**Senior Ecologist – Natural Capital**

**Job Description and Person Specification**

**Reports to:** Head of Nature Recovery

**Contract:** Permanent Full Time

**Hours:** 37.5 hours per week with occasional weekend and evening work as required

**Based at:** Elm Tree Court, Devizes with travel across Wiltshire and the wider Bristol Avon Catchment area. Hybrid working available.

**JOB PURPOSE**

The Senior Ecologist – Natural Capital will play a critical role in advancing the Trust’s ambition to bring about nature’s recovery across Wiltshire and the wider catchment areas. This role will not only contribute to achieving 30% of land, rivers, and wetlands managed for nature by 2030 but will also drive commercial growth through the delivery of consultancy services in Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and natural capital markets.

**DIMENSIONS**

**Direct line management reports:** There are currently no line management responsibilities, but you will be required to provide support, guidance and mentoring to the wider team and any trainees/placements.

**Budget responsibility:** Responsibility for project budgets, financial management of consultancy work, and generating commercial income through ecological and environmental services, with support and strategic guidance from the Head of Nature Recovery.

**MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

You will be working to support the development and delivery of a range of ecological and environmental services driven largely through natural capital and private finance to drive forward nature’s recovery. You will be seeking opportunities to deliver against the Trust’s 30 by 30 and species abundance targets as part of our Nature Recovery Directorate. The main duties and responsibilities will be focussed on:

*Development of high-integrity, specialist ecological services:*

A primary focus of this role is to help generate commercial income through the delivery of high-quality ecological and environmental services. Key responsibilities include:

* Proactively identifying and pursuing commercial opportunities, including Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) projects, carbon markets, and other natural capital initiatives.
* Generating income through consultancy services by developing and delivering ecological assessments, habitat management and monitoring plans, and other technical reports for private, public, and third-sector clients.
* Preparing competitive proposals and quotations, negotiating contracts, and managing client relationships to ensure successful projects that deliver for nature.
* Help build and maintain systems and processes for efficient project management, from initial enquiry through to project delivery and evaluation.
* Help lead the financial management of consultancy projects, ensuring projects are delivered on time and within budget.
* Supporting the Head of Nature Recovery in strategic planning and business development, contributing to the design and rollout of new consultancy offerings.
* Preparing and submitting applications for permits and consents, such as Planning Applications and EIAs.
* Development of management plans and ecological report writing
* Undertaking protected species surveys/monitoring
* Keeping up to date with policy and legislation changes impacting on nature’s recovery, farming and ecology and sharing with the wider team.
* Supporting the promotion of both project focussed and wider conservation issues and Wiltshire Wildlife Trust at a senior level, by working with the marketing and communications team, assisting with internal and external events and attending external working groups.
* Ensuring the highest levels of management of health and safety of all staff, placements and volunteers involved in land management and promote the use of best practice in all areas of work.

*Expanding nature-based investment opportunities:*

* Developing our work with Biodiversity Net Gain and other environmental services, on both our own and third-party land, including that of farmers across Wiltshire
* Developing nature-based projects, producing relevant maps using GIS, survey reports and associated documentation, such as habitat management and monitoring plans
* Exploring and utilising innovative funding models, such as voluntary carbon markets, biodiversity credits, and other emerging financial mechanisms.
* Supporting the delivery and development of existing projects such as the Bristol Avon Catchment Market and contributing to the development of a Wiltshire-wide carbon and BNG market through the NEIRF project.

Creating new revenue streams by establishing the Trust as a provider of consultancy services to businesses, developers, and landowners seeking to meet regulatory and voluntary biodiversity and carbon obligations.

*Supporting nature’s recovery:*

* Supporting landholders with habitat creation and enhancement advice; this will include responding to enquiries, scoping new projects, liaising with clients, writing quotations and tender responses, scheduling work, and other related project management tasks
* Delivering and supporting the expansion of ecological farm advice services to maximise biodiversity, working with key partners to increase WWT’s impact and reach
* Supporting the development of our own working farm as a ‘farmer learning and engagement hub’ through ecological baselining, planning and monitoring
* Any other duties as may be required which are commensurate with this post.

**SAFEGUARDING**

Wiltshire Wildlife Trust is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children, young people and adults at risk. All WWT staff will receive safeguarding training and must ensure that they comply with WWT’s safeguarding policy.

