixall, and Bettisfield Mosses National Nature Reserves (NNR), Stiperstones (NNR)



- Activities on NNRS at The Stiperstones, Aqualate Mere, and Fenns, Whixall and Bettisfield Mosses e.g. conservation management, surveying and monitoring wildlife



- Specialist bat workers

For more information contact Natural England  
Volunteer Co-ordinator

Tel: 0300 060 0693

Website: [www.naturalengland.org.uk](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk)



## Penns Meadow



Penns Meadow is a 5½ acre field near to Broseley in Bridgnorth. A group of volunteers hold working sessions on this privately owned site to ensure that it is preserved as a Hay Meadow in the future. The group would welcome any new volunteers.

For more information please contact Phil Revell  
Tel: 01952 882055  
Email: [philrevell@btconnect.com](mailto:philrevell@btconnect.com)

## Severn Gorge Countryside Trust

The Severn Gorge Countryside Trust was established in 1991 to manage more than 270 hectares (670 acres) of woodland, grassland, heathland, pools, and other public places throughout the Ironbridge Gorge and its surroundings. The Trust manages this landscape for the benefit of local communities and the many thousands of visitors who come to visit the gorge each year.

*Volunteering activities include:*

-  ● Wildlife surveys and biological monitoring
-  ● Guided walks
-  ● Practical conservation activities such as habitat management and footpath improvements

All activities take place in the Ironbridge Gorge and surrounding areas in South Telford.

For more information contact Severn Gorge Countryside Trust, Wesley Rooms Annexe, Jockey Bank, Ironbridge, Telford TF8 7PD  
Tel: 01952 433880  
Email: [volunteer@severngorge.org.uk](mailto:volunteer@severngorge.org.uk)  
Website: [www.severngorge.org.uk](http://www.severngorge.org.uk)

# Shawbury Moat Project



The Shawbury Moat Project consists of a community group who are renovating a 13th Century Moat in Shawbury village. The group have regular 'tidying' work parties of the moat and surrounding area, and would welcome any new volunteers.

For more information please contact  
Adrian Brown on 01939 250295

## Shropshire Council, Outdoor Recreation

*Shropshire Council's Outdoor Recreation Service offers a range of active volunteering opportunities through a number of initiatives.*

### Parks and Countryside Sites

The Parks and Countryside Sites Team manage about 150 sites around Shropshire. These range from small areas of urban greenspace to large Country Parks and Nature Reserves. There are many opportunities to get involved in maintaining and developing these valuable sites throughout the year.

Activities include:



● Tree / hedge planting



● Invasive scrub clearance



● Hedge laying



● Path and gate maintenance



● Wildflower meadow management



● Helping with events

*continued...*

-  ● Woodland management
-  ● Fencing
-  ● Horticulture
-  ● Wildlife and visitor surveys

Volunteering opportunities include:

-  ● Midweek practical tasks – Tuesdays based at Severn Valley Country Park (but also working on other parks and sites in the Bridgnorth area); Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays based in Shrewsbury and Ellesmere (but working on parks and sites all over the county)
-  ● Weekend tasks throughout the county - especially in the Autumn and Winter months
-  ● Volunteer Site Rangers – being the “eyes and ears” in parks and sites; litter picking; carrying out wildlife and visitor surveys
-  ● Tree Warden Scheme – looking after trees in your area

For further information, please contact Gareth Egarr, the Countryside Heritage Sites Manager on 01691 624448  
Email: [gareth.egarr@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:gareth.egarr@shropshire.gov.uk)

## Parish Paths Partnership

The extensive rights of way network in Shropshire is managed by the Countryside Access Team. With over 5,500km of routes they are always looking for volunteers to help keep all the footpaths and bridleways well maintained for everyone to use and enjoy. There are two main



volunteering schemes in place in the county dependant on whether you would wish to join an existing group of volunteers, start your own group or prefer to volunteer on your own.

There are over 55 Parish Paths Partnership groups of volunteers all over the county who survey, maintain, and promote their local network of Public Rights of Way. The Countryside Access Team at Shropshire Council offer assistance to these groups through training, grants, materials and tool supply, and general practical assistance.

*Activities carried out by the Parish Paths Partnership groups include:*

- Clearance of footpaths and bridleways
- Installing gates, stiles and small bridges
- Surveying and waymarking of paths
- Organising guided walks in their areas

*There are Parish Paths Partnership groups with regular work parties in the following areas:*

- |                     |                   |                  |
|---------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| ● Bishops Castle    | ● Church Stretton | ● Clun           |
| ● Cleobury Mortimer | ● Craven Arms     | ● Ditton Priors  |
| ● Highley           | ● Hinstock        | ● Kinlet         |
| ● Loppington        | ● Ludlow          | ● Market Drayton |
| ● Oswestry          | ● Pontesbury      | ● Prees          |
| ● Shifnal           | ● Stottesdon      | ● Westbury       |
| ● Worfield          |                   |                  |

There are a number of other groups in existence across the county: this list highlights those that are most active. If you can't find one local to you please contact Shropshire Council for a full list of Parish Paths Partnership groups.

