

Volunteers Report 2019

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Volunteer Reports

Since 2015 we have produced annual volunteers reports that showcase our volunteer activities and demographics.

Unfortunately, this year due to the current situation with coronavirus we are unable to produce a full report in a pdf format. However, we have summarised the key information in the tables below.

This information shows changes in our volunteer activity and allows us to successfully monitor performance and what we're doing to improve the volunteering experience around the Lee Valley.

Volunteering in Lee Valley Regional Park 2019

Volunteering is one of the many positive ways that Lee Valley Regional Park Authority (LVRPA) engages with the regional community. We are extremely privileged to have over 1,000 volunteers registered to take part in volunteering activities that support LVRPA. This is an outstanding achievement and we are humbled by the level of commitment we experience but also by the added quality our volunteers provide to the management of the Authority's open spaces and venues.

The success of our volunteering programme is an excellent representation of social cohesion as our aim is to make our opportunities as accessible as possible so that members from any community can get involved. Members of these communities have told us how their volunteering has helped to expand knowledge of the park within their community and given them a more enhanced experience of their local or regional area. The volunteers also gain a great sense of ownership and are able to become better acquainted with areas of the park that they might have previously overlooked and pass on their new knowledge to other visitors.

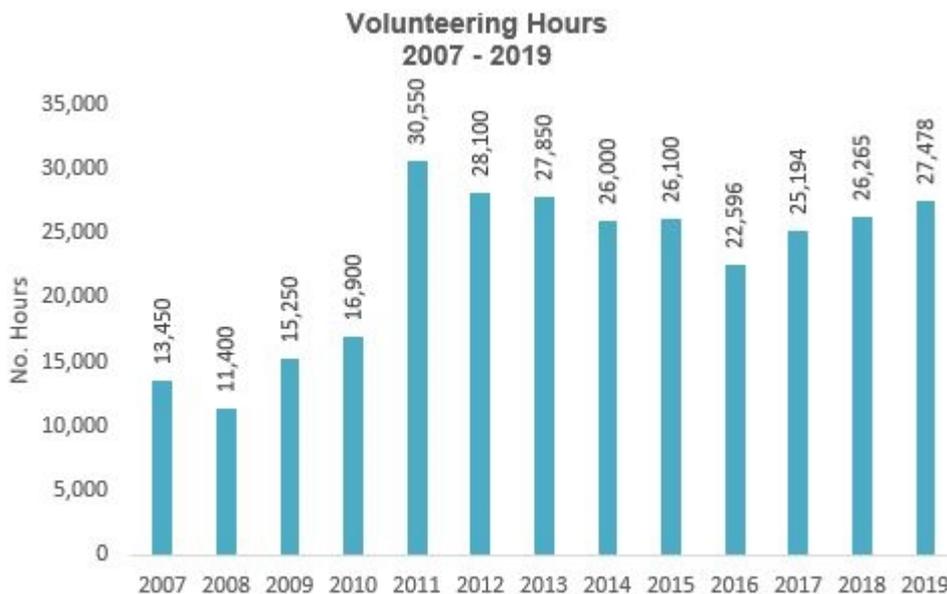
We would like to thank each and every one of our volunteers for their support in making 2019 a huge success. With wellbeing and environment at the forefront of many people's minds it is pleasing that the park can use this momentum to reaffirm our volunteers of the importance of their contribution to our open spaces. Small changes can still make a big impact whether this is through education, maintaining a general presence within the park, helping others to make the most of these precious places, contributing to the management of the open spaces or ensuring all visitors feel welcome and informed during events at our venues.

Our partnerships have grown ever stronger with firmer bonds cemented and new links created. This has included several joint activities which were undertaken with groups such as Hertford Regional College, CWOATA, CHEXS, Canal and River Trust, Lee Valley Litter Pickers Association, Wormley & Turnford Big Local, E.A. Bowles of Myddelton House Society, Lifewalks and Cycling For Health, and the Stonebridge Lock Coalition.

The value of the volunteering has many angles, as well as the social and community engagement benefits the equivalent monetary value to the park this year is equivalent to around £463,874.

