

Hawk's Rest Sanctuary - Volunteer Training.

Confidently Engaging Visitors at the Sanctuary

Trainee Workbook.

This training session is designed to give you the tools that you will need to impart interesting and informative tours to visitors to Hawk's Rest sanctuary. This session will cover:

- Strategies to manage visitor behaviour
- Clear and engaging speaking techniques
- How to respond to challenging questions & behaviour
- How to deliver key sanctuary messages accurately & consistently

Please feel free to use this workbook to add additional notes during the session, as well as future learnings during your time as a volunteer at Hawk's Rest.

Topic 1: Delivering sanctuary messages clearly and consistently.

Why Consistency Matters

Unclear and Inconsistent

- Visitor confusion
- Complaints
- Reputational risk

Clear and Consistent

- Informed visitor
- Enhanced reputation
- Confident volunteer
- Trust in the charity

Notes:

Our mission:

To rescue, treat and release birds wherever possible, and to house those for whom release is not possible.

How donations are used:

Keeping the sanctuary open
Research
Treatment of injured birds
We are not for profit

Core Sanctuary Messages

Rehabilitation Process (SOARS):

- S:** Secure (rescue & treatment)
- O:** Observation (stabilisation & first aid)
- A:** Administer care (treatment)
- R:** Restore (Recuperation & rehabilitation)
- S:** Set free (release)

Key Species:

- Vultures
- Swans
- Kites
- Gulls

Notes:

Tone & Consistency Expectations

Don't 	Do 
<i>We fix hurt birds.</i>	<i>We care for injured and orphaned birds, nurse them back to health, and release them back into the wild whenever we can.</i>
<i>I'm not totally sure, but I think it does that because it's stressed.</i>	<i>This behaviour usually means she's alert and focused – birds of prey are incredibly tuned in to their surroundings</i>
<i>I don't know, that's not really my area.</i>	<i>That's a great question — let me find out the answer for you and come back to you before the end of the tour.</i>

Notes:

Topic 2: Speaking with clarity and confidence.

Voice Clarity & Pacing



PROJECTION

Speak to the back of the group.



PACING

Slow down your speech



AVOID FILLERS

These can distract & undermine

Notes:

Structuring Explanations

HOOK

Grab listeners' attention with a surprising fact or question

"Did you know a kestrel can spot a beetle from 50 metres away? They can even see ultraviolet light, which lets them track mice from high in the air."

CORE

Deliver the key information simply & clearly

"Kestrels are one of the species we care for here. Most come to us after collisions with vehicles or windows — injuries that stop them hunting. We rehabilitate them and, where possible, release them back into the wild."

CLOSE

Land the message you want the audience to take away

"Every bird we successfully release is back where it belongs. That's what this sanctuary is for — and what your support makes possible."

Notes:

Adjusting to Different Audiences



- Short sentences
- Questions
- Analogies



- Detail
- Wider themes



- Hook to engage
- Detail layered into answer

What is a word or phrase that we might use with adult visitors which might not be appropriate when showing younger people the centre?

Notes:

Topic 3: Responding appropriately in real time.

Answering Difficult Questions: AABB Framework

Acknowledge

Shows respect and gains thinking time.

That's a really important question...

That's a very thoughtful question...

I appreciate you bringing that up...

Answer

Use approved messaging or offer to ask and get back to the questioner later in the tour.

Bridge Back

Return confidently to the tour structure, don't allow the flow to be impacted by repeated questions.

Notes:

Topic 4: Behaviour Management Strategies.

Setting Expectations Early.

- Use a brief, friendly introduction.
- Think about your positioning.
- Outline what visitors can/can't do.
- Demonstrate confidence with your posture.

Notes:

Posture

- Hands in pockets ❌
- Standing up straight ✅
- Fast movements ❌
- Making eye contact ✅
- Speaking quickly ❌

Notes:

Calm Boundary-Setting

- Friendly but firm
- Be proactive & consistent



De-Escalation

- Lower your voice – don't raise it!
- Acknowledge frustration
- Look for win/win solutions



Notes:

Conclusion.

Next Steps

- **Review the session key content**
- **Create your own 'hook'**
- **Shadow a more experienced guide**

Notes: