

Wimbledon Park Watersports Centre Volunteer Scheme



Learn about working in watersports!

Get experience at a busy watersports centre and be part of our team for the summer! Volunteers can use their time volunteering to fulfil their work experience requirements too.

No experience necessary. All it takes to succeed on the scheme, is some determination and a desire to work with children.

Gain new skills!

The scheme will develop your confidence as well as your leadership and coaching skills. The 4-week syllabus includes an introduction to session planning and session running and gives you lots of chances to try out those new skills in a safe environment.

But you'll also get the chance to improve your personal skills - even if you've got no previous watersports experience – through in-house training across multiple watersports disciplines. You'll be able to access training opportunities unavailable to the general public.

Make new friends!

Be around other young people and make lifelong friendships!

Become an instructor?

After completing the scheme, we support volunteers in their progression towards qualifying as watersports instructors if that's a pathway they want to take.

Since revamping the scheme in 2021, we've had an unprecedented 31 out of 55 participants qualify as instructors in at least 1 of our watersports disciplines. Many have already been employed at Wimbledon Park Watersports Centre and become important members of our seasonal team, and we look forward to having even more join our pool of staff soon.

Check out what others have said about their time on the Scheme!

Amy Dickson (age 15 as a participant in 2023)



Amy had only taken part in 1 course at the centre before joining the volunteer scheme in 2023. By the end of her 4 weeks as a volunteer, she was running sessions for large groups of children. Amy has since already qualified as a Paddlesport Instructor and has joined the Wimbledon Park Instructor pool. She's also recently been voted in as commodore of the Wimbledon Park Sailing Club.

"I've really enjoyed getting to know the centre, the instructors and also the type of work. Improving my personal skills in both instructing and sailing/paddling has been a positive aspect of the scheme as well as making new friends.

This program has made me realise that instructing, specifically here, is something I would feel so amazing doing. My 4 weeks here have been the happiest weeks of my life."

James O'Connor (age 17 as a participant in 2023)

James had no watersports experience when he joined the volunteer scheme, but he did have a real desire to learn about the outdoor industry. That work ethic, as well as the skills learned on the scheme, have helped James secure a job as an Activity Instructor and Group Leader with PGL working outdoors with kids!



"I came onto the scheme with zero previous experience and found myself at the end a competent sailor and willing to take it on as a hobby afterwards. All members of staff were insightful and keen to teach me.

Other volunteers were helpful and friendly; all becoming close friends who still talk on a regular basis after the scheme concluded. The only way you could improve the scheme is to allow volunteers to do more time instead of only 4 weeks.

Thank you to everyone who had to put up with the great misfortune of my company for four weeks straight, including the half an hour early arrival every day, I thoroughly enjoyed the scheme and will be definitely completing other courses at Wimbledon Park."

Maya Regan (age 15 as a participant in 2021)



Maya took part in the massive 2021 version of the volunteer scheme. She had been attending the centre on many courses over the years in multiple disciplines and made the step up to volunteer. She has since qualified as a Paddlesport Instructor and has become a part of the Instructor team at Wimbledon Park over the last 2 years.

"The volunteer scheme was amazing, and I clearly loved it so much because I have not stopped volunteering there since. The staff and other volunteers were all brilliant- helping you progress in your paddling and instructing skills, I made great friends I have continued to keep in touch with. The environment is so positive and everyone is there to have a great time - it was exhausting but so rewarding and an experience I will not soon forget."

Robin Blair (age 16 as a participant in 2021)

Robin was already partially qualified as a dinghy instructor before he enrolled in the 2021 volunteer scheme. He continued to develop his coaching and personal skills while on the scheme so that he breezed through the final part of his course to complete the qualification. At the same time, he diversified his skillset by learning how to paddle and qualified as a paddlesport instructor too! Robin became Commodore of Wimbledon Park Sailing Club for a year and joined the Wimbledon Park Instructor Team working on both sailing and multi-watersports. He has been a valued member of the team for the last 2 years and recently made the step up to be a leader on some of our sailing courses.



"I had a great time on the volunteer scheme. I made lots of friends and learned lots of new skills. When I started my 4 weeks, I was already a partial DI but the extra training I received helped solidify my skills while also introducing me to paddlesports (where I'm now also an instructor). I'm now Commodore of the Wimbledon Park Sailing Club along with some of the other volunteers."