

Newt Officer (Central Bedfordshire)

Employment and location:

The successful candidate will be employed by NatureSpace Partnership and seconded to Central Bedfordshire Council. The postholder will work alongside planning and ecology colleagues in Central Bedfordshire Council's office in Shefford. The post will be mainly desk based with site visits and meetings as required.

Post type:

Full time, fixed term contract (initially to May 2020 but with the expectation of renewal.)

Timescales:

The closing date for applications is **22nd February 2019**. You will be notified by 4th March if you have been selected for interview. Interviews will be held on 12th March in Central Bedfordshire Council offices.

How to apply:

Send your up to date CV and a covering letter to sarah.garratt@naturespaceuk.com

Role description

Qualifications and experience:

- A relevant degree in ecology or environmental management
- Knowledge and understanding of ecological impact assessment and/or biodiversity in planning
- Experience with great crested newt survey and or mitigation practice – preferably with first-hand field experience of surveying, mitigation, compensation, and standard mitigation licensing requirements for the species.

Essential key skills:

- An excellent communicator with good inter-personal skills - able to liaise proactively and confidently with developers, local authority officers and members, local media, local wildlife groups, etc.
- Highly literate and numerate – able to analyse and present data, prepare documents quickly and diligently to a high standard, following defined processes, protocols and guidance, including fluency in the use of Microsoft Office software (Word, Excel, etc.)
- Organised, methodical and conscientious - able to juggle and prioritise multiple cases, enquiries and tasks, and work efficiently to meet tight deadlines.
- Self-motivated and independent - able to work flexibly and without supervision, as part of a small team.
- Willingness and ability to travel as necessary (mainly within the South Midlands region) – including full driving licence and access to a car for business travel.

Desirable key skills:

- Knowledge of European Protected Species legislation and the new licensing policies
- Knowledge and experience of the local planning system
- Competence in GIS (ideally ARC or QGIS).

Main duties:

To provide planning and licensing advice re great crested newts – (75% FTA):

1. Raise general awareness of the legislation relating to great crested newts and the optional new district licensing scheme:
 - a. With developers, agents, consultant ecologists, etc. – through LPA websites, literature, pre-application discussions, etc (*not* active marketing and promotion)
 - b. Within the LPA – promote high levels of awareness within the LPA of general environmental obligations
 - c. Promote the District Licensing scheme, and the newt conservation strategy, to all appropriate staff
2. Planning advice and implementation of district licensing:
 - a. Ensure LPA planning staff are familiar with the scheme and the process (e.g. dealing with NatureSpace certificates, reports and authorisations)
 - b. Provide clear, timely, accurate and relevant advice to LPA planners on any development in respect of great crested newts and the options/requirements for licensing including the district licensing scheme
 - c. Support planning officers to ensure that the district licence requirements, as detailed in NatureSpace reports and certificates are converted fully and appropriately into planning conditions
 - d. Ensure that any developments which either cannot be (or choose not to be) covered under the scheme revert to business as usual for GCN matters (survey, impact assessment, mitigation proposals and subsequent licence application to NE)
 - e. Monitor developer compliance with any newt-related planning conditions and advise LPA planners on any compliance and enforcement issues
 - f. Undertake site visits and meetings as required, to provide advice and guidance on newt licensing requirements
3. Provide a point of contact for newt-related matters for the LPA to liaise with NatureSpace Partnership, the South Midlands Newt Conservation Partnership and Natural England as required (overseeing use of the licence within the LPA, record keeping, compliance and enforcement)
4. Attend South Midlands District Licensing Scheme networks and meetings – with other LPA GCN Officers, LPA Planners and Ecologists, NatureSpace Partnership and the South Midlands Newt Conservation Partnership, as required
5. Ensure relevant Council staff/Members are informed of the outputs and outcomes of the scheme, as appropriate.

To provide general support for LPA ecologists and planners (25% FTA):

1. Support the LPA ecologist in general duties, relating to ecological and biodiversity matters, as required.
2. To advise on the ecological consequences of development and negotiate enhancement for biodiversity through the planning process. This includes advising Development Management colleagues with regard to protected species and habitats legislation.