

# Volunteer Heritage Guide



## Help us protect, conserve & enhance the heritage of the Lagan Valley

### Role description:

The role of a Heritage Guide is to welcome visitors as the public face of Lagan Valley Regional Park (LVRP). To tell visitors the story of the Lock Keeper's cottage and/or the barge and provide information on the history of the cottage, the barge, the Lagan Navigation and the Lagan Valley Regional Park.

### Purpose:

The Lock Keeper's cottage was restored in 2008. Volunteers have played a key role in keeping the cottage open and providing information to the general public on the history of this site thus keeping its memory alive. The barge was restored and returned to the Lagan in 2014. Volunteers will, like in the cottage, keep the barge open and provide information to the general public on the history of the barge and Lagan Navigation.

### Specific tasks & duties:

- Welcoming visitors
- Telling the story of the cottage and Lock 3 and/or the barge
- Caring of artefacts on display in the cottage
- Providing the public with information about LVRP
- Light gardening
- Lighting the fire and helping to keep the cottage and/or barge clean
- Opening and closing up
- Helping staff with future management of the cottage and/or barge

### When:

The cottage and barge are open daily, a timetable is created each month and volunteers may express their availability and thus be included in the rota.

### Location:

The Lock Keeper's cottage, barge and Lagan Valley Regional Park office is based at the Lock Keeper's Visitors Centre just off the Milltown Road in Belfast.

### Why volunteer:

- Feel more connected to your local heritage
- Gain valuable experience
- Meet new people
- Learn new skills
- Be a part of living history

### **Who will you volunteer with:**

Heritage Guides will work closely with our Volunteer Coordinator who is responsible for the upkeep and interpretation of the Lock Keeper's Cottage and barge. New volunteers will shadow other, long-time serving volunteers until they feel ready to take a volunteer session on their own. At busy times and weekends volunteers will be timetabled to work in pairs.

### **Support, supervision & training:**

Full training will be provided for all volunteers in the form of an induction, shadowing and continuous support from our Volunteer Coordinator. Heritage Guides are encouraged to be involved with the management of the cottage and/or the barge and the development of their roles. Volunteer feedback and input is always welcome and is treated with respect and enthusiasm by the Volunteer Coordinator. Volunteers can also request a reference from our Volunteer Coordinator. The Volunteer Coordinator will also provide regular feedback and continuous support for the volunteers.

### **Commitment:**

This role is flexible. You can decide how much time to spend volunteering. This is arranged on a monthly basis with our Volunteer Coordinator.

### **Skills needed:**

No specialist skills are required. Training is provided and good communication skills are essential. Having an interest in heritage and local history along with a willingness to learn new skills is important. Flexibility is essential as well as the ability to work closely with others. However volunteers can always refuse demands that they find unrealistic.

### **What to bring:**

We will provide everything you need but do recommend you wear warm clothing in the winter as the cottage and barge doors are always open. As a representative of LVRP in the public eye we ask that volunteers wear suitable clothing, we will supply a LVRP fleece.

### **We provide:**

The staff will give you training in the information we are trying to get across to visitors, artefact and cottage/barge care and most importantly the tea and biscuits!

### **Insurance:**

As a volunteer you be covered by LVRP employer's liability insurance and protected by policies such as health & safety.



**Volunteer Coordinator**

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