

Kent County Council

Job Description: *Kent Biodiversity Net Gain Officer*

Directorate:	Growth, Environment and Transport
Unit/Section:	Natural Environment & Coast
Grade:	KR10
Responsible to:	Natural Environment & Coast Manager

Purpose of the Job:

To work with Kent's upper and lower tier planning authorities in their preparation for biodiversity net gain, developing a consistent and joined up approach within the county that meets the requirements of the Environment Act and ensures a genuine contribution to the recovery of nature through this new policy.

Given that biodiversity net gain is a new and developing policy area, the post holder will deliver their work with the support and guidance of the Natural Environment & Coast Manager, the Kent Nature Partnership's Biodiversity Net Gain group and the county's local planning officers. It is also acknowledged that the post has a wide-ranging person specification. We are looking for a candidate that is either strong on ecology, with a sound understanding of planning; or a planner, with an evidenced interest in pursuing high environmental standards within this field.

This post represents an excellent opportunity to help shape the delivery of biodiversity net gain in Kent. Our priority for the successful candidate is someone who understands the potential this policy offers nature recovery and who has the vision and skills to work with partners to deliver this.

Main duties and responsibilities:

- Work with planning authorities, as required, to develop biodiversity net gain policy wording and supplementary planning documents/guidance. And support any associated viability assessment, or other policy option work, relating to biodiversity net gain.
- Advise on the implementation of secondary legislation and statutory guidance at the local level, developing effective and robust development management processes to support this. Work with the planning authorities to identify any potential constraints within the planning process and mechanisms for addressing these.
- Develop policy, site criteria and delivery arrangements to underpin offsite biodiversity net gain delivery in Kent.
- Liaise with landowners to identify potential offsite options, including a project pipeline of strategic projects.
- Coordinate county responses to any further biodiversity net gain consultations and keep abreast of developments and evidence in respect of net gain, to ensure the work in Kent is delivering the best outcomes for biodiversity.
- Develop and deliver information/training sessions to Kent's planning authorities and their elected members.
- Develop proposals for a coordinated approach for biodiversity net gain delivery in Kent and Medway and the appropriate governance to support this.
- In line with regulations as they are published, develop proposals for the delivery of monitoring and reporting requirements in Kent.

- Ensure all relevant stakeholders are kept informed of the biodiversity net gain delivery approach in Kent, including Kent's developers.
- Develop a screening and review process of biodiversity net gain for development management, which provides the best efficiencies within the available resource, whilst ensuring all applications get the scrutiny and input as required.
- Provide additional expertise (where needed) in respect of biodiversity net gain proposals that may be submitted in the interim period, including advice on S106 agreements and planning conditions.

This position is offered as a full time, permanent contract. KCC operates a flexible working approach, a hybrid of office/site and remote working. The post holder is not expected to be located in Kent, but they should have the ability to travel to Kent to attend meetings and site visits that are expected to be routinely required by this post. Secondments will be considered.

Footnote: This job description is provided to assist the job holder to know what his/her main duties are. It may be amended from time to time without change to the level of responsibility appropriate to the grade of post.

The following outlines the criteria for this post. Applicants who have a disability and who meet the criteria will be shortlisted.

Applicants should describe in their application how they meet these criteria.

	CRITERIA
QUALIFICATIONS	<p>Relevant professional qualification to degree level.</p> <p>Membership of Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) or Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) (or ability to meet eligibility criteria and willingness to gain accreditation)</p>
EXPERIENCE	<p>Experience of undertaking and/or use of ecological assessments and surveys, within either the planning or consultancy field.</p> <p>Practical experience of working with, or in, the planning sector.</p> <p>Experience of liaison, negotiation and agreements with landowners and developers.</p> <p>Strong track record of working in partnership.</p>
SKILLS AND ABILITIES	<p>Proven ability to undertake, interpret and scrutinise biodiversity net gain assessments.</p> <p>Excellent interpersonal skills, with a proven ability to collaborate, influence and build trust and develop highly effective relationships.</p> <p>Ability to think strategically, innovatively and find solutions.</p> <p>Excellent planning and organisational skills, with the ability to manage a range of complex activities.</p> <p>Ability to communicate with, engage and influence customers, partners and stakeholders, in complex situations.</p> <p>Excellent written and verbal communication skills, with ability to confidently present to different audiences.</p> <p>Proven research and analysis skills and experience of developing procedures, policies, guidance and practices.</p>

KNOWLEDGE	<p>An excellent and demonstrable knowledge of the legislation and policy relating to biodiversity net gain and its delivery through the development management process.</p> <p>An excellent practical and applied knowledge of the Defra BNG metric.</p> <p>Knowledge of habitats and species (and in particular priority</p>
	<p>habitats), with particular reference to their treatment within the planning system and environmental assessment.</p> <p>A good understanding of habitat management, including habitat creation and restoration, across a broad range of habitats</p> <p>Knowledge of the Environment Act, Town & Country Planning Act and NERC Act.</p> <p>A good understanding of the planning system, planning documents and mechanisms and S106.</p>
KENT VALUES AND CULTURAL ATTRIBUTES	<p>Kent Values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are brave. We do the right thing, we accept and offer challenge • We are curious to innovate and improve • We are compassionate, understanding and respectful to all • We are strong together by sharing knowledge • We are all responsible for the difference we make <p>Our values enable us to build a culture that is:</p> <p>Flexible/agile - willing to take (calculated) risks and want people that are flexible and agile</p> <p>Curious - constantly learning and evolving</p> <p>Compassionate and Inclusive - compassionate, understanding and respectful to all</p> <p>Working Together - building and delivering for the best interests of Kent</p> <p>Empowering - Our people take accountability for their decisions and actions</p> <p>Externally Focused - Residents, families and communities at the heart of decision making</p>