

Data Officer

Job description

Contract: Permanent

Location: Office-based (Oxford Office), or hybrid working. Remote working possible for the right applicant.

Responsible to: Technical Director - National research, survey and monitoring team

Responsible for: Data management, GIS and data processes integral to the work of Freshwater Habitats Trust; working closely with and supporting the research, survey and monitoring team, and conservation delivery teams.

Salary range: £27,000 - £30,000 depending on qualifications and experience.

Background

Freshwater Habitats Trust (FHT) is the UK's leading charity for all freshwaters. We are an evidence-based, conservation charity 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 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 is based in Oxford, with key regional hubs in the south, the Midlands, the north of England and Wales. We work nationally with practical projects throughout England and Wales, and out-posted staff based from Cornwall to Newcastle. We also work with partners on research and policy projects in 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. A central objective of FHT's strategy for the period 2021-35 is the creation of the Freshwater Network, a new approach to the protection and recovery of freshwater biodiversity.

Freshwater Habitats Trust operates mainly by running projects of variable size, length and duration to protect and enhance freshwater biodiversity. The income generated maintains core activities including fundraising and communications. Individual project budgets vary from a few thousand pounds to £1-2 million, the latter typically running on 1-3-year cycles but with some now extending over 30+ years. For further information on our project and activities, see here: <https://freshwaterhabitats.org.uk/>

Role

Data and evidence are vital in prioritising our work across the organisation and building the Freshwater Network. They are also vital when influencing external audiences to achieve our mission to reverse the decline in freshwater biodiversity.

This is a new role in the organisation and reflects an urgent requirement to collate, organise and manage a large volume of research, survey and other data collected by Freshwater Habitats Trust over the last four decades, the potential of which is not currently being fully realised.

We have many different types of data reflecting the range of environments and projects that we work in and deliver on. Data types can broadly be categorised as follows, for example:

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Biological Surveys | Standardised surveys e.g. National Pond Survey (NPS) and Predictive System for Multimetrics (PSYM) |
| | Landscape freshwater biodiversity surveys (i.e. from multiple waterbody types) |
| | Standard freshwater Water Framework Directive type surveys (e.g. RICT data) |
| | Fen biological surveys and monitoring |
| | PondNet eDNA surveys for great crested newts |
| | Single species and multi-species surveys (incl. eDNA results) |
| | Data shared under licence from partners |
| Environmental Data | Clean Water for Wildlife results |
| | Laboratory water quality analysis |
| | Hydrological monitoring data |
| | Freshwater habitat monitoring data from streams, rivers, ponds, lakes and wetlands |
| National Data | National database for Priority Ponds |
| Personal information | Land holdings |
| | Landowner engagement |
| | Volunteer personal data |

It is critical that through the development of an organisational data strategy we can:

- Provide evidence of our research and advocacy
- Showcase Freshwater Habitats Trust's expertise.
- Facilitate effective teamwork within and between project and organisational teams
Enable efficient project delivery and public / partner engagement.
- Guide the strategic delivery of conservation projects through Important Freshwater Area analysis mapping and reporting.

The role will work closely with the strategic Research and Data Sub-Group of the Senior Management Team who are responsible for driving this work forwards.

Job description

Data management

- Maintain accurate, up-to-date datasets in tabular, database and spatial formats, as appropriate.
- Collate, catalogue and centralise existing datasets.
- Design, improve, and maintain data processes to ensure consistency and quality across our systems.
- Liaise with internal teams to ensure understanding and adherence to data systems.
- Enable the timely and accurate exchange of our data with partners, local record centres, national recording schemes, 3rd party end users, etc.

Facilitate data capture, data flow and data outputs

- Provide Freshwater Habitats Trust teams with relevant data (tabular, spatial or other) to support project, research comms and policy work.
- Maintain and improve the GIS tools we use for practical delivery work and data collection, such as ArcGIS applications (Survey 123 and Field Maps) and cloud-based GIS collaborative working systems (ArcGIS Online).
- Compile and catalogue 3rd party datasets to facilitate the work of Freshwater Habitats Trust – ensuring data agreements are in place and licence requirements met.
- Undertake GIS analysis which combine datasets e.g. of habitats and species data for Important Freshwater Areas Assessment reports for England and Wales.
- Provide GIS training and support to Project Officers including guidance on layer display, mapping tasks and site completion data collation. Troubleshoot GIS-related issues and provide technical support.

Administration

- Follow FHT standard information management systems for projects and finances.
- Ensure that you are familiar with FHT H&S and HR policies and implement as needed.
- Provide information on request and in good time to your line manager, your colleagues and the Senior Management Team, in line with FHT policies.

General

- Ensure that you understand the Freshwater Habitats Trust strategy for freshwater biodiversity conservation and that you represent the views of the organisation in your work.
- Ensure that high quality technical delivery is achieved by drawing on both external and internal scientific knowledge and evidence.
- Contribute positively at internal and external meetings and to the maintenance of a constructive working environment.
- Undertake other duties your line manager or other members of the Senior Management Team may from time to time require.

Person specifications

Experience/skills

- Degree or higher in Geography, Environmental Science, GIS, or a related field (2:1 minimum).
- 2 years of experience in a similar role.
- Knowledge of the UK nature conservation and the role of biodiversity data.
- Knowledge of UK species data pathways and key infrastructure and tools e.g. local environment records centres, the Biological Records Centre iRecord.
- Experience of managing large ecological datasets or repositories
- Highly experienced in using software tools including making use of relevant MS Excel, MS Power BI, NVivo, Tableau, ARC GIS, QGIS, or equivalents.
- Understanding/experience of CRM systems and/or databases.
- Strong skills and knowledge of biological surveys and survey design.
- Knowledge of GDPR Compliance and Data Security

Personal qualities

- Ability to work and manage time independently.
- Ability to work effectively within a team and alone, and know when to ask for help,
- Highly effective communicator, verbally and in writing, able to work collaboratively demonstrating excellent diplomatic and interpersonal skills.
- Ability to manage multiple projects, identifying conflicting demands and establishing clear priorities in order to meet agreed objectives.
- Capable of troubleshooting technical issues efficiently.
- Team orientated and comfortable working with a wide range of partners.
- Enjoys solving problems and helping others.
- Positive and adaptable, with excellent attention to detail.
- Excellent time management and other organisational skills
- Good interpersonal skills, approachable and professional
- Good writing skills, able to adapt style for different audiences (technical, non-technical)

What we have to offer

We value employees' unique views and encourage them to develop their interests. Besides paying a competitive salary we also offer the following benefits:

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