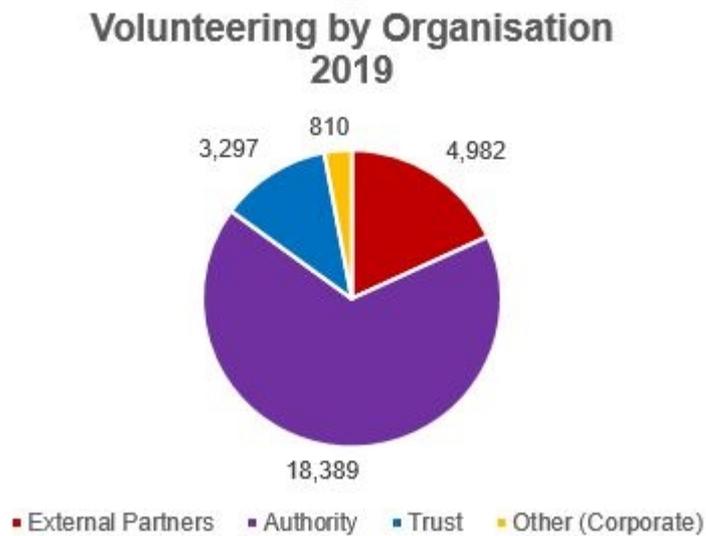
Find out more at visitlee valley.org.uk/volunteers

Volunteering Hours 2007 - 2019



Volunteering hours rose by just over 1,000 hours this year. The patterns seen in the hours in 2019 are similar to those in previous years with a healthily increase in open space and conservation volunteering and continued downward trend in major events at venues. Our corporate event numbers were nearly double of that in 2018 but still show a lower level of uptake than in previous years. After completing research and development during 2019, we are looking forward to launching a new approach to corporate volunteering during 2020. The majority of events at our venues are now supported solely by volunteers recruited and managed by external providers and we frequently signpost our registered volunteers to these activities. As observed in 2018 there are very few Authority led events at venues.

Links remain strong between the Authority and external partners but it may be the case that volunteering hours within our venues are being under recorded through our database.



Ratio of staff to volunteers

Our volunteer to staff ratio for the Authority and Lee Valley Leisure Trust combined at the end of 2019 was 2.7:1 (Volunteers to every staff member) which is similar to the ratio recorded in 2018 which was 2.6:1.

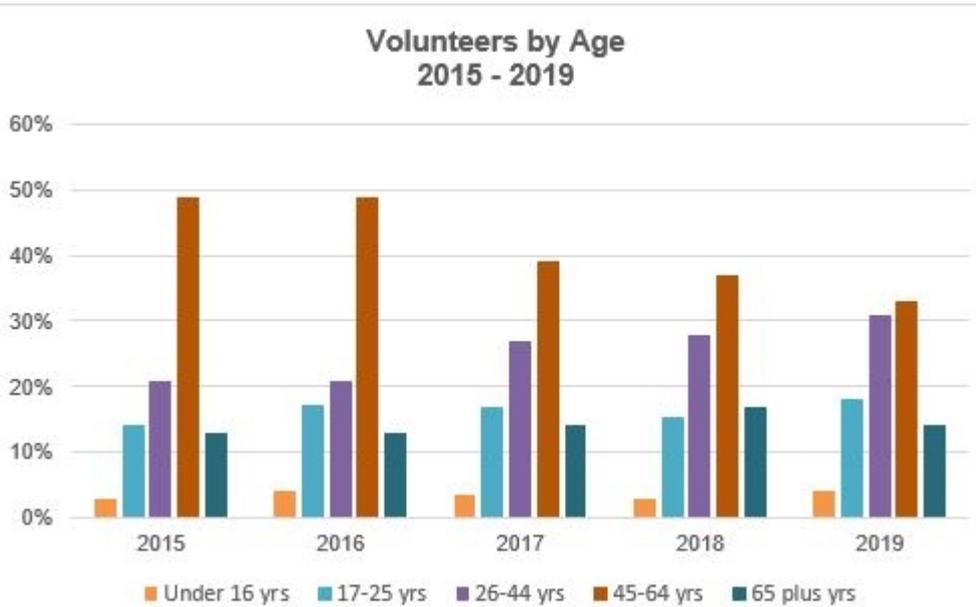
It is worth looking at the ratio of volunteers to staff separately for the Authority and Lee Valley Leisure Trust. This shows that the ratio is higher for open spaces but lower for venues. The ratios are broadly in line with last year.

