Job Description – Minerals & Deeds Officer

Incorporating the role of Deputy Gaveller

Job Summary

This role combines two distinct and important functions of the Estates team in the Forest of Dean, and the wider West Forest District. As the district's Minerals Officer, the postholder will lead the administration of mining and quarrying activity, incorporating the historic role of Deputy Gaveller in the Forest of Dean. The Deputy Gaveller has specific responsibilities arising from the Dean Forest (Mines) Act of 1838, and is Forestry England's primary liaison with the freeminers of the Forest of Dean. As the district's Deeds Officer the postholder has primary responsibility for maintaining and interpreting the legal property layers on our GIS system and producing reports to support the estates team as required. The role includes field surveying to support the investigation of boundary disputes and encroachments. The Minerals and Deeds Officer will bring these two roles together, providing a professional, accurate and efficient supporting service to, primarily the estates team, but also the wider West Forest District team as required.

Together we are Forestry England, we grow forests for all, for life.

Key Responsibilities & Accountabilities

Deputy Gaveller / Mining & quarrying administration and safety.

- Inspect and regulate mining activity across the Hundred of St Briavels in accordance with relevant legislation, notably the Dean Forest (Mines) Act 1838.
- Assess and process applications to become a freeminer and maintain the official Register of Freeminers & Freequarrymen.
- Foster a positive team working relationship with colleagues from the Mines Remediation Authority, acting as the local liaison and supervisor for historic mine workings such as subsidence and dangers arising from old mines, mine entries and coal tips.
- Administer mining gales and associated mineral interests, rents, royalties and lease issues arising from said.
- Foster a positive, professional working relationship with active miners and quarrymen in support of a safety-first culture in the Dean's mines and small quarries.
- Foster a positive, professional working relationship with the caving community across the West Forest District, which in the Dean is represented by the Forest of Dean Cave Access Group in support of a safety first culture that respects cultural heritage, cave archaeology and ecology below ground (principally, but not limited to, bats).
- Attend HM Verderers Court on a quarterly basis to report on minerals activity within the Forest of Dean.
- Provide professional mining and quarrying expertise to the wider estates and forest beat teams across West Forest District as may be required for safety, cultural heritage or nature recovery reasons.

Deeds Officer

- Positively collaborate with the wider estates team to support case work through the investigation and interrogation of the deeds and GIS property layers to establish legal boundary, access, easements, mining plans, historic conveyances and other property issues as required.

- Assist with resolution of boundary disputes, encroachments and access issues, supporting local staff as may be required.
- Research and interpret ownership histories affecting third party properties and their interaction with the Forestry England managed estate as required.
- Maintain the accuracy, intergrity and accessibility of the Deeds, Forest of Dean property records and GIS property layers.

Land surveyor

- Support the wider estates team in undertaking accurate field surveys and produce mapping using GIS systems.
- Accurately undertake and record field surveys as required, principally, in relation to boundary disputes, encroachments but also for other purposes such as lease agreements and land sales, as required.
- Commission and manage specialist land surveyor support where required.

Location-Specific Information (optional)

The postholder will be based in the district office at Bank House, Coleford, Gloucestershire. A blended working pattern can be agreed, with a minimum attendance at the office of 3-days per week.

Skills, Knowledge & Experience

Essential Professional and Technical experience

- Experience of administering mineral rights, mining operations, quarrying activities, estates management, land management or a related regulatory environment.
- Experience interpreting legal documents, deeds, leases, licences, plans, easements or property records.
- Experience maintaining accurate records and administering complex statutory or regulatory processes.
- Experience using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and associated mapping software.
- Experience undertaking field inspections, surveys or site-based investigations and producing accurate reports.
- Experience working with multiple stakeholders and maintaining effective professional relationships.
- Ability to interpret and apply legislation, regulations and policy guidance.
- Ability to analyse complex historical and legal records and present findings clearly.
- Strong GIS, mapping and spatial data management capability.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Strong organisational skills and attention to detail.
- Competent user of Microsoft Office applications.
- Ability to manage competing priorities while maintaining accuracy.

Desirable Professional and Technical experience

- Experience of mining, quarrying, geology or mineral extraction activities.
- Experience of land surveying and mapping.
- Experience of public sector estates management.
- Experience working with heritage assets or historic legislative frameworks.
- Experience managing royalties, rents, licences or mineral interests.
- Experience engaging with community groups, statutory bodies or industry representatives.
- Experience working with boundary records, title plans and historic deeds.

Qualifications

Essential

- Degree or equivalent experience in mining engineering, geology, minerals management, land management, surveying, geography, estate management or a related discipline.
- Demonstrable experience of GIS systems and spatial data management.

Desirable

- Professional membership of a relevant minerals, surveying, geology or estate management body.
- Level 3 qualification in Surveying, Geomatics or a related discipline.
- Chartered status or working towards membership of a relevant professional body.