moor trees

creating native woodland

Volunteering with Moor Trees









Information Pack

April 2025

A welcome from our Chief Executive

Thank you for expressing an interest in volunteering with Moor Trees. Volunteers have been at the heart of Moor Trees' achievements since we were established in 1999. As an environmental charity we believe we offer a unique experience for local people to have an active role in responding to the climate and nature crises.

When talking to our passionate and committed team of volunteers it is clear that everyone has a different motivation for wanting to support Moor Trees. The charity aims to respond to this by offering a range of opportunities to get involved. Whether you want to be a regular volunteer supporting our Dartmoor provenance tree production at our weekly sessions in our Community Tree Nurseries or brace yourself against the wind and rain of a tree planting season to create the native woodlands and temperate rainforests of tomorrow. Perhaps you want to give your time to share with others about our work and how they can get involved and support us at local events and shows - there are lots of ways you can help.

Each year our 275 plus volunteers give more than 5,000 hours of their time to support our vital work by being part of every step of the journey to restore native woodland on Dartmoor. From gathering seeds from ancient woodlands each autumn, nurturing the young seedlings in our tree nurseries, planting out saplings over winter or monitoring the health and habitat change of woodlands we have created over the summertime there are many ways in which you can play your part.

Thank you again for your interest in volunteering with Moor Trees. We hope that you will join us and help continue our work breathing more life into Dartmoor.

With best wishes



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About this document

This information pack has been developed to help inform people about the experience of volunteering with Moor Trees. As a charity we are reliant on the time and the commitment of volunteers to help us in creating native woodland on Dartmoor. This document contains information about our expectations, what we commit to do for the volunteers we support and information about our systems and processes.

About Moor Trees



Moor Trees aims to create and expand native broadleaf woodlands on Dartmoor, forming a mosaic of restored habitats through natural regeneration of native species. We are also helping to improve connectivity of habitats through the planting of trees. We grow our own trees in our two community tree nurseries using locally sourced seed from Dartmoor and surrounding areas. The UK remains one of the least wooded countries in Europe with 13% woodland cover compared to the European average of 38%.[1]

Since 2000, Moor Trees has planted over 165,000 trees and currently provides the opportunity to over 275 volunteers each year to reconnect to nature and enhance their wellbeing. At the heart of our mission lies a powerful purpose: connecting communities, improving biodiversity, and combating climate change – the most urgent challenges of our time.

Why volunteer with Moor Trees?

Moor Trees aims to see a third of Dartmoor as woodland, wood pasture or natural regeneration by 2050. We recognise that without the ongoing support of volunteers this will not be possible. The Moor Trees community of volunteers is essential to realising these ambitions. Volunteers bring a variety of skills, knowledge, energy and enthusiasm to our mission.

Volunteers are an essential part of Moor Trees. They are at the core of what we do and achieve. Without their help, our work would not be possible. We were founded by volunteers in 1999. Today, around 275 volunteers make a huge contribution to our work

[1] Provisional Woodland Statistics - Forest Research

each year, some volunteering once and some, every week. Volunteers are very much at the heart of what we do.

There is a strong community of volunteers at Moor Trees and there are many reasons to volunteer with us. This includes to:

- Learn new skills.
- Help to achieve our aims of seeing an increase in tree cover on Dartmoor.
- Spend time with a welcoming, friendly community of volunteers and make social connections.
- Improve mental and physical wellbeing by being outdoors.
- Improve local biodiversity and increase benefits for wildlife on Dartmoor.
- Create resilient native woodlands.

Types of volunteering

Moor Trees has a seed to site approach to volunteering and volunteers are welcome to engage with all aspects of this. There is no need for any knowledge or experience, as full instruction will be given for all activities. We offer a range of ways to volunteer, especially at our tree nurseries, where there is a variety of jobs to suit different ages and abilities. Our volunteering offer includes but is not limited to:

- Helping to grow, care for and prepare trees for planting at our Tree Nurseries.
- Collecting seeds, at one of our organised seed collection events.
- Tree planting, at our woodland creation sites.
- Monitoring woodland biodiversity and health, during the summer at our Citizen Science events.
- Representing Moor Trees at events or shows.
- Supporting our fundraising activities.
- Social media/photography.
- Transporting equipment and driving.