Authority: Volunteer to Staff Ratio – 8:1

Lee Valley Leisure Trust: Volunteer to Staff Ratio – 0.5:1

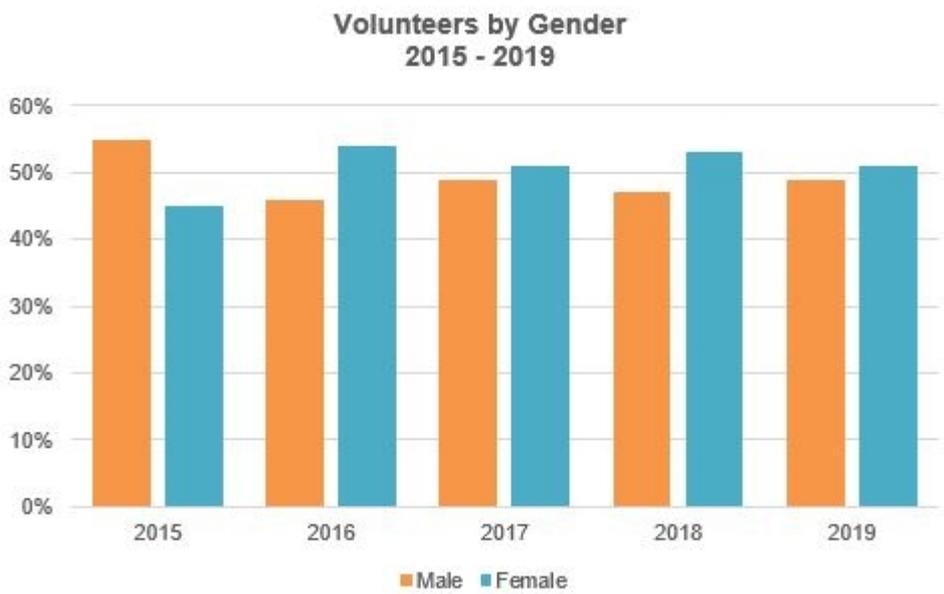
Demographics

Our average age make-up from 2015 to 2019



All except the 'under 16' and '45 to 64' age brackets are in line with the national average of the population. We are below average for under 16s but over representing 26-44 yrs and 45-64 yrs. This is a potentially a result of increased promotion and recording of opportunities that aid career starters or changers across a variety of our departments. We continue to seek new ways to improve in these two areas but it is likely to remain constant.

