

## Green Recovery Challenge Fund

### Close the Gap – Volunteer Engagement & Comms Officer

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND PERSON SPECIFICATION



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<b>PROJECT TITLE:</b>	Volunteer Engagement & Comms Officer – Close the Gap
<b>BASED:</b>	Working primarily from home, with visits to The Tree Council HQ in Canada Water, London SE16 when restrictions permit
<b>SALARY:</b>	£27,000 - £30,000 per annum
<b>TERMS:</b>	Fixed term, full-time post, to 30 March 2022 – immediate start 25 days annual leave, plus Public Holidays and the period between Christmas and the New Year.
<b>PENSION:</b>	7% contribution by The Tree Council

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<b>REPORTING TO:</b>	Close the Gap Project Manager in close consultation with National Tree Warden Scheme Coordinator
<b>LIAISON WITH:</b>	Tree Council Senior Team / Science & Research Projects Manager / Head of Major Planting Programmes / Head of Comms and wider Tree Council team  External liaison: National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF), volunteer Tree Wardens, Close the Gap project partners, plus a wide variety of additional stakeholders

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**The Green Recovery Challenge Fund is funded by Defra and is being delivered by The National Lottery Heritage Fund in partnership with Natural England and the Environment Agency.**

In December 2020, The Tree Council and Partners received confirmation that their joint £1.8m bid to Defra's Green Recovery Challenge Fund had been successful.

The 18-month programme, called Close the Gap, focuses on hedgerows and is jointly presented by The Tree Council, with People's Trust for Endangered Species, Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group, Moor Trees, University of Reading and Hedgelink, (the partnership organisation for those with an interest in hedgerows).

The Tree Council is the lead partner guiding the delivery of the programme, supported by a Steering Group with representatives from each organisation.

We're looking for a skilled Volunteer Engagement & Comms Officer who can demonstrate a passion for connecting people and the environment and inspiring communities to take local action. You will have minimum three years' experience of working with a wide range of voluntary groups, ideally including 16-24 year olds, and you will also be an advocate for the ecological, economic and social importance of hedges and trees.

You must possess excellent people skills, inspiring people to learn, survey, plant, restore and carefully manage hedgerows and trees in their communities. You must also be adept at developing clear and concise resources to support better understanding of hedges and trees on a multitude of platforms to ensure that people continue to plant and care for them in their communities beyond the end of the project.

You will be supported by the new Close the Gap Project Manager and work closely with the National Tree Warden Scheme Coordinator, as well as The Tree Council's existing highly motivated team.

The programme aims to:

- help shape the future of England's urban and rural hedgerows
- support UK targets for ecological restoration and climate change mitigation
- increase and share knowledge on best-practice hedgerow management through a new Hedgeline website and online training hub ([Welcome | Hedgeline](#))
- inspire the younger generation to engage with land-based careers
- launch new community seed nurseries nationwide to feed future bio-secure tree supplies
- raise awareness of the value of hedgerows through a new National Hedgerow Week
- reduce plastic waste in the countryside (eco-alternative tree guards and tree ties)
- build a strong, long-term, well-funded hedgerow partnership for the future

You will be at the heart of this new programme where active communication, attention to detail and determination will be vital to success.

#### **JOB PURPOSE:**

Support existing networks of volunteers (Tree Wardens, PTES volunteers, farmers and others) to restore, plant and manage trees and hedgerows, as well as set up tree nurseries in their communities

Support farmers, landowners and volunteers to deploy the new National Hedgerow health-check to help map the health of England's hedgerows and provide tailored hedge management

Support delivery of the apprenticeship programme working closely with Moor Trees and Future Gardeners / The Royal Parks Guild

Help the National Tree Warden Scheme Coordinator establish new volunteer Tree Warden networks in areas where there currently are none and develop resources and provide training where required

Support the Project Manager to deliver the programme, in particular the development of the website (working with external consultancy) and promotion of a new high profile public engagement campaign: National Hedgerow Week

#### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

Support new and existing volunteer networks to plant, restore and manage trees and hedgerows

- Work with the Project Manager to establish systems and co-ordinate a hedgerow and hedgerow tree planting fund for volunteer Tree Warden networks and other community groups (funding in place)

- Encourage volunteers to use the PTES Health Checker App to help map hedgerows and restore and better manage them
- Develop relevant educational materials to support communities with hedgerow management and planting

Assist with the delivery of the apprenticeship and training programme

- Work closely with Moor Trees to establish an apprenticeship programme with 10 apprentices at their nurseries in Devon
- Work closely with The Royal Parks Guild / Future Gardeners to develop the necessary hedgerow programme for c300 apprentices at a Discovery Day in September 2021
- Assist with the creation of training modules aimed at volunteer Tree Wardens
- Support the production of a series of workshops, webinars and podcasts linked to the apprenticeship and Tree Warden programme

Support the delivery of other Close the Gap project elements, including:

- Support the development of a new Hedgeline website including a 'knowledge hub' incorporating literature review undertaken with Reading University
- Support the launch of a new high profile National Hedgerow Week in May 2021 – a public engagement campaign to celebrate and raise awareness of hedges
- Engage with farmers as appropriate through the FWAG planting programme
- Support the implementation of a project monitoring and evaluation framework
- Prepare regular reports for the project funders
- Keep detailed budget and project management plans