If you want to join an existing group or would like to start a new group in your area please contact:  
Phil Betts, Countryside Access Team, Old Nills  
Quarry, Pontesbury SY5 0YH

Tel: 01743 791984

Email: [phil.betts@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:phil.betts@shropshire.gov.uk)

Website: [www.shropshire.gov.uk/countryside.nsf](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/countryside.nsf)

## Parish Paths Wardens



The Parish Warden scheme is a new initiative aimed at individuals who are willing to regularly walk and survey their local Rights of Way and provide information on their condition back to the Countryside Access Team to help keep the local routes open and available for all to use. Individuals can do as much or as little as they want, but activities could include surveying and waymarking of routes and light clearance work.

If you are interested in becoming a Paths Warden for your area please contact Phil Betts in the Countryside Access Team on

**01743 791984**

Email: [phil.betts@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:phil.betts@shropshire.gov.uk)

Website: [www.shropshire.gov.uk/countryside.nsf](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/countryside.nsf)





Shropshire Council's School Travel Plan Advisers work closely with schools throughout the county with the aim of encouraging active travel on the journey to school, and reducing car use. Many schools have developed walking buses where pupils walk on a specified route accompanied by a group of adults. The routes vary immensely with some about a mile long and others much shorter. Routes are risk assessed by Road Safety Officers, and volunteers are trained and are all CRB checked.

Some schools find it difficult to recruit enough parent helpers to maintain the required ratio of adults to children, and would welcome volunteers from their local community. Some walking buses run every day, but most run on one or two days of the week.

*There are currently walking buses in:*

**Cressage, Corvedale, Bayston Hill, Clun Bridgnorth, Alveley, Claverley, Criftins, Shifnal, Cophorne, Shrewsbury, Ludlow, Albrighton, Hanwood, Worfield, Minsterley, Weston Rhyn, Prees, Much Wenlock and Clebury Mortimer. Schools in Whitchurch, Wem, Kinnerley and Trefonen would like to start up walking buses but have insufficient volunteers at the moment.**

There are also opportunities to volunteer to train as cycle trainers. The Road Safety Section of the Council is able to provide training for volunteers, who can then help with delivering cycle training in schools.

For further information please contact the  
School Travel Plan Team on **01743 253001**  
Email: **[transport@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:transport@shropshire.gov.uk)**

# Shropshire Wildlife Trust

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Shropshire Wildlife Trust protects wildlife where you live. They are the county's leading environmental charity, currently supported by 9,500 members.

Shropshire Wildlife Trust is based in Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury. They are open to visitors from Monday – Saturday, 10am – 4.30pm. They offer you the chance to explore their garden, browse their shop, and find out more about the work they do.

Every year volunteers give the Shropshire Wildlife Trust thousands of days work, and they are also looking to recruit new volunteers.

*Activities you can volunteer to get involved in include:*



● Wrekin Forest Volunteer Group activities which take place in the Wrekin Forest and Telford Green Network e.g. planting hedges, mending fences, building gates and wildlife ID days (all abilities)



● Regular work parties on nature reserves, carrying out activities such as dry stone walling, hedge laying, and pond clearance



● Surveying



● Wildlife watch groups



● Gardening at the Trust's headquarters in Shrewsbury

For more information please contact the Volunteer Co-ordinator at Shropshire Wildlife Trust

Tel: 01743 284296

Website: [www.shropshirewildlifetrust.org.uk](http://www.shropshirewildlifetrust.org.uk)

# Telford Green Gym

Telford Green Gym is part of Telford and Wrekin Primary Care Trust's Health Promotion Service. The Green Gym offers people an alternative way to improve their health and wellbeing by getting involved in practical conservation activities around Telford and Wrekin. Sessions run Tuesday, Wednesdays and Thursday, for three hours, with a maximum of 15 volunteers.

*You can get involved in:*

-  • Allotment gardening
-  • Community projects
-  • Habitat management
-  • Step and bridge building

Please note that anyone interested after the first taster session will be asked to sign up for ten weeks because this is a health project and the benefits need to be evaluated.

