

Open Gardens



Cornwall
Wildlife Trust

Volunteer Coordinator

Role description

For more information go to: cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/opengardens

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 214929

Introduction

Much of what makes Cornwall special is its beautiful wild places: our moors and heathlands, vibrant with the pinks and purples of heather in autumn; our coastline, with its rugged cliffs and sandy beaches; and our rivers and estuaries, often surrounded by woodlands and wildflowers. And these wild places are home to an array of magnificent wildlife – such as the iconic Cornish chough and one of Britain’s only resident pod of bottlenose dolphins, for whom our seas are home.

Cornwall Wildlife Trust is committed to creating a Cornwall where nature thrives. But we can only do this with our supporters, including those who generously volunteer their time and expertise to fundraise.

We now have an opportunity for new Volunteer Coordinators to join our highly successful Open Gardens programme, which, over the last 12 years, has raised more than £175,000.

You’ll be a key part of the Open Gardens volunteer team, helping deliver a series of successful events - baking cakes, coordinating parking, taking entry fees, serving refreshments, selling plants and so much more (all with a spirit of commitment and camaraderie).

This pack includes further information about the Volunteer Coordinator role, which supports the programme year-round. If you’re looking to give back to Cornwall through a rewarding challenge, and think you have the right skills, we’d love to hear from you. Thank you for your interest.



A handwritten signature in brown ink that reads "James".

James Webb,
Director of Fundraising and Communications



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Creating a Cornwall
where nature thrives



About Cornwall Wildlife Trust

Vision

Our vision is of a Cornwall where nature thrives, with our wildlife and wild places valued and enjoyed by all.

A Cornwall where currently rare and threatened habitats and species are once again a common part of our countryside, seas and skies. Where healthy oceans, soils, rivers, wetlands, woodlands, moors, grasslands, sand dunes, and other ecosystems are valued for the vital roles they play. Where every child in Cornwall grows up with access to beaches and green spaces. And where we're all connecting with, benefiting from, and taking action for nature.

Our work

To achieve this, we:

