

WILD STEWARDS APPLICATION PACK

Youngwilders

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INTRODUCTION TO THE WILD STEWARDS PROGRAMME

Wild Stewards is a nature education programme run by Youngwilders that places young people into paid, decision-making roles in active nature recovery projects for one year, provides seminars, training opportunities and operational support, and facilitates shared learning between the Wild Stewards and the Youngwilders core team.

The programme has been co-designed with young people and is focused around experiential learning, developing local ecological knowledge, and providing agency, opportunity and fun for young people in the face of the environmental crisis.

As a Wild Steward, you will be working on your local Youngwilders nature recovery project and will be partnered with one other Wild Steward. Please see the Appendix for a list of the projects available. Your work will be partly crafted to align with your aspirations and personal interests. For example, if you're eager to hone your skills in volunteer coordination, we'll provide the necessary support for you to organise volunteer days at your site.

You will be joining a cohort of other Wild Stewards across the country, all working on active nature recovery projects, and will be meeting them online to share learnings across different regions and habitats, and coming together for a few legendary meet ups throughout the year. Letsgooooooooooooooooooooo

We ask that you commit to working one day per month for one year and attend a monthly seminar and catch-up with the Youngwilders team. Youngwilders will provide a monthly stipend of £100 and will cover travel expenses involved in the work. We will also provide in-person training, support with research, an opportunity to network with your cohort, and provide a free ticket to Overgrowth: our Youth Rewilding Summit.

You do not need to have any prior experience to take part in the Wild Stewards programme! We're simply looking for passionate young people who are keen to use their own unique set of skills and interests to join the nature recovery movement, get more connected to nature and develop their powers as an environmental steward.



ABOUT YOUNGWILDERS

Youngwilders is a youth-led non-profit organisation focused on accelerating UK nature recovery and centering young people in the process and movement. We do this through facilitating youth-led nature recovery projects across the UK, as well as a mix of creative programmes oriented around upskilling and energising the next generation of environmental stewards.

We currently run 8 active small-scale nature recovery and rewilding projects across England and Wales. These ecological projects are youth-led, with all interventions conceived, designed and delivered by young people. By taking this approach, our ecological projects aim to provide young people with practical experience in nature recovery work, a sense of community and well-being, an opportunity to feel more connected to nature and an opportunity to have real stake in the direction of an active conservation project.

Our creative programmes and activities are focused on involving young people in the nature recovery movement. These include workshops, seminars, our magazine, documentary work, social media outreach, and two annual youth rewilding summits held at the Knepp Estate in Sussex and Hepple Wilds in Northumberland.

For more information on Youngwilders, including our latest impact report, please visit our [website](#).



WILD STEWARDS - ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The tasks you undertake will depend on your project and your own interests. However, To give you an idea of what you could be doing, we've set out some potential tasks you could undertake over the course of the Wild Steward programme below!

Site Restoration/Activities

- **Assessing/surveying the site**

- This could involve fixed point photography, drone footage, citizen science data, or extend all the way to full UK Hab surveying. Youngwilders ecologist extraordinaire Meg Cookson will be on hand to teach ecological surveying skills.

- **Comprehensive plan for the restoration and enhancement of the site**

- In some cases where the project is in the early stages, Wild Stewards will play a key role developing the ecological restoration plan for the site. For more ongoing projects we will be looking at assessing and improving current nature recovery plans.

- **Implementation of Nature Recovery plans**

- Wild Stewards will lead on various elements of our Nature recovery projects. This will include completing physical interventions yourself, like tree planting or fence removal, for example, and in some cases working with contractors to carry out the works.

Skills Building

- During the induction meeting with your contact, you will be asked which skills you would like to build over the coming months, and some time will be set aside for developing these. These could include technical/instrumental skills, soft (but important!) social skills, or developing your knowledge base in a specific environmental area.

Organisation, Networking and Communication

- **Planning and coordination with partners**

- You could be expected to plan and coordinate with partners to deliver site restoration (e.g. external ecologists, labourers, grazing providers etc.), with support from Youngwilders.

- **Working with other local young people**

- You may be asked to co-ordinate and lead groups of young people engaging with the project

- **Liaise with landowners**

- Youngwilders will be the main liaison with the landowner and key stakeholders. However, you will be asked to provide updates to the landowner where necessary and manage your relationship with the landowner appropriately. I.e. organising visits to the site.