**BACKGROUND**

With a friendly staff team and many passionate and expert volunteers helping fulfil our mission, Wiltshire Wildlife Trust is the largest organisation concerned with all aspects of the environment in Wiltshire and Swindon. We advocate for the protection and restoration of habitats for wildlife, run our own farming operation and promote renewable energy. We are part of the network of 47 Wildlife Trusts which spans the whole of the UK, advocating for the recovery of our natural environment and which has over 800,000 members.

There is a growing appreciation of the ecological and climate emergencies and the emergence of new approaches to nature conservation. There are increasing opportunities for the Trust to influence outcomes across a wide range of sectors and growing public support for our work.

**WORKING RELATIONSHIPS**

You will report to the Nature Recovery Team Manager and will work closely with colleagues from across the Trust. You will be required to frequently liaise with a wide range of stakeholders, internally and externally including partners, landowners and community groups. Ability to speak to large groups of people to convey complex and sometimes controversial messages and often acting as advocate for Wiltshire Wildlife Trust.

**SCOPE FOR IMPACT**

This post will be pivotal in helping the Trust respond to the opportunities and challenges presented and could play a significant part in working to achieve our strategic target of 30% of land, rivers and wetlands managed for nature by 2030. It is a wide ranging role that will involve the development and delivery of a range of ecological services, working with green finance to deliver natures recovery. Opportunities to engage with a wide range of partners to support the development of new approaches to address the major challenges facing the recovery of nature in Wiltshire, Swindon and the wider catchment areas will also be key.

**EXPERIENCE, QUALIFICATIONS AND SKILLS REQUIRED**

This is a role that requires sound ecological knowledge with a good understanding of the major issues facing the natural environment. The role requires the ability to be innovative, adaptable, with a strong level of self-motivation and the ability to communicate with a wide range of stakeholders.

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|  | Essential | Desirable |
| Qualifications | * To be educated to degree level, with a relevant environmental degree, or have proven substantial relevant experience |  |
| Knowledge and Experience | * Proven experience in delivering commercial ecological and natural capital services, particularly in BNG and carbon markets. * Strong commercial acumen, with a track record of generating income through consultancy work. * Experience of ecological survey and assessment, including protected species surveys and licencing * Experience of project management and managing relationships with clients and contractors * Excellent communication and negotiation skills, with experience in preparing proposals, quoting for work, and managing client relationships. * Experience of managing, mentoring and training placements, volunteers and of supervising contractors * Experience of writing nature conservation management plans and ecological reports * A sound understanding of Biodiversity Net Gain and key principles of Nature Based Solutions * A sound understanding and knowledge of the ecology, habitat management and conservation requirements of priority habitats and species * Understanding of UK Conservation framework, environmental issues and legislation * Protected species licenses held | * Experience of practical land management across a range of habitats * Experience of working with technical specialists * Knowledge of agri-environment and farming practices |
| Skills | * Experience of GIS, preferably ArcGIS or ESRI based systems, data management, and interpretation of data * Ability to utilise environmental service calculation tools, such as Defra’s Biodiversity Metric 4.0. * Excellent written / oral communication skills * Building and maintaining strong working relationships with a range of stakeholders and partners * Managing and prioritising a busy workload with multiple deadlines * IT Skills – Using MS Office for report writing, presentations, project planning and budgeting |  |
| Personal attributes | * Act as an effective leader and advocate. * Self-motivation, initiative and drive and ability to guide, support and influence others. * Ability to negotiate in a sensitive and pragmatic manner * Excellent team worker * Dynamic and innovative with ability to adapt * Attention to detail * Ability to process complex information and present in a variety of formats to different audiences * Excellent client care. |  |
| Additional requirements | * Valid full driving licence. * There will be a requirement for occasional evening work. * CIEEM membership at Associate level or higher |  |

Special note:

This job description does not form part of the contract of employment but indicates how that contract should be performed. The job description will be subject to periodic review and amendment in consultation with the post holder. The post holder may be required to perform duties other than those given in this job description. The duties and responsibilities attached to the post may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the duties or the level of the responsibility entailed. Such variations are a common occurrence and would not in themselves justify the re-evaluation of a post. In cases, however, where a permanent and substantial change in the duties of the post occurs, consistent with a higher level of responsibility, then the post would be eligible for re-evaluation.