

Head of Strategy and Transformation

Candidate Information Pack, July 2025



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Welcome from Anna Brown, Director of Forest Services

Thank you for your interest in the role of Head
of Strategy and Transformation at Forest Services.

At the Forestry Commission, we are driven by a shared mission: to deliver thriving forests, woods and trees that help tackle the climate emergency, boost biodiversity and improve the lives of people across the country. Forest Services plays a key role in delivering that mission - through regulation, grants and advice - and as Director, I am proud to lead a team so dedicated to these goals.

The Head of Strategy and Transformation is a critical leadership role, responsible for ensuring that Forest Services continues to evolve, improve and align its resources to the future. Your work will support all parts of our organisation—developing strategy, managing performance, improving digital systems, driving major change programmes, and building our internal capability through training and transformation.

In this role, you will lead a team of around 80 professionals and six specialist functions, all focused on strengthening the foundations of our work. Your leadership will ensure that we remain agile and future-fit, able to respond to changing challenges while holding true to our strategic objectives. You will work closely with me and the wider Executive Team to shape the organisation's direction, drive improvement, and ensure our enabling services are as impactful as our frontline delivery.

If you are a forward-thinking and collaborative leader with a passion for strategy, transformation and public value, I look forward to receiving your application.

Dr Anna Brown
Director of Forest Services





Advertisement – Head of Strategy and Transformation

Location - Any Forestry Commission office with regular presence in Bristol and London and travel nationwide

Salary - £71,676 - £78,908 (New entrants are expected to join on the minimum of the pay band)

At the Forestry Commission, we are united by a shared vision - to help tackle some of society's biggest challenges through thriving forests, woods and trees.

Forest Services, as part of the Forestry Commission, is the Government's expert body for woodland regulation, incentives and advice in England. We support the forestry sector and landowners to protect, improve and expand the country's valuable woodland assets - delivering benefits for biodiversity, climate, people and the rural economy.

We are now seeking an outstanding individual to join our Executive Team as Head of Strategy and Transformation. This pivotal role will lead a diverse and talented team delivering the systems, strategy, insight and innovation that underpin everything we do.

As Head of Strategy and Transformation, you will oversee the development of Forest Services' strategic plans, organisational design, business planning and performance. You will lead six professional functions, including business analysis, project and change management, promotion and engagement, digital systems and skills. Your leadership will ensure that Forest Services continues to evolve, adapt and improve, while remaining focused on its core purpose and strategic goals.

This is an exciting opportunity for a forward-thinking and collaborative leader who thrives on complexity and transformation. You'll need excellent strategic planning skills and experience of aligning people, funding and infrastructure with long-term objectives. You will be an experienced senior leader, confident in managing large, geographically dispersed teams and passionate about continuous improvement. You will bring a blend of insight and pragmatism, balancing sound governance with innovation and delivery. Your ability to work across boundaries - internally and externally - and your commitment to staff development and inclusion will be essential.

If you are excited by the opportunity to shape the strategic direction and long-term capability of a high-profile, mission-driven organisation, we look forward to hearing from you.

Applications in the form of a tailored CV and covering letter (no longer than two pages), highlighting your skills and experience pertinent to the role, should be submitted no later than midnight **Thursday 10 July** to Executive@LHH.com

For a confidential discussion about the post or to request the Candidate Information Pack, please contact LHH Executive Search on **+44 (0)141 220 6460** or email Executive@LHH.com



Forestry Commission: Our Organisation

The Forestry Commission also plays a key role in shaping wider policy.

The Forestry Commission is a Non-Ministerial Department sponsored by the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) and overseen by the Forestry Commissioners. We are the government's forestry and woodland experts and work closely with other agencies at a regional level including Forest Services, Forestry England and Forest Research.

Our vision and purpose is to tackle some of society's biggest challenges with thriving trees, woods and forests. Trees provide a uniquely versatile and proven solution to a range of today's problems, from reducing carbon in the atmosphere and creating habitats for biodiversity, through to supporting rural economies, providing timber and relieving the burdens on our health services.

At the heart of tackling these issues is our Forestry Commission Strategy 2023-28 which has three strategic goals:

- More trees, more diverse species, growing and thriving.
- Better managed woods and forests that are protected and improving.
- Bigger benefits for nature, climate, people and economy

In delivering our strategy we collaborate widely across sectors to inform, demonstrate and enable what works to deliver multiple benefits from thriving trees, woods and forests.

