



Hands of Hope

TITLE OF POST	Volunteer & Engagement Lead
BASED AT	Hope Farm Community Garden - Hawkhurst
HOURS	3 days per week – Tues, Weds & Friday
ACCOUNTABLE TO	Board of Trustees
SALARY	Permanent Contract - £26,000 Per Annum, Pro Rata.

Background

Set up in 2016 by the current trustees and still run by them, Hands of Hope are restoring & developing a neglected Edwardian walled kitchen garden and 22 acres of AONB land in Hawkhurst, located on the Kent and East Sussex Border – “Hope Farm Community Garden” - whilst conserving the sites natural heritage. Since securing planning in January 2019, we have been delivering programmes aimed at tackling **rural isolation, loneliness, and food poverty**, as well as **improving mental, physical & environmental health** for communities throughout Rother, Hastings, & West Kent. Projects include Get Growing, Great British Brick Off (GBBO), Bee in Company, Helping Hands Lunch Clubs, Hawkhurst Shedders and Living History Programme; additionally, we offer, free, rural crafts training & Volunteering sessions. We have a no-dig, productive, organic, market garden, with Soil Association Accreditation & extended our growing capacity in 2023 to support a new sensory garden project designed and delivered by Volunteers as well as our in-season weekly Pop-Up café/farm shop, managed by trustees and volunteers.

We are currently developing Hope Farm Community Garden as an inclusive & affordable destination where participation in our programmes can help improve physical and mental wellbeing through increased social contact, culturally valued activities, and the mitigation of food poverty. Our focus is getting people out, active, skilled, and connected. Additionally, our site provides spaces for community connections between people from different demographics, including people of all ages, families, people who are isolated, disabled, in poor health and are experiencing mental health issues.

We have improved facilities on site since COVID-19, and now have access to 4 new classrooms via the restoration of the derelict pumphouse which includes a disabled toilet and a new inclusive growing area. Additionally, we have erected a new outdoor learning structure in the ghyll woodland as well as a 20m glasshouse. We have an Apiary, a pond-dipping platform and in Spring 2024 will complete works on a new Community Kitchen & Cookery School, large learning Yurt and Victorian Glasshouse. Our Mission is to enable people and communities to lead healthier and happier lives by connecting them to nature and each other.

Job Summary:

We are looking for a “people person” who loves the variety of working with people and nature, Recruiting, retaining and supporting volunteers and visiting groups - outdoors and indoors – all year round and in all weather. A strong communicator, who thrives on inspiring and motivating people to participate in activities aligned to growing, cooking and nature. You will lead on the recruitment, induction, management, and support of volunteering across the charity and collaborating with a small team of trustees, project leads and staff, help encourage more diverse engagement with Green Spaces through closer working with schools, young adults, community groups, health professionals, local businesses, sponsorship, and corporate volunteering.

Main Duties and Responsibilities:

1. Volunteer Recruitment:

- Devise volunteer roles to support planned service delivery and our fundraising and marketing activity and supporting our Project Leads to increase regular weekly volunteer numbers and volunteering opportunities aligned to our on-going programmes and the growing seasons.
- Devise and implement a communications drive to attract new volunteers from hard-to-reach areas of our community or those struggling with mental & physical health issues, including:
 - I. Hawkhurst Shedders
 - II. Bee in Company
 - III. Rural craft programmes
 - IV. Get Growing
 - V. GBBO (Great British Build Off)
 - VI. Growing Buddies
 - VII. Eco Warriors
- Support the trustee in charge of fundraising with **corporate volunteering** days including managing the booking administration and supporting them to secure more corporate groups.
- Devise and adapt tasks as required for less physically able volunteers or specialist volunteer groups.
- Manage online platforms and social media to promote volunteer opportunities maintaining and updating information on current third-party sites.
- Collaborate with community organisations and other networks to enhance awareness of volunteer opportunities.
- Undertake DBS checks for all volunteers where necessary.
- Act as the first point of contact for all new volunteer enquiries.

2. **Training and Induction:**
 - Ensure all new volunteers are inducted correctly and areas covered include: (i) tour of the site, (ii) introduction to staff, trustees, and other volunteers, (iii) Introduction to facilities including toilets/kitchen and (iv) relevant Risk Assessments and Health & Safety Documents.
 - Working with trustees, develop a volunteer handbook.
 - Working with General Site Maintenance Manager ensure all Volunteers understand H&S policies, Emergency Evacuation Procedures, Safeguarding and First Aid.

