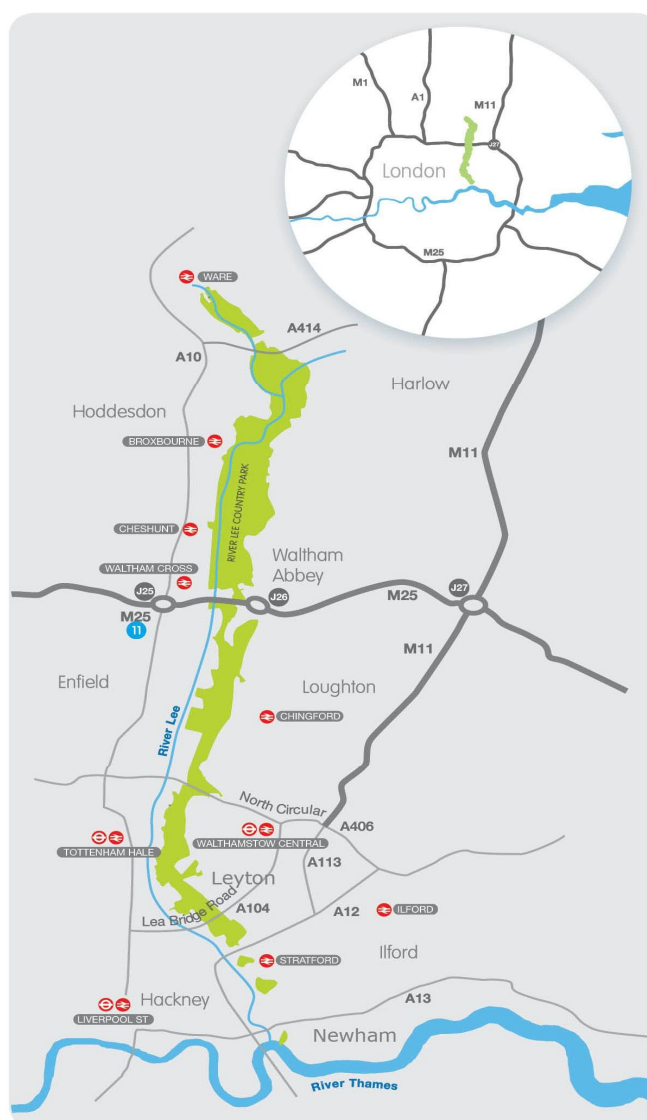


Lee Valley Regional Park Authority

Volunteer Handbook



Bringing you

Welcome to the team!

Thank you for volunteering with the Lee Valley Park your assistance is greatly valued and we hope your time with us is enjoyable and rewarding.

We want to make you as welcome as possible and ensure that you feel part of the team at Lee Valley, helping to provide quality environmental open spaces, sports and leisure facilities.

The Lee Valley Park is managed by the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority (open spaces) and the Lee Valley Leisure Trust (venues and facilities). Depending on what you have signed up to volunteer with will depend on your day to day contact but overall you can always contact the volunteers team who work with both organisations to deliver quality and rewarding volunteering activities within the Park.

This handbook is given to you so that you have all the necessary information to work safely and securely, and is designed as a reference book for you whilst you are volunteering. It is divided into three parts, which should make it easy to use.

The first section gives you some information about the Park and its history. The second section tells you about our volunteer policy and explains what you can expect from us and what we expect from you. In the third section, we provide you with details regarding Health and Safety.

Although you may feel that a number of the sections do not apply to you, it is important that you have them available to refer to should you need to do so.

You will be allocated a Supervisor who will be an employee of either the Authority or the Leisure Trust and they will be your main point of contact for all that you do. In many instances, apart from a few roles which require lone working, you will be with your Supervisor or another employee when carrying out activities. You can also contact the Volunteers Team at any time you wish.

Happy volunteering!

The Volunteers Team

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Section 1

1.1 Lee Valley Regional Park

The Lee Valley Regional Park is a unique mix of sport and leisure facilities, heritage sites, gardens, nature reserves and riverside trails. Stretching over 10,000 acres the Regional Park winds its way 26 miles along the banks of the River Lee from Ware in Hertfordshire, down through Essex, North London, past the Olympic Park to East India Dock Basin on the River Thames.

Easy to reach by cycle, car, bus, train or on foot we are an ideal venue for volunteering. We hope that you enjoy the many different sites, facilities and experiences that the Regional Park has to offer.

1.2 History of the Regional Park

The possibility of rescuing the Lee Valley from its years of neglect and regenerating it as a “Great Playground for Londoners” was first proposed sometime before the Second World War. Sadly the war intervened, but in 1944 Sir Patrick Abercrombie revived the idea in his Greater London Plan when he suggested “the Valley gives the opportunity for a great piece of regenerative planning.....every piece of land welded into a great regional reservation.”

The idea lay dormant until in 1961, Alderman Lou Sherman, Mayor of Hackney, took up the challenge to regenerate the Valley. He inspired and cajoled seventeen other Local Authorities to support him, and in 1963 the Civic Trust was invited to undertake an appraisal of the Valley's potential as a vast leisure and recreational resource. The Civic Trust report was extremely positive and on the back of it a Bill was promoted in Parliament to establish the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority as the development body with the responsibility and the powers to deliver the vision.

Following Royal Assent to the Lee Valley Regional Park Bill in December 1966, the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority was formally constituted on 1st January 1967. The Authority's remit, described in the 1966 Act, embraces just about every conceivable aspect of leisure, sport and recreation, including nature conservation and the protection and enhancement of the natural environment.

In April 2015 the management of the Park began a new chapter with the formation of the Lee Valley Leisure Trust which now manages the venues for the Authority. The Authority manages the open spaces, Myddelton House Gardens, Holyfield Hall Farm, Fisheries, biodiversity and the volunteers programme.

1.3 Funding

The Authority is an independent statutory public authority established by an Act of Parliament. The Authority is financed from the council tax base of Hertfordshire, Essex and Greater London.

