



Volunteer Gardener placement at The Sharpham Trust

11-month placement mid-January to mid-December 2027, 4 days per week

About the Volunteer Opportunity

The Sharpham Trust is offering two residential volunteering opportunities in our garden team starting in January. This will be the fifth year offering these 11-month placements. Volunteers will be engaged in tasks in the 10-acre gardens that surround Sharpham House. Gaining comprehensive training and experience in a broad range of horticultural areas including all aspects of running a sustainable, no dig walled kitchen garden, managing ornamental borders, lawns, woodland and orchards.

You will join a passionate and knowledgeable small team that works hard to create and maintain beautiful, productive and environmentally-sustainable gardens where wildlife can thrive and people and our retreatants can connect deeply to nature. Most of your time will be spent outdoors in the gardens learning through doing.

Tasks are divided across the growing spaces to give you extensive experience. In our productive gardens this will include growing vegetables, fruit, cut flowers and a large range of culinary and tea herbs. Tasks will vary from preparing beds and propagation to harvesting, irrigation, working in our polytunnel and 100-foot glasshouse and managing apple and pear orchards. In our ornamental gardens you will be mowing lawns, strimming woodland areas, maintaining ornamental borders and more. This volunteer placement will include some light machinery use such as pedestrian mowers and trimmers, for which training will be given. You will also help oversee gardening sessions for people on retreat here.

About You

The volunteer placement at Sharpham is suitable for someone who is well organised, with excellent communication skills and the ability to work as part of a small team. You will have a passion for sustainable food growing and ornamental gardening as well as flexibility and a sense of humour. We are looking for volunteers who are enthusiastic, practical and keen to learn and contribute to a hard-working team. An interest in the Trust's environmental aims and mindfulness would also be an advantage.

Accommodation and Expenses

We provide fully equipped accommodation on-site in a shared bungalow with all the amenities, right next to the gardens and with a view down the River Dart to the nearby town of Totnes. As a volunteer you will be reimbursed specific living expenses based on production of receipts monthly.

Apricot Centre Training Opportunity

The Apricot Centre in Dartington offer a Level 3 Year-long Diploma programme in Regenerative Land-Based Systems on one day a week which is free for the successful candidates who will need to apply for this separately.

The Sharpham Trust

We are a registered charity caring for the historic Grade I-listed Sharpham House and Estate on the banks of the River Dart near to Totnes. At the heart of the Sharpham Trust's ethos is our desire to build a more mindful, compassionate and environmentally sustainable world. We connect people with nature and foster mindfulness and well-being through our programme of retreats, mindfulness courses, public events, outdoor learning and the arts.

Other Useful Information

The Sharpham Trust is located 3 miles from Totnes and on the edge of the village of Ashprington. Having a car is an advantage but not essential as there is a direct bike path to Totnes which takes approximately 50 minutes to walk and 25 minutes to cycle. From Totnes there are good public transport links by bus and a train station with good national links. We are a small team working closely together and you will be living and working with your fellow trainee 24/7. It would be an advantage if you have previous experience of shared living, are communicative, respectful and open-minded so that everyone can enjoy a harmonious experience.

How to register your interest in volunteering

If you would like to hear more about the role, please contact Emily Ings, Co-Head Gardener at: gardener@sharphamtrust.org

Click here for the online application form: <https://forms.gle/uSVbgPqegnfiAodaA>

Applications close: 9am, Friday 11 September 2026

Interviews: 20/21 September 2026