Our average gender make-up from 2015 to 2019

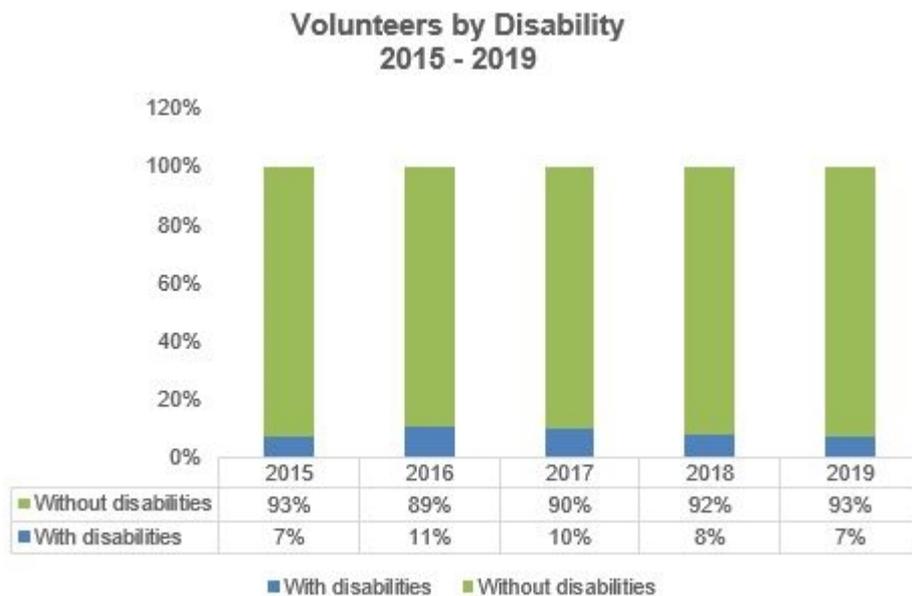


Our gender make-up is directly in line with the national average which is 49% male and 51% female.

Our average percentage of people with and without disabilities from 2015 to 2019

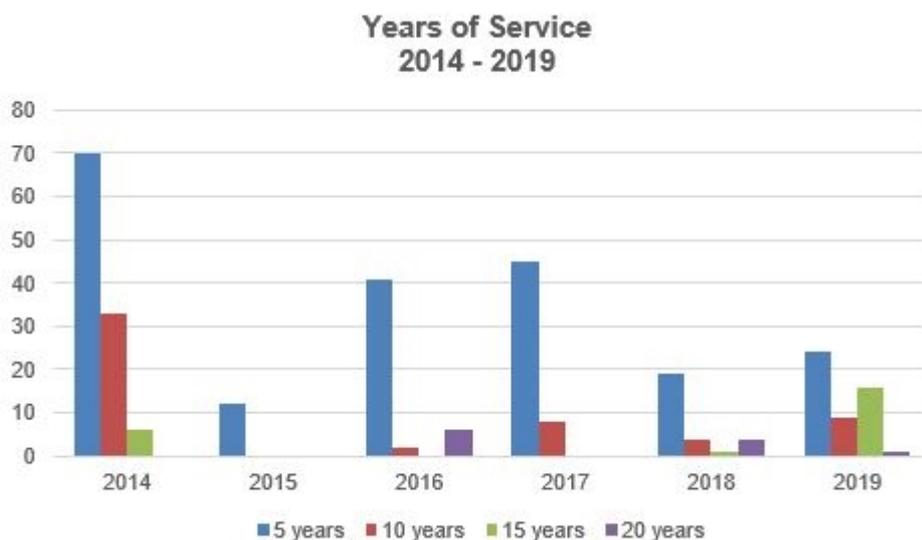
With 7% of the UK population classed as having disabilities our makeup of volunteers with disabilities for 2019 is in line with the national average showing our volunteering activities

are not a barrier to people with disabilities. It is likely that a minor drop in people with disabilities getting involved since 2018 may be due to the increased number of volunteers represented within 26-44 yrs and 45-64 yrs age ranges.



Long Service Awards

Long service awards were introduced in 2014 when many volunteers were backdated with awards. This will continue to be a measure we look at to indicate how many awards we are presenting and what our retention rates are like over time. It is pleasing to see a number of 10, 15 and 20 year awards given out in 2019. In particular, the increased number of 15 year awards acknowledges the excellent levels of retention that have been recorded since the recruitment of a Volunteer and Community Engagement Manager and the formalisation of the volunteer's programme in 2005.

