

Volunteer Voice

24th September 2026

St Mary's Hall, Ross-on-Wye

Staff Attendees: Frances Weeks, Lesley Hack, Ian Grafton, Rosie Wilson

1. Updates on new staff and staff departures: - We have a new Café manager at Queenswood, Kerry Prew, and Café Team Leader Sophie Griffiths-Rose - Will have a new officer joining the Severn Treescapes team in November. Their role will focus on traditional orchard management and planting for four key species: noble chafer beetle, red-horned cardinal click beetle, orchard toothcrust fungus and mistletoe marble moth.	
2. Update on training: - Rosie has contacted all volunteers requiring brush cutter training. If you think you should be on this list and haven't been contacted, please speak with your main staff contact. - Jenny Mottershead is organising water safety training for staff and volunteers. If this training is required for your role, please speak with your main staff contact to be added to the list. - The next training day for Volunteer Work Party Leaders and Voluntary Wardens will be on 9th November at Queenswood: Volunteer Task Leader and Reserve Warden Training Day Herefordshire Wildlife Trust - We are hoping to offer a fungi identification workshop (or possibly two) for volunteers this autumn – this will be advertised in the volunteer weekly newsletter once confirmed.	
3. Update on volunteer activities: - The next Volunteer Voice will be confirmed asap. We are hoping to be at Weobley in early December. - The Volunteer Christmas Quiz and afternoon tea will be, as last year, at Withington Village Hall, on the afternoon of Thursday 3rd December. Full details to follow soon. - Our next Discovery Day will be the Autumn Discovery Day and AGM on Saturday 17th October, Bodenham Parish Hall: Autumn Discovery Day and AGM Herefordshire Wildlife Trust	

• Our next Discovery Walk, for members and volunteers, will be Wednesday the 4th November - A walk to interpret the wide vista at the viewpoint at Queenswood, explore South Wood, view coppicing operations there and continue to Burghope Quarry and its outcrop of the unusual Bishops Frome Limestone before returning to the start point. Full details and a booking link will be in Friday's newsletter and on the website. • It was suggested that the Trust run more walks for non-members and charge a fee. We have limited capacity to offer any more events at the moment, but we are looking into 'bring-a-friend' walks to introduce more people to the Trust. Watch this space!	
4. Update on wildlife recording A wide-ranging discussion was had. There will be a focus on recording and evidence in our new strategy which will be published later this year and in effect from 2027 so work in this area will progress during the new strategy period 2027-2030.	
5. Update on potential for recycling vapes at Queenswood This is not something the Queenswood Visitor Team are currently considering but it was discussed that vapes should not be included with general waste as they can cause fires.	
6. Update on managing overlap of events between branches and Trust Resolved with closer discussions between staff and local branches going forwards.	
7. AOB a) News on the long-awaited Ross-on-Wye charity shop: progress has been made with our solicitors and we are expecting to sign a contract and have keys within weeks, fingers crossed! It will then take a little while to set up and open. Once we have the keys we can work towards an opening date and start advertising for volunteers and accepting donations. The shop will also act as a 'hub' in the area with information on membership and Trust activities in the shop and a meeting room upstairs which can be used by the local branch group, staff etc.	

b) It was noted that Trust activities, up until now, were very remote to members and volunteers based in the south of Herefordshire and it was appreciated that we were holding Volunteer Voice in different locations. We hope the opening of the new shop will also help in this regard. c) We discussed whether there were any licenced dormouse surveyors currently on the Trust's staff – TBC.	
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