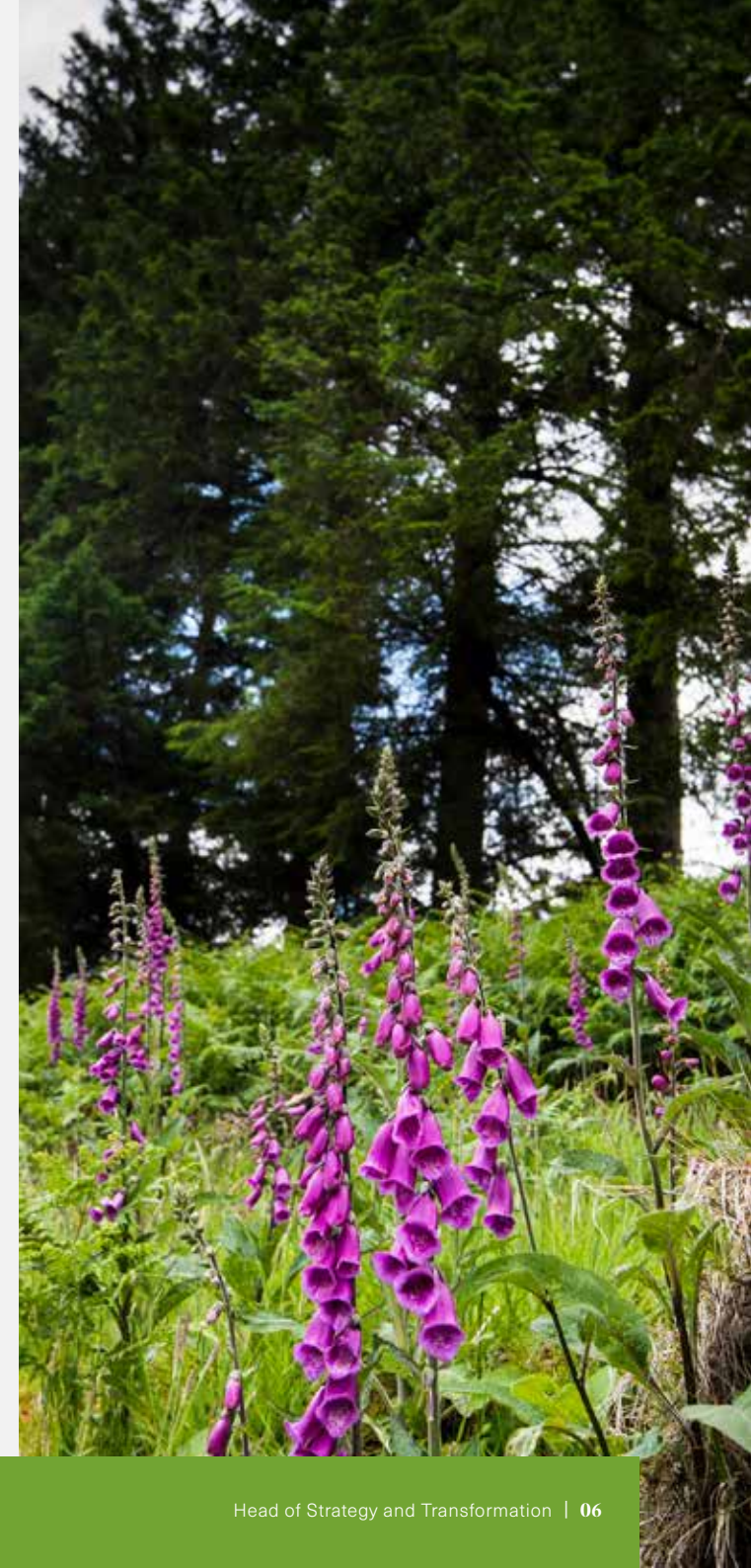
We do this by:

- Generating, sharing and applying world-leading science and evidence.
- Demonstrating the best of modern forestry and land management as custodians of the nation's forests.
- Supplying domestic timber to market and building capacity in the wider forestry sector
- Working across agencies to prevent and respond to outbreaks of tree pests and diseases
- Enabling others to sustainably manage and expand woodland through advice, grants and regulation We deliver this work through Forest Services, part of the Forestry Commission, as well as two executive agencies, Forestry England and Forest Research