Liz after processing seeds at our Broadley tree nursery

What you can expect when volunteering with Moor Trees

When volunteering with Moor Trees you can expect us to:

- Provide a welcoming, inclusive and friendly experience.
- Give instruction as appropriate to each task and clear plans for the day or session.
- Help and support volunteers when learning new tasks and to give feedback and guidance.
- Offer out of pocket expenses to cover travel and other costs in line with our reimbursement policy.
- Adhere to health and safety guidance and provide safety equipment as appropriate or required for a particular task.
- Have appropriate Employer's liability insurance and Public liability insurance covering volunteering activities.
- Provide inclusive access to volunteering opportunities with the charity.
- Respect volunteers for the time and skills they give to help Moor Trees achieve its aims.
- Recognise and thank volunteers for their contribution and celebrate achievements together.

What we expect from you

When people choose to volunteer with Moor Trees we ask that our volunteers embrace the principles that make our community of volunteers a friendly, welcoming, safe, enjoyable and inclusive place. We ask that while volunteering with Moor Trees you are:

- Willing to follow all instructions relating to Health and Safety.
- Able to share with us any information that will help us to keep you safe.
- Open and honest about any challenges you have with any task.
- Willing to work alongside other volunteers to carry out a task.
- Able to ask for any extra instructions or information needed to carry out a task.
- Respectful of the sites that we visit and the wishes of the landowner.
- Able to treat everyone with fairness and respect.
- Embracing of being a part of a safe environment where all volunteers share our intentions for creating a respectful, friendly and welcoming environment for everyone, regardless of their background or ability.
- Conscientious and treat any Moor Trees equipment with care
- Understanding that sometimes we need to be flexible and the need to adapt plans to changing situations
- Patient with staff who are supervising events.
- Committed to helping us to achieve and advocate for our aims and objectives, without representing your views as that of the charity.

Becoming a Moor Trees volunteer

Anyone interested in volunteering with Moor Trees is welcome to attend a **taster session** before they formally **register** to volunteer with the charity.

There is **no interview process**. Volunteers are encouraged to share with the charity during your **induction** information that is relevant to your ability to carry out your volunteering role. This includes existing skills and experiences, desires and interests to learn and personal developments, reasons why you may not be able to participate in particular activities, guidance on whether you are comfortable working in a group or prefer to work on your own or in small groups, and medical information including certain conditions and medication.

Asylum seekers, people on benefits, and ex-offenders are all entitled to volunteer for charities. If you are from overseas, you will need to check that your visa allows you to volunteer and any conditions that might apply.

How to register as a volunteer

1. Complete a volunteering registration form

We ask that everyone fills in a **volunteer registration form** before joining us. This is to make sure we can keep you safe while volunteering with us and to be able to plan sessions. The form is accessed through the volunteering page on our website. We are also able to provide a printed copy if required.

Register online at www.moortrees.org/get-involved/volunteer/volunteer-registration-form/

2. Register for an upcoming volunteering activity

If you are interested in volunteering for the first time with Moor Trees you can see all our events on our website, Eventbrite or Facebook page. If there is anything you want to ask that isn't included in this pack or on the website, you can email info@moortrees.org.

We also run several volunteering open days throughout the year, where you can come along and see our Dartington tree nursery and ask any questions or discuss the suitability of our sessions. These are also advertised on Eventbrite and social media.

Anyone wishing to volunteer on a particular day is encouraged to **book for free** on **Eventbrite**. This is our preferred method of letting us know if you are coming to an event. Sometimes, there is a need to cancel events at short notice because of weather or other unforeseen circumstances. In these situations, it is important we know you are hoping to attend the event, and we can communicate with you.

3. Complete a short induction for the volunteering activity

We will provide a short practical **induction** at each event, and all instruction will be given for the tasks we are doing by a named session leader(s). At our tree nursery sessions there will always be a range of tasks that we need help with, suitable for all ages and abilities. We do always ask that anyone under the age of 18 years old is accompanied by an adult.

Once volunteers have completed a certain number of sessions of one type or have volunteered at several different types of events through the year, they will be asked if they want to become considered an 'experienced Moor Trees volunteer'. An **experienced volunteer** may be asked to help with buddying up with newer volunteers to help provide support with a task. They might also be asked to help with larger volunteering or community events, assisting with setting up the site, car parking or packing away. Extra training or instruction will be given for these additional tasks.



Tree planting on Harford Moor, February 2025

Moor Trees induction

Moor Trees will provide a copy of the volunteering information pack and the volunteering policy following the submission of a registration form. Volunteers new to the organisation or activity will be provided either with an individual or group induction.

At each of our sessions, we will ensure that volunteers:

- Understand the tasks and what is expected of them on the day.
- Are introduced to relevant staff and volunteers.
- Are shown around the site or location where they will be volunteering.
- Know who they can go to if they have any questions or problems.
- Are shown where they can find the resources they need.
- Know about breaks.
- Understand how to claim expenses.
- Are offered (if required) to be shadowed by another experienced volunteer or member of staff.



