

Job Description – GIS and Planning Assistant (PB6a)

Job Summary

As England's largest land management organisation and guardians of the nation's forests, Forestry England is uniquely placed to deliver benefits for people, wildlife and climate. You can find out more about our vision in our [Growing the Future \(2021-2026\) strategy](#).

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) are increasingly valuable tools for managing the nation's forests. The GIS and Planning Assistant is an exciting role that will support our forestry, environment and wider land management teams in the East Forest District by coordinating the collection, processing and management of accurate and insightful spatial data.

The District consists of myriad of habitats from the largest productive coniferous forest, mixed broadleaved woodlands, heathland, chalk and acid grasslands, to streams in diverse landscapes in south-east of England from North Norfolk to East Sussex. We are in the forefront of the climate change pressures, but also of the pro-active planning to ensure that the forests thrive and continue to support society in the future. We have launched [Forest Resilience Plan](#) outlining long-term changes towards lower impact silviculture systems and creating more diverse, healthy and connected habitats. We are accelerating our efforts in restoring Ancient Woodlands and trialling new tree species best suited for future climate.

You will use this data to support important decision making processes, such as forest planning and operational planning. This will involve the production of maps, reports and other analyses and visualisations of spatial data. It will also involve working with a wide range of colleagues, from ecologists to foresters, to make sure that outputs are accurate and meet the high standards of our sustainable forest management certifications.

You will be an important part of the Planning Team, who provide expertise in forest planning, in close collaboration with the Environment and Forest and Land Management teams. In particular, you will work closely with, and learn from, the Forest Planner. You will assist the Forest Planner in the production and review of forest plans and the coordination of our operational planning processes.

You will be supported in developing your expertise in application of spatial tools. This will be accompanied with regular opportunities to grow your understanding of forestry and land management through formal and informal training and involvement in organisation-wide forest planning/GIS networks and meetings.

Key Responsibilities & Accountabilities

Main role responsibilities

- Coordinate and assist with the collection, processing, and management of spatial data that supports forest and operational planning. This will require you to coordinate procedures for gathering data, such as tree planting returns, tree safety management surveys, and forest tariffing.

- Update essential data sets, such as the sub-compartment database, tree safety, thinning, and conservation records using information gathered from surveys.
- Create new spatial layers, query and analyse spatial data to support management decisions.
- Produce maps, reports and other visual representations of data for Forest Plans and other projects.
- Undertake regular integrity checks of our data to ensure datasets meet the standards required for operational use and compliance with the UK Woodland Assurance Standard.
- Assist the Forest Planner in the production and review of forest plans.
- Provide advice and technical support to colleagues on the use of GIS, including Forester Web, ArcPro and ESRI Field Maps.

General responsibilities

- Minimise filing backlogs and prioritise workload to meet targets.
- Be familiar with and appropriately adhere to Forestry England Policies and Procedures.
- Keep Health and Safety matters as the overriding determinant at all times and in all circumstances.
- Undertake any other duties, reasonably requested by the Forest Planner or Planning Manager.

Location-Specific Information (optional)

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- The duties of this post require the applicant to sometimes travel to remote locations that are not accessible by public transport. You will therefore need to hold a full and current driving licence that enables you to drive in the UK. We are willing to consider any proposals put forward by applicants that would allow them to do the job by other means.

Skills, Knowledge & Experience

Essential

- Experience using GIS software, preferably ESRI ArcGIS/ArcPro.
- Ability to work with complex spatial data accurately and precisely.
- Excellent communication skills, both written and verbal, and the ability to work collaboratively across teams.
- Proficient user of Microsoft Office applications.

Desirable

- Basic understanding of forestry, land management, ecology or forest planning.
- Experience with mobile GIS software, e.g. ESRI Field Maps.

Qualifications

Desirable

Degree qualification in an environmental discipline with a strong GIS component, or demonstrable, equivalent professional experience.