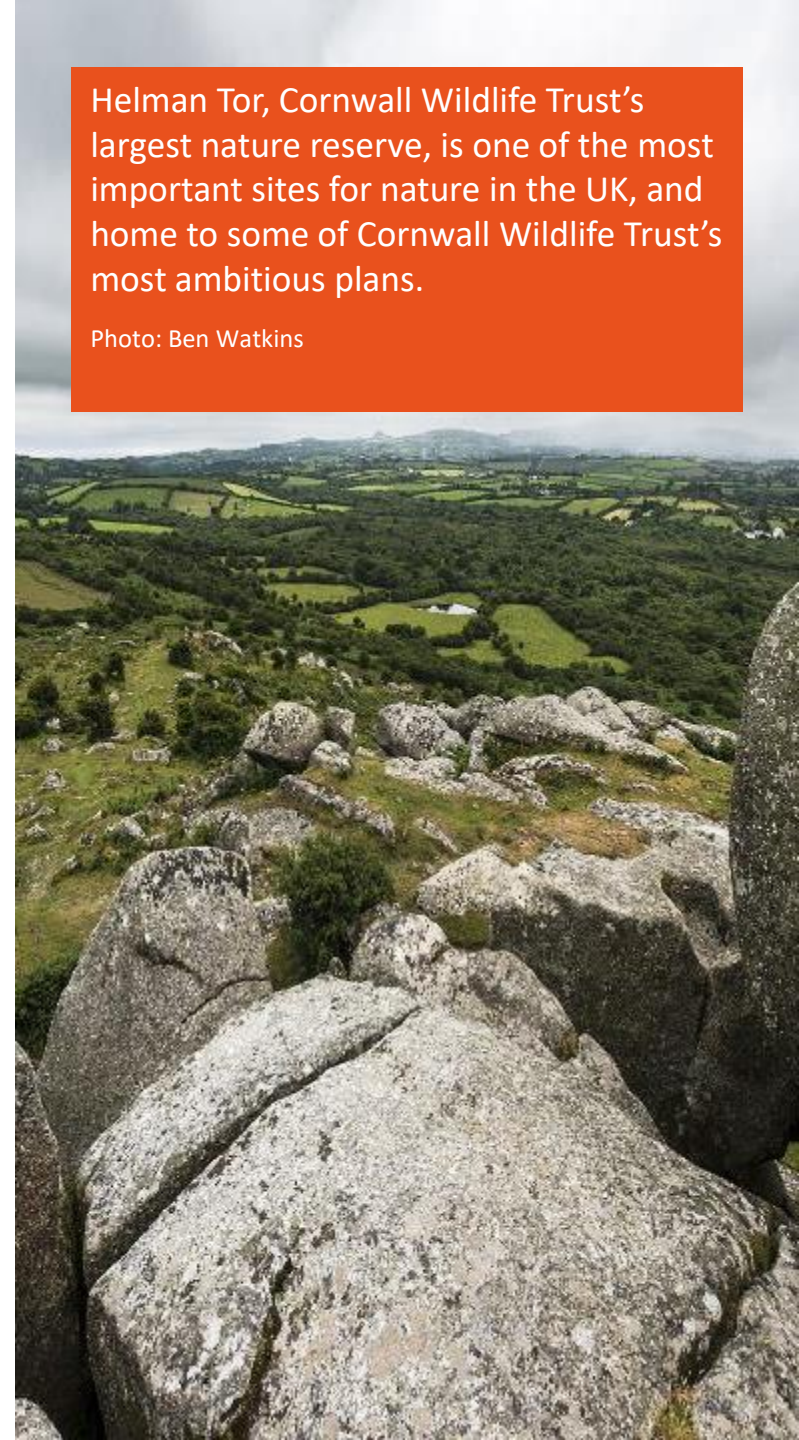
- Manage more than 5,700 acres of land across 59 nature reserves, creating and restoring habitats for wildlife.
- Work with farmers and fishermen to increase sustainable practices on land and at sea.
- Support individuals and groups to take action and speak out for nature in their towns, villages and communities.
- Collate valuable evidence on the state of nature in Cornwall, using this evidence and our practical experience to influence others to make better decisions for wildlife.



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Helman Tor, Cornwall Wildlife Trust's largest nature reserve, is one of the most important sites for nature in the UK, and home to some of Cornwall Wildlife Trust's most ambitious plans.

Photo: Ben Watkins



About Open Gardens

Our annual Open Gardens programme sees approximately ten private gardens open their gates to visitors over spring and summer to raise much-needed funds for nature in Cornwall.

Visitors experience some of Cornwall's most wildlife-friendly gardens in a laid-back atmosphere, with the opportunity to enjoy a selection of homemade cakes and purchase locally-grown plants to take back to their own gardens.

