

Landguard Nature Reserve



Volunteer Information Pack



Welcome

Thank you for choosing to volunteer with the Landguard Trust at the Landguard Nature Reserve. Your volunteer support is important to our organisation and plays a huge role in the conservation of this special site.

This document has been produced to provide volunteers with information about the many volunteering opportunities available at the Reserve

Volunteering at Landguard can provide you with valuable conservation and tourism experience, opportunities to meet like-minded people and take an active role in supporting Landguard.

We offer a range of opportunities for people over 18 years of age for which you do not require any specific skills. Whatever your knowledge, interests, or skills we would welcome your involvement.

Landguard Nature Reserve

Landguard is a designated Local Nature Reserve (LNR) due to its value to the local community and a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) because of its high wildlife conservation value, such as its rare, vegetated shingle habitat and botanical species.

Covering approximately 33 hectares (81 acres) this shingle spit on the southern tip of Suffolk's stunning coastline offers a variety of flora and fauna including unusual, rare plants, migrating birds, reptiles, and small mammals.

Our Work

The Trust aims to ensure that Landguard peninsula is managed in a sustainable manner, contributing to the nationally important environmental conservation, cultural heritage, educational resources, and economic prosperity of the area and adding to the quality of life and enjoyment of the local community and visitors.

It is a unique environment which attracts over half a million visitors each year and contains a variety of attractions for visitors (and volunteers!):

- Landguard Nature Reserve
- Landguard Fort
- Felixstowe Museum
- Landguard Bird Observatory
- The John Bradfield Viewing Area
- Landguard Visitor Centre (Viewpoint Cafe) and Ferry.

Types of Volunteer Activities

Please note that some activities can be difficult to schedule, as such, should you choose to register your interest, we will endeavour to keep you updated via email regarding forthcoming activities and any changes. For example, we may plan a task that will include volunteer support but may have to reschedule at short notice due to weather and other environmental conditions. When this happens, we will try to give you as much notice as possible and reschedule as soon as possible.

Details of scheduled tasks/activities will be emailed to those who have registered their interest.

Seal Watch

Grey seal and Common seal regularly haul out on our shores – it is part of their normal behaviour. They spend more time out of the water, digesting their food and resting than in it. Therefore, finding a seal on the beach does not mean there is a problem and healthy seals should be left alone.

Seal Watch volunteers play a very important role in protecting seals when resting on the Nature Reserve and helping the Ranger ensure they remain safe and undisturbed. As a Seal Watch volunteer, you will work in pairs for short durations, to help maintain a safe distance between the animal and visitors.

Beach Clean / River Clean – Litter picking

We are committed to keeping the Reserve clean and free from litter, and especially plastic. Removing litter and plastics from the reserve is important because every piece of plastic and litter that we remove from the marine environment will not end up in the sea or harm marine animals or other wildlife.

We aim to host at least 4 litter picking events each year and always need the support of volunteers.

Scrub management / bramble bashing – autumn/winter

Bramble is a valuable habitat for nesting birds, feeding birds, nectar feeding insects and small mammals but left unmanaged can develop into dense invasive thickets.

Here at Landguard we manage our bramble on rotation to ensure that the habitat is maintained at different stages of succession.

Bramble control takes place during autumn and winter and volunteer activities typically includes cutting back / trimming bramble with hand tools (loppers) and removing all cuttings for burning.

Mowing and raking – Summer & Autumn

As you walk around the reserve you will notice that there are some permanently fenced conservation areas such as the area of acid grassland next to the Landguard Bungalow and a ponded area west of the rifle butts.

These areas are fenced and rabbit proofed to allow the vegetation to grow unhindered by trampling and rabbit grazing but as such need managing by hand.

Cutting and raking of the acid grassland area takes place annually in September. It happens this late in the year to ensure that the plant species present have been able to flower and set seed.

At this time, the sward will be cut using a petrol push mower then the arisings are gathered with hay rakes and removed. The arisings are removed to ensure that thatch does not develop at the base of the sward and suffocate new growth, but some arisings (green hay) may be collected and deliberately spread in areas where species diversity is sparser to supplement the substrate seed bank and encourage greater diversity.

It is also necessary to cut the areas of sward surrounding the pond at this time. All arisings are removed to ensure that nutrients do not leach into the pond.

Pond Maintenance – Autumn/winter

Currently there is only one pond at Landguard Nature Reserve. This is a naturally occurring pond fed by a spring. Water levels fluctuate and the pond occasionally dries out. The pond is fringed with marginal, emergent, and submerged vegetation that occasionally needs reducing to maintain an open water habitat.

This type of activity takes place in the winter when fewer species are present and involves removing some of the vegetation by hand from the surface of the water and around its margins. This management practice may not be required every year.

