

Please see the individual Role Descriptions on the website for a detailed breakdown of duties.

Essential criteria for all long-term Handa volunteers:

- **You must be prepared to live and work on a remote island, in very basic, shared, mixed-sex accommodation with occasionally hostile weather conditions.**

- **You must have a good level of health and fitness.**

This is because one of your duties is to help visitors from the boat, which involves holding a heavy boat steady (in a variety of sea-states) and moving the wooden jetty up and down the beach all day. There is also **a lot of walking** to and from the shelter during beach duties and it's a long way uphill to the bothy!

You will be expected to carry out practical duties as and when required, and you will need to be able to carry tools, timber, and equipment.

- **You must be willing to meet and interact with the public, contractors, and other volunteers.**

As part of your duties you will need to welcome visitors to the island and to invite visitors to the shelter where you will give them an introductory talk about the island and its wildlife. You will also be living with occasional contractors or work parties, so strong communication and people skills are essential.

- **There is a Code of Conduct that sets out what the Trusts expects from you, and what you can expect from the Trust.** The Ranger or responsible person will ask anyone found behaving unacceptably to leave on the next available boat.

- **We regret that we cannot accommodate pets on Handa.**

- **ACCOMMODATION** is provided free of charge, in a two-roomed, stone-built bothy.

- There are 6 single bunk beds in a communal mixed sex room. Next to this are two flushing toilets and a shower. There is also a separate communal cooking/living area. Separate self-contained accommodation is also provided for the seasonal Ranger(s), however they also share the toilets and the shower. From time-to-time Scottish Wildlife Trust work parties spend a week on the island carrying out practical tasks. For much of the season, the bothy is a busy place!

- To keep our ecological impact to a minimum, as much as possible, everything on Handa is reused or recycled. Due to the remote location of Handa, the island is completely off-grid. We ask that volunteers are considerate when using resources such as gas and water, which are expensive to maintain and difficult to transport. The showers are powered by solar panels so do not expect to be able to take a shower every day!

- Please refer to the Handa Volunteer FAQs for further information.

PLEASE BRING as a minimum:

- Enough **food** for yourself for at least the first two weeks, **including for packed lunches and breakfast every day.** Most bothy residents cook communally so speak to the Ranger before arriving about what food to bring.
- **Insect repellent** and/or **midge net**
- **Sun cream, sun hat and sunglasses**
- A **watch** and a **(head)torch** with plenty of battery life, preferably with rechargeable batteries.
- **Waders** are essential for working on the beach and we provide these. However, if you have particularly small or large feet, please check the availability of waders with the Ranger before you come. Please bring a sturdy **belt** for these.
- **Plenty of socks** as you may get wet feet whilst working with the ferry.
- **Mobile phone and charger**
- **Sleeping bag, 2 pillowcases** and **2 fitted sheets** for the mattress. Alternatively, you may wish to bring a duvet and sheets, but these are not always as warm as a sleeping bag.
- **Warm and waterproof clothing** (including waterproof trousers)
- **2 sets of work clothing** (though Scottish Wildlife Trust fleeces and t-shirts will be provided for duration of your stay)
- **Thermos, water bottle and tupperware** for packed lunches
- **Sturdy footwear** (boots or walking shoes)
- **Binoculars** – the bothy has some older pairs, but you may want to bring your own
- **A hot water bottle** can make nights more comfortable, especially at the start and end of the season – the bunkroom where you'll be sleeping is unheated

GETTING SUPPLIES, POST and HAVING TIME OFF THE ISLAND

You are expected to provide all of your own food for the duration of your stay. Long-term volunteers do have a food allowance of £30 per week, but this is claimed back as expenses and does not include alcohol. Communal cooking is commonplace, but each week is different so always assume you are looking after yourself. Check with the Ranger prior to coming as there may be an ample supply of staples such as pasta and condiments already in the bothy. Scourie Stores and Post Office has all the essentials, but it is a little expensive and limited, especially for fresh fruit and veg. It's possible to walk to Scourie on days off from Tarbet, weather allowing – it is a 4 hour round trip on foot. To get supplies, ask arriving volunteers and visitors to bring things to you if it is convenient for them. The Ranger also goes off island every two weeks to collect shopping usually ordered through a supermarket click and collect system. Get your post re-directed to **Handa Island, c/o Scourie Stores, Lairg, IV27 4TB** and it will be collected every few weeks or so. The boatmen will provide one free return ferry ticket every 2 weeks of your stay, providing you come and go on empty boats. If you wish to come and go more frequently, you must pay the full fare.

HOW TO GET HERE

Please aim to arrive at Tarbet Pier for around **2pm on the first day of your placement**. **If you are delayed, it is essential that you contact the Ranger so that they can let the ferry operator know.** The Trust covers the ferry fare for its volunteers. When you arrive at Tarbet, please introduce yourself to the Ferry Operator and let him know you're a Volunteer; you'll be working closely with him throughout your stay.

- **If driving**, please allow sufficient time for your journey, bearing in mind that the roads are often slow during summer. If travelling via Lairg be aware that most of this route is single track. **Your car can be safely left at Tarbet pier for the duration of your stay.** Some choose to leave their keys with the ferrymen.
- **Public transport is very limited in the area and as of 2017, timings mean that this is likely not a viable option.** This is because the only bus service (the [Durness Bus](#)) arrives too late and leaves too early on a Saturday - linking public transport on other days can be very tricky. **Transport options for successful candidates will be discussed at interview.**

If you have any questions about getting to Handa ask the ranger *well in advance* of your placement!

ADVERSE WEATHER CONDITIONS – arrival and departure

Occasionally the weather is so severe that the boat will not run or will run a limited service. Always keep an eye on the forecast, and phone the Ranger the day before arrival if the weather is looking poor. Always keep your phone on and check it where possible on your trip as the Ranger may need to contact you to advise an earlier or later arrival.

COMMUNICATIONS

There are communication facilities on the island for emergency use only. For safety reasons, **we require you to bring your own mobile phone and charger.** There is a public phone at Tarbet, and Scourie and the nearest post office and shop is at Scourie. Most mobile networks have coverage, some more limited than others. We have wifi facilities, however whilst this is often fine, due to the location this cannot be guaranteed or relied upon

FURTHER INFORMATION

For more information on your role and what it is like to live on the island, please make sure you read all of the documents and watch the videos on our [website](#).

USEFUL CONTACTS

Handa Ranger	handaranger@scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk 07920 468572 - signal is patchy and text messages frequently get lost, so please phone and always leave a message if unable to speak to the Ranger directly.
Scottish Wildlife Trust Headquarters	volunteerhanda@scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk Tel: 0131 312 4732 and ask for the Handa Volunteering Co-ordinator.
Durness Tourist Centre	01971 511259
Handa ferry operators	Roger Tebay 07780 967800

**Thank you for supporting the Scottish Wildlife Trust.
We hope you have a fantastic time on Handa!**