

## New volunteers to join the team

Last month we gave maintenance Team Leaders an opportunity to recruit some willing helpers from the volunteer waiting list.

This could be as an extra pair of hands for regular maintenance visits; to take on a share of the section visits entirely if getting there 3-4 times a year is difficult; or to mentor and transition to the next cohort of volunteers on a section.

Of the 155 current maintenance sections, 16 Team Leaders responded asking for additional volunteers in some way.

The eventual recruitment campaign included:

- 9 totally vacant sections (including pre-existing vacancies)
- 6 sections asking for new teams to take on at least one full visit each year
- 7 sections welcoming extra team-members to work with.

These 22 sections were distributed the entire length of the Track.

All appropriate prospective volunteers on the waiting list were contacted (60 people, longest time on waiting list 4.5 years!).

Considering the range of sections (location and form) on offer, it was disappointing that only 12 people responded

at all. Nearly all responses were from people less than 12 months on the waiting list. Interest in volunteering is often expressed through BTF Event evaluation surveys, as well as through our online contact option or direct email; it may be supposed that initial enthusiasm unfortunately wears off. People are eventually removed from the waiting list if there's never an indication of ongoing interest.

Sectional preferences were heavily skewed towards the northern half of Track (see graph below). This is usual and reflects the residential location of most prospective volunteers. Recruitment in the Southern Forests and Great Southern region must be specific, strategic, local, and look beyond our usual supporter base.

The placement process involves reviewing the responses and deciding who gets which spot (when there are options!). Placements are based on interest shown and a suitable fit between the person and the section, as well as length of time on the waiting list. We then start the process of registering them as volunteers, induction material, and of course putting them in touch with existing volunteers where appropriate.

New recruitment isn't limited to such coordinated campaigns – please contact Helen at any time to tap into the resource of prospective volunteers on the waiting list.

