

Job description

Ecologist

Band 6

This role will be based at both our Bury St Edmunds and Mildenhall offices. You may reasonably be required to work at any other of the council's premises as required in order to meet the needs of the service.

At West Suffolk Council we positively encourage agile working, with work being an activity we do, not a place we go. Work styles are led by operational and organisational need and are jointly agreed between the manager and employee.

Job purpose

To assist in the delivery of a high performing and effective planning service for the Council of West Suffolk supporting our ambitions for sustainable growth.

The post sits within the Council's multi-skilled planning and growth team, reporting to the Senior Landscape and Ecology Officer.

This post will have 2 main areas of focus:

Taking a proactive role in formulating and implementing the Council's work in nature conservation, through partnership with officers including from other departments, national statutory and non-statutory bodies, elected members and the local community.

To ensure compliance with the Council's statutory obligations and biodiversity duty with regard to planning applications.

This may vary over time, dependent on workload fluctuations and the Council's priorities. Any such changes will be subject to discussion to assist in the delivery of a high performing and effective planning and growth service our ambitions for sustainable growth.

Key responsibilities and activities

As the Ecology Officer you will be responsible for the following tasks:

To ensure compliance with the Council's statutory obligations in relation to planning applications, with regard to nature conservation and Biodiversity Net Gain.

To advise and implement Biodiversity Net Gain relevant to planning.

To formulate, recommend and implement the Councils approach to ecology and biodiversity policies and the Local Plan. Key policies include and not limited to relate to:

- The Brecks and its Special Protection Area; and
- The Recreational Avoidance Mitigation emerging policy and strategy

To prepare, seek solutions and advise on masterplans, supplementary planning guidance in relation to ecology and nature conservation.

To prepare the councils Habitats Regulation Assessment for the council for applications, plans and programmes where applicable which have an impact on European sites.

To prepare and review and comment on Sustainability Appraisals, Screening Opinions, Strategic Environmental Assessments and Environmental Impact Assessments as appropriate.

To provide ecological and biodiversity advice and expertise on corporate projects

To provide expert ecological and biodiversity advice to members and officers in relation to the council's planning service.

Prepare statistical analysis, monitor and report on issues relating to ecology and nature conservation and performance on issues relating to planning and specifically Biodiversity Net Gain.

To establish and maintain effective information and quality management systems to support the management of ecology and biodiversity.

To advise and represent the Council on all matters relating to ecology and biodiversity meeting the provisions of all relevant legislation and to keep up-to-date with developments and trends in the nature conservation industry and undertake research to support continuous improvement as far as it relates to the role.

To be conversant with all aspects of current ecological and biodiversity management

To provide support to the Senior Landscape and Ecology Officer on environmental related matters.

To attend Cabinet, Committees and Panels and other public meetings, and present reports, as and when necessary