



Volunteer Update December 2015

We would like to wish all our volunteers and partners a lovely Christmas and a prosperous new year. A big thank you for the hard work and dedication you have put into the Park and its projects. It would be quite literally true to say we simply couldn't do many of these additional projects without your help. The Regional Park and the visitor experience is greatly enriched by your hard work.



Christmas event

All our volunteers are invited to our Christmas event on Saturday 12th Dec. We want to take this opportunity to thank you all for your dedication, help and support over the year. We will be meeting at 10.30 at Lisburn Linen Museum where we have organized a tour 'Flax to Fabric' a fascinating look at one of the Lagan Valley's most renowned industries. Following this we will make our way down to the Lagan Valley Island and the Lighters Restaurant. The restaurant is currently closed but the facility has been made available to us to provide refreshments and the opportunity for a bit of craic. We will be running a Christmas quiz – nothing serious – just a bit of fun and we'll supply a bit to lunch to finish off.

Investing in Volunteers Accreditation

We are currently providing feedback to our assessor from investing in volunteers and expect to be in a position to renew our accreditation in Jan/Feb of the New Year. We will be making volunteers aware of our updated policies as part of this process.

Volunteer Heritage Guides

Well it's the time of year when the days grow shorter, darker, damper and the chill of winter starts to deepen the gloom. Special thanks has to be given to our Heritage Guides who's sustained enthusiasm makes visiting the barge and the cottage an interesting and exiting experience for members of the public.





We hope you all enjoyed the trip to Clotworthy House. It's always refreshing to see somewhere different and the garden tour was fascinating; quite a character! It's amazing that there can be so much to tell just wandering around the garden and how much history there can be in such a small space. Sometimes as we build our knowledge base we can overlook just what a wealth of knowledge we have and that goes for our Heritage Guides. We regularly get great feedback from visitors about how fascinating and informed their visit has been.

Volunteer Wildlife Surveyors

Thank you to all our surveyors. Whilst some surveys don't take place during the winter, we are grateful to our squirrel surveyors for continuing to gather transect data and whose long term consistency is invaluable. We hope to expand our surveys to include bumblebees and wildfowl in the near future. Bumblebees are an important pollinator species, pollinating over 80% of all our wildflowers and food plants.

Saturday Programme

We always welcome suggestions for tasks, but please understand that any new task must be approved by landowners and meet our strategic requirements. Anne, Dan and myself will continue to rotate working with the Saturday Volunteer group and whilst it may appear that there is a different task leader each time, we do liaise and plan the tasks between the three of us. The Saturday Conservation Volunteer programme for the next three months is looking like this (with the proviso that some of these may change):

9 th Jan 2016	Tree care	Belvoir Wood	Car park at playground	Dan
23 rd Jan 2016	Scrub Clearance	Hugeonot/Millbrook	Lagan Valley Island	Anne
6 th Feb 2016	Laurel Removal	Derriaghy Glen	Yew Tree Walk	Andy
20 th Feb 2016	Tree planting/thinning	National Trust	Minnowburn car park	Anne
5 th Mar 2016	Hedgerow Maintenance	Lagan Meadows	Sharman Drive entrance	Dan
19 th Mar 2016	Laurel Removal	Derriaghy Glen	Yew Tree Walk	Andy