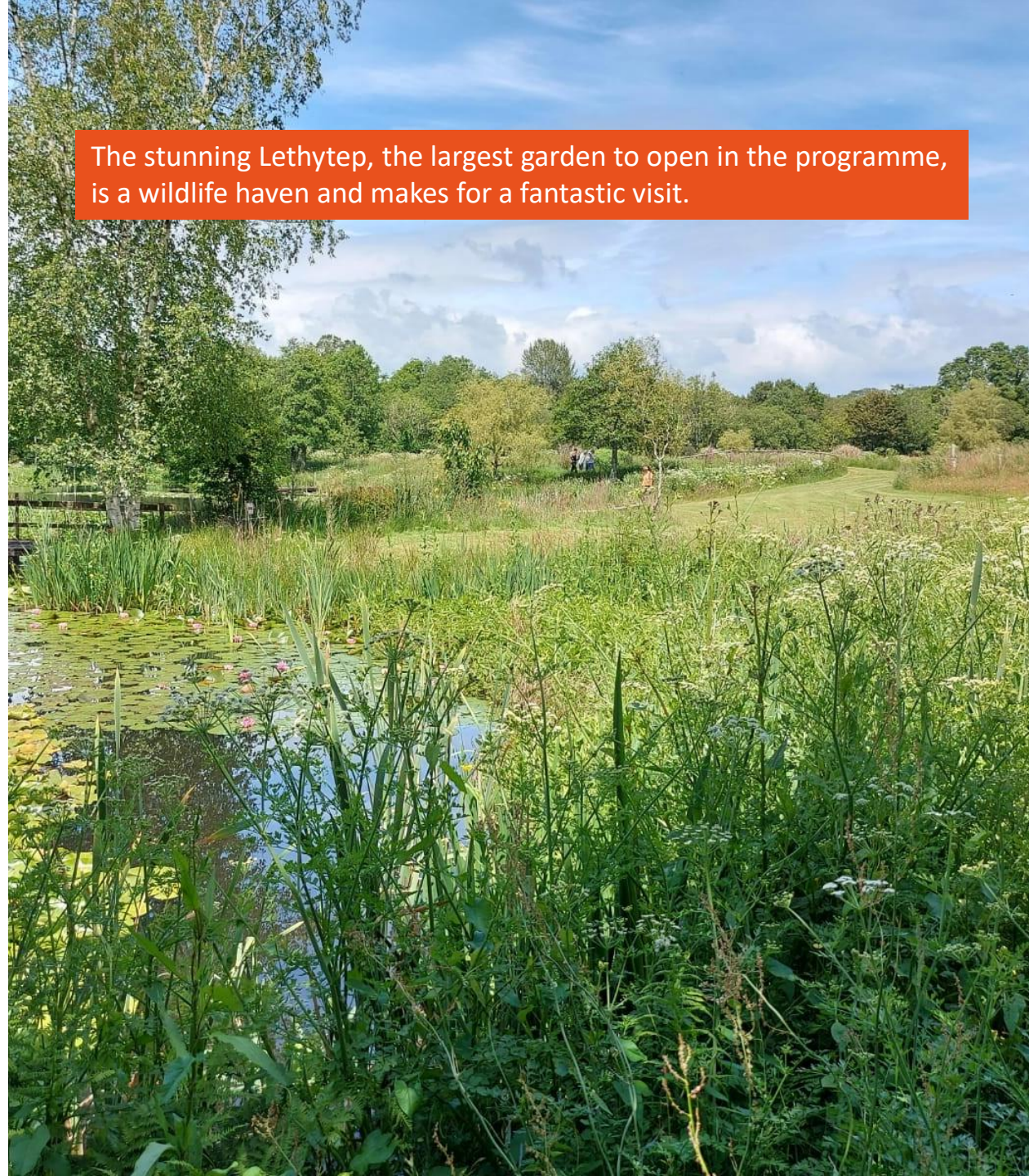
The programme is volunteer-led, with support from Cornwall Wildlife Trust staff. Volunteer Coordinators support the programme year-round, playing a key role by:

- Coordinating the planning, delivery and review of Open Gardens, working closely with other Volunteer Coordinators and staff support.
- Leading a particular area of the programme (for example, organising catering, identifying new gardens, or liaising with the wider volunteer group).
- Leading the delivery of approximately three Open Garden days (working closely with the garden owners and volunteer team to deliver successful events), while supporting at others.



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The stunning Lethytep, the largest garden to open in the programme, is a wildlife haven and makes for a fantastic visit.



Responsibilities

Regarding the Cornwall-wide scheme, work closely with other Volunteer Coordinators and Cornwall Wildlife Trust staff to:

- Research and identify gardens suitable to include in the Open Gardens programme.
- Actively follow up leads, assess suitability and report back.
- Confirm or decline garden inclusion in the programme in agreement with other coordinators.
- Attend meetings with other Volunteer Coordinators and Cornwall Wildlife Trust staff as required.
- Plan and agree the yearly programme of Open Gardens and review the previous year.
- One Coordinator takes responsibility for a specific area, such as catering and other consumables or volunteer coordination.

Take a lead role to coordinate a specific number of Open Garden days:

- Visit and risk assess agreed gardens and plan the delivery of the day, including communication with volunteers.
- Liaise with Cornwall Wildlife Trust staff on the marketing of events, helping promote them in communities.
- Engage and support garden owners in the planning and delivery of Open Garden days.
- Motivate, support and lead the volunteer team in the delivery of Open Garden days.
- Plan and coordinate the delivery of the day, including ensuring all equipment, signage and refreshments are collected, taken on site, set-up, cleared-up, and returned to the office.

