

Woodland Officer(s) - West Midlands

Location

West Midlands (England)

About the job

Never has there been a more important time for trees and forests to help tackle the climate emergency and provide a much-needed sanctuary for people and wildlife. Our government are committed to creating 30,000 hectares of woodland a year across the UK by the end of this Parliament. This acceleration in current planting rates in England will contribute to meeting the net-zero by 2050 ambitions, and to government's wider environmental targets. This was supported by the announcement at the 11 March 2022 budget of £640m for a new Nature for Climate Fund 'to support natural habitats like woodland and peat'.

The Department for the Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) and the Forestry Commission have setup a joint tree planting programme for England to support the forestry sector, landowners and communities in the delivery of these ambitions. Forestry Commission will lead the delivery of the following parts of the tree planting programme:

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- Sector capacity
- Planting on public land
- Planting on private land
- Promotion and engagement

If you are passionate about the role of forestry in creating a better future for England, and want to play a key part in realising that, we want to hear from you. By joining the Forestry Commission, you will become part of a team of passionate, committed colleagues, and be able to build on a wealth of expertise to take this ambitious work forward. You will be able to make your mark by helping the Forestry Commission to revolutionise how we work together and reach new stakeholders. Our staff engagement levels are consistently well above the Civil Service average and staff turnover is well below. We value our people, we look after them, and we will look after you. We hope you will join us for the challenge.

The successful candidate will be expected to live in the West Midlands Area and their parent office will be the nearest of our offices which are located at Cannock Ludlow, Worcester. There will be flexibility for some optional blended working between the FC office/s and home (see further details below). Our area team operates from 5 offices distributed across the NWM (Penrith, Delamere, Cannock, Ludlow and Worcester).

Applicants will be asked to specify their preferred location and whether they would prefer a permanent position or Secondment /Loan – this should be made clear in their application but will also be asked in interview if successful.

Job description

We are seeking dynamic individuals with experience in forestry and/or land management, who are quick to learn and can inspire and enthuse others. The Woodland Officer role can be seen as the 'face' of the Forestry Commission to landowners, managers and stakeholders. The Woodland Officer Tree Health role represents Forest Services front-line woodlands and forestry expertise including plant health related matters. Working across the West Midlands, the individual would develop a strategic view of the local landscape, a network of local stakeholders and understanding of the challenges and opportunities.

You will be at the forefront of delivering the Forestry Commission's incentives and regulations, and able to provide advice and support to the private forestry sector in addition to Local Authorities and Defra colleagues. Internal team working is also integral in the Woodland Officer role, for example across the Area Team (e.g. assisting others in 'alleged unlicensed felling' investigations) and the wider Forestry Commission (e.g. opportunity for review of national guidance and procedures). Through both, you will have the ability to assist the Forestry Commission to build strong working relationships to help create and manage diverse, resilient multi-purpose woodlands.

Responsibilities

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Protect our existing trees and woodlands:

Administer Forestry Regulations to include:

- Forestry Act – Felling Licences to ensure tree felling is carried out legally in accordance with the principles of the UK Forestry Standard as appropriate;
- Environmental Impact Assessments – afforestation, deforestation, forest roads and forest quarries, and Habitats Regulations – re forest operations within Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation;
- Advise on the links with other legislation such as those pertaining to European Protected Species; and Provide specialist advice to planning authorities re the impact of proposals on existing woodland and how new trees and woodland could be used to enhance new
- Support the administration and delivery of Statutory Plant Health Notices and Tree Health

Improve the condition and resilience of our existing woodlands and wider treescape:

- Champion the benefits of actively managed woodland and support the delivery of grants and incentives to support this work
- Support woodland owners and managers in responding to key challenges of pests and diseases including Chalara ash dieback, Phytophthora ramorum, deer and grey squirrels;
- Work to increase resilience within woodlands to the challenges of a changing climate; and - facilitate closer working across the forestry sector – for instance between markets, contractors, managers.

Expand Woodland Cover:

- Champion the multiple benefits of new woodland as business opportunities for land owner and as natural capital (including biodiversity, water quality, flood management, carbon sequestration/substitution, etc.) for the wider environment and society;
- facilitate the design and delivery of new woodlands optimising the benefits they can deliver to the owner and as natural capital;
- administer the forestry Regulations relating to woodland creation (Environmental Impact Assessment); and
- administer/process applications for grants.

Engaging partners, stakeholders and the public: -

- Encourage, enthuse and support key partners and stakeholders to help facilitate the expansion, protection and improvement of our woodlands and treescape; and - champion the many values of trees and woodland to the wider public helping them understand and appreciate the importance and values of active management.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

ESSENTIAL:

- *Good interpersonal and influencing skills demonstrating the ability to build and maintain effective working relationships with internal colleagues and our customers.*
- *Ability to prioritise and manage a varied workload.*
- *Good computer skills with experience of MS Office and Excel.*
- *Ability to proactively deal with complex and contentious issues relating to people and woodland interests, leading to the delivery of project outcomes and development of work areas as necessary.*

- Proven knowledge and experience of temperate forestry, with a focus on multifunctional woodland management and creation practice.
- Degree/ Higher Diploma in forestry / land management / countryside management and/or significant equivalent and related experience in forestry / woodland management.

Please clearly demonstrate how the above applies to you throughout your application. Failure to do so will mean that your application is automatically sifted out.

DESIRABLE:

- Experience of practical woodland management
- Experience of urban forestry
- Experience and knowledge of forestry regulations, incentives and tree health
- Experience of promoting, designing and establishing new woodland
- Experience of working in partnership across delivery organisations
- Experience in facilitating market growth in the forestry sector
- Experience of supporting integrated land / woodland management
- Practitioner level understanding of landscape
- Membership of (or working towards) a relevant professional institute (e.g. Institute of Chartered Foresters).
- Evidence of maintaining Continuous Professional Development

Benefits

- A Civil Service pension
- A range of family friendly benefits
- An environment with flexible working options
- Learning and development tailored to your role
- A culture which promotes a diverse and inclusive work environment
- A range of wellbeing benefits including discounted Civil Service Healthcare, access to an Employee Assistance Programme 24/7, Bike to Work Scheme, plus many more.
- 25 days annual leave, with 1 additional day for each years' service up to 5 years (pro rata)
- Ability to buy or sell 5 days annual leave
- 3 days volunteering per year (pro rata)

Salary £32, 612- £35, 343

To apply, please visit [here](#).

Closing date: Apply before 11:55 pm on Tuesday 14 February 2023



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