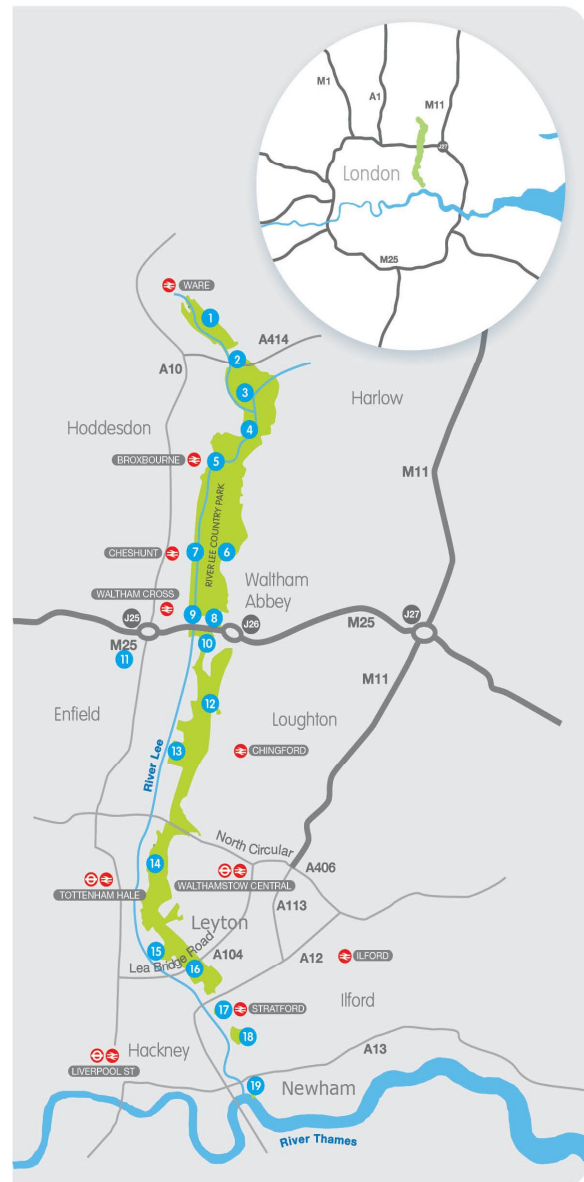
1.4 Beyond 2012

Lee Valley Regional Park Authority played an active part in the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. In Legacy the Lee Valley White Water Canoe Centre, VeloPark and Eton Manor Training Centre will all be owned by the Authority and run by the Leisure Trust. They join our existing facilities including Lee Valley Athletics Centre, Riding Centre and Ice Centre to create a chain of sporting excellence throughout the Park to be enjoyed by local communities, regional communities and elite athletes alike.

Lee Valley Regional Park

Area map

- 1 Amwell Nature Reserve
- 2 Lee Valley Marina, Stanstead Abbots
Stanstead Innings
- 3 Rye Meads Nature Reserve
Rye House Gatehouse
- 4 Lee Valley Caravan Park, Dobbs Weir
- 5 Lee Valley Boat Centre & Chalets
- 6 River Lee Country Park (Fishers Green)
Lee Valley Park Farms
- 7 River Lee Country Park (Pindar)
YHA London Lee Valley
- 8 Waltham Abbey Gardens
River Lee Country Park (Cornmill Meadows)
- 9 Lee Valley White Water Centre
- 10 Gunpowder Park & Sewardstone Marsh
Ramney Marsh, Swan & Pike Pool
- 11 Myddelton House Gardens
- 12 Lee Valley Campsite, Sewardstone
- 13 Lee Valley Athletics Centre
Lee Valley Camping & Caravan Park
Lee Valley Golf Course
- 14 Tottenham Marshes
- 15 Lee Valley Marina, Springfield
Walthamstow Marshes & Leyton Marsh
- 16 WaterWorks Nature Reserve & Golf Centre
Lee Valley Riding Centre
Lee Valley Ice Centre
Middlesex Filter Beds
- 17 Olympic Park: Lee Valley VeloPark
Lee Valley Hockey Centre
Lee Valley Tennis Centre
- 18 Three Mills Island
- 19 Bow Creek Ecology Park
East India Dock Basin



1.5 Lee Valley Regional Park Authority Volunteer Strategy

Below are the key aims in the Volunteer Strategy:

1. Develop our volunteer programme at the Trust's venues and the Authority's parklands for all by:
 - Improving awareness and increase access to volunteering opportunities to raise the current ratio of volunteers to staff to 5:1
 - Working with venue managers, rangers and Fisheries to continually identify new packages of opportunities.
 - Secure Investors in Volunteers (IIV) again in 2017
 - Explore the potential for the establishment of a 'Friend's Group' for the Parklands.
2. Match the Authority's and Trust's business needs with volunteer support through:
 - Auditing the organisations capacity gaps and match these with existing volunteer skill set.
 - Reviewing our recruitment processes to ensure new volunteers have the right skill set where possible to serve our business needs.
3. Developing specific opportunities to promote diversity involving hard-to-reach, ethnic minority, disabled, private, diverse age ranges, community and voluntary sector groups:
 - Actively promote the strategy and programme to 'target groups'
4. Resource additional support for volunteers by:
 - Reviewing the operation and function of the existing team.
 - Strengthening the register of company's interested in corporate opportunities.
 - Actively promoting engagement of companies through presentations and visits.
 - Rewarding dedication, endeavour and contribution.
5. Encourage staff to pursue volunteering opportunities to support communities across the Region:
 - the Volunteers team to actively encourage opportunities for staff either within the Park or in other areas across the region.
6. Actively seek opportunities for joint partner programmes for volunteer activities through
 - Identify areas where further joint working can be identified and delivered

Section 2

2.1 Why Do We Involve Volunteers?

We recognise the huge number of positive reasons for involving volunteers in the work of the Authority and the Leisure Trust.

We aim to include a wide range of people, helping us to better reflect the varied communities in the region that we represent, leading to a greater capacity, and the ability to reach a wider section of society. Involving and supporting volunteers gives us a better understanding of Regional Park users, and also helps us to model good practice in volunteer management.

Having a diverse range of volunteers supporting the work of the Park increases our skills as staff. We recognise that we can learn from our volunteers' skills and experience, and from supporting them. We are committed to involving volunteers at every level in valuable and interesting roles.

The Authority and the Trust has the ethos of working with volunteers to add value and enhance what we are providing to our customers and our regional community. Unlike some organisations we try not to use volunteers in any position of service delivery and if we stopped working with all of our volunteers tomorrow we should still be able to operate.

We also strive to ensure we are benefiting the volunteers as well as the Park so it is a mutual partnership. It needs to be a mutual activity and we should not be looking at volunteers as a form of cheap labour but as enthusiastic supporters of the Park that want to contribute something back because of a passion or interest in what we do.

All staff and volunteers should make the effort to be aware of this and have this ethos when working with and dealing with volunteers at all times. All members of staff should be familiar with at least our volunteers policy which can be found on the web site.

2.2. Lee Valley Regional Park Authority Volunteer Policy

The Volunteer Programme will promote and encourage opportunities for volunteers. It will actively seek to engage community groups, private and commercial sector groups, as well as hard to reach groups such as ethnic minority and disabled individuals and groups from across the region. The Volunteer Programme aims to provide numerous opportunities in conservation, leisure and sport, whilst giving quality and rewarding experiences.

The Authority will ensure that all volunteers are trained for the roles they are undertaking and will encourage development of volunteers' skills for the mutual benefit of the individual and the Authority. We will actively encourage the teamwork of staff and volunteers.

Development of this volunteer programme will enable the Authority to enhance its service provision ensuring maximum benefit to regional stakeholders.