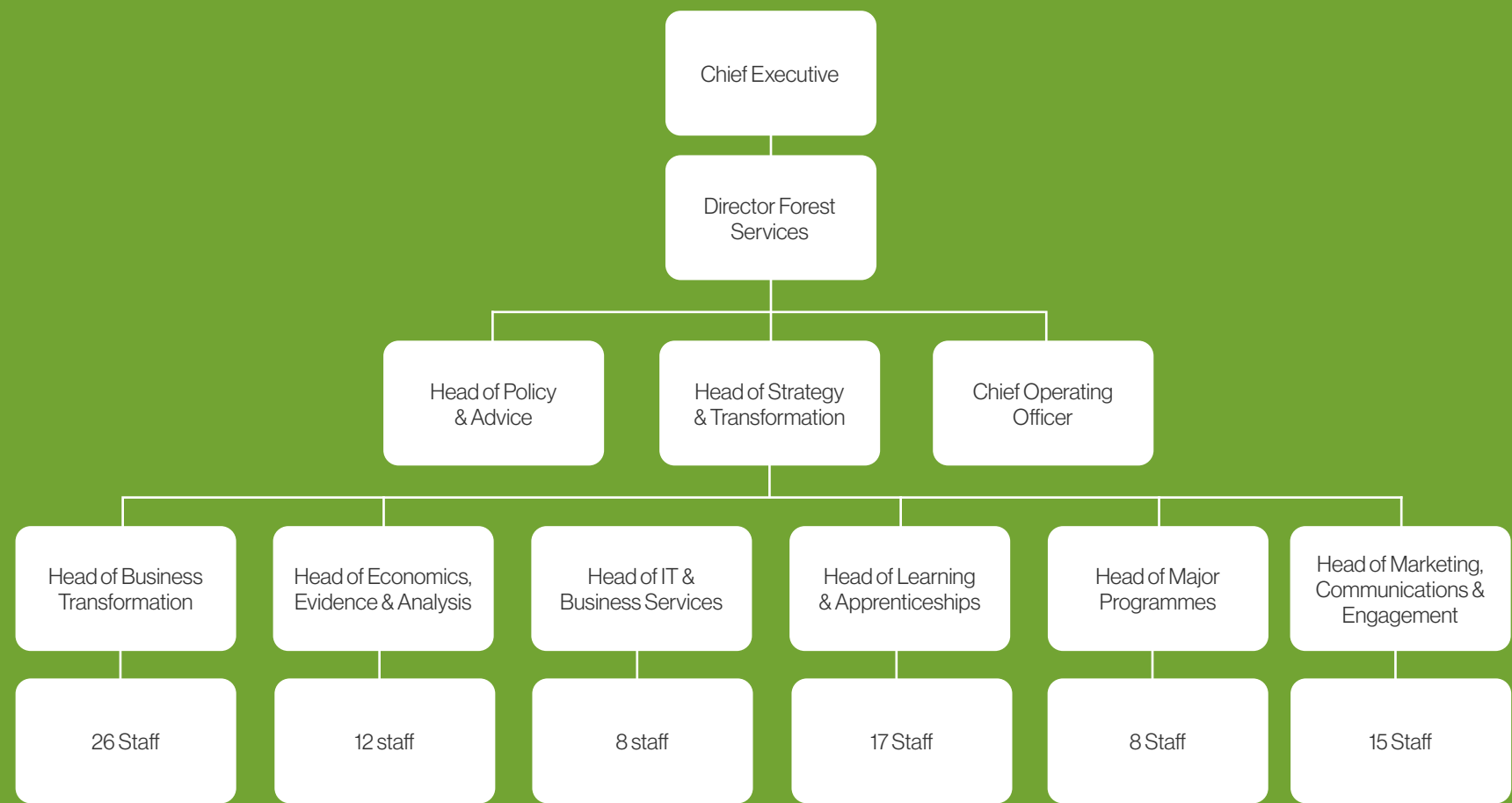
The Forestry Commission also plays a key role in shaping wider policy, working closely with the UK Government and the devolved administrations to align our strategic plans to the policy priorities of the day, as the government's forestry experts. While this policy landscape may change over the next five years, we will continue to support current government policy priorities such as Defra's Environmental Improvement Plan and the government's Net Zero Strategy.