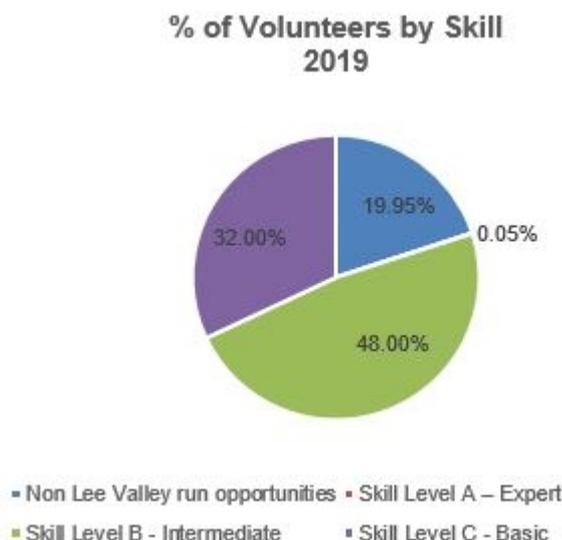


Monetary Value of Volunteering

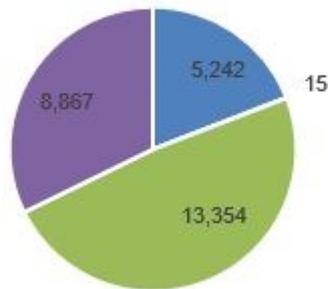
Each year we monitor our volunteer hours and transpose that into monetary value. We measure using the formula given by The National Lottery Heritage Fund for volunteer contribution which takes into account different levels of expertise for different roles. The chart below shows the last five years of monitoring using The National Lottery Heritage Fund formula. The increase is due to more hours in the Skill Level B roles which we suspect is linked to an increase in volunteers within the 26 – 44 year age category.



In 2019 the final figure was an excellent example of value in kind from volunteering activities. The charts below give a breakdown of the roles undertaken and percentage at each value. Non LVRPA (e.g. corporates or partners working with us) are costed at the intermediate level.

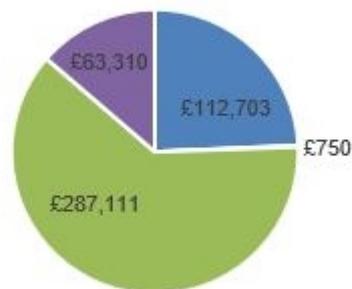


No. Volunteering Hours by Skill 2019



- Non Lee Valley run opportunities
- Skill Level A - Expert
- Skill Level B - Intermediate
- Skill Level C - Basic

Value of Volunteering by Skill 2019



- Non Lee Valley run opportunities
- Skill Level A - Expert
- Skill Level B - Intermediate
- Skill Level C - Basic

Volunteer of the Year

The winner of the 2019 Volunteer of the Year was Colin Short from Lee Valley Fisheries.

He received several nominations across different departments. One of his nominators said “he’s been very reliable, ensuring the fish are kept alive, running volunteer work parties and being on call for any eventuality. He’s done it with a positive attitude and a smile. Without him I believe fisheries would have crumbled as he’s almost been in a fulltime post for the last few months.”

Colin is a long standing volunteer who has taken on many roles, supporting the Fisheries team, over a number of years. He consistently gives many hours to the Authority. Averaging at least 500 hours annually, making him the highest accumulator of hours each year.

During 2018 he completed 621 hours and by the end of 2019 he pulled out all the stops and dedicated over 1,100 hours to Lee Valley Fisheries! He has gone way above and beyond the call of duty for a volunteer. When the Fisheries Officer left the Authority in July 2018, Colin

stepped in and helped the team by using the knowledge he had gained from working side by side with the Fisheries Officer for many years.

Already a key Fisheries Volunteer Coordinator he covered at least 80% of the Fisheries Officer's role until the team were able to recruit a new member of staff. He continued to lead and organise the Task Force, preparing the new season's work plans and Bailiff rotas for each of the 80 Volunteer Honorary Bailiff's.

At the same time, he has continued to serve on the Volunteers Committee as he has done for several years now.

It is usually very hard to decide on the overall winner of Volunteer of the Year but this year there was no competition in terms of the level of dedication that Colin gave, he went far beyond what we would ever expect from any volunteer. We are sincerely grateful for his contribution to Lee Valley Regional Park.

Gary Smith, Fisheries Manager said "I could not have asked for a better stand in for the Fisheries Officer for the last 11 months and in my view Colin thoroughly deserves to win the Volunteer of the Year Award this year."

IIV 2020

Park staff have worked hard to ensure volunteers have an excellent experience with our organisation and the Volunteers Team holds itself to the high standards of the Investing in Volunteers Award which will be due for renewal in 2020. We have also spent time this year continuing to train and develop our current cohort of volunteers so that they can try new roles or get more involved in certain aspects of their role. It is possible that the steady increase in hours is now based on the quality of the volunteer programme and the hard work Lee Valley Regional Park staff put into maintaining an excellent reputation with our volunteers.

