

Project Manager

Job description

Contract: 2-year fixed term contract, full time.

Salary: £30,000-£32,000

Location: Oxford

Responsible to: Hannah Worker, Regional Programme Manager, Oxon-Bucks Region.

Responsible for: Managing a portfolio of projects focused on conservation and community engagement work as part of Freshwater Habitats Trust's work on the Freshwater Network in Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire.

Background

Freshwater Habitats Trust (FHT) is the UK's leading conservation charity concerned with the protection of freshwater habitats. We are a friendly, evidence-based organisation that works to protect UK and European freshwater wildlife through practical and innovative nature conservation projects. Our organisation is well respected nationally and internationally, and we work with a network of statutory, NGO and private partners both in the UK and the rest of Europe. Freshwater Habitats Trust was originally founded in 1988 (as Pond Conservation) and has a substantial track-record of originating new ideas through research in freshwater biodiversity conservation to inform and drive our practical conservation and policy work.

FHT has a central office in Oxford, and regional hubs in the north of England and the New Forest and out-posted staff in Cornwall and Wales. We run a range of practical projects throughout the Midlands and work with partners on research and policy projects throughout the UK and internationally. Since 2017 we have seconded staff to the Newt Conservation Partnership (NCP), a new community-benefit society established by NatureSpace, Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (ARC) and FHT, to create and manage habitats for the NatureSpace District Licensing scheme for great crested newts.

Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire are key areas for Freshwater Habitats Trust's work. Building on the Trust's historic work in the county and starting in 2021, Oxfordshire was the first region where we began the implementation of the organisation's new strategic approach to freshwater conservation, the Freshwater Network. The Freshwater Network is the network of high quality freshwater and wetland habitats, and terrestrial habitats generating clean water across the landscape, that together support our most important freshwater wildlife.

Through our catchment projects we work closely with local landowners and partners. In recent years we have restored and managed six alkaline fen sites, created floodplain wetland mosaic habitat at four sites, and restored over 15 ha of floodplain meadow. We run an extensive community engagement programme, including involving local people in the propagation of some of the region's endangered freshwater plants. While educating the public about Oxfordshire's important wetland plants, this programme, known as GroWet, enabled us to develop stocks of plants for use in conservation translocations.

Work on the Freshwater Network in the region continues into 2024, where we have extended this approach to Buckinghamshire. The Trust has also successfully

Role

This is a key strategic project for the organisation, with substantial responsibilities, and an opportunity for the appointed person to take a major step in their career, making a big impact in UK freshwater conservation.

The role will primarily focus on the Ock and Thame Farmers: Floodplains and Freshwaters Project, one of DEFRA's new pilot [Landscape Recovery Projects](#). During the first two-years of development the project will involve working closely with the project team, 10 core project partners and over 90 landowners, to co-design a series of land management agreements to deliver landscape recovery across 9000ha of Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire. In addition, the project will undertake environmental and carbon baselining, and develop a series of blended finance mechanisms to fund delivery of designed agreements during the subsequent delivery phase (~20 years). The right candidate will need to have great attention to detail and good interpersonal skills to ensure the project runs smoothly between the many partners.

In addition, the role will involve project management of across other smaller catchment projects in the region, supporting staff in catchment monitoring, and in the develop a pipeline of habitat creation and natural flood management works.

You will be responsible for the day-to-day project management, working closely with the Project Director and Freshwater Habitats Trusts Finance Manager and Senior Management Team, as well as core project partners.

Further information on the details of the project, including details of the Work Programme you will be running, are available from Laura Sinyama (lsinyama@freshwaterhabitats.org.uk).

Key responsibilities

Project management:

- Responsible for work planning, defining tasks and allocating resources.
- Resource, manage and support the project team.
- Responsible for the projects' budgeting and financial management including: (i) regular reporting to the Project Director and Regional Programme Manager; and (ii) implementation of all financial processes for the projects including regular claiming and reporting funder.
- Responsible for all contract and logistics management
- Responsible for ensuring health and safety procedures are followed, implemented and reported on.
- Track and monitor project progress.
- Present to stakeholders, as required.
- Implement and manage change when necessary to meet project outputs.
- Update all internal management information data systems

Project communications:

- Working with the Freshwater Habitats Trust Communications Team to deliver the communication plans for the projects.

Project development:

- Working with other members of Freshwater Habitats Trust staff and landowner networks

to develop future projects to continue our work on the Freshwater Network in the region.

In the longer term there will be opportunities to influence the development of the Freshwater Network concept as it builds and develops in Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and adjacent counties.

Additional general responsibilities for the post holder

- Help to build a positive relationship between Freshwater Habitats Trust and its partners.
- Understand and follow Freshwater Habitats Trust's internal procedures including Health and Safety, information management systems, site protocols etc.
- Work closely and constructively with your manager and colleagues in all areas of your responsibility.
- Undertake other duties as the Senior Management Team may from time to time require.

Competencies

Qualifications

- Degree or equivalent in a relevant subject (at least a 2:1)
- Full current driving licence

Knowledge and experience

- Proven project and budget management skills
- Proven experience of managing multi-partner projects in the field of practical habitat creation and management, including on the ground delivery and working with citizen groups to deliver practical conservation outcomes
- Experience of staff management
- Good knowledge of restoration ecology for both freshwater and wetland habitats
- Experience of contractor management
- Knowledge of land management stakeholders and policy
- Computer literate: Word and Excel are essential, GIS is desirable
- Proven ability to communicate effectively with a range of stakeholders, including landowners and the public
- General interest in wildlife

Personal qualities

- Ability to manage workload and competing priorities effectively and meet internal deadlines through effective forward planning
- Good verbal and written communication skills
- Good interpersonal skills - approachable, professional and courteous

- Attention to detail and able to deliver on time
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team

What we have to offer

At Freshwater Habitats Trust we value employees' unique views and encourage them to develop their interests. We also offer the following benefits:

- The option to work flexibly, including hybrid or remote working
- 35-hour week
- 25 days of annual leave plus bank holidays
- Pension with 6% employer contribution
- Mobile phone allowance
- Free eye tests
- Free Employee Assistance Program
- Mileage pay