



## **PRESS RELEASE**

**For immediate release**

**12<sup>th</sup> January 2022**

### **New Year, New opportunities**

#### **Volunteers help families and children reconnect with nature**

The Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership has a fabulous group of volunteers. You can spot them tree planting within the landscape, restoring dry stone walls on Pendle or supporting local families at events. The partnership team are now asking more people to offer their free time to support families, schools and little ones reconnect with nature.

Outdoor family events are planned for 2022, but they couldn't be delivered without fantastic volunteers and the team want to say a huge thank you to every volunteer who helped in 2021. The projects' Outdoor Learning Officer Alison, who is funded by the Ernest Cook Trust, has been delivering free family events since summer 2018. "Volunteers are vital. At my toddler events they have become the smiley face that new little ones and their sometimes-anxious parents meet on arrival into the woods. Providing an extra hand, pair of eyes and listening ear to families with excitable children. I relish seeing volunteers demonstrating crafts or conservation tasks, while children follow eagerly."

There are plenty of different opportunities for outdoor learning assistants. Some of Alison's volunteers used to work within the Education sector, and want to keep using their skills, but outdoors. Other volunteers love attending the events, as a new hobby and enjoy learning something new alongside the families they are supporting. Recently a young volunteer wanted to pursue outdoor learning as a career, so volunteered to gain valuable experience before gaining a full-time job in environmental education.

Jessica, from the Ribble Valley, is completing her Forest School level three and became a volunteer to gain experience for her training " Volunteering with the Pendle Hill team has taught me so much and given me more confidence to work with others. I feel very lucky to even be a small part of a team who are making a massive difference to our local are"

Alison adds "Volunteers bring additional knowledge, skills and experience, so I always learn something new too. All volunteers have their own reasons for attending, but the common ground is they want to give something back and encourage others to enjoy the wildlife that is on our doorstep"

There are also volunteer opportunities at the educational trips, teacher training and conservation tasks that Alison organises with local schools and youth groups. This will include next month's tree

planting sessions with the Ribble Rivers Trust and local schools. Helpers would be useful to have on site to support each class. "Volunteers are given a full induction, training and will never be asked to do a task they don't want to carry out. There is no previous experience or skills required, just enthusiasm and willingness to learn. But it is convenient to enjoy the great outdoors, in all Lancashire weather!"

Ali signed up as a volunteer in Spring 2021 "For me it was about the joy you get when working with young children. Watching them learn through nature, their natural fascination and inquisitiveness. It wasn't just about them expanding their knowledge though, I learnt new things about nature every time I got involved! As well as meeting new people and being part of a great and fun team."

The National Lottery Heritage Funded Landscape Partnership scheme started in April 2018. If volunteers wanted a more hands on past time, there is the Pendle Hill Conservation Volunteers who meet at least twice a month, on the first Sunday and third Wednesday of the month and are always looking to invite new people to come along! The volunteers meet across the Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership area, which covers the hill itself and villages such as Gisburn, Downham, Roughlee, and Read.

If you are interested in learning more about the Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership volunteering opportunities please see website <https://www.pendlehillproject.com/volunteering>, or email [volunteer@pendle-hill-lp.co.uk](mailto:volunteer@pendle-hill-lp.co.uk) or call 01200 420420.



*Assisting children toast marshmallows is all part of the rewarding volunteer role*





*Volunteers assisting on a family nature walk*





*Super volunteers wear nature crowns*

## **EDITORS NOTES**

- The Pendle Hill landscape partnership is led by the Forest of Bowland AONB.
- The partnership aims to:
  - I. restore, enhance and conserve the heritage and landscape of Pendle Hill
  - II. reconnect people with their past and their landscape
  - III. bring the two sides of the hill together
  - IV. create a sustainable future for the environment, heritage and for visitors' experience of Pendle Hill

- The scheme was awarded a National Lottery grant of £1.8million by the National Lottery Heritage Fund in January 2018. These funds will be delivered from 2018-2022 and will be matched with a further £1m raised locally.
- The scheme is made up of a dozen projects which safeguard the area's wildlife and heritage and improve people's access to this popular countryside area. We will do this by providing opportunities for training and volunteering; by supporting research and devising creative and digital interpretation to inspire a new generation about our heritage; by restoring important landscape features, and by working with communities to re-tell the stories of radical Pendle people. The scheme will increase pride in this special place and raise aspirations amongst communities, and it will bring in new investment to support the environment and the economy.
- The Pendle Hill landscape partnership is supported by National Lottery players through the Heritage Fund and by the Forest of Bowland AONB. Partners include representatives of parish councils, the landowning and farming community, Pendle and Ribble Valley Borough Councils, Lancashire County Council, statutory bodies, tourism businesses and volunteers.
- Projects will be delivered by the AONB team, plus local delivery partners including In-Situ Arts, the Dry Stone Walling Association, Mid Pennine Arts and Ribble Rivers Trust.
- The Pendle Hill LP covers 120 square kilometres, stretching from Gisburn down to Whalley, and from Clitheroe across to Nelson and Padiham.
- The Hill is well known as a beauty spot and is heavily visited by residents of the local towns: it is a perfect place for walking and cycling. The area's heritage is dominated by the story of the Pendle Witches, but there are lots more stories to tell including the founding of the Quaker movement, non-conformists and radicals, Roman and Bronze Age settlers, medieval farming systems and early industrial developments. The network of dry stone walls and hedgerows give the area a distinctive feel, and the landscape is also important for its wild moorland, rare birds and woodlands.
- For further information contact the LP Scheme Manager [cathy.hopley@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:cathy.hopley@lancashire.gov.uk) on 07891 537835 / 01200 420420
- Visit the project website at [www.pendlehillproject.com](http://www.pendlehillproject.com) or visit our Facebook page 'Pendle Hill Project' for up to date news and views.

### **About the National Lottery Heritage Fund**

Using money raised by the National Lottery, we **Inspire, lead** and **resource** the UK's heritage to create **positive and lasting change** for people and communities, now and in the future. [www.heritagefund.org.uk](http://www.heritagefund.org.uk)

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