

Job Description

This form is used to provide a complete description of the specific job and defines the required skills, knowledge, behaviours, qualifications and experience.

Section A: Job Profile

The job profile provides key information relating to the salary and working conditions e.g. location of a job, along with the current focus of the role and a brief description of the main duties.

Job Details

Job Title:	Principal Biodiversity Officer
Salary:	£38,890 - £41,881
Grade:	12
Hours:	37
Team:	Environment Strategy
Service Area:	Strategic Infrastructure and Planning
Primary Location:	Oxford [See Note]
Budget responsibility:	N/A
Responsible to:	Environment Strategy Manager
Responsible for:	Protected Species Officer G9 / Ecology Officer G10 (agency / casual / staff - tbc)

Job Purpose

The post sits within the Council's Environment Strategy team that includes landscape and green infrastructure specialists, a hosted countryside project and links closely into the wider climate change, natural capital, heritage, access and flood risk management activities of the Council.

The County Council has acknowledged that the county is facing a climate and ecological emergency. The importance of the natural environment has been recognised in the Oxfordshire Growth Board's recently adopted strategic vision for the county. Biodiversity – the diversity of all living things – underpins a healthy, sustainable natural environment and the wellbeing of all our residents.

The Principal Biodiversity Officer is the specialist lead on biodiversity and ecology for the County Council providing efficient and comprehensive biodiversity advice to support the planning and policy functions of the County Council. This includes providing advice to the county's Development Management team on highways, Regulation 3 applications and minerals & waste applications; input into policy and strategic planning, development monitoring and control and, the delivery and monitoring of biodiversity and environmental gain. The Principal Biodiversity Officer will play a key role in helping to shape and deliver the Council's response to the biodiversity elements of the forthcoming Environment Bill.

Through the Oxfordshire Growth Deal the County Council is committed to delivering a significant programme of infrastructure investment over coming years, supported by ongoing development in the minerals and waste sector. Providing an ecological response to planning applications will be a core part of the role.

Working across the Council the Principal Biodiversity Officer will lead the development of a strategic approach to and operational engagement with biodiversity and the enhancement of nature, within the context of the Council's statutory role as planning authority and where appropriate as a landowner and scheme developer.

Oxfordshire has a thriving and diverse biodiversity sector with strong academic, NGO and nature campaigning interests complementing the activity of local authorities and statutory agencies. The Principal Biodiversity Officer will need to champion the County Council's biodiversity interests and become recognised as an authority on these matters at county level.

[Note] Due to the Covid19 pandemic this role will be performed remotely for the foreseeable future. The primary location is usually Oxford and you will be required to work from this location and in an agile manner when government guidelines permit this.

Job Responsibilities

This is a list of the main duties or tasks that the post holder will be expected to undertake.

- Lead on and undertake the provision of biodiversity policy and planning advice within required timescales to the County Council at all stages of the development process, for external and Regulation 3 developments and other applications for which the County Council may be the determining authority. Represent the County Council on biodiversity matters at judicial review, public and planning inquiry, planning committee, public meetings and other consultation events.
- Lead work across the County Council within agreed timescales to ensure biodiversity considerations and advice are taken account of and implemented within new infrastructure developments by the County Council.
- Develop and implement systems to secure and spend developer contributions for biodiversity including S106 agreements, CIL and biodiversity net gain in association with the Council's development funding team where necessary supporting them in negotiations.
- Lead the provision of ecological advice to the Council's planning development management team to monitor and enforce conditions and legal agreements including the delivery of biodiversity net gain.
- Lead on the contribution of ecological inputs to Habitat Regulations Assessment and the review of HRAs provided by others as part of the planning and development process and the Council's role as Competent Authority.
- Lead on the development and review of biodiversity strategy, policies, plans, assessments and guidance within OCC and contribute to the development of strategies, policies, plans, assessments and guidance by others where this is relevant to the county – linking to issues including climate change, landscape, natural capital and green infrastructure as appropriate . Lead on the preparation of biodiversity responses to local, regional and national consultations. Advise and support the Environment Strategy Manager on the development and delivery of the Council's responsibilities under the Government's forthcoming Environment Bill.
- Lead the provision of biodiversity inputs on behalf of the County Council to local partnerships and hosted projects including the county Biodiversity Advisory Group, AONBs, Local Wildlife Sites programme, Newt Conservation Partnership, Council hosted projects and initiatives and, other existing and future groups.

- Help the County Council develop effective new partnerships to protect and enhance biodiversity and participate in programmes or initiatives that deliver biodiversity improvements within the county. Work with and support community groups, local organisations and others in order to raise public awareness of Oxfordshire's biodiversity.
- Undertake site visits and habitat surveys, including species surveys within your areas of competence, to inform the provision of ecological advice.
- Develop and deliver funded projects and programmes to provide biodiversity gain within the county.
- Oversee the provision of ecological advice to County Council operational services including highways, property, estates, schools. Oversee the protection, management and enhancement of the County Council's road verge nature reserves.
- Provide the first point of contact for members of the public, councillors, local interest groups and others on biodiversity and ecological issues. Provide the lead inputs for Freedom of Information and Environmental Information Requests involving biodiversity and ecological issues.
- Manage specialist ecological consultancy inputs where required including identification of consultants, preparation of briefs and tenders, consultant selection and negotiation and project management. Supervise and support any students and volunteers engaged to assist the work of the natural environment team
- Manage, support and develop the Protected Species Officer and future ecology specialists as might be recruited to ensure the continued high performance of these roles. Manage additional technical specialists where necessary to meet any growth in demand for these inputs.
- Monitor and review the biodiversity information provided by the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre and work with TVERC to ensure the environmental records information provided to the County Council is fit for purpose.
- Promote understanding of the biodiversity assets of the county and the services of the team via the Council's website, intranet, information resources and training programmes.
- Record and recharge and ensure income generation targets where present are met across the biodiversity and ecology team, and work is delivered to a high professional standard.
- Deputise for the Environment Strategy Manager when required.
- Contribute to the activities of the Environment and Heritage Group and wider Service.
- Such other duties as might reasonably be required to promote the county council's biodiversity ambitions.

