



The Old Ragged School, Brook Street, Nottingham, NG1 1EA

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Media Release

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Wildlife Trust issues urgent call for volunteers to help reopen facilities at its largest nature reserve after challenging year.

Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust has today issued an urgent call for volunteers to help get its visitor reception, café and shop reopened at the Idle Valley Nature Reserve after a difficult year.

Whilst the 450-hectare nature reserve, just outside Retford, has remained open, even during the main Lockdown period, its car park of North Road was closed for many months and its visitor facilities remain closed. Over the past few weeks the charity, which manages nature reserves across the county, has reopened its visitor car park and the owners of the building that houses the facilities have now given the Trust, a registered charity, the greenlight to reopen facilities to the public.

The Trust is now trying to put everything in place to reopen ahead of the busy Christmas period - but desperately needs more volunteers to join the team. Without sufficient help it may not be able to reopen on a regular basis and this would be a further blow to the charity which has already made the difficult decision to cut a number of roles in its catering and retail team due to loss of income from its two visitor facilities during the pandemic.

Speaking about the volunteer recruitment drive the Trust's People & Nature Officer Holly Hucknall said: "The Idle Valley is a special place and one of the things that makes it so special is the welcome that our local volunteers provide to visitors. We know that people have continued to enjoy the reserve during a challenging year, visiting for exercise and to connect with nature but we're now ready to get our reception, café and shop back open and we hope some of those that use the reserve regularly will consider getting involved as volunteers."

Situated along the western bank of the River Idle, the spectacular nature reserve covers a beautiful network of lakes, wetland, grassland and woodland. It is one of the largest nature conservation sites in the region and recognised as one of the richest bird-watching sites in the region, especially in the autumn and winter – adding to the Wildlife Trust's determination to reopen the facilities as soon as it can.

Nottinghamshire

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Re-opening the facilities safely and ensuring the charity can meet all the necessary guidance linked to covid-19 restrictions means more people are needed to operate the facilities. Speaking about the importance of volunteers Holly added: 'We need to recruit more receptionists and visitor supporter volunteers to join our dedicated volunteers and staff to get the centre and café at Idle Valley Nature Reserve reopened as soon as possible. We would be delighted to hear from anyone who feels that they could offer visitors a friendly welcome, so if you feel these roles could be for you, please do get in touch with us – we'd love to welcome you into the team!'

Details of all the charities current volunteer roles can be found at nottinghamshirewildlife.org/volunteer

ENDS

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Notes to Editors

Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust

The Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust, a registered charity, manages Nature Reserves throughout the county of Nottinghamshire. It advises local authorities, community groups and landowners on nature conservation issues, and makes a major input into decision-making on planning matters and other issues. For more information please see our website: nottinghamshirewildlife.org.

The Trust is part of a nation-wide network of local Trusts which work to protect wildlife in town and country - The Wildlife Trusts.

The Wildlife Trusts

The Wildlife Trusts believe that people need nature and it needs us. We are here to make the world wilder and to make nature part of everyone's lives. We are a grassroots movement of 46 charities with more than 850,000 members and 38,000 volunteers. No matter where you are in the UK, there is a Wildlife Trust inspiring people and saving, protecting and standing up for the natural world. With the support of our members, we care for and restore special places for nature on land and run marine conservation projects and collect vital data on the state of our seas. Every Wildlife Trust works within its local community to inspire people to create a wilder future – from advising thousands of landowners on how to manage their land to

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benefit wildlife, to connecting hundreds of thousands of school children with nature every year. wildlifetrusts.org