- **Involving the local community**

- You could be expected to involve the local community in the project, fostering a sense of common custodianship and care for the site. This could entail a report or presentation to the parish council/local stakeholder group but will not involve extensive consultation with local community members.

Final Event and Creative Output

- All Wild Stewards will be asked to work towards a final event. In many cases this will be to plan and coordinate a volunteer day, which aligns with works for the site restoration. We will also ask you to create a tangible output showcasing the progress of the restoration project. This could be in the form of a photo diary, film or essay, for example. This could be presented to the community (including at Overgrowth Youth Rewilding Summit), to help contribute to the wider knowledge base.



TIME AND ENERGY COMMITMENT

We ask that you work one day per month for one year, and attend key dates held on your site such as volunteer days. Please also factor in the time it will take you to travel to and from the site.

In addition to this, you will need to attend the following every month:

- An online seminar
- A check-in meeting with your point of contact from the Youngwilders team

At the start of the programme, you'll join all Wild Stewards for an in-person event in London to meet each other and co-create elements of the year. There will also be another meet up in March at a location that is reasonably easy to get to for all Wild Stewards. At the end of the programme, all Wild Stewards are invited to attend Overgrowth South - our Youth Rewilding Summit held at the beginning of September at Knepp Wildland.

We will tailor the Wild Steward programme to suit the project and your own interests. If you have access needs or a disability, we are committed to making reasonable adjustments for the position. We would love to discuss with you how we can ensure the Wild Stewards programme suits your needs.

The Wild Stewards position is designed to be as flexible as possible so it can fit with your current life and work commitments. Every month you can decide which day works best. You will just need to coordinate this with the other Wild Steward working on the site and your Youngwilders mentor.

Wild Stewards will be paid an £100 stipend per month, and your travel costs will be reimbursed.

HOW TO APPLY

If you're interested in applying for the position of Wild Steward please fill in [this application form](#).

Please read information about the sites in the appendix to decide which one you're interested in stewarding.

Our Wild Stewards programme is aimed at young people (aged 18-30). We particularly welcome applications from young people who face additional barriers to accessing the environmental sector. Including, but not limited to, those who are:

- Ethnically minoritised
- Economically disadvantaged
- Living with a disability

If you have any form of disability or neurodivergence and require further assistance in completing your application, please contact Molly at molly@youngwilders.uk who will be happy to assist.

The closing date for submission of applications is **7pm on Monday 18th August**.

APPENDIX: ABOUT THE SITES



MAPLE FARM, SURREY / SUSSEX, GU6 8EZ



Maple farm is a 40 acre rewilding project on the border of Surrey and Sussex. Youngwilders have been working on the site for four years! We are taking crucial steps to encourage the natural regeneration of scrub, restore grassland on the site, and improve the river and floodplain habitat on the site.

For the bird lovers amongst us, the site has become a stronghold for the critically endangered nightingale thanks to its amazing scrub habitat.

Accessibility

The site is accessible via a heavy gate followed by a rocky slope. There is a clearly trodden path through the first field and around the edge of the meadow field, but no paved paths on the site and the fields are largely flat with slight slopes, bar the hilly left field. There are some benches scattered around the site and there is a wooden structure (the outdoor classroom) with seating and limited protection from the elements located at the furthest away field. A portion of the site floods during heavy rainfall.

There is very limited phone service on site, and the only toilet is located by the carpark before you enter the site, although there are plans to build a compost loo!

POUNCE HALL, NORTH ESSEX, CB10 2LE



Pounce Hall is a piece of land made up of three fields totalling around 19 acres located just outside Saffron Walden in North Essex. It has historically been mown for hay and grazed. The intensity of these processes, combined with over-fertility from surrounding intensive agriculture and a very high density of deer have led the land to ecological disrepair.

Youngwilders have been working on the site for the past 3 years to establish a woodland pasture type ecosystem on the land. There is much to do to achieve this aim! Specific interventions and initiatives will be decided with the Wild Steward as the project unfurls, but Pounce Hall is a rare project where everything is already funded and permissions gathered, it's just a matter of deciding and doing.

Accessibility

The Pounce Hall parameter can be accessed easily by car, but the fields themselves are rough terrain with only desire line paths through the long grass. The site is small so there is less need for extended movement compared to other sites (walking max 5mins at a time), and there is great cover for resting in the main barn, which remains quiet most of the day.