Jill and Jon gathering seeds at Hillcrest, 2024

Resolving problems

Moor Trees expects that all volunteers share our intentions for creating a respectful, friendly and welcoming environment for everyone.

If there are issues that arise, the person supervising the session will be the first point of contact, for any grievances or complaints. Any complaints will be dealt with fairly and with a focus on resolution.

If a volunteer has tried to solve a problem or concern informally by talking to the person supervising the session and it is not resolved they can talk to the Operations Manager. If they are not satisfied after this stage, then a formal complaint can be made in writing. Any complaint in writing should be submitted to the Chief Executive.

Complaints will be recorded and reviewed to help us to identify areas for improvement. Moor Trees will regularly give opportunities for feedback and use this to improve our volunteer experience and providing updates to the Information Pack.

Moor Trees aims for everyone volunteering with the charity to have a positive experience and benefit from the opportunity of supporting us to achieve our aims. However, we understand that problems may arise. As a volunteer, you might experience the following:

- struggling to do a particular task or activity
- finding yourself doing too much and feeling overwhelmed
- not getting on with others
- being unhappy with things the organisation is doing or not doing

The charity also wants to avoid more serious problems which could include:

- bullying or harassment
- sharing confidential data
- fraud or stealing funds
- being under the influence of alcohol or drugs

If something does go wrong our Volunteering Policy outlines the process we will follow.

Ceasing to volunteer

We understand that there are a range of reasons why people are no longer able to volunteer for Moor Trees or need to take a break. If possible, please let the team know if you are no longer able to volunteer or if you would like to be kept updated in the meantime before you are able to volunteer again. Volunteers are encouraged to sign up to receive our monthly e-newsletter to be kept informed with news and information about the charity.



Taking a break – Seed Gathering Season, 2024

Practicalities when volunteering with Moor Trees

Booking to volunteer with Moor Trees

To help us plan our volunteering sessions, we ask all volunteers to register via Eventbrite to confirm that they will be attending the session. All upcoming events are advertised via our Eventbrite page and shared on our website and Facebook page.

Volunteers can cancel their booking at any time. We encourage volunteers to notify us if they cannot attend as our volunteering days can be very popular with people on a waiting list to join in.

By booking to attend, volunteers will also receive notification of any information required ahead of the volunteering session. This is particularly important for our off-site volunteering days where we can be in a range of different locations from one session to the next where access and parking may be limited.

If a volunteering session needs to be cancelled, we aim to notify all volunteers booked to attend within 48 hours of the planned start time.

Health and Safety and Insurance

Moor Trees carries out risk assessments for all the activities we undertake. Volunteer safety and welfare is considered in all our risk assessments. We plan our sessions with volunteer safety in mind and provide protective equipment suitable for the task and advise volunteers on suitable clothing to wear and items to bring. Full instruction will be given for any tasks at the start, and during, each session.

During any volunteering session our staff and seasonal workers will maintain a dynamic approach to assessing risks. When working in remote locations, especially on Dartmoor, weather conditions can change quickly or sites that were previously deemed safe may on the day pose specific risks if there has been, for example, recent heavy rain, snow or frost causing new hazards or there is a heat wave and limited shade.

Moor Trees has appropriate Public liability insurance and Employers' liability insurance. Moor Trees staff and some of our volunteers are First Aid trained for outdoor environments.

Driving when volunteering for Moor Trees

Due to the location of some of Moor Trees' planting sites it is unlikely that they will be easily accessible by public transport. If using their own vehicle, volunteers should let their insurer know they are using their own vehicle in a voluntary activity and that out-of-pocket expenses may be received but that this is not a commercial use of your vehicle.

In the event of an accident, Moor Trees and the emergency services should be informed immediately. If a passenger falls ill or is injured during a journey the volunteer driving should seek immediate medical help.

Moor Trees does not co-ordinate the transporting (car share) of volunteers by other volunteers. Such arrangements can be made between individual volunteers. The charity may share informally in a direct conversation or a group chat (e.g. via Whatsapp) if a particular individual is enquiring about the potential for a car share.

Reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses

Moor Trees will reimburse any reasonable expenses incurred while volunteering. Volunteers should discuss as part of their induction the type of out-of-pocket expenses that are eligible to be claimed.

This includes:

- travel (including to and from the place of volunteering).
- meals and refreshments if representing the charity at shows, external events, fairs or training, where lunch is not provided and the period of time exceeds four hours.
- administration costs such as postage, phone calls and stationery.

