

Blackwell Volunteer Steward Role Information



Introducing Lakeland Arts

Lakeland Arts is one of the most remarkable arts and heritage organisations in the North and has an exceptional portfolio of attractions in an area of outstanding natural beauty. 2018 was the first full year of inscription of The Lake District as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Blackwell The Arts & Crafts House is a stunning Grade I listed house overlooking Windermere. It is architect MH Baillie Scott's greatest house, retaining almost all its original decorative features, and it provides a perfect setting for historical and contemporary craft.

Abbot Hall Art Gallery is a Grade I Listed Building in Kendal. The eighteenth century riverside mansion is a wonderful setting for our ambitious programme of temporary exhibitions and displays showing work of artists of national and international significance. Artists featured in major exhibitions over the past few years include Rembrandt, Canaletto, Barbara Hepworth, Graham Sutherland,

Richard Long, Ben Nicholson, JMW Turner, George Shaw and Sean Scully.

The Museum of Lakeland Life and Industry boasts a collection of 25,000 objects telling the story of people who lived and worked in the Lake District. The Museum brings the collection to life through exhibitions, period rooms and a Victorian street scene. Displays include objects relating to Arthur Ransome, author of *Swallows and Amazons* and Cumbria's farming heritage.

Windermere Jetty Museum of Boats, Steam and Stories will be a world-class museum displaying the nationally significant collection of boats that are all associated with Windermere. It will offer a range of activities for visitors including displays telling the history and stories of the boats and the people who built and used them, a publicly viewable conservation workshop, a boathouse with boats on the water and high-quality visitor facilities.



Volunteer Steward - Role Description

Overview

Our Volunteer Stewards help welcome our visitors to Blackwell and help them understand more about the house and its history.

What's involved?

- Our volunteer stewards assist our visitors and provide more information about the house.
- The main hall is often the focus of a visit; however there is opportunity to wander throughout the building talking to visitors.
- We're keen that visitors complete a survey during their visit – our stewards can help our visitors complete this using our iPads.
- Some of our stewards also help by giving a 20 minute introductory talk in the main hall.

Will I be trained?

- When you first join the volunteering team, you'll receive training from a member of the team, including security arrangements and fire evacuation.
- Our Curators will offer specific training about the house and its history.

What can I expect?

- We plan our rota between 1 and 2 months in advance.
- We ask that you treat your slots on the volunteer rota as a firm commitment. We appreciate that there may be times when you're unable to attend at the last minute – please let us know as soon as possible so that we can arrange alternative cover. You can sign up online or
- Some volunteers are able to cover occasional days, whilst others are able to make a regular commitment (e.g. 1 slot per week). We hope that volunteers can give some time every month; however we try to take a flexible approach that suits each individual's needs.

What skills are needed?

- Most of all we're looking for genuine enthusiasts who love sharing their passion for Blackwell with our visitors.
- A friendly and welcoming approach to ensure our visitors get the most from their visit.
- A general interest in history, and the Arts & Crafts movement can help; however we'll provide plenty of information and training about the house.
- Volunteers delivering our talks need strong verbal communication skills and a clear voice.
- As the 'face' of Blackwell you'll need to look presentable and be friendly and approachable.
- You'll need to be sufficiently mobile to move around the building and be able to assist with the evacuation of the building in the event of a fire.

What are the benefits?

- Our Stewards have a lot of direct contact with our visitors. There's a lot of satisfaction from helping our visitors explore the house.
- Volunteering is a great way of meeting fellow volunteers and visitors.
- Our 'active volunteers card' entitles you and your immediate family free admission to Blackwell, Abbot Hall, and Windermere Jetty.
- Your 'active volunteer card' also entitles you to a 50% discount in our cafes, and a 10% discount in our shops throughout the year.