

Principal Strategic Biodiversity Officer - Nature Positive Portsmouth

Salary: Band 11 - £47,181 to £51,356 per annum

Hours per week: 37, which are to be worked in accordance with the flexible working hours' scheme and the needs of the Service.

Office attendance is required minimum 2-days a week for full time staff, this remains flexible, subject to business needs.

Location: Civic Offices, Portsmouth

Contract type: 2.5 years fixed term contract

The Project

Portsmouth City Council are delighted to have been awarded significant funding to ensure a greener future. Nature Positive Portsmouth is a project that looks to deliver nature recovery at scale, climate resilient green infrastructure and improved connection to nature for health and wellbeing in the City. The project focuses on developing the plans, partnerships and ways of working to effect transformative change and leave a legacy of a project pipeline and identified funding opportunities. The long term goals of Nature Positive Portsmouth are:

- Resilient biodiversity
- Implementation of nature-based solutions for climate change effectively (specifically SuDS and trees)
- Equitable access to nature and benefits from nature for health and wellbeing

This post is funded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund through Nature Towns and Cities, a partnership between the Heritage Fund, Natural England and the National Trust.

What is the role?

The Principal Strategic Biodiversity Officer is part of the Nature Positive Portsmouth project team. They will have a strategic overview of nature recovery in the City helping to embed nature recovery into thinking and ensure resilience to climate change in our nature networks. The successful candidate will work with Council Officers to develop a strategic approach to biodiversity in the City, it is envisaged that specific works areas led by the Principal Strategic Biodiversity Officer include:

- Appointing and working with an external consultant to oversee a rapid review and production of a Biodiversity Strategy and high-level action plan for nature recovery in Portsmouth. Alongside the Urban Forest Master Plan this strategy will provide the strategic direction to inform the development of a Green Infrastructure Strategy for the city.
- Work with the Project Manager and Team to promote the Strategy and Action Plan inspiring project partners and other asset owners to identify opportunities on their own land for nature recovery.
- Collate and manage information on biodiversity to better support colleagues across directorates.
- Building on the strategy and working with internal and external stakeholders to develop costed implementation plans for landscape-scale nature recovery

through coastal and countryside sites identified in the Hampshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy. This may include identifying and building on opportunities for offsite BNG.

- Work with internal and external stakeholders to develop a nature forum for Portsmouth to support nature recovery across identified strategic sites and scale shared initiatives, for example the rolling out of practices that support nature networks of flower rich grasslands.
- Provide technical support to colleagues as required in consideration of BNG in planning applications and identify opportunities to develop and deliver resources that help planners and developers alike, for example Portsmouth focused biodiversity guidance to support planners, land managers and communities deliver nature recovery.
- Identify opportunities for BNG enhancement projects on Council assets through working with other Council officers and develop a suite of funded proposals and relevant supporting documents including for example, habitat management and monitoring plans.
- Work flexibly across the Council as required by operation as needed and carry out other duties appropriate to the nature and grade of the post as directed by the Project Manager.

Who is the person?

You need:

- Relevant professional qualification (s) Degree in Ecology or Nature Conservation
- Relevant experience with expertise in biodiversity and green/natural infrastructure implementation.
- Good understanding of nature conservation legislation and guidance in relation to BNG Knowledge of habitats and species (and in particular habitats) with particular reference to their treatment within the planning system and environmental assessment as well as habitat management practices and the risks and benefits associated with their delivery in different conditions)
- Advanced knowledge and experience of undertaking ecological surveys of a range of habitats within the planning or consultancy field.
- Knowledge of the Environment Act, Town and Country Planning Act and NERC duty and the requirements associated with BNG and duties placed on the Local Authority.
- Knowledge and experience of the planning system.
- Knowledge and experience of habitat management within a Local Authority setting - for example a Parks and Open Spaces Service
- Experience of collaborative project development or delivery of partnership projects. Experience of technical processes of Local Planning Authorities. Practical experience in the use of the Biodiversity Net Gain metric. and applying the principles of net gain to a development.
- Experience in preparing and presenting technical reports. Experience of working with consultants in a coproduction environment.
- Strong collaborative and influencing skills including strong personal motivation and leadership to carry cross-directorate cooperation and push through Council-wide strategy. Ability to provide clear and coherent advice and defend that advice when necessary.
- Ability to understand and analyse information from a wide range of disciplines, with good attention to detail.
- Excellent verbal and written skills, demonstrating an ability to clearly communicate to different audiences and an aptitude for producing reports.

- Organised and methodical approach to work, ability to manage own workload, prioritise and meet deadlines.
- Ability to use GIS. The council has MAPINFO.
- Ability to respond to commercially sensitive information.
- Demonstrated ability to work both independently and as an effective team member.
- A demonstrable ability to act as a catalyst for change and take forward new ideas.
- A working knowledge of terrestrial and coastal habitats, protected species and effective conservation management.
- A working knowledge of habitat and protected species survey requirements and an understanding of the tools and techniques for assessing development impact.
- A working knowledge of the relevant environmental and planning legislation and policy required to develop biodiversity strategy for the city including a working knowledge of Biodiversity Net Gain.
- An interest in maintaining up to date professional knowledge together with training and development needs of the role.

The ideal candidate will also have Membership of Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) and or Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) and Experience of delivering training although these are not essential.

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