To read our strategy, visit:

[Forestry Commission Strategy 2023-2028 - GOV.UK](#)



Forestry Commission: The Team



Head of Strategy and Transformation – The Role

The team is responsible for strategy development and business planning.

Background information

Forest Services as part of Forestry Commission are the Government's forestry experts. We advise nationally and locally on how to unlock the full potential of woodlands and support the forestry sector to protect, improve and expand England's valuable woodland assets, ensuring that they continue to provide benefits to people, the environment and the economy. Forest Services achieves these objectives through regulation, incentives and advice.

The diverse Strategy and Transformation Team ensures that Forest Services remains the outstanding organisation that it is, by providing essential professional services and leading our ongoing transformation. The team is responsible for: strategy development and business planning; spatial, statistical, economic and business analysis; project and change management for major programmes and transformational initiatives; marketing and communications; the development and management of IT applications; the development and delivery of FS' staff learning programme and the only degree-level forestry apprenticeship scheme in the UK; and the management of contracts, information, governance, and cross-cutting business services for FS.

If you are passionate about the role of forestry in creating a better future, and want to play a key part in that, we want to hear from you.

Purpose of the job

The purpose of the role is to enable Forest Services to deliver for our people, customers and stakeholders by ensuring strategic alignment of the organisation's objectives, funding, and tools to deliver. You will be the most senior champion of a diverse range of professions and our transformation agenda. You will work in close partnership with the Heads of Policy and Advice, Delivery, Plant Health Forestry, and National Grants and Regulations, the Chief Operating Officer and the Director, to provide a coherent strategic direction to Forest Services through our Executive Team.

Key work areas

You will:

- Lead and develop the Strategy and Transformation team: line managing six PB2s (Grade 7s) and a team currently totalling around 80 FTE, promoting compliance with HR and other corporate policies as well as good health and safety and well-being in the team.
- Proactively manage a multi-million-pound cost centre, taking ownership for spend decisions within your delegated authority and ensuring accurate forecasting. Closely monitor spend against budget and ensure that all those to whom you delegate financial authority are appropriately trained in financial awareness.
- Oversee the ongoing development of Forest Services' organisational strategy and the production of annual business plans, working closely with Forest Services Executive Team and Forest Services Board to agree on direction and lead on performance monitoring.



- Act as Sponsor or Senior Responsible Officer for a number of critical transformation initiatives for Forest Services, championing their benefits and ensuring their efficient and timely delivery.
- Chair Forest Services' Portfolio Evaluation Board, ensuring that Business Transformation resource is assigned to highest priority projects in our pipeline.
- Lead on current and future Spending Review exercises for Forest Services, working closely with the Forestry Commission Director of Finance and Corporate Governance and.
- Act as the key point of contact to Finance and HR, leading on cross-cutting initiatives including workforce planning and organisational design, as required.
- Oversee and act as senior point of escalation for all six functions in your portfolio, including spotting and responding to synergies and tensions between them.
- Be an active member of the Forest Services Executive Team and contribute to the wider leadership of Forest Services, taking interest in and joint responsibility for matters beyond your immediate portfolio.
- Proactively contribute to annual business planning, ensuring the needs and objectives of your team are balanced with those of other parts of Forest Services so that our strategic objectives continue to be delivered.
- Act as an Information Asset Owner and Safeguarding Lead, and undertake other corporate responsibilities as head of function as required.

Head of Strategy and Transformation – The Role

Forest Services achieves these objectives through regulation, incentives and advice.

Person specification

Essential

- Business management experience including budgetary, forecasting and analytical skills
- Experience of leading innovation and complex organisational change, including navigating governance and bringing stakeholders together to ensure successful adoption
- Experience of strategy development and successful implementation
- Experience leading an organisation or business unit through complex business planning processes to align objectives, targets and resourcing
- Strong judgement combined with the confidence to take appropriate risks and exploit opportunities, and the ability to make timely decisions with incomplete information
- Excellent people management skills and strong experience of successfully leading a diverse, multi-disciplinary and geographically dispersed team to achieve ambitious targets
- Demonstrable understanding of programme, project and change management principles, ideally through direct experience (e.g., as Senior Responsible Officer for a complex project or programme)
- Demonstrable experience of actively managing internal and external stakeholders, including where their needs are in conflict
- Experience of reacting promptly and tactically to issues, as well as making long-term strategic plans for your business unit and wider organisation
- Proven ability to deliver at pace in complex environments
- Excellent influencing and communication skills, with experience of briefing senior officials verbally and in writing to achieve the right outcomes, and of securing your team's buy-in to strategic changes
- Strong delegation and reporting skills, combined with the ability to balance sound governance and procedure (including escalation) with the need to maintain portfolio ownership

Desirable

- Experience of leading a government body's response to a Spending Review exercise
- Awareness of Civil Service financial procedure and good practice (e.g., through an understanding of Managing Public Money)
- Demonstration of a leader's commitment towards continuing professional development





Conditions & Remuneration

Blended working forms part of our flexible and inclusive approach to future ways of working.