3. **Volunteer Management:**
 - Create a welcoming, positive, and inclusive environment where people from different backgrounds and abilities feel valued and supported and roles are matched to volunteers' skills, interests, and availability.
 - Maintain an up-to-date volunteer database, including contact information, skills, and availability.
 - Ensure Volunteer hours, including trustees are recorded weekly and monthly.
 - Ensure all participation surveys are uploaded for public service contracts – average 4-10 per month.
 - Identify pathways for volunteers to take on leadership roles at HFCG, such as lead volunteer roles or leadership around certain projects and/or, activities.
 - Ensure appropriate set up of tools and equipment for all Volunteering sessions in advance working with HOH team.
 - Regularly communicate with volunteers to assess their needs and provide ongoing support.
 - Develop and implement a recognition scheme for volunteers.
 - Continually assess and identify the volunteer needs across the organisation and ensure that any need for volunteers is addressed.

4. **Communication & Event Coordination:**
 - Working with team members and trustees, develop and expand our current Corporate Volunteering programmes as well as Community initiatives to aid the development of Hope Farm and Community Gardens increasing awareness within our local communities to improve engagement and participation.
 - Coordinate volunteer involvement in events, workshops, and community engagement activities.
 - Maintain a volunteer noticeboard with key updates, opportunities, events, and training sessions etc.
 - Working with colleagues' devise and circulate quarterly Volunteer Newsletter.
 - Ensure the volunteering information on our website is up to date.
 - Support the outreach and marketing of our event and box scheme opportunities in the spring/summer, including Farm Pop-Up Shop and Café.

5. **Reward and Recognition:**

- Working with trustees, investigate, develop, and implement a new rewards and recognition programme aligned to volunteers' contributions.
- Organise appreciation events and activities to foster a sense of community among volunteers e.g. our Thank You lunch in the summer and traditional Wassail in January.

6. **Evaluation and Reporting:**

- Collect feedback from volunteers to assess the effectiveness of programmes and identify areas for improvement.
- Generate reports on volunteer engagement, hours contributed, and impact for organisational review.
- Keep photographic records and evidence in line with data protection regulations.
- Work with volunteers & members for case studies ensuring diversity in approach. Inclusions but not limited to: (i) Garden Volunteers, (ii) Lunch Club Volunteers, (iii) Bee in Company Member, (iv) Shedders, (v) Countryside Management activities (vi) Brick laying for GBBO.
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7. **Other Related Duties**

- Adhere to and keep up to date with organisational policies, guidelines and procedures and best practice requirements.
- Along with all staff, be a key holder and be responsible for locking and unlocking the site if first in or last out.
- Take joint responsibility with all staff for the tidiness and upkeep of the site.

This post may involve working with vulnerable adults and children and as such the post holder will be required to apply for a disclosure of criminal records at an enhanced level (DBS) as well as undertaking Safeguarding Training, which HOH will provide.

Person Specification:

	Essential	Desirable
Experience		
Experience of building and maintaining effective relationships with internal and external stakeholders	E	
Experience of recruiting and managing volunteers	E	
Skills		
Excellent listening and interpersonal skills	E	
Excellent verbal and written communication skills	E	
Ability to deliver training / presentations		D
Strong organisational and time management skills	E	
Proficient in use of Microsoft Applications e.g., Word, Excel, and Outlook	E	
Experience of using Social Media, Canva etc to communicate	E	
Ability to work independently and collaboratively in a team environment	E	
Ability to meet deadlines and deal with competing priorities and demands	E	
Able to build and maintain relationships whilst maintaining appropriate	E	

professional boundaries		
Knowledge		
A personal commitment to equal opportunities and an ability to achieve results in this area	E	
Experience of Volunteer Recruitment and Management	E	
Knowledge and understanding of safeguarding responsibilities associated with vulnerable adults	E	
Knowledge and understanding of Social Prescribing		D
Qualifications		
Have access to a car and hold a full current UK driving licence		E

To apply for this position please contact Mandy Doran, info@hohcharity.co.uk