For more information go to: cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/opengardens

Volunteer Coordinator - Jo's story

Jo was an Open Gardens Volunteer Coordinator for 11 years and continues to volunteer at the events.

"I applied for the role as I was edging towards retirement from a challenging and stressful career. In truth, I applied to help with the change of lifestyle and transition to retirement by finding something purposeful and interesting to do. It was a perfect solution.

"The coordinator role was a wonderful way of learning more about gardening, plants, and wildlife, while also providing my partner and I with the most fabulous opportunity to explore gardens across Cornwall that we wouldn't normally have access to. One of the best experiences has been getting to know and build relationships with garden owners and forming strong friendships with other volunteers. We have so much fun; my baking skills have improved considerably!

"All the Open Gardens are unique in their own way, offering a different experience. Some of my personal favourites are regulars like Pedn Billy, Trenarth, and Lethytep. While the team will always remember some of the busiest events, we seem to cope with whatever the day brings and therein lies the fun and sense of satisfaction of raising funds for a worthwhile cause. The volunteer team and staff at Cornwall Wildlife Trust are incredibly knowledgeable and happy to share their time and skills. They are a wonderful and unique organisation to volunteer for - they are ALWAYS there if you need them and respond quickly to any issue but also let you get on with the role.

"The role does require time, attention to detail, IT savviness, organisational skills, and the ability to multi-task. There are times when you need to think on your feet if the situation changes, as well as needing to listen to others and make decisions. It can get very busy and when it does, it helps to remain calm, keep smiling, delegate, and remember the team are always with you to help."

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Person specification

Essential

- Enthusiastic, positive, and professional manner.
- Ability to work effectively as part of a team and, when required, motivate and lead other volunteers.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills, with the ability to engage and forge strong working relationships with garden owners and volunteers.
- Solutions-focused.
- Highly organised with keen attention to detail.
- Working knowledge of Microsoft Office programmes.
- Ability to work independently.
- An interest in wildlife, gardening, and the environment.
- Access to a vehicle, a clean driving license, and the ability to transport equipment on Open Garden days.
- Reasonable levels of fitness (as the role requires lifting and long days on your feet).

Desirable

- Previous experience in a similar role for a charity would be an advantage.

Time commitment

- Please note, this role requires, on average, an estimated one day per week throughout the year.
- There are periods where the role requires more time within a week. For example, ahead of Open Gardens and in key planning periods.



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Volunteering with us

Cornwall Wildlife Trust aims to deliver a rewarding volunteer experience, where you're valued and connected to the work you make possible.

Volunteer with us and:

- Meet new people with a shared love for Cornwall and a desire to protect its natural beauty.
- Be part of an incredible team, with commitment, energy, and humour.
- Apply existing and / or learn new skills, including event planning.
- Be trusted to make decisions autonomously, with support from friendly Cornwall Wildlife Trust staff (with a specific point of contact).
- Make a real difference to Cornwall's wildlife!

Volunteers are provided with branded clothing to represent the charity and receive fuel costs (30p per mile). We also host an annual organisation-wide volunteer thank you party, where supporters meet one another and find out more about the work they support.



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The Open Gardens Team at the programme's 10-year anniversary celebrations in 2021.



To apply

This is a fantastic volunteer opportunity for someone who loves Cornwall, wants to use their time and skills to make a difference to our wildlife and wild places, and is looking for a rewarding challenge.

