

## Job Description - Volunteering and Community Engagement Officer (PB5)

### Job summary

The Volunteering and Community Engagement Officer's role balances these two pivotal and complementary areas of work.

Community engagement is our work across all forest beats to ensure our woods are welcoming and safe for local communities to use and enjoy, reaching out to community groups to facilitate visits and increase understanding and support for our work.

The volunteering part of the role provides specialist support to those offering volunteering opportunities at both our forest beats and our main recreation sites, adding value and ensuring best practice as we increase the number and quality of volunteering opportunities in line with Growing the Future to 2031.

This post sits within the Recreation and Engagement team which consists of four recreation hub teams, Haldon Forest, Cardinham, Forest of Dean, Wyre & the Marches, and specialist functions such as community engagement, learning, volunteering, marketing and communications.

The role can be based anywhere within the district, with frequent travel around the district a necessary part of its success.

### Key responsibilities & accountabilities

#### Volunteering - approximately 75%

- Create and implement the West district Volunteer Plan, identifying areas in need of support at both our main recreation hubs and our wider forest and opportunities to maintain and grow volunteer activity and diversify participation
- Support and promote volunteering opportunities, ensuring best practice is followed and a strong health and safety culture is emphasised.
- Provide support for staff managing volunteers throughout the district, including dealing with challenging situations as they arise. Tasks include reviewing volunteer agreements, ensuring volunteers are registered on the volunteer database, carrying out FISA checks on practical work parties, and providing advice on welfare provision, as well as monitoring and auditing volunteer management
- Carry out regular site visits to review and support volunteer good practice; joining in with volunteer activities to get a sense of the work being done and build solid relationships with staff and volunteers alike
- Coordinate volunteering activity including corporate volunteering and partnership working. Organise and run corporate volunteer days in conjunction with the Recreation Projects Manager in line with the National guidance on corporate groups
- Coordinate the shadow volunteer programme in West
- Keep clear, concise and accurate record keeping using the Volunteer Management CRM system, ensuring all staff who manage volunteers understand the database and input details regularly and accurately
- Recruit and induct new volunteers; book, facilitate and on occasion deliver training sessions
- Keep up to date with volunteering internally by attending Volunteer Network Meetings, Teams catch up calls and linking in on a 1:1 basis with the team. Run two West-district in-person volunteering meetings a year - in winter and summer - to pass on knowledge and troubleshoot.
- Liaise with national colleagues and champion volunteering, telling the story of our volunteers to volunteers, wider staff teams and externally.
- Actively seek feedback from volunteers to help develop our ideas

#### Community Engagement - approximately 20%

- Lead our community rangers in their work across the district, with regular monthly team catch ups online, and hosting two face-to-face meetings a year in autumn and spring to brainstorm issues and showcase best practice
- Travel around the district to support development of work - this could include walking to remote areas to troubleshoot particular issues with teams, helping design community questionnaires, or representing Forestry England at public events

- Lead on the creation of community plans, including the district schedule and budget for plans, public engagement events, templates where appropriate, and production of the final plans
- Provide advice and guidance on day-to-day issues around forest ops engagement and day-to-day community work issues
- Evolve how we engage around forest plans, ensuring we are reaching out to the right audiences and gathering their views as part of the process
- Lead and proactively support volunteers and members of staff to deliver community engagement programmes and events
- Support the development of key relationships with third-party stakeholders

#### **General - 5%**

- Manage the community engagement annual budget, reporting to the Operations Manager for Marketing and Communications on a monthly basis
- Demonstrate and proactively support safe working practices, review risk assessments, and share messaging, training, updates and lone working support for the community team
- Encourage rangers to share good news stories nationally and locally, internally and externally

This role's grade usually contains line management duties. At present there is no line management attached to this role, but this might be added in the future.

### **Skills, knowledge & experience**

#### **Essential professional and technical experience**

- Experience of working collaboratively with organisations, community groups, volunteers and local people, confident in starting new conversations and building relationships
- Experience in creating and developing engagement packages and programmes
- Experience of working with communities facing disengagement with local services or experiencing levels of deprivation and additional barriers to making decisions about their community.
- Experience and confident in running events and public engagement
- Able to build and maintain effective relationships with partner organisations, including networking with other agencies and departments.
- Ability to act as a trouble shooter, arbitrator, problem solver and crisis handler.
- Reliable and self-motivated, ability to work independently and without close supervision
- Able to act in a professional manner and with integrity at all times, understanding and adhering to professional boundaries
- Able to challenge inappropriate behaviour sensitively and diplomatically
- Discretion and confidentiality combined with sensitivity and diplomacy
- Able to work independently as well as part of a team.

### **Qualifications**

#### **Essential**

- Functional skills in Math's and English.