2.3 Code of Conduct for Volunteers

What We Aim to Do for You:

- Make sure you feel part of the team.
- Ensure you understand what the Regional Park is and what it does.
- Give you an employee of the Authority or Trust as a supervisor.
- Ensure you know who to talk to if there is a problem.
- Give you regular feedback.
- Consult and talk to you about your volunteering role.
- Ensure you receive the training you need for your role.
- Ensure you are safe and insured whilst volunteering.
- Tell you when things are changing.
- Ensure you feel valued and are thanked for your contributions.

What We Ask of You:

- Be reliable, if you agree to do something please try to make sure you do it.
- Tell us as soon as possible if you are unavailable or running late.
- Respect confidential information.
- Give us feedback.
- Take part in required training.
- Ask for help if you need it.
- Ensure we have your up to date information.

2.4 Volunteer Role Descriptions

Specific role descriptions are available which give you advice and guidance on your volunteer role, as well as any skills or experience that will be useful. Each role description has a risk assessment attached to it.

If you do not have a copy of your role description, they are available on the Lee Valley Regional Park website at www.leevalleypark.org.uk/en/content/cms/corporate/volunteers/ , www.visitleevalley.org.uk/en/content/cms/corporate/volunteers/ or please ask the Volunteers Team if you require a copy.

As a volunteer you are entitled to refuse to undertake any activity you consider to be unrealistic, beyond the scope of the role, or that you do not have the skills to undertake.

2.5 Recruitment and Selection

We follow the same process for recruiting volunteers with each enquiry. This begins with either an Enquiry and Registration Form or Registering on our database (<http://volunteer.visitleevalley.org.uk/vk/volunteers/registration.htm>). Once registered you will have a short interview with a member of staff. This ensures that you are matched to the most appropriate role, and are happy with what to expect from us, and what we expect from you. This also ensures that all volunteers are given the same opportunities and support when volunteering within the Regional Park.

2.6 References

All registrations to volunteer with the Park ask for a reference to ensure we are working with trustworthy, honest and reliable people. This protects staff, other volunteers and members of the public. We will send out a standard questionnaire to one of your provided referees within one week of receiving your registration, which will then be placed on file for you.

2.7 Other Recruitment Processes

If the role you are interested in involves requires a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check we will ask you to complete the relevant forms and provide specific identification documents to complete the DBS check.

If you are going to be driving Park vehicles you will need to read the Vehicle Policy and to complete a separate form. The first time you drive the vehicle, you will be accompanied by an employee to check you are safe to drive it.

If you are going to be using computers or IT systems you will need to read the IT usage policy which will be provided by the Volunteers Team.

2.8 Induction

Wherever you are volunteering you will be given a site specific induction prior to starting your volunteering. The Authority and the Trust has many processes and procedures. Specific ones to the role that you will be undertaking will be shown to you at your site specific induction. You should endeavour to adhere to these at all times and should not be worried about asking for help if you are unsure.

Further information about some of the specific points of the induction are below.

Your Induction will Cover the Following:

- Why we work with volunteers.

- Relevant Authority or Trust information.
- Site / place of work information and role specific information such as training.
- Support and supervision available.
- Role descriptions.
- References.
- Times of attendance.
- Unable to attend procedure.
- Identification and uniform.
- Out of pocket expenses claims procedure.
- Trial period.
- Time sheets.
- Volunteer Policy.
- Health and Safety Policy.
- Equal Opportunities Policy.
- Confidentiality Policy.
- Problem Solving Procedure.
- Fire Safety.
- Evacuation Procedures.
- Manual Handling.
- Alcohol and Drug Policy.
- First Aid and Accident Book.
- Insurance.
- Volunteer feedback.
- Volunteers leaving the Authority or Trust.

When you have completed your induction if you wish you can be issued with a certificate, and you will be asked to sign your induction record.

If there is anything that you are unsure of you should go to your Supervisor in the first instance. Do not be afraid to ask questions it is better to ask and get things right than to do things wrong.

2.9 Training and Development

As well as an induction, Supervisors are responsible for any ongoing training requirements for volunteers. This may be standard training that the Authority or Trust can provide or contracted in training. If a volunteer requires or requests specific training then advice should be sought from the Volunteers Team. The Volunteers Team will occasionally advertise any volunteer training opportunities on the internet that may be of interest to volunteers.

2.10 Support, Supervision, Reward and Recognition

Your Supervisor and the Volunteers Team are there for you. Please feel free to contact them if you need to feed back on anything connected with volunteering for the Authority.

You may never need them and if you are happy with how things are going then contact may be minimal. However if there are any issues you wish to discuss please make sure you talk to a member of staff. We cannot support you unless we know there is a problem.

Appropriate reward and recognition will be given. It is understood that relevant activities may vary for different types of volunteering. The Volunteers Team arrange and host an annual Volunteer Party which is open to all Authority and Trust volunteers to attend. Some venues and functions will also undertake specific activities at various times of the year and your supervisor will invite you to these events as and when they take place.

As part of the annual Volunteer Party, the Volunteers Team give an awards to recognise volunteers within the Park, these include volunteer group, volunteer photographer and the overall volunteer of the year. The Volunteer of the Year Award and the Volunteer Party rewards volunteers from all sectors of the Park. The volunteers are nominated by Supervisors, managers or other volunteers.

As a volunteer, you will also receive a weekly e-mail Park Life, updating you on any information about the Park that may be of interest to you, and signposting you to other opportunities to get involved with.

Discount Cards for Volunteers

This scheme aims to give regular volunteers for the Authority and Trust recognition for the hours of personal time they donate to the Park. The scheme recognises volunteers that give a minimum of 20 hours per annum in any one calendar year. Volunteers who give less than 20 hours per annum will not be eligible for this recognition scheme. Please check with your volunteer supervisors that your volunteer hours are being recorded properly so we know who can take part in the scheme. Remember you can always send your volunteering hours into the volunteers team (volunteers@leevalleypark.org.uk) to check they have been entered to ensure you get your membership cards.

There are two levels to the scheme, the first will be eligible for volunteers that give between 20 hours and 100 hours in one calendar year, the second will be eligible for volunteers that give greater than 100 hours in one calendar year.

Level 1

Any volunteer that gives between 20 hours and 100 hours in one calendar year will be able to obtain a Lee Valley membership card which entitles them to get a discount of 25% on food and beverages available at all of our sites within the Park (excluding vended products). This discount will be available for the calendar year following the year they worked their volunteer hours and will last for one calendar year.

Level 2

Any volunteer that gives greater than 100 hours in one calendar year will receive the same benefit as Level 1 plus the additional benefits laid out below). This discount will be available for the calendar year following the year they worked their volunteer hours and will last for one calendar year.

