



The South Downs

South Downs

Volunteer Ranger Service

Your chance to make a difference

Where you could be working

East Hampshire AONB

At the western end of the South Downs is the East Hampshire AONB. Its landscape is rich and varied. The rolling chalk downland extends from Winchester to the West Sussex border and is bisected by the Meon Valley.

Sussex Downs AONB

Northern

This area encompasses the valley of the Rother and undulating ridges of sandstone. It runs from the Surrey and Hampshire County boundaries in the north and west, northwards to the downland escarpment west of the Arun Valley. It is a landscape of mostly woodland and heath.

Western

This area includes all the downland running from the Hampshire border east to the A24 and Worthing. It contains the valleys of the Arun and Lavant, along with significant areas of woodland, including the characteristic hanger woodlands of the escarpment.

Central

This is an area of open and rolling downland running from the striking escarpment of the Downs, southwards to the coastal conurbations of Brighton, Hove, Shoreham and Worthing. The western boundary is formed by the A24, A280 and the eastern boundary is formed by the river Ouse.

Eastern

This area stretches eastwards from the Ouse Valley to the cliffs of East Sussex's designated Heritage Coast. Except for the spectacular escarpment of Mount Caburn, it is bounded by the A27 to the north and the towns of Seaford and Newhaven to the south. This is an open undulating landscape divided by the valleys of the Ouse and Cuckmere.

"The VRS has made and continues to make a very valuable contribution to the conservation and management of the South Downs...often it is like meeting up with old friends"

**Glen Redman, countryside manager,
National Trust South Downs (East)**

"We depend on volunteers to carry out the fine tuning of the habitat management - we couldn't do without them"

**Malcolm Emery, site manager,
East Sussex National Nature Reserves, Natural England**

"Our knowledgeable volunteers ensure that the thousands of visitors to the country park are offered a personal insight into what makes the South Downs such a special place"

**Catherine James, visitor services manager,
Seven Sisters Country Park**



*fresh air
new skills
new friends*

To find out more please contact

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What is the South Downs Volunteer Ranger Service?



The South Downs Volunteer Ranger Service (VRS) gives people the opportunity to become involved in caring for the countryside of the South Downs.

The VRS is a group of volunteers dedicated to conserving, enhancing and improving access within the two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) which together form this internationally important landscape. The VRS is supported by the South Downs Joint Committee (SDJC) and works in partnership with local authorities and a number of conservation organisations, including Natural England and the National Trust.



There are many ways to get involved with the VRS with different experiences to be had. The diverse opportunities and support given means that there is always something for everyone.

"Jollier than gym or jogging"
David, 68, Midhurst

"For me, volunteering is about the opportunity to discover local areas!"
Liz, 46, Petersfield

Ways to get involved



Outdoor Volunteer Rangers

Outdoor rangers undertake a mixture of access maintenance, improvement and practical conservation work, such as woodland management, chalk grassland conservation or heathland restoration. Work varies slightly from area to area, depending on the season and nature of the relevant issues.

Volunteer Parish Path Rangers

Rangers take responsibility for monitoring the condition of all the footpaths and bridleways within a Sussex parish or along a specific trail.

Livestock management

Working in conjunction with the South Downs Grazing Scheme, VRs 'looker' sheep and cattle involved in conservation grazing and have the opportunity to assist local farmers at lambing time.



Archaeological monitoring

In partnership with the Sussex Archaeological Society, volunteers monitor and report on the condition of Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs) across Sussex.

South Downs Way Volunteer Wardens

Help with monitoring, reporting problems and supporting visitors along the South Downs Way National Trail, running from Eastbourne to Winchester.

Seven Sisters Visitor Centre Volunteers

Volunteers work in the visitor centre at Seven Sisters Country Park, running the centre, its shop and providing guidance and support to visitors.

"I live and work in town so it's nice to get out into the countryside at weekends"

Gary, 36, Portsmouth

"Restoring dew ponds, coppicing in ancient woodlands, surveying beaches. Worthwhile work, fantastic sites, so much variety and so much fun"

James, 20, Eastbourne

"It's the people and their questions that make it fun"
Coralie, 54, Seaford



Open Access Wardens

Help monitor the condition of open access gates, stiles and signs. Also provide information to walkers and monitor how sites are used.

Elm Wardens

Through going out "spotting" and reporting diseased Elm trees you will support the Dutch Elm Disease programme and therefore ensure the survival of Elm tree populations in East Sussex.

Promotional activities

Get involved with the activities above and then help us with our promotional work. We meet the public and raise awareness of our work to protect, conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the South Downs AONBs and to encourage people's quiet enjoyment of the area.

Office/project work

Help support the team behind the scenes. From helping with the day to day running of things such as putting together the quarterly volunteer newsletter, to desk based projects such as surveying the ponds across both the AONBs.



"I come home healthily tired, and filled with a sense of achievement"
Isabel, 28, Brighton

"Having a laugh with your new friends"
Sue, 63, Midhurst