Special Requirements

- Some out of hours work may be required in the normal course of duties for which time off in lieu will be given.

Section B: Selection Criteria

This section provides a list of essential and desirable criteria that detail the skills, knowledge, behaviours, qualifications and experience that a candidate should have in order to perform the job. The selection criteria provide a list of essential (no more than 8-10) and desirable criteria (no more than 4). The criteria are aligned to our [corporate values](#).

Each of the criteria listed below will be measured through; the application form (A), a test / exercise (T), an interview (I), a presentation (P) or documentation (D).

You must provide a supporting statement as part of your application which includes examples and evidence of when you have demonstrated the criteria listed below. You will be expected to address each point separately and in the order listed. If you do not complete a full supporting statement in the requested format your application may be rejected.

Essential Criteria	Assessed By:
Degree in relevant environmental discipline or equivalent experience in a relevant specialist field.	A, D
Good level of experience in biodiversity planning within development management including highways and/or minerals & waste sectors.	A, I
Good knowledge of habitats typical to Oxfordshire and the ecological and land management processes needed to support a high level of biodiversity	A, I
Knowledge of Environmental Impact Assessment procedures and their application.	A, I
Demonstrable knowledge and understanding of the administrative and statutory responsibilities of Natural England, DEFRA and District Councils.	A, I
Ability to write clearly and succinctly to convey key messages in a variety of formats written and verbal, to a range of audiences.	A,D, I
Good interpersonal skills, with the ability communicate clearly and effectively with a diverse range of people and provide an authoritative voice for biodiversity.	A, I, P
Showing initiative in analysing situations, negotiating and finding resolutions to problems.	A, I
Ability to undertake a diverse range of activities whilst working to deadlines.	A, I
The ability to drive and the possession of a current driving licence, or ability to demonstrate an effective means of travel to and access remote areas of the county.	A, I
Desirable Criteria	Assessed By:
Qualified member of an appropriate professional body e.g. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management.	A, D
Knowledge of Habitat Regulations Assessment procedures and their application	A, I
Experience in using GIS, in particular ArcGIS	A, I



Experience in line management of professional staff

A, I

Section C: Pre-employment Checks

All appointments are subject to standard pre-employment screening. This will include identity, references, proof of right to work in the UK, medical clearance and verification of certificates. Further information can be found here [Pre-employment checks](#)

Additional pre employment checks specific to this role include:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check with Children's and Adults Barred List	<input type="checkbox"/>	Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check without an Adult/Children's barred list check
<input type="checkbox"/>	Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check with Children's Barred List	<input type="checkbox"/>	Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check with Adults Barred List
<input type="checkbox"/>	Standard Disclosure and Barring Service check	<input type="checkbox"/>	Basic Disclosure
<input type="checkbox"/>	Disqualification for Caring for Children (Education)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Overseas Criminal Record Checks
<input type="checkbox"/>	Prohibition from Teaching	<input type="checkbox"/>	Professional Registration
<input type="checkbox"/>	Non police personnel vetting	<input type="checkbox"/>	Disqualification from Caring
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify):		



Section D: Working Conditions

This is a guide to the working conditions and the potential hazards and risks that may be faced by the post-holder.

Health and Safety at Work

You are responsible for your own health, safety and wellbeing, and undertaking health and safety duties and responsibilities for your role as specified within Oxfordshire County Councils Health and Safety Policy.

The potential significant hazard(s) and risk(s) for this job are identified below (those ticked).

<input type="checkbox"/>	Provision of personal care on a regular basis	<input type="checkbox"/>	Driving HGV or LGV for work
<input type="checkbox"/>	Regular manual handling (which includes assisting, manoeuvring, pushing and pulling) of people (including pupils) or objects	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Any other frequent driving or prolonged driving at work activities (e.g. long journeys driving own private vehicle or WCC vehicle for work purposes)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Working at height/ using ladders on a regular/ repetitive basis	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Restricted postural change – prolonged sitting
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Lone working on a regular basis	<input type="checkbox"/>	Restricted postural change – prolonged standing
<input type="checkbox"/>	Night work	<input type="checkbox"/>	Regular/repetitive bending/ squatting/ kneeling/crouching
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rotating shift work	<input type="checkbox"/>	Manual cleaning/ domestic duties
<input type="checkbox"/>	Working on/ or near a road	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Regular work outdoors
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Significant use of computers (display screen equipment)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Work with vulnerable children or vulnerable adults
<input type="checkbox"/>	Undertaking repetitive tasks	<input type="checkbox"/>	Working with challenging behaviours
<input type="checkbox"/>	Continual telephone use (call centres)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Regular work with skin irritants/ allergens
<input type="checkbox"/>	Work requiring hearing protection (exposure to noise above action levels)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Regular work with respiratory irritants/ allergens (exposure to dust, fumes, chemicals, fibres)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Work requiring respirators or masks	<input type="checkbox"/>	Work with vibrating tools/ machinery
<input type="checkbox"/>	Work involving food handling	<input type="checkbox"/>	Work with waste, refuse
<input type="checkbox"/>	Potential exposure to blood or bodily fluids	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Face-to-face contact with members of the public
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify):		



Agile Working

All staff may be required to work from a different base or in a different location at some point in the future in line with any Council or school needs. Such changes will be made after proper consultation and shall be deemed to be reasonable after taking into account any personal requirements.

