

Woodland Skills Programme FAQ's

Woodland Skills is Avon Needs Trees' new training programme, designed to increase employment opportunities for adults who want to work in the green sector.

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What is the Woodland Skills programme?

The Woodland Skills training programme is a combination of practical on-site learning experiences and talks from industry professionals on a range of topics relating to woodland creation, tree care and land management.

It is designed to help adults who want to work with trees and woodlands to gain skills and experience that might lead to employment, training or volunteering.

Participants will be encouraged to create their own self-directed career plan. They will receive help with CV writing, interview skills and resources to support next steps into employment, volunteering or further training after completion.

Throughout the 6-month programme, there will be opportunities to meet people working in a range of jobs across the sector and/or to shadow our staff and volunteers in a range of activities relating to Woodland Creation, heritage and outreach.

Who's it for?

Participants suited to this programme will be:

- Over the age of 18
- Not yet in a paid job within the green sector
- Looking to work in the green sector now or in the future
- Able to dedicate approximately 4 days a month to the programme (flexible)

We are particularly keen to hear from those who identify when any of the following:

- Long-term unemployed people of all ages
- People having taken a career break and now looking to retrain
- 18-25 year olds out of work and/or looking for a career
- People who have volunteered with Avon Needs Trees and are looking for more
- Those who have faced barriers to accessing environmental jobs - which might be due to race, sexual orientation, child-care situations, income or disability.

Is it accessible?

We want people to be able to participate in and around their varied other life commitments and constraints, and so

- Daytime workshops will be organised to take child-care responsibilities into consideration wherever possible
- Some learning can take place online in the evenings drawing from ANT's online events programme and archive of previous talks and presentations.
- Transport (or transport expenses) can be covered with prior agreement

Some tours and training tasks can be adapted to suit access needs, although when visiting rural settings there may be constraints due to uneven ground and limited paths. If you have specific access needs please contact us to discuss how we can support you.

English Language and Right to Work

The course will be delivered in English and participants will be expected to write their own CV's and cover letters, whilst applying for jobs, apprenticeships or training courses. The Resources folder is an additional support that contains written materials. Most of the workshops will be active and involve talking, walking and practical tasks. The online sessions will mainly be talking, with occasional writing.

The course will be accessible to people with a Level 2 standard of English comprehension in speaking / writing / reading

Applicants do not need to have a Right to Work to be accepted onto the course, but it must be in process, or awaiting decision. Applicant selections will be made based on the ability to meet the course objectives which includes helping people into work, training, volunteering and apprenticeships. Unfortunately Avon Needs Trees cannot support people to submit a Right to Work application, it is expected this will have been done before accepting a place on the course.

How much does it cost?

The 6-month programme is free to attend, thanks to funding from West of England Combined Authority (WECA) and the generous support of all the industry experts offering their time to lead workshops.

What does it involve?

Course Content

Workshops and Site visits will happen approximately twice a month and will involve a mixture of tours and presentations alongside practical tasks and skills.

Online content

There will be short online sessions to help with employability and to meet some of the industry partners for short intros. These will happen at lunchtimes, often on a Wednesday and will be around 1 hour long, sometimes 1.5 hours.

The programme also draws from the ANT archive of talks and presentations, where participants can choose to learn about pollinators, butterflies, water voles & beavers, mushrooms, foraging, ancient woodlands and the positive impact trees can have on the climate crisis. These talks are pre-recorded and can be viewed whenever convenient.

Shadowing opportunities

For those with specific career goals in woodland creation we may be able to provide the chance to shadow some of our staff for a day to assist in day-to-day job related tasks. This could include site inspections and maintenance surveys, heritage work, outreach at local events and leading volunteer days. Specific opportunities will be worked out with individuals once the programme is underway.

Course Learning Objectives

- To increase knowledge and practical experience relating to Woodland creation, Tree care and Land management.

- To broaden understanding of environmental jobs working with trees and landscapes and learn more about career pathways in this area.
- To meet employees who are currently doing jobs relating to trees and meet possible future employers
- To brush up on CV writing and interview skills
- To create a self-directed plan of action, which might include further training you'd like to do, volunteering opportunities, and jobs you're going to apply for.

How will success be measured?

- Each person will set a goal for the programme and self-evaluate achievements
- Attendance at the workshops will be recorded
- Short written or verbal feedback will be requested after each workshop session
- A programme evaluation form will be completed at the end of the programme or upon early-exit (especially if a job has been taken!).
- On completion, we will ask you if you'd like to keep in touch with us and let us know when you get your dream job!
- A celebration will take place at the end of the programme.

What is expected of me?

Participants will be required to:

- Attend [workshops](#) in various locations in and around Bristol & B&NES (roughly twice a month and usually on a weekday)
- Attend online sessions (roughly twice a month - there will be a mix of daytime and evenings, or you can watch recordings in your own time)
- Direct your own learning and development by selecting opportunities that match your career inspirations
- Try new activities and tasks
- Check in with Green Skills Coordinator every other month. (20 mins phone call)
- Provide feedback on the workshops and complete an evaluation at the end.

What will I get out of it?

Like most things, the more you put in, the more you'll get out. This programme is a combination of organised workshops and time at home developing your own job interests and preparing for applying to jobs.

By attending the workshops, you will finish the programme with a greater understanding of employment options available in the Green sector. You will come away with new

knowledge and skills that can be applied to various job roles, and you will receive resources to help you take your next steps into employment.

When will it happen?

Avon Needs Trees' second Woodland Skills programme will run from November 2024-May 2025 Throughout the course, we will visit a range local sites across Bristol, Bath & North Somerset and South Gloucestershire.

The workshops will mainly take place on Thursdays between 10am-2pm with some at other times. Please look at [the schedule](#) and check you'll be able to attend. Online talks will mainly happen on Wednesday lunchtimes with a few at other times.

How will the applicant selection process work?

The first pilot programme had 54 applications for 15 places. We expect the second programme to be even more popular! All names and contact details are removed before the selection process takes place, and a rigorous system is in place to ensure our selection process is fair. Priority will be given to those who identify with the key priority groups, who can commit to attending the workshop dates in the published schedule and who intend to work in the green sector in the next 2 years.

Who to contact

If you have questions about the programme or accessibility requirements, please contact: Debs Hoy, Green Skills Coordinator by email: debs.hoy@avonneedstrees.org.uk or by phone: 07709 086 434