# Kent County Council
## Job Description: *Biodiversity Officer*

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| **Directorate:** | **Growth, Environment and Transport** |
| **Unit/Section:** | **Natural Environment & Coast** |
| **Grade:** | **KSG** |
| **Responsible to:** | **Senior Biodiversity Officer** |

## Purpose of the Job:

Kent County Council provides professional and independent advice to the majority of the county's planning authorities via the Ecological Advice Service. The service's Biodiversity Officers deliver this service by advising on the ecological implications of development, strategic planning and other proposals and ensuring that the planning authority meets wildlife legislation, policy requirements and duties, and effectively protects, manages and enhances the biodiversity of Kent.

The Environment Act 2021 has resulted in significant change to how biodiversity is dealt with at the local government level. The strengthened Biodiversity Duty now requires all public authorities to not only consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity but also agree policies and specific objectives, and act to deliver these. Furthermore, this is backed by the requirement to prepare and publish a biodiversity report.

The Act has also introduced Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS), spatial strategies that identify our most valuable existing areas for nature, and areas which have the potential to offer the greatest benefits to nature recovery and the wider environment, through the creation or improvement of habitat. These Strategies will have an instrumental part to play in Local Plan making, with all planning authorities required to have regard to the LNRS. In Kent, the County Council is the Responsible Authority for the development of the Kent & Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

There has not been a more exciting time to join Kent County Council's Ecological Advice Service and assist the county not only in development management but a new approach to the delivery of nature recovery, that puts local government right at the heart of action.

## Main duties and responsibilities:

- Provide ecological advice at any stage as requested within the development management process (pre-application, screening, scoping, formal application and enforcement).

- Assess, and advise on, ecological impacts and appropriateness of any proposed mitigation and biodiversity enhancement measures.

- Assess, and advise on, biodiversity net gain statements, metric assessments and plans.

- Represent the service at, and input to, meetings with developers and applicants, planning committees, planning inquiries and appeal hearings.

- Support the development of local plans, and other strategic planning documents, by ensuring there is consultation of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, that full consideration is given to areas important for conserving and enhancing biodiversity and that plans enable a more proactive role in environmental recovery.

- Support the preparation of LPA biodiversity reports, as required by the Environment Act, and identify opportunities for Kent's authorities to support the county's nature recovery action.

- Provide the County Council's ecological input to strategies, plans, major development proposals and consultations.

- Act as a point of ecological expertise to county council services, ensuring the authority's work is delivered to best practice standards and meets the requirements of legislation and policy.

- Provide expert input as required to support the development of county-level strategic documents and action, including the Kent & Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

- KCC operates a flexible working approach, with 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 can be required by this post.

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

# Kent County Council
## Person Specification: *Biodiversity Officer*

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** |
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| **QUALIFICATIONS** | • Relevant professional qualification to degree level.<br>• Membership of Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) (or ability to meet eligibility criteria and willingness to gain accreditation). |
| **EXPERIENCE** | • Experience of undertaking or reviewing habitat and species surveys and ecological impact assessments, demonstrating an excellent understanding of ecological issues.<br>• Practical experience of the Biodiversity Net Gain Metric and applying the principles of net gain to a development.<br>• Practical experience of working with, or in, the planning sector. |
| **SKILLS AND ABILITIES** | • Strong collaborative and influencing skills. Ability to provide clear and coherent advice and defend that advice when necessary.<br>• Ability to understand and analyse information from a wide range of disciplines, with good attention to detail.<br>• Excellent verbal and written skills, demonstrating an ability to clearly communicate to different audiences and an aptitude for producing reports.<br>• Organised and methodical approach to work.<br>• Able to use GIS.<br>• Demonstrated ability to work both independently and as an effective team member. |
| **KNOWLEDGE** | • A detailed knowledge of habitats, protected species and wider biodiversity issues.<br>• A detailed knowledge of habitat and protected species survey requirements and an understanding of the tools and techniques for assessing development impact.<br>• A practical knowledge of Biodiversity Net Gain.<br>• A detailed knowledge of the relevant legislation and policy required to provide good quality ecological advice.<br>• Knowledge and understanding of development management and strategic/forward planning. |
| **KENT VALUES AND CULTURAL ATTRIBUTES** | **Kent Values:**<br><br>• We are **brave.** We do the right thing, we accept and offer challenge<br>• We are **curious** to innovate and improve<br>• We are **compassionate**, understanding and respectful to all<br>• We are **strong together** by sharing knowledge<br>• We are all **responsible** for the difference we make<br><br>Our values enable us to build a culture that is: |

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| | **Flexible/agile** - willing to take (calculated) risks and want people that are flexible and agile<br>**Curious** - constantly learning and evolving<br>**Compassionate and Inclusive** - compassionate, understanding and respectful to all<br>**Working Together** - building and delivering for the best interests of Kent<br>**Empowering -** Our people take accountability for their decisions and actions<br>**Externally Focused** - Residents, families and communities at the heart of decision making |