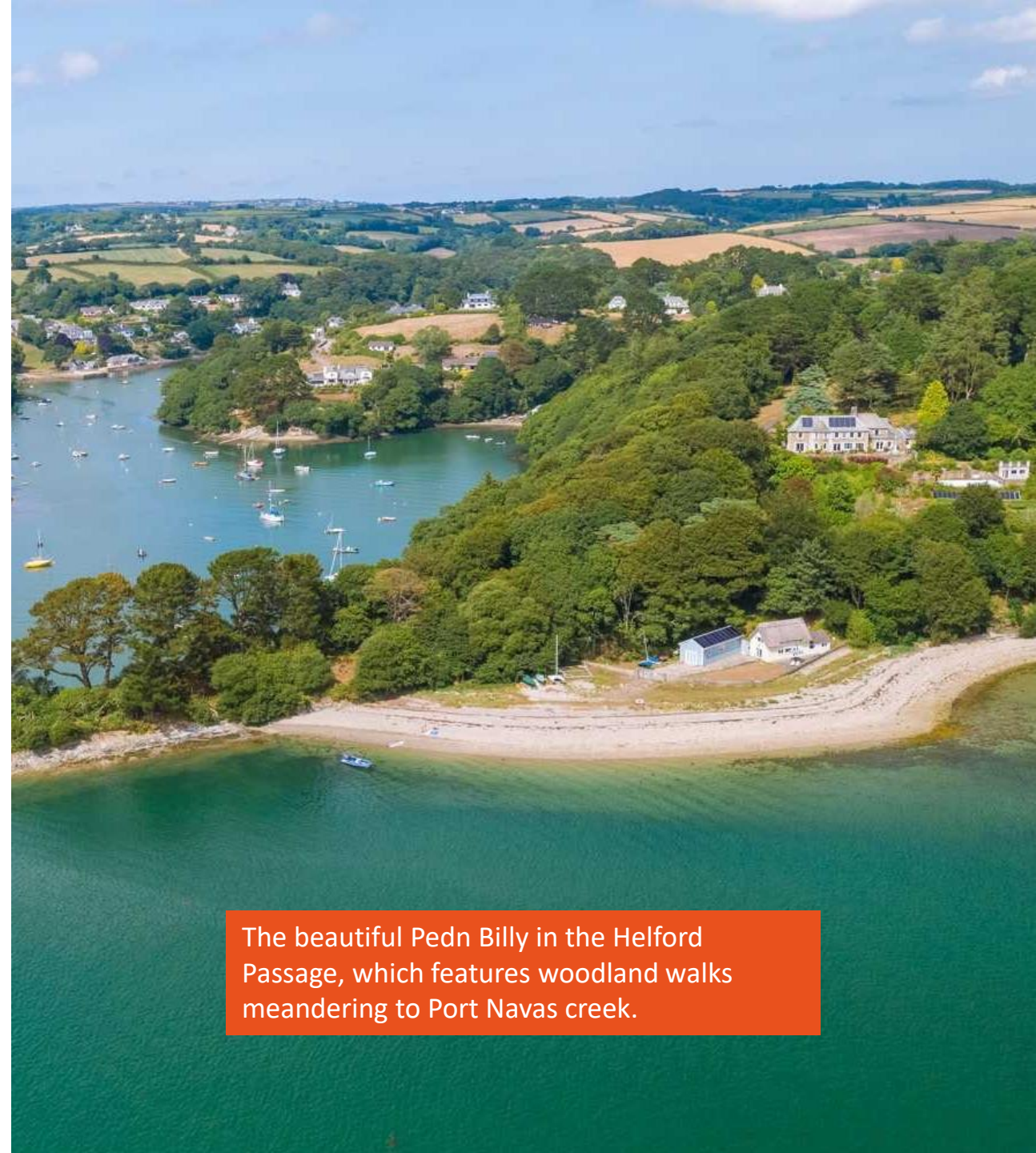
To apply, please email Sam Lucock at sam.lucock@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk, outlining your interest in volunteering with Cornwall Wildlife Trust and why you're suitable for the role.

If you'd first like to find out more or have any questions, please get in touch. We'd love to hear from you! Email Sam on the email address above or call 07825 070612.

Please note, this is an open recruitment process without a closing date. However, we aim to recruit new Volunteer Coordinators by the end of June, so they can attend a 2024 event to get a better sense of the programme and meet the team.



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The beautiful Pedn Billy in the Helford Passage, which features woodland walks meandering to Port Navas creek.

Thank you for
your interest!



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