Volunteers exceeding 100 hours will also be eligible for the following discounts:

- Free casual entry with up to one additional adult and two children at Lee Valley Park Farms
- Free weekday golf with one accompanying adult or child at the Lee Valley Golf Course
- 50% off weekend afternoon golf with one additional adult or child at the Lee Valley Golf Course
- 25% off casual use of the Lee Valley Athletics Centre
- Free casual ice skating with up to one additional adult and two children at Lee Valley Ice Centre
- 25% discount for midweek lessons one volunteer at Lee Valley Riding Centre
- £30 per person discount rate at off peak times at Lee Valley White Water Centre
- 50% off mid and low season cocoon hire at Lee Valley campsite, Sewardstone and Lee Valley camping and caravan park, Edmonton.
- 50% discount on mid-season touring / motorhome / tent fees at Lee Valley Campsites
- 75% discount on low season touring / motorhome / tent fees at Lee Valley Campsites

There is no discount available at Lee Valley Fisheries, Lee Valley Marinas or Lee Valley VeloPark and there is no discount at Lee Valley White Water Centre during peak times (weekend and bank holiday May to September).

Any discount will only apply when volunteers present their Lee Valley membership card. Failure to produce your card will result in full price being charged. All volunteers who qualify will be written to with a letter of authorisation at the end of July. If you take this letter to any of our venues they will be able to issue you with a membership card and set up your specific discounts for you.

2.11 Uniform

It is not compulsory, but uniform is available if you wish to wear it.

If you do wear uniform, we ask that you only wear it when on duty as a volunteer or representing the Park.

You will only be issued with uniform after a trial period and 30 hours or 3 months of volunteering as decided by your Supervisor. Some public facing volunteers may be offered uniform from day one if undertaking events or public facing activities.

When wearing uniform you may be approached by members of the public, and you should remember that you are representing the Park at all times, so please treat them as customers and be as helpful as you can.

There may be queries or questions that members of the public may ask that you cannot answer. Remember you can always refer people to the Information Centre on **03000 030 610**

2.12 Expenses

In most instances we aim to provide you with what you need to undertake a role at an agreed location. On some rare occasions you may be out of pocket due to something that we have asked you to do outside of your normal volunteering hours or location, or asked you to purchase for the Park for use when volunteering.

These cases will be very unusual, and any costs or travelling out of the ordinary must be agreed by our supervisor or the Volunteers Team beforehand. In cases where reasonable authorised costs have been incurred, you can claim back the out of pocket expenses.

There are two types of reimbursement that you can claim:

- Reimbursement for travel when requested to work anywhere other than your normal volunteering location.
- Reimbursement for supplies, tools or equipment purchased for the Park. This includes stamps and stationary used for volunteer communications, or equipment or tools used on volunteer tasks and activities.

Any purchases should be authorised by your supervisor or the Volunteer Team, and will become the property of the Authority or the Trust and will be managed by staff. They will be logged on the inventory list and labelled as Park property.

Travelling expenses for volunteers will be paid at the casual user allowance at the following rates:

	451-999cc	1000-1199cc	1200-1450cc
Per mile first 10,000	45p	45p	45p
Per mile after 10,000	13.7p	14.4p	16.4p

All travelling must be authorised by your supervisor or the Volunteer Team

All expenses must be claimed using Volunteer Expenses Claim Sheet. Please ask your Supervisor or the Volunteers Team for a copy of this form.

Claim forms should be signed by your Supervisor and sent to the Volunteers Team who will arrange for reimbursement to you by cheque.

All claims must have a valid receipt with them and Supervisors should not send forms without receipts. Payments will not be made without receipts.

2.12.1 Expenses

Volunteering with the Lee Valley Regional Park is designed to be inclusive. Due to the large number of volunteers who work with the Park, it is not possible to offer travelling expenses to every volunteer. We do recognise, however, that there are a number of people who are in situations where they would like to volunteer but due to financial issues would be unable to.

In view of this, we have established set criteria where we will pay travelling expenses to certain volunteers from their home address to the place of volunteering:

- To claim travel expenses proof of benefits must be given.
- The expenses will be reimbursement of public transport costs only.
- A **V011 Volunteer Expenses Claim Form** with supporting train or bus ticket or receipt must be completed.
- Taxi fares will only be paid if it has been agreed with both the Volunteers Manager and the Volunteer Supervisor prior to travel.
- Volunteers must live further than two miles away from the place of volunteering.
- No claim can be made if the volunteer is receiving expenses from another source for the activity.

To qualify to receive expenses, Volunteers must be in receipt of one of the following:

- **Carer's Allowance** On production of one of the following:
 - Letter from Housing Benefits confirming benefits award.
- **Constant Attendance Allowance** On production of one of the following:
 - Letter from Benefits Agency confirming allowance
- **Disability Living Allowance** On production of one of the following:
 - Letter from Benefits Agency confirming allowance.
- **Disability Living allowance/Incapacity Benefit (until 2013).** On production of the following:
 - Letter from Benefits Agency confirming allowance.
- **Housing Benefit.** On production of the following:
 - Letter from Benefits Agency confirming allowance.
- **Income Support** On production of one of the following:
 - Letter from Benefits Agency confirming allowance.
- **Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit.** On production of one of the following:
 - Letter from Benefits Agency confirming allowance.
- **Senior Citizens / Pensioners (men and women)** On production of one of the following: Proof of age, driving licence, passport.
- **Pension Credit** On production of one of the following: Letter from Benefits Agency confirming allowance
- **Students** On production of one of the following: Student card or proof of full time education

Before incurring any expenditure volunteers are advised to check with the Volunteers Team that the Authority or the Trust has the resources available to be able to reimburse any expenses incurred.

If you feel that you are not able to volunteer because of genuine hardship and lack of funds to travel to the location you wish to volunteer please come and talk to us and we will look at every case individually and assess the need. In some circumstances where travelling costs are a barrier to volunteering we will consider paying your travelling costs.

Note: All volunteers who are on benefits should inform the Benefits Office that they are undertaking volunteer work. The Volunteers Team can supply a letter of reference to state the type of volunteer work undertaken and the hours worked.

2.13 Time Monitoring

The government has raised the profile of volunteering in a number of its priorities and action plans. One of the ways in which volunteering is assessed is the number of hours of their time volunteers donate.

Organisations that collect information on volunteer hours are also able to apply for a range of funding which can go towards projects and improvements that could benefit us and you.

Therefore, recording how much time you give is very important. When recording your times, please include travelling to a site and any admin work that you do associated with your volunteering work.

We can provide you with a form to monitor your time. It will benefit us enormously if you can complete one of these for each month that you volunteer, even if it is only a couple of hours, it all adds up.

All completed forms should be handed in to your supervisor or sent to the Volunteer Team at **Freepost, Lee Valley Regional Park Authority, Volunteers, PO Box 88, NW4169, Enfield, EN2 9BR or emailed to Volunteers@leevalleypark.org.uk**

There is a real incentive to ensuring your hours are recorded and for those volunteers completing more than 20 hours annually they will be entitled to a discount card which will give discounts on food and beverages at our venues.

