

Welcome



Thank you for volunteering with the Scottish Seabird Centre! As part of our team, you will be contributing to the essential marine conservation and education work that the charity undertakes every day.

This handbook is designed to provide the information you will need as you begin your voluntary role. In addition, our staff and volunteers will always do their best to make you feel welcome, provide training and answer any questions you might have throughout your time with us.

Volunteer Handbook

To be read in conjunction with Health & Safety
Induction for Volunteers and Fire Safety booklets



What is the Scottish Seabird Centre?



The Scottish Seabird Centre is a conservation and education charity which aims to inspire and engage people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds to connect with the marine environment and take action to protect it.

The Centre provides a unique opportunity to view wildlife from its stunning location overlooking the Firth of Forth, using interactive cameras which allow visitors to closely observe seabirds, marine mammals and other wildlife without disturbance. Boat trips out into the Forth, which run throughout the summer season, also grant visitors an exciting and memorable experience to engage with Scotland's natural heritage.

Opened in 2000, the Scottish Seabird Centre is now the recipient of multiple national awards and is famous for providing an excellent experience to visitors. A leader in scientific communication and education, the Centre is an important voice for nature.

Education



The aim of the Scottish Seabird Centre's education programme is to inspire and engage everyone to appreciate, learn about and care for Scotland's habitats and wildlife.

Our education and engagement team currently connect with people in a variety of ways, including:

- ♦ Primary, secondary and tertiary school visits
- ♦ A weekly Wildlife Club
- ♦ A Holiday Club run during school breaks
- ♦ Community outreach with various talks and activities
- ♦ A range of events



Community



Community involvement is crucial to the Centre's success. Since opening, it has helped to enhance North Berwick as a popular tourist destination and supported local businesses by promoting other attractions in the area, sourcing products locally where possible and providing training and work placements to local people.

Conservation



The Scottish Seabird Centre's award winning SOS Puffin project has been running for over 12 years, undertaking essential invasive species control on the islands of Lamb, Fidra and Craigleith in order to restore important seabird nesting sites. Volunteer led and delivered, this project offers the opportunity for the community to take practical action for nature.

The new Wildline Project, funded by *Nature.Scot's* biodiversity challenge fund, also works to control invasive species, supporting the work of SOS Puffin and working with private landowners along the East Lothian coast.

Where will I be working?



The Scottish Seabird Centre Volunteer Group contributes to the charity in a variety of ways. Volunteers are free to choose the activities or departments which they would like to contribute their time to.

Fundraising



The Scottish Seabird Centre is a charity and relies on the generosity of its supporters to operate. The Scottish Seabird Centre Volunteer Group (which operates as a separate charity to the Scottish Seabird Centre itself) does an invaluable job raising essential funds to support the education and conservation work carried out by the Centre. You can contribute to this by fundraising as an individual or joining the team at events and functions.

Education



The education team are always on the lookout for enthusiastic volunteers to help with the delivery of our school visits, wildlife club and holiday club. If you'd prefer not to support delivery, creating lesson plans and educational resources is also a great way to contribute to the team.



The Discovery Experience



Our recently transformed Discovery Experience is packed with new exhibits, games and upgraded interactive cameras. Staff and volunteers work together to inspire visitors and bring the wonders of Scotland's marine habitats and wildlife to life. If you choose to volunteer in the Discovery Experience you will receive training and support to operate the games and exhibits. A few of the main features of the experience are:

- Virtual Reality —walk among the gannets on the Bass Rock or dive into the underwater world.
- Interactive live cameras—visitors operate live cameras bringing them closer to the wildlife out on the amazing Firth of Forth islands.
- Interactive games and challenges—visitors have the opportunity to explore species, habitats and threats by taking part in a range of fun activities.
- Educational displays—displays containing lots of information, images, video footage and objects allow visitors to learn more about local wildlife and how we study and protect it.

Positive public engagement



Top tips for excellent visitor experience

- ♦ Greet visitors with a warm and genuine smile. Welcome them to the centre and give them more information about what we offer.
- ♦ Tailor your information and delivery to the visitors' needs. Ask them questions to establish what they are interested in and learn more about who they are and why they are here.
- ♦ Invite visitors to ask you questions.
- ♦ Look out for areas which do not match our 5-star rating and make changes to the Centre where necessary. The Discovery Experience should always be clean and tidy.
- ♦ Keep increasing your knowledge and experience. The more you learn, the more knowledge and enthusiasm you can impart to visitors.



© Greg Macvean



© Michal Wolowik

What will we provide?



- ♦ A friendly welcome to the team.
- ♦ A secure place to store your belongings.
- ♦ A branded purple t-shirt and name badge.
- ♦ A discount card and access to the employee advantages scheme.
- ♦ The appropriate safety information and insurance cover.
- ♦ The opportunity to enhance your knowledge, skills and experience.
- ♦ Inclusion in social events and access to regular volunteer meetings.
- ♦ Ongoing support from Scottish Seabird Centre Staff and the volunteer group.

What do we expect from you?



- ♦ Commitment and reliability. If you are going to be late or can no longer attend an agreed shift, please call the Centre (01620 890202, option 4) and inform the appropriate department.
- ♦ A clean, neat appearance. The uniform consists of black shoes, black trousers or skirt and a Scottish Seabird Centre polo shirt or sweatshirt. Your name badge should be clearly displayed at all times.
- ♦ A helpful, friendly and polite attitude when communicating with members of the public and the Scottish Seabird Centre team.
- ♦ To seek guidance from Scottish Seabird Centre Staff if you need support.
- ♦ To be an ambassador for the charity and support the Scottish Seabird Centre's vision and values.



Complaints procedure



Dealing with a complaint is an opportunity to create a loyal supporter. If a member of the public wishes to complain, we:

- ♦ Listen to the full complaint without interrupting
- ♦ Apologise for the dissatisfaction
- ♦ Thank them for bringing the issue to our attention
- Find the Duty Manager or a member of staff

Injured bird procedure



Occasionally, members of the public bring sick and injured birds into the Centre. In the event that you are approached by a visitor with an injured bird, contact a member of staff immediately who will call the SSPCA on 03000 999 999. Under no circumstances should you attempt any kind of treatment yourself.

Thank you



The work undertaken by the Scottish Seabird Centre would not be possible without the dedication, hard work and commitment of volunteers.

We are living through a time of climate and biodiversity emergency. The latest [State of Nature Report](#) revealed that 41% of UK species studied have declined since 1970.

By volunteering your time and energy with us, you are part of a movement acting to protect Scottish wildlife, connect people with nature and safeguard habitats for future generations.

