

Charcoal makers, Knighton Community Woodlands Group

Knighton Community Woodlands Group (KCWG) is local people coming together to enjoy, conserve and enrich our environment. We learn and share woodland skills, and use those skills to improve habitats for wildlife and to allow our members access to affordable woodland products.

We are looking for new volunteers to allow us to expand our new sustainable charcoal making and would like your help with this.

We make and sell sustainably produced charcoal, generating a small regular income to help meet our running costs - such as training, insurance, and tools. We use a charcoal retort, rather than a traditional charcoal ring-kiln, as a retort burns much more efficiently and cleanly, producing more charcoal and far less particulate pollution. Our retort produces charcoal within 7 to 8 hours, which is much more 'volunteer friendly' than the 24 hours that a ring-kiln needs supervising! We already sell to our members and through local shops.

Charcoal making allows us to make use of small timber and brash, utilising more of the timber we grow and turning the 'waste' side branches and tops that arise from our work into a value-added product. Long term, we would also like to run training courses on making charcoal.

You choose which days to attend and everyone works at their own pace. The work is fun and gives you a real sense of achievement at the end of the day. We provide all the tools and training needed. Some of the other skills we can teach you include coppicing, safe use of hand tools, cutting and properly seasoning firewood and managing woodlands for wildlife.

Our volunteer programme allows you to directly benefit local habitats and reduce your carbon footprint by growing a sustainable source of wood-fuel, timber and other woodland products – such as charcoal! The good company of fellow volunteers and the inclusivity of the group also helps to develop our local community. All volunteers gain knowledge and skills and you get plenty of fresh air and exercise on our woodland Task Days.

You don't need any charcoal-making skills, just enthusiasm, and we will teach you what we know – although we are still learning ourselves! You will be supported by an experienced and knowledgeable group who have been running for the past 12 years.

Use your skills and experience to help support local wildlife, the local community and make a positive contribution to the ecological and climate crises. Volunteer alongside a wonderful established group, allowing you to socialise and enhance your knowledge.

We meet in woodlands local to Knighton one day a week from 9.30am to around 5pm, on alternating Thursdays and Sundays - please see our website for our task day schedule. You don't need to attend every task day!

For more information please email: woodland@tveg.org.uk or telephone 01547 520374. To learn more about KCWG, please go to <http://tveg.org.uk/wordpress/woodland-project>