For more information please contact Telford Green Gym Office, 67 High Street, Madeley TF7 5AU Tel: **01952 686310**



# 'Walking the way to Health' walk leaders

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Walking the way to Health is a joint initiative between Natural England and the British Heart Foundation. It aims to encourage people, particularly those who currently take little exercise, to join regular short walking groups in their communities. Nationally there are over 400 Walking the way to Health groups.

Walking the way to Health groups across Shropshire need volunteers to train as walk leaders to ensure that every walk has someone at the front of the group and someone at the back, this way walkers feel that they are in a safe and supported environment.

*There are currently Walking the way to Health groups existing, or being developed, in every district in the county:*

- **North:** Oswestry, Llanymynech, Wem, Market Drayton, Whitchurch, Shawbury, Ellesmere and Hadnall
- **Central:** Shrewsbury, Pontesbury, Telford & Wrekin Walks
- **South Shropshire:** Alveley, Beckbury, Bridgnorth, Shifnal, Highley, Broseley, Much Wenlock, Albrighton, Church Stretton, Craven Arms, Ludlow, Worthen, Rushbury, Ditton Priors and Minsterley

For more information on how you can volunteer to be a walk leader in any of these areas please contact: The Walking for Health Co-ordinator, Countryside Access Team, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury SY2 6ND  
Tel: **01743 255059** or visit the Walking the way to Health website [www.whi.org.uk](http://www.whi.org.uk)

For Telford & Wrekin walks contact Jenny Stretton, Telford & Wrekin PCT, 67 High Street, Madeley, Telford, TF7 5AU  
Tel: **01952 686332**  
Email: [jenny.stretton@telfordpct.nhs.uk](mailto:jenny.stretton@telfordpct.nhs.uk)

# Wye Wood Project

The Wye Wood Project works with local communities to encourage the use of local woodland to help improve health and wellbeing.

*Volunteering opportunities at the Wye Wood Project include:*



- Walk leaders (as part of the Walking the way to Health initiative) for walks in Mortimer Forest, Wigmore Rolls, Aconbury Wood, and Newton Coppice



- Coppice workers at Aconbury Wood and Wigmore Rolls woodland



- Greenwood workers at Wigmore Rolls woodland and Aconbury Wood

For more information please contact the Wye Wood Project Officer:

Tel: 01544 232707

Email: [katelawes@smallwoods.org.uk](mailto:katelawes@smallwoods.org.uk)



# Wyldwoods

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Wyldwoods is a rural centre based on the outskirts of Broseley in beautiful, tranquil and secluded countryside. We provide a wide variety of activities including creative arts for well-being, small animal care, organic gardening, holistic therapies, environmental awareness and a whole lot more. our beneficiaries include people of all ages who have experience of mental health issues, learning difficulties and other disadvantages as well as the local community. We have volunteering opportunities for people over 18 who want to work as a support to our beneficiaries with practical tasks and occasional written work etc.

## Other volunteering opportunities include:



- teaching arts and crafts and other skills
- admin and office tasks
- fundraising
- event planning
- distribution of promotional materials



- site maintenance
- gardening
- animal care

We carry out a formal induction process including CRB checks and following up references. This is followed by a trial period with regular feedback opportunities from volunteer(s) and Wyldwoods. We are not always in a position to take on volunteers so please bear with us. We are a small registered charity and we need to have funding before we can provide for our beneficiaries and staff and volunteers.

We do have expression of interest forms for volunteers in the first instance, then we go through the process from there.

**Stephanie Brett**, Dean Corner Farmhouse  
Willey, Broseley, Shropshire TF12 5JH  
Email: [steph.brett@wyldwoods.co.uk](mailto:steph.brett@wyldwoods.co.uk)  
Website: [www.wyldwoods.co.uk](http://www.wyldwoods.co.uk)  
Tel: 01952 884224  
Mobile: 07816 113539

# Volunteering Bureaux

The volunteering opportunities in this guide are by no means a complete list of everything that you can get involved in around Shropshire.

If you would like to find out about an even wider range of volunteering opportunities, please contact your local volunteering bureau on the details below.

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## Central and South Shropshire

Community Council of Shropshire  
The Creative Quarter, Shrewsbury Business Park  
SHREWSBURY, SY2 6LG  
Tel: 01743 237877

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## North Shropshire

Qube, Oswald Road, OSWESTRY, SY11 1RB  
Tel: 01691 656 882  
Website: [www.qube-oca.co.uk](http://www.qube-oca.co.uk)

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## Telford & Wrekin CVS

Meeting Point House, Southwater Square  
Town Centre, TELFORD, TF3 4HS  
Tel: 01952 291 350  
Website: [www.tandwcvcs.org.uk](http://www.tandwcvcs.org.uk)



# Get ACTIVE by volunteering!

