

Job description - Project Delivery Officer (PB5)

Job summary

As Project Delivery Officer, you will be part of the Upper Irthing PRISM Landscape Recovery Project; a partnership between landowners and Forestry England. The project has secured development funding through DEFRA's Landscape Recovery scheme to co-design a new model for integrated land management across ~10,400 hectares of the Upper Irthing Catchment, spanning the Northumberland/Cumbria border.

This 2-year development phase (commenced in 2024) involves surveys, data collection, partner liaison, and stakeholder engagement to inform a long-term (minimum 20-year) proposal for managing the catchment. The area includes the south-west corner of Kielder Forest and adjacent privately owned land. The project takes a holistic, catchment-wide approach to managing habitats, species, natural resources, and the rural economy—creating a plan that works for nature, landowners, and local communities.

The Landscape Recovery scheme is part of DEFRA's Environmental Land Management Schemes (ELMS), supporting long-term, landscape-scale environmental initiatives. It enables cross-boundary collaboration and supports private landowners in delivering environmental improvements while continuing food, fuel, and fibre production.

PRISM stands for:

- Peatlands
- Rivers
- Invasives
- Species Recovery
- Meadows

These themes reflect the breadth of the project, aligned with the funding criteria:

- Net Zero (peatland restoration, woodland creation)
- Protected Sites (SSSIs, NNRs, SACs—over 20 designated parcels in the project area)
- Wildlife-rich habitats (riparian corridors, species-rich grasslands, transitional habitats, invasive species control, species recovery)
- Food production (supporting thriving habitats and commercial enterprise)

The project is currently midway through the development phase. While further involvement may be possible if plans are accepted and future funding secured, this cannot be guaranteed. Future roles may evolve based on the business and funding models developed.

Key responsibilities & accountabilities

- deliver and complete a suite of habitat and species surveys to establish baselines and current conditions. Some surveys will be conducted directly; others will require external specialists. You will produce specifications, procure expertise, and supervise contractors in line with project financial rules.
- develop habitat restoration, creation, and enhancement plans based on survey data. These will range from detailed delivery-ready plans to broader long-term recommendations. You will work with the Financial Officer to assess budgetary needs and identify appropriate funding sources.
- liaise with project partners, particularly landowners and managers, throughout planning and delivery.
- contribute to other project outputs including access plans, resilience strategies, funding and business models, and impact assessments.
- support stakeholder and community engagement, communications, and public representation of the project.
- produce and contribute to project documentation and reporting, including budget and expenditure tracking.
- undertake other project-related duties as assigned by your line manager.

And any other tasks, reasonably requested by your line manager.

Location-specific information

Role is linked specifically to the project area in South West of Kielder Forest on the Northumberland / Cumbria border. Primary office location will be Bellingham, but desk space can be made available at Spadeadam satellite office. Hybrid working options can be discussed with some home working time acceptable. The role will also require regular visits to the project area and to visit partners.

Skills, knowledge & experience

Essential professional and technical experience

- experience working on development and/or delivery of a nature conservation project, with a sound understanding of UK ecology, habitats, and species, and their management and restoration / reintroduction,
- experience working with a wide range of stakeholders (inc. other landowners and managers, statutory bodies, eNGO's, funders, local authorities, community groups etc.),
- experience of habitat and species surveys,
- experience producing habitat management plans and proposals,
- strong organisational skills, including the ability to plan your own time and manage your own tasks and workload efficiently,
- experience of procurement, contract management and contractor supervision / consultant liaison,
- ability to work independently while maintaining good relationships and knowledge exchange with team members and the wider project partnership.
- competent in IT including core Microsoft Office applications; GIS experience beneficial.
- a full driving license.

Desirable professional and technical experience

- specific experience of working on peatland restoration OR nature conservation in farmed environments (including through agricultural subsidies) OR woodland creation and management.
- understanding of and/or experience in project reporting and budgeting.
- good communication skills in a range of media to a variety of audiences.
- familiarity with relevant legislation related to designated sites, forestry and woodland management, and water course management and restoration.

Qualifications

Essential

- relevant degree advantageous, but relevant practical experience beyond academic studies essential

Desirable

- member of e.g. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, British Ecological Society or local naturalist groups.
- relevant protected species licenses beneficial but not crucial