



The Bishop's Palace

WELLS · SOMERSET

## Volunteer Team 2026 Training, Tours & Talks

This programme is open to all volunteers and provides the opportunity for you to learn more about The Bishop's Palace and Gardens and surrounding area. Some teams of volunteers will have their own training sessions in addition to this programme. Please let us know if there is any other training that you would find useful and we will try to run it later on in the year.

### Social Events

**National Volunteers' Week 1-7 June** – We will celebrate with a garden party for our team on Fri 5<sup>th</sup> June 6-8pm with garden games, food, and drinks. More info to follow nearer the time. There is usually a Wells wide celebration too so watch this space.

**Volunteers' Carol Service - December** – We will once again have a carol service just for volunteers, to which you can invite a guest. Mince pies and mulled wine afterwards. Dates to be confirmed.

**Coffee Meet Ups – all volunteers welcome (Laundry Room). Drop in anytime. Lasts 1hr.**

Tues 27<sup>th</sup> Jan 2pm

Fri 27<sup>th</sup> Feb 11am

Thurs 26<sup>th</sup> March 11am

Tues 28<sup>th</sup> April 2pm (this one will be in the community garden mess room)

Fri 29<sup>th</sup> May 11am

Thurs 23<sup>rd</sup> July 11am

Tues 29<sup>th</sup> Sept 2pm (this one will be in the community garden mess room)

Fri 20 Oct 2pm

Thurs 26 Nov 11am

**You need to book your place for any of the training, talks, visits or tours** overleaf by emailing Gemma Palmer, Community Engagement Assistant. Please let her know if you have any access requirements for the session. Some locations will be confirmed on the day depending on numbers. Some sessions may not run if we have too few people sign up. We will notify you if that happens. Please note there are stairs up to The Laundry Room so let us know if that's difficult for you and we can change the location.

**Gemma Palmer, Community Engagement Assistant**

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Title	Dates & Time	Location
<b>Welcomer refreshers (drawbridge /palace/new welcomer role – formerly VSV)</b> Refresh, learn new things or if can't make it you can arrange to do shadowing through Siobhan (please contact her directly). For those of you who used to do the VSV role, you may like to learn a bit more about the multi-media guides and drawbridge welcoming in case you want to do this during your session as a welcomer.	Mon 19 Jan 11-12	<b>Meet in the entrance hall of the palace</b>
<b>Architecture of The Palace</b> A guided tour with one of our experienced guides, Malcolm Mogford.	Wed 21 <sup>st</sup> Jan 2-3pm	<b>Meet in the undercroft</b>
<b>Induction and Safeguarding</b> This is for those of you who are new to the team or want a refresher. <b>All new volunteers need to complete this session before getting started. Three dates to choose from.</b>	Fri 30 Jan 10:30-12:30 Tues 24 Feb 11-1 Thurs 19 March 2-4	<b>Laundry Room</b>
<b>Dementia Awareness</b> An introductory session run by Wells Dementia Action Alliance. We are a dementia friendly site and aim to be sensitive to those who may need some additional understanding during their visit.	13 Feb 10-11	<b>Laundry Room</b>
<b>Welcomer training</b> This is for new welcomer volunteers	Wed 25 Feb 2-3:30 There will be one in the first half of March too TBC	<b>Meet in the Undercroft</b>
<b>Property &amp; Collections</b> Katy Love, Property & Collections Manager, explains how we look after this site and its collection. Have you ever wondered who owns some of the items in The Palace. What does looking after a moat involve? This and more will be revealed!	Thurs 26 Feb 12:30-1:30	<b>Conference Room</b>
<b>Annual briefing for Volunteers</b> Please join members of the senior management team and our trustees to find out about the plans for 2026 and beyond. <i>We encourage everyone to attend.</i>	Thurs 26 Feb 2-3	<b>Conference Room</b>
<b>Guide Refresher – Palace</b> <i>Only for current guides</i>	Mon 2 <sup>nd</sup> March 12-1	<b>Meet in the entrance hall of the palace</b>
<b>Autism Awareness</b> A member of staff from The Mendip School will help us to understand more about autism so we can engage better with our colleagues and visitors.	Mon 2 <sup>nd</sup> March 2-3pm	<b>The Conference Room</b>