Salary

£71,676 - £78,908 (New entrants are expected to join on the minimum of the pay band)

Location

Any Forestry Commission office (subject to availability in relation to working pattern/blended working arrangements), with regular presence in Bristol and London and travel nationwide.

We aim to provide a great place to work, whichever location you work from. Blended working forms part of our flexible and inclusive approach to future ways of working. It is an informal arrangement which gives you the option to work some of the week from home, and some of the week from our Forestry Commission workplaces, subject to role requirements, business needs, and regular review. Informal blended working arrangements will be available as agreed with the line manager.

Timescales

Closing date for applications **midnight Thursday 10 July**
Interviews with Forestry Commission, **Thursday 24 July**
(subject to change)

Benefits

Alongside your salary of £71,676 – £78,908, Forestry Commission contributes £18,330 towards you being a member of the Civil Service Defined Benefit Pension scheme. [Find out what benefits a Civil Service Pension provides.](#)

- A Civil Service pension with an employer contribution of 28.97%.
- 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), plus 10.5 bank holidays/privilege days (pro rata).
- Ability to buy or sell 5 days annual leave.
- 3 days volunteering per year (pro rata).

Selection process details

Applications in the form of a CV and supporting statement are to be submitted to Executive@LHH.com no later than midnight, **Thursday 10 July**.

Any move to Forestry Commission from another employer will mean you can no longer access childcare vouchers. This includes moves between government departments. You may however be eligible for other government schemes, including Tax Free Childcare; for further information visit the Childcare Choices [website](#).

If successful and transferring from another Government Department a criminal record check may be carried out.



In order to process applications without delay, we will be sending a Criminal Record Check to Disclosure and Barring Service on your behalf. However, we recognise in exceptional circumstances some candidates will want to send their completed forms direct. If you will be doing this, please advise Government Recruitment Service of your intention by emailing Pre-EmploymentChecks.grs@cabinetoffice.gov.uk stating the job reference number in the subject heading.

This role is full time only. Applicants who wish to work an alternative pattern are welcome to apply however your preferred working pattern may not be available and you should discuss this with the vacancy holder before applying.

Where a role has been identified as one which falls under the scope of the Public Sector English Language Requirements, within Part 7 of the Immigration Act 2016, it is essential that applicants should have the ability to converse at ease with members of the public and provide advice in accurate spoken English. Applicants will be assessed in the selection process in accordance with the requirements.

Conditions & Remuneration

Travel

The duties of this post require the applicant to have a full current driving licence that enables them to drive in the UK. However, the Forestry Commission is willing to consider any proposals put forward by applicants that would allow them to do the job by any other means.

The Forestry Commission is actively working to reduce the carbon emission of official travel and applicants should be aware of the broad principles which are being applied to reduce carbon emissions to less than 50gCO₂/km.

Travel options include:

- Use of private car: some Officers choose to use their private car and receive payment for the miles they drive on official business. Vehicle emissions are measured in CO₂ grams per kilometre (g/km). The cap is currently 115 gCO₂/km and will be reduced to 100 gCO₂/km on 1st April 2026. After that date, we expect private vehicles used for official travel to emit significantly less.
- Use of CAPES (lease) Cars: after an employee has successfully completed their probation, they can opt for a CAPES car (the user pays a monthly rate for private use). All CAPES cars must emit less than 50gCO₂/km

Reasonable adjustment

If a person with disabilities is put at a substantial disadvantage compared to a nondisabled person, we have a duty to make reasonable changes to our processes. If you need a change to be made so that you can make your application, you should contact Executive@LHH.com to tell us what changes or help you might need further on in the recruitment process.