Any vegetation removed is then left on the edge of the pond for a few days before being disposed of to allow any creatures to return to the pond. Cut vegetation cannot be left permanently on the pond edge because as it breaks down it will leach nutrients into the pond and potentially over-nutrient the pond.

Fence Building & Repair, Boardwalk & Step Maintenance – Any time of year

If you are a regular visitor to Landguard you will be quite familiar with the permanent conservation areas, temporary cordons, boardwalks, paths, and steps that guide you around the reserve. All these fixtures need to be maintained throughout the year and sometimes replaced if they become too worn or damaged.

Usually, any planned maintenance would take place during the Autumn and Winter so as not to disturb any ground nesting birds and to coincide with periods of fewer visitors.

Tasks include, replacing and repairing worn steps and barriers on the butts, replacing worn ropes with wooden rails, replacing rotten posts, and annually erecting and removing the

temporary bird nesting cordons out on the shingle. This type of work can be quite physically demanding and involves some manual handling of materials such as wooden rails and fence posts, but it can be a very rewarding task!

For all activities, hand tools, basic protective items such as gloves and eye protection will be provided for your use when needed and it is recommended that you wear stout waterproof boots as the ground may be uneven and clothing to suit the weather conditions (long trousers and long sleeves will help avoid being scratched by bramble thorns).

Special Projects

Occasionally we need assistance with special projects such as ground disturbance to encourage specific flora, creating temporary cordons to protect special areas, wetland creation to encourage wetland flora, seed collection for habitat enhancement and education events and activities, tree planting and marram grass control. These activities will be scheduled as required and dates added to notice boards and social media.

Alternatively, ...

If you have a specific skill such as botany or entomology etc, then you might prefer to conduct your own specific species surveys and share your data with the reserve, to help better inform future management plans. We welcome this whenever appropriate and just ask that you liaise with us first.

If any of the above has piqued your interest and you would like to get involved, or if you have some questions or would like more information, then please contact the Landguard Ranger at enquiries@landguardtrust.org.uk or telephone 01394 834695 and leave a message

Volunteer Agreement

We appreciate and recognise that as a volunteer, you are giving your time freely to support our activities. We have a responsibility to you as a Volunteer and it is important for our Volunteers to understand what you can expect from the Trust and what we expect from you.

You can expect the Trust:

- To provide you with a main point of contact for all volunteering activities.
- To provide you with induction information, including relevant forms you will need to complete and copies of risk assessments.
- To provide a clear guidance regarding what you will be doing and why.
- To provide you with the necessary equipment to support your activities.
- To ensure you are covered by insurance to insure you against any accidents that may occur during volunteering activities which are not your fault.
- To apply our equal opportunities policy so volunteering is open to all.

As a volunteer of the Trust, we expect you:

- To consider the health & safety of yourself and others
- To treat others with respect and thoughtfulness and develop and maintain good relationships with other volunteers and staff.
- To adhere to any relevant Trust policies, decisions, and procedures, as detailed in the Volunteering Policy and Volunteering Handbook.
- To work at your own abilities and pace and inform your main point of contact of anything that may affect your ability to undertake volunteering duties
- To complete and return necessary recording forms as required such as, survey sheets and volunteer hour logs
- Be an ambassador of the Trust in your local community.
- Have fun!

We hope that after reading this information pack, you will be excited about volunteering at Landguard Nature Reserve. If you would like to offer your time to assist us with any of the activities mentioned please complete the volunteer registration and personal information form and return to enquiries@landguardtrust.org.uk or fill out and place in the Ranger post box [next to the Nature Reserve entrance gates opposite the Fort car park.](#)

**** All volunteering activities carried out at Landguard are done so in line with the Landguard Trust Volunteering Policy (Please refer to the attached document). The Trust holds public liability insurance which will cover you as a volunteer. The insurance will not cover unauthorised actions or actions outside of the Landguard volunteering agreement.**

Volunteer Registration and Personal Information Form



All information is to be used solely for the purposes of volunteering at Landguard and will not be shared with anyone else.

Name: _____
Address: _____

Home phone number: _____
Mobile phone number: _____
Email address: _____
DOB: _____

Please tick which volunteer activities you would like to register for:

Bramble bashing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cutting and raking	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pond maintenance	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fence building	<input type="checkbox"/>
Boardwalk and step repair	<input type="checkbox"/>	Events/Education	<input type="checkbox"/>
Litter picking	<input type="checkbox"/>	Species surveys	<input type="checkbox"/>
Special projects	<input type="checkbox"/>	Seal Watch	<input type="checkbox"/>

Relevant skills and experience: _____

Any allergies, medications or medical conditions that we should be aware of: _____

Emergency contact/next of kin:
Relationship to you _____
Address _____

Phone number _____
Volunteer signature _____
Date _____