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|  **Volunteer Role Description** |
| **Volunteer Role Title** | **Role Number** |
| Pony & Livestock Checker  |  |
| **Reserve, Project, Team or Area**  |
| East Regional Team- Askham Bog Nature Reserve , York |
| **Volunteer Manager/Supervisor**  |
| Alan Brown |
| **Why do we need this volunteer?**  |
| Do you fancy keeping fit whilst getting some fresh air? Would you like to help us check our Pony’s and Dexter Cattle to make sure they’re in good health? This will include feeding our pony’s their favourite snack – carrots!You might be wondering why we have Livestock at our Site at Askham Bog! Yorkshire Wildlife Trust manages over 100 reserves, restoring biodiversity, protecting habitats and wildlife and providing wonderful opportunities for visitors to get close up and see some of our most enthralling wildlife. Part of the management of many of our grassland, fen and heathland reserves is carried out by grazing animals. Grazing helps control competitive ‘rough’ plant species that can out-compete the finer, more interesting species of grass and wildflower that we seek to encourage. Livestock on the reserves need to be checked to ensure that their health is good, and that they are still all there.  |
| **What will the volunteer be doing?**  |
| * Each visit involves a short to medium walk (depending on site) across the area being grazed, counting the number of animals and looking for any signs of ill health. If you did see any problems, you would not be expected to deal with them, simply to ring us at YWT to let us know.
* We usually work a rota system, so a group of people take it in turns to check stock at a certain site, so each individual’s commitment is not too great.
* An introduction to the site will be given, with a site and task risk assessment. Plus information on what to look out for, more common problems encountered, tell tale signs of illness etc. This will be given in person on site and/or followed up by a written reminder document.
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| **Experience, knowledge and skills needed for this role** |
| * No previous knowledge or experience necessary, but you need to feel confident being around grazing animals, and any past experience or knowledge of stock welcome.
* Reliability – the volunteer must check the stock on their allocated day, or let us know if they can’t so we can make other arrangements.
* You also need to be fairly physically fit as some of the grazing areas have rough terrain, tussocks, boggy ground etc. that you need to be able to negotiate.

**Does the volunteer need a driver’s license?** Yes – unless you live within walking distance of the reserve. |
| **What’s in it for the volunteer?**  |
| * The chance to visit one of YWT’s superb reserves throughout a season, seeing it develop and change, and enjoying the wildlife it supports.
* The chance to get to work with our grazing stock – cattle and ponies. Each have their own personalities and are a joy to get to know.
* Learn skills in animal welfare and care.
* Learn some more about nature reserve management
* Spending the day with our lovely ponies and livestock!

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| **Where is the role based?**  |
| York, Askham Bog Nature Reserve, Askham Bryan, York YO23 3QX |
| **Commitment**  |
| Each checking visit may take between fifteen minutes and an hour, depending on the site. You can commit to doing this as little or as often as you can manage - any help is appreciated. Weekly or twice monthly visits are average. |
| **Duration**  |
| From May 2021 – October 2021 |