NATURE CHAIN MEADOWS, BATH, BA2 7UR



The overall objective of the Nature Chain Meadows project is to create a corridor of wildlife rich habitat, particularly wildflower meadows, across smallholder farms in the villages of Limpley Stoke and Freshford.

Youngwilders have been working with a group of five landowners over the last three years to develop a best practice management plan to maximise floral and structural biodiversity for the grassland habitats present in the corridor. This work has been developed following conversations with farmers, local environmental bodies, and other local projects.

Now we are at a stage where we are starting to deliver parts of the management plan, including introducing locally harvested wildflower seeds across the sites, and managing grazing animals across the sites :)

We are running our first ever youth-led engagement day at the site on 20th September! Please put it in your calendar if you are interested in being involved.

Accessibility

Nature Chain consists of a series of meadows across the villages of Limpley Stoke and Freshford. Three of the sites are very close to one another, and the others are either a moderate walk, or short drive, away. The fields are relatively steep. Phone signal is good, and facilities are available at a café well positioned between the different sites. The land owners live on site.

HEPPLE WILDS, NORTHUMBERLAND, NE65 7LN



Hepple Wilds project is a dynamic rewilding initiative located in the heart of Northumberland, near Morpeth. Situated across 4,000 acres of uplands, woodlands, and wetland areas, Hepple is driving the recovery of ecosystems through a process called "managed wilding." This approach seeks to revive biodiversity through natural processes like grazing and habitat regeneration, helping to restore the land while benefiting the local community.

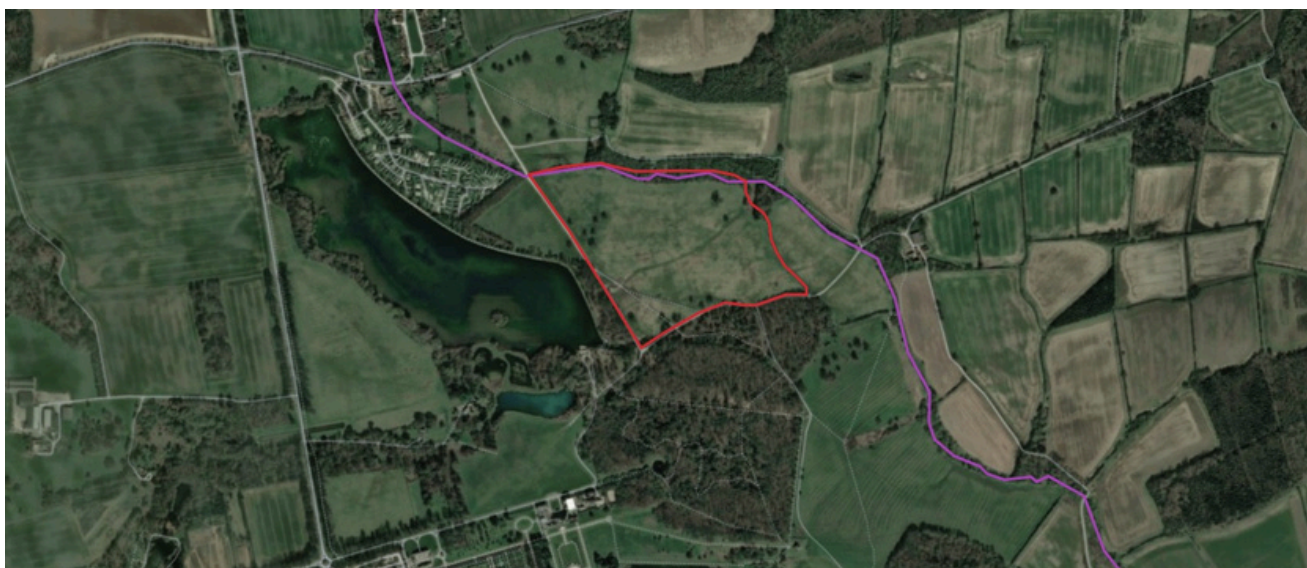
The Wild Stewards programme at Hepple is slightly different to our other projects. You will be working closely with the onsite ecologist at Hepple, learning from the work being done there and gaining new skills towards landscape scale nature recovery.