2.14 Insurance and Health and Safety

You will be insured whilst working in the Park as long as you have completed your induction, and we have a signed Enquiry and Registration Form or you have registered on the database.

The Authority and the Trust takes Health and Safety very seriously and much of Section 3 in this Handbook is there to protect you and other Regional Park users.

You have a duty of care to yourself as well as the duty of care that we have to you. You must ensure that you do not do anything to put yourself at risk whilst carrying out any volunteer activities.

We ask that our volunteers are over 16 and that anyone under 16 years old who wants to volunteer comes along with a supervising adult, and that volunteers under 18 have parental consent.

We also ask that you do not bring children under the age of eleven with you when volunteering with others unless by prior arrangement. This can put other volunteers and Supervisors in a difficult position as they are not responsible for small children during volunteering activities. If you do have to bring a child with you then you must assume full responsibility for the child at all times.

2.15 Equal Opportunities

The Regional Park has an Equal Opportunities Policy and all volunteers are covered under this, and have to abide by it. If you wish to see a copy please ask the Volunteers Team.

2.16 Rehabilitation of Offenders

The Regional Park recognises the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act and will not discriminate against volunteers with spent criminal records. However, current criminal records or convictions at any time in the past for the following offences will not come under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act.

Any individual with these offences will not be permitted to volunteer with the Regional Park:

- Murder
- Sexual Crimes
- Embezzlement

2.17 Alcohol and Drugs Policy

The Authority and the Trust distinguishes between the use of alcohol and drugs in the workplace (which will be regarded as a disciplinary offence and treated appropriately) and sickness due to the use of alcohol or drugs. The abuse of alcohol or drugs in the workplace is likely to lead to dismissal. The following rules apply:

- If a volunteer is found consuming alcohol or taking drugs on any Park premises whilst on duty or are under the influence of alcohol or drugs whilst volunteering, this will be treated as gross misconduct under the disciplinary procedure. The possession of drugs for any reason other than medical is forbidden. Volunteers must inform their supervisor if they are taking non-prescription drugs for medical reasons and in particular if they are likely to affect their ability to undertake their roles.
- Volunteers may be required to undergo a medical examination in order to ascertain whether there is a problem in relation to drink or drugs which is affecting their ability to undertake a role. A volunteer may be suspended from volunteering until the problem has been resolved. The Authority or Trust will decide whether to require a volunteer to undergo a programme of rehabilitation or whether abuse of alcohol or drugs should be treated as a disciplinary matter.
- If a volunteer is offered a programme of rehabilitation and does not comply with the programme this may be treated as a disciplinary matter.

Volunteers should be aware that the Authority and Trust will not hesitate to inform the police if it believes there has been an abuse of controlled drugs for which criminal sanctions are appropriate.

2.18 Problem Solving Policy

If at any time you feel that you have been treated unfairly, there is a Problem Solving Policy which covers all volunteers. If you wish to see a copy of this policy please ask your Supervisor or contact the Volunteers Team.

2.19 Confidentiality

Whilst working as a volunteer for the Park you may have access to information about the Regional Park, employees or other volunteers that is not readily available to the general public.

Under no circumstances should this information be passed on to any third parties. You should respect the confidentiality of any information that is available to you and keep it restricted at all times.

At the end of your induction, you will sign the induction form, to say that you have understood our Confidentiality Policy, and our other policies and processes have been discussed.

2.20 Volunteers Leaving the Authority

If you decide to stop volunteering your Supervisor or the Volunteers Team will endeavour to conduct an exit interview with you. This may be face to face or over the phone. This is to help us gain an understanding of the reasons behind you leaving. If it is established that it is because of some wrong doing on the part of the Authority or Trust, you should inform the Volunteers Team who will critically review the situation and ensure any required improvements are made.

Volunteers who are leaving may request a reference from either their Supervisor or the Volunteers Team.

Section 3

3.1 Important Information

The following information is taken from Park procedures and may be relevant to the role that you undertake. They are given to you for reference purposes.

Many of the procedures may not be relevant to you, but are included for your information and protection, so it is advisable to read through this section.

Any procedures specific to your role will be pointed out to you by your Supervisor during your induction. If there are issues or problems that are not covered in the Volunteer Handbook, please talk to your Supervisor or the Volunteers Team.

3.2 Top Tips

These top tips may seem obvious but are worth thinking about every time you visit the Park, whether volunteering or visiting as a member of the public.

Health and Safety:

- When volunteering alone, always carry a mobile phone. If volunteering in a group you should ensure that one person has a mobile phone.
- Wear any protective clothing you are given.
- Be careful when lifting. Always test the weight first. Bend your knees and not your back. Get advice or help if you are not sure you can lift an object.
- Do not use broken or defective tools.
- Only use tools that you have been trained to use.
- Do not use your mobile phone when driving.
- Always tell someone where you are going and when you expect to be back.
- Only use ladders if you have been trained properly to do so.
- Always wash your hands after being outside, near water or with animals.

Dealing with people and members of the public:

- Dress appropriately for your role – particularly in a public facing role uniform should be worn.
- Always inform members of the public that you are a volunteer for the Park – remember you are representing the Park in your volunteering.
- Greet people with a friendly and non threatening attitude.
- If you don't know the answer to a question from a member of the public do not guess, take some details and get a member of staff to get back to the person.

- When dealing with a problem, stay calm and show concern for the customer's difficulties. Do not argue with them, try and be supportive and defuse the situation if you can.
- Do not shout or swear at/in front of members of the public or children.

Support for volunteers:

- If you have any problems your first point of contact is your Supervisor or the Volunteers Team.
- Know where the Accident Book and First Aid kit is. Know who the local First Aiders are. If you are interested in First Aid training please ask your Supervisor or the Volunteers Team.
- Know your fire drill, alarm sound, fire exits and what to do in the event of a fire or emergency evacuation.

Beware of the following:

- Falls into water from paths, bridges and platforms. Be aware of any hazards and don't go too near to edge.
- Slips, trips and falls on uneven ground and paths. Be aware of any hazards, and wear shoes/boots with a good grip.
- Overhanging vegetation that could cause damage to eyes.
- Falling branches.
- Dog fouling, as there is a danger of toxicaria from dog faeces.
- Out of control dogs.
- Stings and bites from wildlife.
- Poisonous and irritating stings from plants e.g. nettles or giant hog weed that can causes blistering.
- Passing cyclists.
- Speeding traffic in car parks and access roads.

3.3 Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) Policy And Emergency Procedure

There may be times when you are volunteering that you are not directly supervised. If you are working on your own and are unable to contact your direct Supervisor in the event of an incident the SRO procedure should be followed.

A member of staff is appointed as SRO and is on duty every day of the year between the hours of 8am and 4pm, whenever members of staff or volunteers are on duty. The SRO is the first point of contact for incidents that require enforcement of the Regional Park Authority's Byelaws or liaison with the Police and Emergency Services.

