

# LOCAL CONSERVATION WORK

COMMUNITY & GLOBAL

**ECO**  **CHURCH**  
AN A ROCHA UK PROJECT



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### WHY?

Community-based conservation is a vital part of being an Eco Church, helping us see the impact of putting our vision and beliefs into practice. It is possible to volunteer with many different environmental charities as well as with A Rocha UK at its own reserves or with one of the Partners in Action. Why not connect with one or more of these to broaden your horizons and deepen your vision?

### HOW? – A ROCHA UK CONSERVATION PROJECTS

#### **VOLUNTEER AT ONE OF OUR A ROCHA UK RESERVES**

##### **Wolf Fields, Norwood Green, West London**

In 2013, the A Rocha UK team, in partnership with the Church Mission Society, took on the challenge of working with the local community to transform the Wolf Fields from a drug den filled with rubbish to a wildlife-rich green space. We have created a wide range of habitats, including a wildflower meadow, a pond, a community orchard, a food growing area, a sensory garden and two beehives – all on three acres of derelict land!

Every week up to 20 local residents join the A Rocha UK team to help plant, dig, mow, record species and talk to passers-by. Barriers are coming down, the area feels safer and hundreds of schoolchildren are now visiting the site each year for lessons and exploration: <https://arocha.org.uk/our-activities/practical-conservation/wolf-fields/>

To volunteer here contact: [kailean.khongsai@arocha.org](mailto:kailean.khongsai@arocha.org)



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### **Foxearth Meadows, Sudbury, Suffolk**

In February 2015, A Rocha UK became proud owners of this rural nature reserve on the Essex/ Suffolk border, due to the generosity of the previous managers of the site, Keith and Maureen Morris. It comprises 11.5 acres of wetland on the River Stour floodplain in north Essex and is a small oasis for wildlife in the midst of an intensively farmed region: <https://arocha.org.uk/our-activities/practical-conservation/foxearth-meadows/>

Join in with one of the regular events such as bat walks or an open-air service. Take a day out to visit and meet some of the gentle Dexter cattle, or spot one of the 70 species of bird present.

To volunteer here contact: [mark.prina@arocha.org](mailto:mark.prina@arocha.org)

### **GET INVOLVED WITH AN A ROCHA UK PARTNER IN ACTION**

Our rapidly growing Partners in Action network includes farms, community projects, outdoor youth centres, conference centres, intentional communities and places of retreat. All of them are working for a positive impact on their land out of a conviction that Christians have a responsibility to care for the natural world.

Find one local to you and get involved as a volunteer with practical conservation work, be inspired by their work or use their venue for your event:

<https://arocha.org.uk/our-activities/practical-conservation/partners-in-action/>

### **JOINING A CONSERVATION WORK PARTY, TAKE UP AN INTERNSHIP OR WORK FOR A ROCHA UK**

The A Rocha UK website provides up-to-date information about volunteering and employment opportunities with A Rocha UK, at our reserves or with our Partners in Action:

<https://arocha.org.uk/get-involved/employment/>

<https://arocha.org.uk/get-involved/volunteers/>





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### HOW? – OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL CHARITIES

#### JOIN A CONSERVATION GROUP

Volunteer at local conservation groups, local branches of national organisations or at reserves or sites managed by national environmental organisations. There are plenty of groups with specific interests such as birds, butterflies, bats, plants, marine life, trees; in fact in almost any field you might be interested in! Here are a few ideas:

#### NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS WITH LOCAL BRANCHES

**Wildlife Trusts:** In May 1912 – a month after the Titanic sank – Charles Rothschild held a meeting to discuss his radical idea about saving places for nature. This ultimately led to the formation of the Wildlife Trusts, which aim to save wildlife and wild places, bring people closer to nature and combat the climate and nature emergency. You can find your local group here: <https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/wildlife-trusts>

**The Conservation Volunteers (TCV):** TCV undertakes a range of activities in both urban and rural areas, from planting trees and wildflower meadows, to building stiles, clearing footpaths or creating new food-growing projects. Perhaps some church members might like to volunteer individually or together? <https://www.tcv.org.uk/communities/find-community-group/>

TCV also runs 'Green Gym' sessions which have an emphasis on health and fitness as people participate in conservation projects which sound like a fun way of making friends and keeping fit! <https://www.tcv.org.uk/greengym/>

**The Woodland Trust** cares for over 1,000 woodlands in the UK. They plant trees to combat climate change, and bring damaged ancient woodlands back to life: <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/support-us/act/volunteer-with-us/opportunities/>



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The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RPSB) aim to base their work on good analysis of the threats facing birds and the environment. They work out what is causing the problem and find ways to put it right. There are 140 local groups as well as projects and reserves seeking volunteers:

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/community-and-advice/local-groups/>

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/volunteering-fundraising/volunteer/>

### NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS WITH ENVIRONMENTAL SITES AND RESERVES

**The National Trust** and the **National Trust for Scotland** look after vast areas of coastline, countryside and green spaces in England and Wales for everyone's benefit. Both are concerned about climate change and preserving the natural landscape for future generations:

- **The National Trust:** <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/find-an-opportunity>
- **The National Trust for Scotland:** <https://www.nts.org.uk/volunteering-jobs>

**National Parks:** As of 2021, there are 15 national parks across England, Scotland and Wales. You can visit for a day out or volunteer in practical tasks, like wall-building or hedge-laying, participating in wildlife surveys and conservation tasks, or maintenance of rights of way and footpaths:

- <https://www.nationalparks.uk/>
- <https://secure.nationalparks.uk/about-us/jobs-and-volunteering/volunteering>

**The Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT):** Founded by Sir Peter Scott, an early conservation pioneer, the WWT works with communities around the world which depend on wetlands. Currently (in 2021) they have ten reserves across the United Kingdom, where volunteers can undertake practical conservation work or other valuable tasks: <https://www.wwt.org.uk/join-and-support/volunteering/volunteering-opportunities/>





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### LONGER READS & OTHER RESOURCES

'NatureScot' provides a helpful list of organisations offering opportunities for volunteering outdoors in Scotland: <https://www.nature.scot/doc/environmental-volunteering-useful-organisations-and-contacts-list>

'Nature Volunteers' draws together some smaller projects where you can volunteer: <https://www.naturevolunteers.uk/about-us/>

### BOOKS

These two books tell of the origins of A Rocha International (ARI) and of A Rocha UK (ARUK) respectively:

1. Peter Harris describes how the gospel inspired the pioneering work of A Rocha in the Algarve. '*Under the Bright Wings*', Peter Harris, Regent College Publishing, 1993 (reprinted 2000)
2. When God challenged him over his attitude to the environment, Dave Bookless did a total rethink leading to major changes to his family's lifestyle and his own career. This led to the founding of A Rocha UK. '*God doesn't do waste*', Dave Bookless, Inter-Varsity Press, 2010