

# VOLUNTEER RANGER

## High Lodge Forest Centre, Thetford Forest

### Background Information

High Lodge Forest Centre is situated in Thetford Forest in the heart of the Forestry Commission's public estate in the East of England.

Thetford Forest is a multi-purpose forest with high public access and a rich natural and historical environment. The area forms the largest lowland man made pine forest in the country and covers an area of 50 square miles. Thetford Forest and much of the surrounding area make up the Breckland Special Protection Area (SPA), a designation to protect our internationally rare breeding birds. Other ecological interest in the forest includes four species of deer and considerable botanical interest including plants specific to Breckland.

Today, High Lodge is a busy recreation site, open all year and attracting around 350,000 visitors per year. The range of facilities for the day visitor include shop, café and Food to Go outlet, large play area, self guided trails, cycle trails and cycle hire, through to Bike Art, Go Ape, our new attraction, Segways and various supplementary attractions. The annual events programme includes Forest Concerts.

More information about High Lodge can be seen at [www.forestry.gov.uk/highlodge](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/highlodge)

## **Volunteer Rangers**

**The Forestry Commission is looking for people with an interest in recreation/countryside management to work as Volunteer Rangers at High Lodge Forest Centre.**

Successful applicants will be given training and development opportunities by work shadowing current recreation staff.

They will develop on-the-job skills and experience, including management of a busy recreation site and the public who use it, support delivery of the education programme, Specialist Recreation, Supplementary Attractions and events. Skills will also need to be developed to maintain the Health and Safety requirements for the site.

The role will be flexible to suit individual needs, but is likely to be 1 - 4 days a week and to include some weekend and evening work. It is hoped that if successful you will continue as a Volunteer Ranger for a minimum period of six months.

The work load at High Lodge is very seasonal and weather dependent. Peak times are school holidays and weekends starting with Easter which can provide us with thousands of visitors if the weather is favourable. In early summer the school visits start; about 7,000 children come on mainly self lead visits. Many of these will return with their families before the end of the summer. Cycling and Go-Ape bring a large number of visitors to High Lodge, as do our Summer Concerts in June and July with in excess of 30,000 audience members over three days. A variety of Supplementary Attractions can usually be found on the site throughout the year. The year quietens down a little after September only to be enlivened by the Halloween and Christmas festivities.

High Lodge Forest Centre is open everyday of the year except Christmas Day.

Volunteer Rangers will be based at High Lodge Forest Centre, Thetford Forest and will be part of the Forestry Commission recreation team.

These roles are voluntary and no salary is available.

### **HOW TO APPLY**

To apply for a Volunteer Ranger position, please send a **CV and covering letter** explaining how your interest and experiences meet the Volunteer Ranger Person Specification below, please use **examples** where appropriate. You will also need to provide us with the names and contact details of two referees.

Applications should be sent with completed forms to Frances Evershed c/o Forestry Commission, East of England, Santon Downham, Brandon, Suffolk. IP27 0TJ or email to [frances.evershed@forestry.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:frances.evershed@forestry.gsi.gov.uk) Please be aware of the final date for this tranche of applicants as mentioned in the accompanying letter.

# Volunteer Ranger Person Specification

## High Lodge Forest Centre, Thetford Forest

	<b>ESSENTIAL</b>	<b>DESIRABLE</b>
<b>Experience</b>	To have an interest in and knowledge of countryside and environmental issues, ideally through work (voluntary or paid), in the field or study.	Seeking work in the environmental sector; countryside /recreation. Having a desire to increase knowledge and involvement in local countryside recreation.
<b>Communicate</b>	Ability to listen to and communicate with Forestry Commission staff, on site providers and members of the public from a variety of age groups and backgrounds to produce better results. Have good interpersonal skills including a willingness to tackle difficult situations.	Be computer literate.
<b>Work with other people</b>	Be approachable and have a flexible and reliable approach to the work. Willingness to build, maintain and improve relationships with groups and activities as required. Be able to appreciate the diverse views and experience of others. Willingness to work as part of a team as well as the ability to work on your own.	
<b>Deliver Results</b>	Make the best use of available resources to achieve objectives, meet standards and customer needs. Be flexible and adaptable and ready to consider a variety of options when looking for solutions. Show motivation and capability to work under own initiative.	Understand the principles of Health and Safety and its relevance to Recreation management.
<b>Learn and Apply</b>	Be open to change and show a willingness to undertake appropriate training to develop new skills and confidence. Be open and responsive to constructive feedback on performance. A willingness to learn and put into practice the necessary skills needed for countryside recreation work.	

<p><b>Other</b></p>	<p>Able and willing to work 1-4 days per week, including some weekend and evening work for a period of 6 months. Be willing to have a CRB (Criminal Records Board) check. Duties will require you to be physically fit.</p>	<p>It is highly desirable that you hold and continue to hold a full current driving licence.</p>
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## Purpose of the Role

To assist with the delivery of recreation services at High Lodge Forest Centre.

### Core Tasks for Volunteer Rangers

- Work as part of the High Lodge Ranger Team.
- Undertake training as considered necessary by Recreation Manager.
- Facilities inspection including trails, walking and cycling, play equipment and surfacing and sculptures reporting findings as appropriate.
- Maintain facilities including litter picking and minor repairs relating to estate management.
- Liaise with organisers of Specialist Recreation events and Supplementary Attractions.
- Provide technical support for site entry scheme.
- Provide site security e.g. locking up.
- Assist with car parking at peak periods.
- Provide First Aid provision, emergency response and accident reporting.

### Additional Tasks

- Support activity delivery including leading on some elements. Four main delivery areas are Play, Education, Events and Trails.
- Endeavour to tailor visitor experience to individual requirements and expectations
- Support High Lodge delivery e.g. assist with table clearing and other catering tasks.
- Support event management e.g. set up, infra structure, delivery take down.
- Supporting customer groups e.g. education groups, families.

## Recruitment and Selection

- Successful applicants will be called for an informal interview .
- Induction and training will form part of the first few sessions.
- Many volunteer activities can be undertaken without previous experience. However some activities will require previous knowledge, experience and training.
- Forestry Commission Equality and Diversity Policy Statement applies equally to our volunteers.
- Volunteer Rangers at High Lodge can expect to come into contact with contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults, it is therefore necessary to obtain a disclosure from the Criminal Record Bureau.

## From the Forestry Commission you can expect

- To gain experience in managing a busy recreation site including event management.
- Assistance to draw up an Individual Learning Plan of formal and informal training relevant to the needs of the individual and the tasks to be performed.
- Pre-season training will be followed by approximately 10 sessions of on-the-job training tailored to the needs of the individual.
- Opportunity to make contact with like minded people.
- Opportunity to acquire useful skills and experience.
- Corporate clothing.
- Personal protective equipment will be supplied in relation to tasks done.
- To have a lot of fun!!

## Support

- The overall responsibility for the volunteer rests with the Recreation Manager.
- Each volunteer will be supervised by an experienced member of staff.
- On commencement of the volunteer's work you will receive as appropriate induction and informal training.
- Volunteers will essentially be treated as members of staff, but no financial reward will be paid.
- You will be expected to start each day at an agreed time and inform the Duty Ranger if you will be late or are unable to attend.
- The Forestry Commission provides professional indemnity insurance for its employees and volunteers.
- Volunteers act as representatives of the Forest Commission and as such will be expected to behave in an appropriate manner.
- If the volunteer has any grievance, this should first be brought to the attention of the Recreation Manager or the Volunteer Manager.