We run our annual Youth Rewilding Summit - Overgrowth North - at Hepple in May. If you are the Wild Steward at Hepple you will play a big part in planning for and delivering this exciting event!

Accessibility

The site's main access point is at the barn. There are many clearly trodden, unpaved paths, and areas of the sites connect by quiet, paved roads. The site is very hilly, with sections of narrow paths through different habitats, including woodlands and rivers. There are grazing animals - highland cows and Dartmoor ponies - moving around the site. There is patchy phone service across the site and the toilets are based at the barn. The landowners live on site.

CASTLE HOWARD, YORKSHIRE, YO60 7DA



A brand new Youngwilders project!

Castle Howard is an iconic 8000+ acre estate in North Yorkshire, England. The estate features formal gardens, rolling parkland, dense woodlands, farmland, and a network of lakes and waterways. They have also started a landmark nature restoration and rewilding project on part of the estate known as Bog Hall. This project aims to significantly increase biodiversity, transform low-yielding farmland into a mosaic of new habitats, including grasslands, shrubland, ponds, and reedbeds, while also enhancing existing woodlands and streams.

Youngwilders have specifically been put to work on a 50 acre sub parcel of the Estate, where we have been given management control over an area of riverbank and parkland. This project aims to restore biodiversity on the 50 acres, to use the site and rewilding activities to empower and educate young people, preparing them for a career in the environmental sector, while also demonstrating the possibilities of community focussed and/or youth-led rewilding efforts.

Given this project is in its early stages, the Wild Stewards will be deeply involved in the planning for the project, helping us shape the vision for the site for the next three years! We will also be delivering a number of youth-led volunteering efforts throughout the year which you will be involved in planning and leading!

Accessibility

The site is one big field which is a 10 minute walk away from facilities (toilets and kitchen) along a flat, unpaved path. The field itself is a large flat grassland with trees and a small river running through. Phone signal is good.

BANGROVE NATURE RECOVERY PROJECT, SUFFOLK, IP31 2HB



Another brand new Youngwilders project!

Bangrove Nature Project is a 250 acre ecological restoration project in north Suffolk which is far reaching in its ambitions, both ecologically and socially. Youngwilders are incredibly excited to be collaborating on the project, where we are focusing specifically on a 30 acre subset of the site. The site is made up of a fascinating mix of river habitat, wet woodland and ponds, an old arable field, and even a historic moat! The project aims to restore biodiversity and bioabundance across the site, to use the site and rewilding activities to empower and educate young people, preparing them for a career in the environmental sector, while helping them to connect to their natural environment.

Given this project is in its early stages, the Wild Stewards will be deeply involved in the planning for the project, helping us shape the vision for the site for the next three years! We will also be delivering a number of youth-led volunteering efforts throughout the year which you will be involved in planning and leading!

Accessibility

The site is largely flat, with no specific paths, other than a well trodden path along the riverbank. The woodland tree are spread out, with a lot of tall undergrowth. The field has a bumpy ground and there are no benches or shelters on site. The phone service is generally good and there is no access to a toilet on site.

THE GRANGE PROJECT, MONMOUTHSHIRE, NP25 5HW



The Grange Project is an 80 acre rewilding project and nature education centre in the heart of rural Monmouthshire, South Wales. Driven by deep concern for nature and climate, the young Constable Family took custodianship of the land in 2023 and are learning quickly with the help of their 'Wilder Podcast', the Grange Project Community and various experiments!

30 acres of The Grange Project has been set aside to be managed by Youngwilders. Like the rest of the site, community and ecological restoration will be key, but Youngwilders will additionally be shoehorning in youth-involvement into every aspect of the process on their plot, and using the project, where possible, as a tool to upskill and inspire the next generation of environmental stewards!

Activities include bringing trees back into the landscape, rewetting areas, creating ponds and reintroducing various grazing animals. The local project celebs are the two pigs on the site, who are helping disturb the soil and boost natural regeneration across the site :)

Accessibility

The site is accessible along a clay road, that can get slippery when the weather has been wet. The site is hilly, with no paved paths. There are two pigs in the field next to the Youngwilders area and the ground there is bare and very lumpy. The lower sections of the sites can get very wet when the weather has been so.

There is access to a toilet at the barn, and decent phone service throughout the site. There are sometimes visitors renting the two outdoor huts, and the landowners live on site.



Youngwilders