For instance, you may need wheelchair access at interview, or if you're deaf, a Language Service Professional. If you are experiencing accessibility problems with any attachments on this advert, please contact Executive@LHH.com

Feedback

Feedback will only be provided if you attend an interview or assessment.

Security

Successful candidates must undergo a criminal record check. People working with government assets must complete baseline [personnel security standard](#) (opens in new window) checks.

Nationality requirements

This job is broadly open to the following groups:

- UK nationals
- nationals of the Republic of Ireland
- nationals of Commonwealth countries who have the right to work in the UK
- nationals of the EU, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein and family members of those nationalities with settled or pre-settled status under the [European Union Settlement Scheme \(EUSS\)](#) (opens in a new window)
- nationals of the EU, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein and family members of those nationalities who have made a valid application for settled or pre-settled status under the European Union Settlement Scheme (EUSS)
- individuals with limited leave to remain or indefinite leave to remain who were eligible to apply for EUSS on or before 31 December 2020
- Turkish nationals, and certain family members of Turkish nationals, who have accrued the right to work in the Civil Service

[Further information on nationality requirements](#)

(opens in a new window).

Working for the Civil Service

[The Civil Service Code](#) (opens in a new window) sets out the standards of behaviour expected of civil servants. We recruit by merit on the basis of fair and open competition, as outlined in the [Civil Service Commission's recruitment principles](#) (opens in a new window).

The Civil Service embraces diversity and promotes equal opportunities. As such, we run a Disability Confident Scheme (DCS) for candidates with disabilities who meet the minimum selection criteria. The Civil Service also offers a Redeployment Interview Scheme to civil servants who are at risk of redundancy, and who meet the minimum requirements for the advertised vacancy.

Diversity and Inclusion

The Civil Service is committed to attract, retain and invest in talent wherever it is found. To learn more please see [the Civil Service People Plan](#) (opens in a new window) and the [Civil Service Diversity and Inclusion Strategy](#) (opens in a new window).

This vacancy is part of the [Great Place to Work for Veterans](#) (opens in a new window) initiative.

The Civil Service welcomes applications from people who have recently left prison or have an unspent conviction. [Read more about prison leaver recruitment](#) (opens in new window).

Once this job has closed, the job advert will no longer be available. You may want to save a copy for your records.

Further information

Our recruitment process is underpinned by the principle of appointment on the basis of fair and open competition and appointment on merit, as outlined in the Civil Service Commissioners' Recruitment Principles. If you feel your application has not been treated in accordance with these principles and you wish to make a complaint, you should in the first instance contact FCE by email: englandhr.services@forestryengland.uk. If you are not satisfied with the response you receive, you can contact the Civil Service Commission, which regulates all Civil Service recruitment.

How to Apply

Please send your tailored CV and a cover letter no longer than two pages by email to Executive@LHH.com

The closing date for applications is midnight,
Thursday 10 July.

To apply for this post, please send your tailored CV and a cover letter no longer than two pages by email, highlighting in the subject heading 'Head of Strategy and Transformation', to Executive@LHH.com

If you would like a confidential, informal discussion about the role then please contact LHH on **+44 (0) 141 220 6460** or send an email to the above-mentioned address.

Forestry Commission is committed to equality of opportunity and to no discrimination on the grounds of race, religion or belief, age, sex, marital or civil partnership status, disability, sexual orientation, transgender status, pregnancy or maternity.

We are constantly reviewing our approach to ensuring equality and diversity in our applications and would be pleased if you could complete the Equalities Monitoring Form below.

[Equalities Monitoring Form - Head of Strategy & Transformation, Forestry Commission](#)

Should you require any modifications or wish to speak with a member of our team to discuss any particular circumstances, please email the above address.



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We connect Scotland's top businesses with exceptional candidates –
and we do it really well.**

We count innovators, creatives and leaders among the professionals we work with, and our clients and candidates span a diverse range of sectors and functions. From procurement and supply chain, medical, engineering, project management, accountancy, legal, transport and business transformation, to banking, the arts, government, technology, marketing and communications, not-for-profit and HR, our expertise is wide-reaching and our reach unparalleled.

We pride ourselves on our ability to give clients and candidates a competitive edge while making the recruitment process smooth, straightforward and – dare we say it – enjoyable. Whether you're taking the next step on the career ladder or building a bespoke and targeted recruitment strategy, our Scottish team will work hard to deliver a first-class service that meets your exact requirements.

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