Title	Date and Time	Location
<b>Guide Refresher – Gardens</b> <i>Only for current guides</i>	Thurs 12 <sup>th</sup> March 2-3	<b>Meet by the winter border (just past new entrance)</b>
<b>Events 2026</b> Chris Heffernan will bring you up to date with all the upcoming events for 2026.	Tues 17 <sup>th</sup> March at 10:30am	<b>Laundry Room</b>
<b>Role of the Modern day Bishop</b> Revd Kate Scott will explain the role of a modern bishop and how The Bishop of Bath and Wells and the Bishop of Taunton works across the diocese and at a national level.	Thurs 19 March 12-1	<b>Laundry Room</b>
<b>Policies and Procedures You Need to Know</b> This will include equality, diversity and inclusion, dispute resolution and expenses.	Thurs 9 April March 1-2	<b>Laundry Room</b>
<b>Water Courses</b> Siobhan will give you a whistle stop tour of the water courses across the site.	Thurs 9 <sup>th</sup> April 2:30-3:30pm	<b>Meet at the Well Pools</b>
<b>The Other Side of the Moat</b> An introduction to Wells that should help you to be able to give our visitors a good overview of this unique city. This will be a guided tour so do dress for the weather!	Mon 30 March 1-2pm	<b>Meet on the grass next to the drawbridge</b>
<b>Timeline of The Bishop's Palace</b> The last 1000 years all neatly packaged into an easy to remember timeline of this unique place.	Mon 30 March 3-4pm	<b>Laundry Room</b>
<b>Colourful Bishops</b> Brian Roberts-Wray has guided here for many years and has looked into what some of our Bishops got up to over the centuries. First talk will cover Bishops Stillington, King, and Castellesi. Second talk will cover Clerk, Knight, and Barlow.	Wed 11 <sup>th</sup> March 3-4 Mon 23 <sup>rd</sup> March 11-12	<b>The Laundry Room</b>
<b>Swans &amp; Other Animals at the Palace</b> They say never work with animals, well why not join Moira as she shares some of the weird and wonderful goings on with our furry and feathered friends.	Sun 29 March 2-3pm	<b>Laundry Room</b>
<b>Our Green Credentials</b> Siobhan, Community Engagement Manager, will guide you on a tour of the site and share some of the things we do to try and meet our target of reaching net zero by 2050. We aim to have reduced it by 50% by 2030.	Fri 10 April 11-12	<b>Meet by the cafe</b>

Course	Date & Time	Location
<b>Garden Tour</b> James Cross, Head Gardener, will give you a guided tour of the gardens, showing you the highlights, explaining how his team achieves such incredible results and their plans for the future.	22 April 10:30-11:30	<b>Meet by the cafe</b>
<b>Fun Facts, filming, anecdotes etc</b> Find out about all the weird and wonderful things that have gone on here in the last 100 years.	Fri 10 April 1-2	<b>Laundry Room</b>
<b>Visit to Bath Abbey</b> including a guided tour (limited places). We will arrange lift shares for the journey.	Thurs 23 April 10:45am	<b>Bath Abbey</b> (meet by front of Abbey doors)
<b>Visit to Wells Cathedral</b> Learn more about our next door neighbour on this interesting guided tour.	To be confirmed	Meet inside the entrance just before pay desk
<b>Dawn Chorus</b> One of our guides and a keen ornithologist, Graham, will lead us on a relaxing and interesting stroll at the crack of dawn. Experience the site as you never have before! Light refreshments afterwards.	Mon 1 June 5:30am (yes that's right!!) max 2hrs.	<b>Meet on the drawbridge.</b> We will lock the gates behind us so please be punctual!

**In addition to the above training all volunteers are encouraged to:**

- Regularly visit The Bishop's Palace website to keep up to date with upcoming events, closures and information that is useful for visitors, and you!
- Regularly have a good look through all of the information on the volunteer website <https://bishopspalace.org.uk/information-for-volunteers/> (password **Wellpools246**)
- Create an account on our online learning portal at <https://wellselearning.thinkific.com/> to do: safeguarding refresher / wildlife in the gardens / garden history / tourist information for Wells
- Use one of multi-media guides inside The Palace
- Go on a few of our daily guided tours
- Watch the welcome video in the entrance hall
- Read through the folders in the Bevy Room
- Borrow useful books from The John Cook Library (by appointment – list of contents is on noticeboard in The Bevy Room and listed on the volunteer website)
- Go to some of the events that are run in Wells as part of Heritage Open Days in September. Completely free and a great way to see things that are not usually open to the public