Alerting the SRO:

- In the case of emergency, volunteers should dial 999 immediately. The process under Major Incidents at the bottom of this page should be followed.

- After contacting the Emergency Service, you should contact the SRO immediately of any incident that involves a serious breach of the Byelaws, injury to an employee, volunteer or a member of the public, damage to public or private property, or requires the attendance of the Police Park Security Officers or Emergency Services.
- The SRO should also be alerted to any ongoing incidents that might develop to involve the circumstances described above or where these circumstances have been narrowly avoided.

Major Incidents at Centres or Facilities:

- Contact the Emergency Services by dialling **999**.
- Inform the Site Manager.

Major Incidents in the Wider Regional Park:

- Contact the Emergency Services by dialling **999**.
 - Call the relevant Lee Valley Regional Park contact number below to advise of the incident.
 - 8am to 4pm: Senior Responsible Officer on **01992 709925**.
 - 4pm to 8am: Out of Hours Service on **01992 639561**.
- It may be of use to programme these into your mobile.

3.4 Lone Working Procedure

Some of our volunteer roles are carried out by volunteers who are alone. If your role involves lone working the following must be adhered to and will be covered in your induction.

The Principal Control Measures for Lone Working are:

- The provision of mobile telephones.
- 'Buddy' systems, where two volunteers work together to monitor each other's safety.
- Signing in and out systems, which record where volunteers are at any given time and when they are expected to return.

No volunteer should work alone in circumstances where there is a specific and identifiable risk [as opposed to a general possibility] of accident, illness or assault.

Lone working is prohibited by law in some situations and in a number of operations. These include:

- Entry into confined spaces, including tanks, grain silos, inspection covers, ceiling or cellar voids, and any other spaces where there might be inadequate natural ventilation.
- Working with boats or by water.
- Use of potentially dangerous machinery.
- Manual handling operations.
- Use of ladders and the erection or dismantling of scaffolding.

For these prohibited operations, the provision of a mobile phone is insufficient protection for lone working; a second person must be present.

Volunteers should try to avoid lone working where possible outside the hours covered by SRO duty: between 8am and 4pm. If lone working is carried out between 4pm and 8am the out of office number can be used to raise issues: **01992 639561**

Things to Remember when Lone Working:

- You should not lone work unless you have a mobile telephone, and as long as someone knows of their intentions. This may be via a signing in and out system.
- Everyone should be cautious when working alone, assuming that there may be a risk, even if the risk is not immediately obvious.
- If you feel in danger whilst lone working, you should withdraw to a place of safety and contact the SRO.
- It is your responsibility when working alone to ensure that your phone is working and fully charged before working alone.
- If a task requires the help of another person then do not attempt to do it without a second person.
- At no point should you be working alone at a time that has not been approved.

“Buddy” System:

- The person working alone should telephone their designated “buddy” when commencing volunteering informing them that they are working alone. The “buddy” will in most circumstances be their Supervisor.
- Volunteers must advise their buddy in advance of their intended actions, give them a contact number and indicate an anticipated time for either completion or an interim check. This should not normally be any more than one hour ahead of their start time.
- If the person working alone does not check-in at the specified time the “buddy” must telephone the given contact number and check the person working alone is okay.
- If there is no answer within a further fifteen minutes, the buddy must contact the SRO immediately. The SRO will then determine an appropriate course of action.
- If the circumstances are suspicious or there has been an accident the Emergency Services should be called immediately

Missing Volunteers:

- If the person is more than 2 hours past the time they were supposed to return or have failed to make contact to inform of any problems, the SRO should be contacted for advice.

- When a volunteer is suspected of being missing, the SRO must be informed immediately. The SRO will then determine an appropriate course of action.
- Each circumstance will be different but common sense should be applied to suspected missing persons.
- The SRO, will have available a list of home addresses and emergency contact telephone numbers for all volunteers, which will be held securely and in strictest confidence, and only used to confirm the safety of a volunteer in the event of concern.

3.5 Boats and Water

While the Fisheries and Angling Manager will act as co-ordinator on matters relating to working with boats and by water, the responsibility for the safe use of boats and work by water rests with the Boat Handler and the relevant Supervisor.

A minimum of two volunteers must be present at all times when using a boat or working close by the edge of water. A minimum of two volunteers are required where any one volunteer intends to enter the water.

When a boat is being used, at least one volunteer must remain on land or the volunteers afloat should use the buddy procedure to maintain contact with the shore.

Boat Handlers should normally only operate boats on water-bodies with which they are familiar. If it is necessary to operate on an unfamiliar water-body, advice on potential hazards should be sought from someone who has greater knowledge of the site.

The Boat Handler must ensure that boats are not overloaded, that any equipment onboard is stowed safely, that sufficient fuel is taken onboard and that oars are available in case of engine failure, and that the boat is equipped with adequate means of anchorage.

Re-fuelling operations or engine maintenance should be undertaken away from the water's edge in order to reduce the risk of pollution.

When operating a boat during outbreaks of any infectious disease the operator must insure the boat is disinfected after use in that particular water body.

When one or more volunteers are entering the water to work, visual contact must be maintained.

At least one employee or volunteer present must have First Aid at Work qualification. A First Aid kit and mobile telephone must be available.

All persons involved in the operation must wear life jackets.

Volunteers should be alert to the risk of infection and disease when working in or close by the edge of water, particularly Leptospirosis or Weil's Disease (see below).

The Risk of Infection and Disease can be Minimised by Adopting a High Standard of Personal Hygiene:

- Wash hands before eating, drinking or smoking.
- Cover any cuts or grazes with some form of waterproof covering before working near water.
- Wash any cuts or grazes sustained during work near water immediately with clean water and apply antiseptic.
- Take steps to avoid the inhalation of water spray and avoid allowing spray to come into contact with eyes.

Volunteers should inform a doctor if they become ill after working by water and should carry a Leptospirosis Medical Advisory Card that we can provide if working by water forms a regular part of their activities.

Volunteers working near water may also come across risk of disease and death in animals. Provisions relating to avian botulism and fish deaths are set out in **Working with Animals and Dealing with Dead Animals** procedure set out below.

Blue-Green Algae:

- Blue-Green Algae naturally occur in inland waters, but can multiply during warm weather or in nutrient deficient situations, to produce toxic 'scum' which is hazardous to humans, domestic animals and wildlife.
- Any suspected outbreak of Blue-Green Algae should be reported to the relevant Supervisor or the Fisheries and Angling Manager, who must alert the Environment Agency and decide on any further action.
- If Environment Agency advises a closure of the water body the Authority will comply with their recommendations / instructions.
- When an outbreak of Blue-Green Algae is suspected on sites with livestock, the Farm Manager must be informed immediately.
- In areas where there are Blue Green Algal blooms notices will be posted. This is the quickest and most effective method of informing the public, staff and volunteers. An example of the poster is given on page 22.

Weil's Disease:

- A bacterium enters the body through breaks in the skin such as cuts, blisters and abrasions, or via the lining of the nose, throat or alimentary tract.
- The incubation period is 7-13 days and the disease starts with a fever, muscular aches and pains, loss of appetite and vomiting. Subsequent bruising of the skin, sore eyes, nose bleeds and jaundice may occur. The fever lasts about five days and may be followed by significant deterioration.

- Weil's Disease is tricky to detect until an infection is identified. You are strongly advised to familiarize yourself with the advice given on page 23.
- It is vital that the doctor be told that the patient may have been in contact with a source of infection. The symptoms can easily be mistaken for those of flu, and the possibility of Weil's Disease may be overlooked in the early stages.
- Laboratory testing of blood will confirm the diagnosis but this may take undue time in an ordinary hospital lab. If Weil's disease is suspected the samples should be sent direct to the address below where they will be tested within 24 hours. Treatment is usually by Penicillin Antibiotic.

The Leptospirosis Reference Unit
Department of Microbiology
County Hospital
HEREFORD
HR1 2ER

Tel: 01432 277707

Email: leptospira.lru@wvt.nhs.uk

WARNING!!

Blue Green Algal Blooms
SCUM MAY BE TOXIC

Blue Green Algae have been identified at this site. Under certain conditions they are known to have the potential to affect the health of humans and animals. The Department of Health has issued the following statement:

"Illness, including skin rash, eye irritation, vomiting, diarrhoea, fever and muscular pain has occurred in some recreational users of water who have been in contact with algal scum ***although algal scum is not always harmful, it is a sensible precaution to avoid contact with scum and the water close to it.***"

With regard to animals, the Chief Veterinary Officer of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food has stated:

"The toxin is poisonous to animals***farmer and pet owners should therefore ensure that their animals do not have access to affected water.***"

All visitors are requested to observe the following guidelines:

- All visitors should avoid contact with the algal scum and the surrounding water. **No swimming or paddling.**
- All animals should be kept out of the water. **Dogs must be kept on a lead.**

- Anglers must avoid any contact with the algal scum. Fishing may be prohibited in areas of known algal scum. Hands must be washed before eating, drinking or smoking and when you have finished angling.
- If you should fall ill after visiting the site and if you feel that you may have come into contact with, or ingested algae, you should immediately contact your doctor and advise him/her of the circumstances.

WARNING!!
Weil's Disease

Rivers, ponds and canals are usually infected with a bacterium which can cause Leptospirosis (Weil's Disease). Most of the time Weil's Disease may take the form of a chill or possibly resemble an attack of flu.

Weil's Disease can cause serious illness or death.

Your Doctor is reminded of the existence of:

***The Leptospirosis Reference Unit
Department of Microbiology***

***County Hospital
HEREFORD
HR1 2ER
Tel: 01432 277707***

Email: leptospira.lru@wvt.nhs.uk

Be Aware:

The disease is *curable if recognised in time*, but many doctors in urban areas will never have encountered it. If you have any reason to suspect that you may have been infected, you may need to draw your doctor's attention to the possibility that the symptoms could be Weil's Disease.

The Symptoms:

The incubation period is 7-13 days.

Early symptoms are: fever, muscular aches and pains, loss of appetite and vomiting.

Later symptoms may include bruising of the skin, sore eyes, nose bleeds and jaundice.

The fever lasts for about five days, and may be followed by significant deterioration.

Results of blood tests have been known to take two weeks or longer through the normal laboratory system. Deaths and serious illnesses have occurred because of slow identification.

Your local laboratory can provide your medical practitioner with a result within 2 – 3 hours through an ELISA test

3.6 Other Potential Health Risks

Tetanus:

- It is recommended that all people working in the countryside have adequate protection.
- Your doctor will give you advice about tetanus should you need more information.
- People at risk include agricultural workers, people working with animals, Rangers and engineering workers, people working out doors or at risk from minor cuts and abrasions.

Giant Hogweed:

- Contact with the sap of Giant Hogweed can cause blistering to the skin in bright sunlight.
- Appropriate protective clothing must be worn if cutting the plant in such conditions.
- Any sap on the skin must be washed off immediately.
- Other similar plants may cause similar but less severe skin reactions and appropriate protection is also recommended.
- People at risk include Rangers, agricultural workers and others working in countryside areas.

Asthma:

- Certain materials encountered are capable of sensitising individuals and may cause Asthma.
- Substances could be dusts, such as those arising from the cultivation of edible grasses (wheat, oats, etc) or chemicals particularly those of a volatile nature (glues, petroleum manufactured substances etc).
- Substances considered to be “respiratory sensitisers” are listed in the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1999.
- People at risk include people working with birds, Rangers and others handling dried grasses such as straw and hay.

Farmer's Lung:

- Farmer's Lung is a form of Asthma. Mouldy straw and hay encourage the growth of certain moulds, in particular *Micropolyspora Faeni*.
- When handled in the field or in a barn, clouds of dust containing these spores are liberated into the surrounding air and are subsequently inhaled by people.

- Not everyone develops Farmer's Lung as the disease is the result of individual hypersensitivity due to an antigen present in the dust of mouldy hay and other vegetable matter.
- People at risk include people working with animals, Rangers and people handling dried grasses such as straw or hay.

Aspergillosis:

- This is associated with exposure to mouldy hay or other mouldy vegetable produce which can result in pulmonary disease.
- Aspergillosis is an asthma-like condition, caused by inhalation of the spores of Aspergillus Fungus, principally **Aspergillus Fumigatus** and **Aspergillus Niger**.
- All of these spores are encountered as mould on fibres such as jute, straw and hay.
- People at risk include people working with birds, Rangers and others handling dried grasses such as straw and hay.

Psittacosis:

- This is a pneumonia-like condition caused by an infection with the **Bedsonia** virus carried by game, poultry and other birds, such as parrots.
- Psittacosis can be fatal to humans if untreated.
- The illness has a sudden effect after an incubation period of two-three weeks.
- It is characterised by initial fever, headache and lethargy followed by pulmonary symptoms several days later, including non-productive cough and shallow breathing.
- Elderly people may die as a result of the infection.
- People at risk include people working with birds, Rangers and others handling dried grasses such as straw and hay.

Legionellosis:

- This is the term used for infections caused by Legionella Pneumophila and other bacteria from the Legionellaceae family.
- Among these infections is Legionnaire's Disease, a type of pneumonia, which in addition to affecting the lungs, may also have a serious effect on other organs of the body.
- Infection is attributed to inhaling legionellae, either by inhaling airborne water droplets which are small enough to penetrate deeply into the lungs, or in droplet particles left after the water has evaporated.
- People at risk include all coming into contact with untreated water sprays or mists.

Low Level Radiation Induced Skin Cancer:

- Skin cancer produced by exposure to sunlight is caused by the Ultraviolet and Infrared radiations contained in sunlight.

