



Volunteer expenses policy

Somerset Wildlife Trust will reimburse travel expenses that were incurred wholly and exclusively for the purpose of volunteering for SWT and agreed in advance with your main staff contact. We encourage local volunteering where possible, for environmental reasons as well as financial ones. Expenses will only be covered where volunteers have participated for the full duration of the task as described in their role profile, or as agreed by their staff contact.

Typically, expenses can cover:

- Travel between the volunteer's home and the location of the volunteer task
- Travel during volunteering for example travelling between survey sites
- Other expenses incurred wholly and exclusively for the purpose of volunteering for SWT and agreed in advance with your staff contact, for example of PPE necessary for volunteering (however this will usually be provided directly)

Somerset Wildlife Trust has well over 300 volunteers across the county, supporting in almost every area of work and central to our work for wildlife - regardless of role or time committed, each and every one of you is a valued member of our team. All eligible volunteers are encouraged to claim expenses but if you would prefer not to claim, it is your choice.

Rates and how to claim:

Please consider using public transport where possible or car sharing.

SWT will reimburse **up to 25 miles per day** at the rates below:

- Cars and vans: 55p per mile (this rate applies to fuel, electric and hybrid)
- Motorcycles: 24p per mile
- Bikes: 20p per mile
- Public transport: Capped at the equivalent rate, which is currently £11.25 per day.

Expenses should be submitted monthly (by the last working Friday of the month) and no later than 60 days after the expense is incurred. Please allow up to 30 days for the payment.

Wherever possible expenses should be submitted using the online form:

www.somersetwildlife.org/volunteer-expenses

If you are unable to submit expenses using the online form, please speak to your staff contact to arrange an alternative method of submission.

Exemptions and exceptions:

The vast majority of roles and tasks are directly supervised by a member of staff and will be **eligible for capped expenses only**.

There are occasional exceptions where expenses over and above 25 miles per day may be agreed in advance at the discretion of the budget holder, in order to fulfil specific tasks. These would be expected to fulfil one of the below criteria:

1. Roles in which the volunteer is the “responsible person”, no staff member is present or supervising remotely, and the task could not reasonably take place without that individual.
For example:
 - Leading a group (without staff supervision) including; reserves, Shoresearch and Wildlife Watch (leaders only).
 - Providing advisory visits e.g. land management advice
 - Delivering a talk or training session to participants or other volunteers
 - Trustees
 - Event photographers
2. When a volunteer, regardless of role, has been asked to travel for training essential to the fulfilment of their role (e.g. first aid).
3. When a volunteer, regardless of role, has been asked to travel in order to fulfil a specific service on behalf of the Trust (e.g. “contracted” to carry out a required survey on reserve).
4. When a volunteer needs to travel in the course of their volunteering, as opposed to simply for reaching their normal place of volunteering (e.g. travelling between survey sites).

Roles/tasks which are not eligible to claim expenses:

1. Public volunteering events for example:
 - Public litter picks and beach cleans
 - Corporate volunteering
 - Fundraisers
 - Citizen science
 - SeaWatch participants
 - Shoresearch participants
 - Nature Connections Buddy participants
 - General event participants
2. Species and habitat recording roles, except where the volunteer has been specifically “contracted” to carry out a survey on behalf of the Trust.
3. Roles which have specifically been created for local “eyes and ears”, as these roles are designed to be assigned to individuals who live very locally. This includes:
 - Stock lookers
 - Water Guardians
 - Volunteer Reserve Wardens

4. Independent and affiliated groups (except where specifically contracted to deliver a task on behalf of SWT and agreed in advance). This includes:
 - Team Wilder communities
 - Specialist Recording Groups
 - Independent practical groups such as Sedgemoor CV and Taunton Midweek CV.

Things to be aware of when claiming travel expense:

The HMRC mileage allowance applies to your total mileage each year. So, if you claim mileage from another organisation it is your responsibility to ensure you keep appropriate records. It is your responsibility to ensure your car is road worthy and appropriately insured. Some insurers require you to have “business” insurance, you should check this with your insurer directly.