



Ecohouse Volunteer

Role Description

About Bankside Open Spaces Trust

Bankside Open Spaces Trust is an environmental and volunteering charity working across SE1 and neighbouring London communities since 2000. We currently maintain 16 parks and open spaces in Southwark and Lambeth. We enhance health and wellbeing, empower local communities, transform open spaces and champion sustainability by caring for parks and gardens, nurturing community projects, running engaging events and educational activities, and welcoming volunteers of all backgrounds to make a real difference locally.

About the Ecohouse

The Ecohouse in SE1 is a community hub offering workshops, growing space, a propagation Grow Room, and a horticultural neurodivergent-led Rainbow Library with around 600 books donated by veteran Gardener Stephen Crisp. Volunteers help shape and grow access to these facilities while supporting community use.

Role Summary

As an Ecohouse Volunteer, you'll help run a welcoming, inclusive, creative and productive community space every Friday morning. You'll support core operations and can specialise over time in areas such as Library Operations, Houseplant Care or Grow Room Support, depending on your interests and skills.

You'll work closely with staff, volunteers, learners and community participants to maintain resources, support visitors and keep the space functioning smoothly.

Commitment

When: Fridays, 9:45 am – 1:00 pm
Where: The Ecohouse, 50 Redcross Way, SE1
Hours: Weekly commitment; long-term involvement preferred



Core Responsibilities (General)

All Ecohouse Volunteers will:

- Attend regularly as agreed with the Volunteer Coordinator.
- Greet visitors and help explain how the Ecohouse spaces operate.
- General support of Library Operations, Paludarium maintenance and Grow Room propagation.
- Support general maintenance and minor repairs where appropriate
- Support a welcoming environment for staff, volunteers and the public.
- Supporting neurodivergent volunteers where appropriate
- Follow health, safety and safeguarding guidelines outlined at induction and special instructions from Facilitator/s
- Respect and uphold the organisation's Equal Opportunities, Confidentiality and Volunteer Policies.
- Maintain shared space areas, assist with light set-up, tidying and refreshments.

Specialist Pathways

Volunteers can choose to specialise over time through training and experience:

Library Operations Support

You'll assist with our horticultural library, ensuring the collection is well organised, accessible and engaging.

Tasks include:

- Helping update and maintain the library catalogue using the library app.
- Supporting check-in / check-out of books and magazines.
- Shelving, straightening and enhancing the presentation of the collection.
- Assisting visitors with enquiries about resources.
- Skills that suit this pathway: good organisational skills, attention to detail, comfort with basic digital tools and a friendly service attitude.

Houseplant Care or Grow Room Support

You'll help nurture and propagate plants in the Ecohouse's Grow Room, contributing to plant production for gardens and community groups.

Tasks include:

- Watering and misting plants to maintain healthy conditions.
- Assisting with sowing, transplanting and propagation activities.
- Monitoring temperature and conditions in the grow area.
- Supporting and guiding other growers where needed.
- Skills that suit this pathway: enthusiasm for plant care, willingness to learn horticultural techniques, and confidence in supporting others. You'll receive training as required.

Paludarium Care

You'll help maintain the Paludarium, a project working with individuals in homelessness recovery, when participants or volunteers on this project are unable to.

Tasks include:

- Feeding the aquatic life
- Maintaining the aquarium
- Aquascaping where needed

What We Provide

In return for your time you'll receive:

- Induction and training relevant to your pathway if you choose one.
- Ongoing support from staff and volunteers.
- Opportunities to learn new skills in customer engagement, library systems, propagation and plant care.
- References for long-term volunteers.
- Travel reimbursement (if needed) and refreshments on shift.
- Specialist and PPE Clothing & Equipment where needed



Volunteers should wear suitable clothing that allows for light indoor tasks and plant care activities, including covered shoes. Lanyards identifying your role will be provided and should be worn during shifts.

How to Apply

Email the Volunteer Team at volunteer@bost.org.uk

If you're not already a volunteer, we'll send an application form. For new applicants we ask for two referees (at least one professional). Referrals from other agencies are welcome. If you need reasonable adjustments to volunteer with us, please let us know.

Once we have your form, you'll be invited to an informal chat (in person, by phone or online) to discuss your interests and find the best volunteer role for you.

Other Opportunities

We also offer a range of community volunteering roles across gardens, events and other engagement activities. Other Bankside Open Spaces Trust volunteer opportunities available include:

- Crossbones Warden
- Gardening Volunteer / Pond Volunteer / Compost Volunteer
- Events volunteer
- Living Space Repair Ranger Volunteer
- Gardening Club Volunteer Project Assistant
- Trustee

For more information on these roles or on anything related to volunteering please contact our Volunteer team – volunteer@bost.org.uk / 020 7403 3393.