- Due to the deterioration of the ozone layer, the population of the world has increasing exposure to Ultraviolet radiation, and so skin cancer is increasing.
- People at risk include people that are required to spend a greater part of their working day in the open.

Avian Bird Flu:

- We advise all volunteers to keep up to date with the current situation on this issue through the media.
- The Authority will issue advice to volunteers who may come into contact with wild birds or poultry as and when necessary.
- Staff monitor the situation closely and any instances of bird flu in wild bird populations will be detected and dealt with very quickly.
- As a volunteer you may be in a position where you observe signs in populations of wild birds such as significant numbers of suspicious deaths of wild birds (5 or more), and rapidly increasing numbers of sick or dead birds.
- Do not touch any of the dead birds but report the incident immediately to the Information Centre on **08456 770 600**
- A full fact sheet is available on request from the Volunteer Team at Myddelton House.

3.7 Animals and Dealing with Dead Animals

All work with animals must be carried out with care and compassion, with the animals' welfare given equal priority with that of employees, volunteers and the public.

Only qualified and/or experienced volunteers should control the movement, feeding, loading, unloading, housing and containment of animals. Volunteers who do not yet have the experience should be supervised at all times.

All animals carry a range of diseases, some of which can infect humans. These diseases are known as Zoonoses.

Particular health risks for Lee Valley Regional Park Authority volunteers are Leptospirosis or Weil's Disease, which is associated with work by water, and Lyme Disease and Q Fever, which are associated with ticks, often from deer and sheep.

The Risk of Infection and Disease can be Minimised by Adopting a High Standard of Personal Hygiene:

- Wash hands before eating, drinking or smoking.
- Cover any cuts or grazes with some form of waterproof covering before working with animals.

- Wash any cuts or grazes sustained while working with animals immediately with clean water and apply antiseptic.
- Take steps to avoid the inhalation of water spray whilst cleaning and avoid allowing spray to come into contact with eyes.
- Wear a long-sleeved shirt and long trousers when working with animals.
- Clothes should be brushed off when entering a building.
- Volunteers should check for ticks when getting undressed.
- Volunteers should inform their doctor that they have been working with animals if they later become ill.

Dealing with Dead Animals:

- There is a risk of infection and disease when dealing with dead animals. Appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) should be worn and the hygiene precautions described above must be followed at all times.
- Professional advice should be sought from a veterinary surgeon if there is any doubt over the cause of death or how to deal with a dead animal.
- Any fallen or dead livestock should be reported immediately to the relevant Site Manager or their assistant.

Avian Botulism:

- Avian Botulism is a bacterial disease particularly affecting ducks, which spreads and can become virulent during warm weather and anaerobic conditions.
- If an outbreak of Avian Botulism is suspected the relevant Site Manager should be informed.

Fish deaths:

- Large scale fish deaths can occur during anaerobic conditions or during periods of high fish stress.
- Where large scale fish deaths occur, the Fisheries and Angling Manager or the Fisheries Officer must be informed immediately.

Avian Bird Flu:

- The signs to look for are suspicious deaths of wild birds which involve significant numbers (5+), and rapidly increasing numbers of sick or dead birds. See page 26 for more details.
- **Do not touch any of the dead birds** report any incidents immediately to the Information Centre on **08456 770 600** or the SRO on **01992 709925**.

3.8 Working with Hand Tools

Responsibility for the safe use, maintenance and storage of hand tools rests with managers and the tool-users themselves.

Tool talks are given before each volunteering session as part of an induction or refresher for those that need it.

A safe zone should be maintained around the work area. An adequate number of employees and volunteers must be on-site to maintain the boundary of the safe zone as well as to undertake the task itself.

Appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) must be worn at all times when using hand tools.

Any defect with a hand tool must be notified to the Site Manager.

3.9 Manual Handling

The responsibility for ensuring that Manual Handling operations are carried out safely lies with Site Managers and with the volunteer undertaking the specific task.

Volunteers whose role might involve lifting should undertake basic training for Manual Handling.

The Correct Technique for Lifting in a Heavy Load is Always:

- Make sure route is clear.
- Approach the load in an upright manner.
- Do not bend the back or lean forward from the hip.
- Get as close to the load as possible.
- Keep the feet apart – place one foot slightly forward so that the load is now as close as possible under the crotch.
- Lower the body by bending the legs – never the back.
- Get a good grip on the load before straightening the legs.
- Pull the load into the abdomen and keep elbows into your side.
- Lower the load by bending the legs – not the back.

No Manual Handling operation should be undertaken where there are too few people available to undertake the operation safely or where there is a risk of injury.

If any volunteer is in doubt about the safety of a Manual Handling operation, they should seek further guidance from their Supervisor before proceeding.

Job Title	Responsibilities	Contact Number
LVRPA Information Centre	For any general Regional Park related queries.	03000 030 610
Volunteer Team	For any queries relating to volunteering.	01992 709 845 / 867 07917647552 / 07909000326
SRO on duty (8am – 4pm)	For matters whilst lone working during office hours.	01992 709 925
Out of hours number (4pm – 8am)	For matters whilst lone working outside of office hours.	01992 639 561
Fisheries and Angling Manager	For matters relating to fish, water and boats.	01992 892 291 / 07970 615 189
Fisheries Officer	For matters relating to fish, water and boats.	01992 892 291 / 07715 449 343
Senior Ranger North	Supervisor of the North Rangers	01992709919/ 07715 449 345
North Ranger	Stanstead Riverside Amwell Rye House Gatehouse Glen Faba Dobbs Weir Splittlebrook Admirals Walk Lake Nazeing Meads Ware Town Centre Ware Riverside Amwell Walk Way Stanstead Innings Rye Gate Farm Nazeing Areodrome	07715 449 335
North Countryside Assistant	Hall Marsh	07824412614
North Ranger	Cornmill Meadows Abbey Gardens	07739852858
North Ranger	Fishers Green Rushey Mead Clayton Hill	07827271330
North Ranger	Broxbourne Old Mill and Meadows Silver Mead Green Lanes Wharf Road Cadmore Lane Nth to Broxbourne Broxbourne Riverside	07739 000 518
North Ranger	Highbridge Street Showground Hooks Marsh + Car Park Cheshunt Marsh Thistly Marsh Turners Hill Pindar Cheshunt Country Walk to Cadmore Lane	07739 449 333
Senior Ranger South	Supervisor of the South Rangers	020 8988 7566 / 07715 449 331
South Ranger	Ponders End Lake Harbert Road Tottenham Marshes Lee Park Way	07715 449 346

South Ranger	Gunpowder Park	07715 449 340
South Ranger	WaterWorks Essex Filter Beds Middlesex Filter Beds	07715 449 330
South Ranger	Copper Mill Walthamstow Marsh	07715 449 329
South Ranger	Old Ford Three Mills Bow Creek East India Dock Basin	07715 449333