

Job Description - Plantation on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS) Project Officer

Job summary

Our vision is that the nation's forests will provide the most valuable places for wildlife to thrive and expand in England. We believe in the positive, long-term impact that forests can have on people's lives, England's biodiversity, a thriving green economy and our response to the climate emergency.

West Forest District is responsible for the sustainable management of over 37,000ha of the nation's forests and woodlands in the west and south-west of England and extends from the Shropshire Hills south to the majestic oak and beech woods of Savernake Forest in Wiltshire and south-west to Idless Woods near Truro in Cornwall. The district team extends to some 170 employees, with frontline delivery through our 17 remotely located delivery teams (5 forest centre and 12 forest beats) which are supported by our network of highly valued volunteers and contractors.

You will work closely with the planning and operational teams to build a programme of work that will accelerate our PAWS restoration program focusing on the most challenging sites which are unlikely to achieve our policy targets without additional support.

The district-wide programme of PAWS restoration will be strategically led by the Nature Recovery Manager to ensure coordinated delivery across all priority nature recovery sites and enabled by our operational delivery teams, including Foresters and Civil Engineers.

The postholder will liaise closely and develop their plans and ideas with the Beat Foresters and their teams, and the Area Ecologists. Networking with colleagues working on forest resilience across the country, and all parts of the Forestry Commission will be expected.

You will have the opportunity to work with experienced colleagues, passionate about their contribution to sustainable forestry, conservation and the organisation's overarching strategy. You will help to connect everyone with the nation's forests, caring for them for people to enjoy, wildlife to flourish and business to grow.

The postholder will be based in the district office at Bank House, Coleford, Gloucestershire (other Forestry England office locations within the district may be considered). A blended working pattern can be agreed, with a minimum attendance at an office of 2 days per week.

If the successful applicant is new to Forestry England, then they will need to be embedded within a Forestry England office for a significant proportion of the working week during an induction period.

You can expect to spend time outdoors, working remotely and you will be expected to manage your own time to maximise efficiency and effectiveness.

Travel: The postholder will be expected to travel to different office and depot locations as well as remotely located woods & forests to support the remotely located delivery teams as may be required; and to attend national meetings and training events. This will most likely require travel by car, and thus a current driving licence is seen as a requirement of the role although candidates may put forward a proposal that satisfies the business need to travel without recourse to driving.

The postholder will be part of the Environment team led by the Nature Recovery Manager.

Key responsibilities & accountabilities

- Lead delivery of our PAWS restoration programme by establishing a program of works that deliver impact over the 3-year project period focusing on;
- Restoration thinning, to increase the "nativeness" of our PAWS
- Veteran trees and trees of special interest; protection, haloing and survey work.
- Invasive weed species to build a prioritised programme for eradication / long-term control.
- Coppicing, protect cut coppice and get ride network back into a condition where it can be cost effectively maintained going forward.

- Removal of redundant materials, such as old fences and pheasant pens
- Foster a positive team working relationship with colleagues to inspire and engage everyone in the project, deriving knowledge, harnessing expertise and building insight and trust. Be open and realistic as to the challenges inherent in the business, promoting transparency and constructive dialogue.
- Engage with district and national colleagues to enable effective delivery of projects.
- Work proactively with the Forest Planning team to ensure that all regulatory requirements are met ahead of work being undertaken e.g. approval of Felling License's etc.
- Deliver a positive and inclusive culture, fostering cross-functional collaboration and support.
- Positively collaborate with finance and business support to maintain clarity on approved expenditure plans and monitoring of spending against delivery.
- Undertake realistic project planning and adherence to existing Forestry England systems and processes to manage the project delivery on time and to budget.
- Feed into monitoring and reporting on progress of the Nature Recovery Programme in a timely, transparent and accurate manner.
- And any other tasks, reasonably requested by your line manager.

Skills, knowledge & experience

Essential professional and technical experience

- Experience planning and managing operational programmes in a land management, forestry, conservation or environmental setting.
- Proven ability to work positively and collaboratively within multidisciplinary teams.
- Strong networking, communication and influencing skills.
- Ability and competence in use of IT packages including MS Office and GIS mapping software.

Desirable professional and technical experience

- Experience of managing a budget, and a sound understanding of and experience of managing contracts

Qualifications

Essential

- Degree or Higher National Diploma (HND) in Forestry or significant equivalent experience in forestry, land management, or the environment.
- Full UK driving license.

Desirable

- Membership of the Institute of Chartered Foresters (ICF) or a commitment to achieve membership.

