Black Middens Bastle House
Monitor Volunteer

Why does English Heritage need my support?
English Heritage cares for over 400 historic buildings and places. In the North region, 90 are free to enter and enjoyed by millions each year. Black Middens Bastle House is situated in an isolated spot on the north side of the Tarset Valley. A bastle house is a type of fortified, or defensible, farmhouse peculiar to the Border country between England and Scotland.

Monitor volunteers play an important role in looking after English Heritage’s sites, and ensuring they are safe and well presented for our many visitors. This can involve checking for any issues with the buildings and ruins, changes to the wider landscape or entry to and from the site. You will help us to better understand and care for our sites, by reporting issues and helping to maintain site presentation.

How much time will I be expected to give?
Though regular visits throughout the year are important, the frequency and time can be agreed with you. It may be weekly or monthly depending on the site and your availability.

Where will I be based?
Black Middens Bastle House, Tarset, Bellingham, Northumberland, NE48 1NE

What will I be doing?
- Providing feedback to your local team about any damage to the buildings or any problems you may find on the site.
- Maintaining the site’s appearance by reporting any damage and ensuring signage is well maintained.
- As far as possible, respond or pass on visitors’ questions with regard to the site or its history. You will also direct visitors to the website where they can find further information.
- Collecting and disposing of any litter found on site, provided it is safe to do so.

What skills, qualities and experience do I need?
- This role would suit someone living in the local area with a reasonable level of fitness and an interest in helping to ensure the site is well-presented and any issues are reported.
- You need to be self-motivated and happy to work alone.

What support and training will I receive?
You will be introduced to a main point of contact. They will then meet with you to outline the role and tasks, as well as ensure you have everything to undertake your role safely.
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What will English Heritage expect from me?
• To be the friendly face of English Heritage.
• To be reliable in attendance and dependable.
• Help us maintain the highest standards of presentation at our sites and properties.
• To wear English Heritage volunteer uniform where provided.
• Help us protect our properties and collections by understanding and following our security and safety procedures.
• Maintain good working relationships with staff, other volunteers and members of the public.
• Attend appropriate training and learn about the work of English Heritage.
• Observe organisational policy and procedures.
• Safeguard confidential information about English Heritage and let us know about anything relating to your role or the work of English Heritage that you think might be controversial.
• Any documentary or other material (including any copyright applying thereto) you are provided with or created by you in respect of your volunteering will be the property and copyright of English Heritage (unless otherwise agreed in writing).

What can I expect from English Heritage?
• A welcoming and enjoyable experience.
• To be treated fairly and with respect.
• Recognition and appreciation for your contribution.
• A full induction and training programme with on-going support.
• A volunteer pass allowing free entry to English Heritage properties is available on completion of six months of volunteering.
• Reimbursement of reasonable local travel costs for meetings within agreed limits.
• A certificate to demonstrate work carried out for English Heritage is available on request to show future employers or further education providers.
• You will be covered by English Heritage’s own indemnity arrangements in respect of all liabilities that may result from your appointment as a volunteer.
• You will be given site overviews, including risk assessments, and will be briefed on our lone working procedures.