

Job Description

Job title: Ecology Officer – Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)
Team: Biodiversity & Greenspaces
Service: Historic and Natural Environment
Directorate: Planning Growth and Environment
Reports to: Biodiversity & Green Spaces Manager
Grade: Scale: P1

Role purpose

The Environment Act has increased the statutory biodiversity duties for Local Authorities and the Ecologist will play an integral role within the Biodiversity & Greenspaces Team to help deliver the biodiversity duties of the Council. Working closely with other Departments such as Planning, Rural Estates, Flood Risk, Highways and Education on the assessment of council owned land for Biodiversity Net Gain, habitat banking and local nature recovery projects.

The Council are looking to expand their ecological services; key aspects of this role will include:

- Undertaking ecology surveys and reporting
- Providing in-house ecological advice
- Advising on all aspects of planning applications
- Supporting the Council's biodiversity policies for BNG and collaborative partnership working on strategic projects (e.g., highways).
- Assisting the Team with delivery of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS).

Accountabilities

1. To provide expert technical advice and guidance on the integration of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) into Council planning policy
2. Advise on the ecological implications of development, strategic planning, and other proposals, ensuring the authority meets its biodiversity legislation and policy requirements, for effective management and enhances biodiversity in the County
3. Assisting the team with delivery of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). For example, data review and reviewing statements for 'biodiversity priorities' for Cambridgeshire.
4. Provide necessary support, advice and appearance at planning and enforcement appeals and hearings.
5. Undertake surveys, assessments including BNG assessment and give advice on protected species
6. Provide training, briefings and advice to other officers, Councillors and other local authorities and other groups on all ecological matters
7. Monitor development to ensure compliance with relevant ecological conditions and obligations
8. The post will require some evening or weekend work

PERSON SPECIFICATION

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Directorate: Planning Growth and Environment

The following criteria are appropriate for this post. You must meet the essential criteria to be shortlisted for the post and it would be advantageous if you meet the desirable criteria.

Qualifications

Essential

Educated to degree level in a relevant area, or ability and experience in diploma in a biodiversity or ecological subject.

Desirable

Membership of Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management or similar professional organisation.

Knowledge and Experience

Essential

Good knowledge and understanding of ecology, habitat management and restoration, survey methodologies and mitigation strategies.

Good understanding of the principles of BNG, EIA (Environmental Impact Assessments) and the application of supporting legislation

Good understanding of the principles and application of planning policies and environmental legislation

Knowledge/experience of habitat surveys, including UK HAB, protected species surveys, methodologies, and guidance

Knowledge of BNG metric

Desirable

Skills and Attributes

Essential

An enthusiasm in advocating biodiversity and ability to motivate others.

Excellent written and verbal communication skills.

Competence in IT packages, including Word, Excel, Outlook, and GIS (Geographical Information Systems).

An ability to work on own initiative as well as part of a team.

Excellent influencing skills in a wide range of situations

Desirable

A flexible approach able to identify and react to opportunities.

Other requirements

The ability to drive is essential as the work will involve visiting sites which are not readily accessible by other means (the post holder will have access to a pool car).

This post will involve, on occasions, evening, or weekend work.