

# Hosting

Since opening in 2001, The Alnwick Garden has welcomed over 4.5 million visitors from around the world. Some are visiting for the first time and others, in particular those residing in the North East, visit The Garden on a regular basis. As a Host you will be in the public face of The Alnwick Garden helping to enhance their visiting experience.

## The role of a Host

- A warm 'meet and greet' welcome is essential as visitors arrive in the Garden and provide them with information to maximise the enjoyment of their visit.
- You may also be their point of contact should assistance be required.
- When on duty you should contact a member of The Garden Staff or Duty Manager regarding any Health and Safety issues, accidents, non-operation of facilities or any another matters.

## Points of contact

- Gill Parker is the Hosts coordinator in The Alnwick Garden.

## Your commitment to The Alnwick Garden

- Hosts, in line with all volunteers, are expected to commit to 48 hours per annum (an average of 4 hours per month). Hosts generally commit to 2/3 hours per session, either in the morning or afternoon. Some attend on a particular day of the week, this is not essential as you can work on an ad hoc basis if you wish.

## General

- On arrival at The Alnwick Garden you must sign in at the time you start your volunteering session, likewise you must sign out at the end of each working session.
- An Alnwick Garden lanyard with an identity badge will be provided, this must be worn at all times when on duty.

## Training

- Once your application has been accepted you will join us on a three month probationary period, during this time you will be provided with training working alongside one of our regular volunteers.

## Benefits

- After your three months probationary period, you will be offered a range of benefits, details of which will be provided at a later date.

## Testimonial

*Hello, my name is Margaret - I came to volunteering when I finished work. I'm not someone who can sit still and do nothing, I need to be busy, undertaking activities that I enjoy and through which I feel are useful. I choose to volunteer at the Alnwick Garden because it is somewhere I had an interest in since its inception and had long wanted to be more involved with – I think it is a great place!*

*The beauty of it is that by being a volunteer and not an employee there is not the pressure of 'having' to be there as in being at work; as long as I am Volunteering in the Garden for at least the minimum required hours – I'm there when it fits around other things in my life, and because I choose to be there at those times, and actually that works out at much more than the basic minimum because, as I said previously, it's a great place to be at all seasons of the year.*

*I began volunteering as a host, meeting and greeting visitors near the entrance but also walking around the Garden and chatting to people. Through being a volunteer I have spent more time in the Garden than I would have done as a visitor. I have also learned a lot more about the history and development of this lovely place, which has been of interest to me personally and also enables me to talk knowledgeably to visitors about many aspects of The Garden - past and present - which hopefully enhances their visit.*

*There is also the opportunity to meet fellow volunteers and so acquire a new group of friends!*

**Margaret Weaver**