Moor Trees will reimburse volunteers towards the cost of travelling to volunteer with the charity including the price of a ticket on public transport to a maximum value of £15 per day.

Quite often there is limited public transport to the sites where Moor Trees operates. When using a car to travel to site, mileage can be reimbursed at a rate of 45p per mile to a maximum of 33 miles per day. A volunteer cannot exceed expenses being claimed for more than 200 miles in one calendar month. Motorbike mileage can be reimbursed at a rate of 24p per mile, and bicycle use at 20p per mile.

Vehicle	Rate	Limitations
Car	45p per mile	Up to 33 miles in one day and no more than 200 miles in one month
Motorbike	24p per mile	Up to 33 miles in one day and no more than 200 miles in one month
Bicycle	20p per mile	Up to 33 miles in one day and no more than 200 miles in one month

Moor Trees will occasionally provide transport to some sites, through the hire of a minibus or MPV. Where this is provided, claims for reimbursement will be considered on a case-by-case basis where there is not an option to use this as transportation to and from a site.

Volunteers are expected to keep clear records of journeys taken as volunteers, with the mileage, time/date and purpose of journey to accompany any claims. This may be reviewed either by the charity or its Independent Evaluators.

Moor Trees does not pay expenses in advance. Volunteers claiming expenses must complete an expense claim form which is signed by the staff member supervising the session. Any receipts for tickets should be submitted along with this form. To help us manage our budgets, expenses should be submitted monthly and must be claimed within three months. Moor Trees must see this evidence to be able to prove that we are reimbursing people's actual costs.

Moor Trees will pay expenses by bank transfer which will require volunteers to provide their bank account details. See appendix for our Volunteer Expense Claim Form.

Photos and social media

Moor Trees likes to promote our fantastic achievements and in particular celebrate the contribution of our volunteers. We take photos or videos for promotional use on our website, publications or social media. If anyone volunteering at Moor Trees does not want to appear in these, they are encouraged to let staff know at the events. During registration you can also choose to **not** tick the box on the form giving consent for you to appear in photographs or videos.

Volunteering and state benefits

You can volunteer with Moor Trees if you are claiming benefits. For general information on volunteering and benefits the following websites are useful.

UK Government www.gov.uk/guidance/volunteering-and-claiming-benefits

Citizens Advice www.citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits/benefits-introduction/how-volunteering-affects-your-benefits/

The Moor Trees Team

Our volunteering programme is overseen by our Operations Manager, who is responsible for co-ordinating our annual programme of volunteering opportunities. Depending on the activity, other members of the Moor Trees staff team or seasonal workers will be responsible for leading individual sessions. The lead person will be named in Eventbrite listings and be the main point of contact on the day.

Meet our team www.moortrees.org/about-us/whos-who/

Other members of the Moor Trees team may on occasion call upon volunteers to get involved and support ad hoc activities.

Moor Trees Trustees

The charity has a board of trustees elected by our members. This is a voluntary role. Our trustees also take part in volunteering sessions in addition to their governance duties. www.moortrees.org/about-us/whos-who/

Further information and contact details

To find out more about the work of the charity please visit our website. Here you can download our Vision for Dartmoor and past editions of our twice-yearly newsletter.

To contact the team please call us on 01364 649277 or email info@moortrees.org

Our registered address is:
Moor Trees,
The Old School Centre,
Totnes Road,
South Brent,
Devon,
TQ10 9BP

Please note that our staff work across our sites and locations around Dartmoor so are not often in our office. The best way to contact us is via the email or telephone above.

April 2025



www.moortrees.org

Moor Trees is a charity registered in England and Wales (No. 1081142) and company (No. 03716434)

Moor Trees Expense Claim Form Volunteers

Name		**Vehicle Reg**		

MILAGE (use of own vehicle only - see volunteering policy)

Date	**Reason for expense**	**Postcode (start)**	**Postcode (end)**	**Total miles**	**Total**
					£0.00

OTHER EXPENSES (e.g. other modes of travel, subsistence, entertaining/hospitality, sundry business expenses, etc.)

Date	**Reason for expense**	**Details** (e.g. item purchased, parking, taxi, if for travel please include postcode start and end information)	**Total**
			£0.00
			£0.00

CLAIMANT

The expenses claimed have been wholly, exclusively and necessarily incurred in the performance of duties for Moor Trees and are claimed in accordance with the Volunteering Policy. The expenses have been approved in advance and represent value for money.

Signature		Signature	
Date		Date	

AUTHORISED SIGNATORY

I confirm that the expenses claimed are fully compliant with the Volunteering Policy.