

Ian Brooker

Using volunteers to help manage the area.

Do you use volunteers at all, as a ranger in looking after the area?

Yes, very much so, I think half of our job we wouldn't be able to get done without the use of volunteers. We're very lucky here for the last 17 years we've had a conservation group called the Sticklepath and Okehampton Conservation Volunteers who regularly come out, every Friday, and they do all sorts of work: now some of that can be maintenance of the area, litter picking, that sort of thing, but quite a lot of the work is actually keeping control of vegetation here, especially the gorse, the gorse does tend to take over and although there's grazing in this area there's not enough grazing now to keep total control of it and some of the sites are so important for industrial archaeology; it's important that the gorse is kept under control otherwise the root system which will actually damage that, so yes, volunteers are very very important to us, and they seem to enjoy it; we've used scouts, we've used Duke of Edinburgh Award Schemes as well here, and that all helps to help look after the place and to get an opportunity to teach them about the site and what it's all about as well.