**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

<b>Person Specification</b>	<b>Criteria *</b>	
<b>Qualifications</b>		
• Degree level qualification (preferably in an environmental discipline although this is not essential)	E	
• Project management qualification	D	
• Current, clean driving licence (minimum one year as a driver)	D	
<b>Experience</b>		
• Minimum 3 years working with a variety of community action groups	E	
• Experience working on an NLHF-funded project	D	
• Experience working on projects linked to the environment or green infrastructure	E	
• Experience delivering across a variety of disciplines with multiple partners	E	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experience of delivering public engagement campaigns, including effective social media activity</li> </ul>	D	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experience dealing with high pressure &amp; sometimes delicately balanced situations</li> </ul>	E	
<b>Skills</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good understanding of hedgerow management for both people and wildlife and ability to champion their importance</li> </ul>	E	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Possess strong organisational skills, often working to tight deadlines, with a calm and confident manner</li> </ul>	E	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Able to prioritise a heavy workload, multi-task and perform effectively under pressure with excellent attention to detail</li> </ul>	E	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Excellent written and spoken English with ability to write engaging copy for difference audiences and with impeccable telephone and email manner</li> </ul>	E	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Numerate and forensic with budgets and targets</li> </ul>	E	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Confident building relationships with a wide variety of stakeholders and chasing for results</li> </ul>	E	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diplomatic with the ability to resolve differences and handle delicate situations in a calm, professional manner</li> </ul>	E	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IT proficient with good knowledge of all MS Office programmes and confident with video conferencing tools</li> </ul>	E	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Self-motivated, high-energy and pro-active with a 'can do' attitude</li> </ul>	E	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Committed to accurate, detailed record-keeping</li> </ul>	E	

(\*) E= Essential      D=Desirable

Attitudes:

- Diplomatic and collaborative team player, builds positive relationships quickly
- Engaging with high energy levels
- High professional standards
- Approachable, with the gravitas to be listened to seriously
- Resilience and tenacity
- Highly practical
- Resourceful problem solver
- Can-do, self-starter and team player
- Able to work weekends / evenings with some potential overnight stays, restrictions permitting (The Tree Council operates a 'Time off in Lieu' policy.)

The Tree Council team works in a collegiate way, delivering projects together. As a result, there is regular cross-over and collaboration. Each project has a designated leader who takes responsibility for driving, maintaining and monitoring progress.

## THE TREE COUNCIL - WHO WE ARE

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The Tree Council is a charity (charity no. 279000) and umbrella body bringing everyone together with a shared mission to care for trees and our planet's future. We inspire and empower organisations, government, communities and individuals with the knowledge and tools to create positive, lasting change at a national and local level.

We inspire people to plant and care for trees – the trees in your city street, your local park or school playground, in orchards and hedgerows and rural pastures around the UK. (Other charities focus on forests and larger woodlands.)

We celebrate our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2023 and are at an important stage in our development, with ambitious plans for the future.

Our work includes:

- Support for a network of volunteer Tree Wardens who help plant and establish trees in communities across England, Scotland and Wales.
- An annual community programme, which connects people with trees and the natural world, including 'National Tree Week' at the end of November, which celebrates the start of the winter planting season
- A grants programme that helps schools and other community groups fulfil their vision to plant trees, orchards and hedgerows
- Science and social research programme in partnership with Defra, Forestry Commission, Fera Science and top UK universities.
- An important relationship as a 'critical friend' to Network Rail. We advise on vegetation management along 20,000 miles of railway corridors and will deliver a new £1m Network Rail community programme over the next four years.
- Partnership with our 120 Member organisations including other charities such as the Woodland Trust and Trees for Cities; academic partners such as Reading, Newcastle and Strathclyde Universities; and generous supporters including businesses, major donors and Trusts & Foundations.

Our small, energetic team comprises:

1. **CEO**
2. **Director of Trees, Science & Research**
3. Head of Major Tree Planting Projects (Based Bath)
4. Science & Research Projects Manager
5. Shared Outcomes Project Manager (*3 days per week*)
6. **Director of Programmes, Partnerships & Comms**
7. Head of Comms & Partnerships (*4 days a week*)
8. Communications & Policy Officer
9. National Tree Warden Scheme Co-ordinator (*based Leicester*)
10. National Schools Programme Manager (*based Winchester*)
11. Administration Officer (*4 days per week*)
12. **Director of Finance** (*part-time*)

Close the Gap – new, fixed-term appointments, starting January 2021:

- Project Manager
- Volunteer Engagement & Comms Officer
- Development/Fundraising Manager (reporting to CEO)

## TIMETABLE

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If you are inspired by this new role at The Tree Council and would like to be considered for interview, please email a CV and covering letter (2 sides A4 max) to [HR@treecouncil.org.uk](mailto:HR@treecouncil.org.uk)

- **Deadline for applications: 24 February 2021, 12pm**
- Candidates selected for interview will be notified on 25 January by 6pm
- **Interviews will take place via Zoom on Friday 26 February 2021**
- A DBS check will be carried out for the successful candidate and two professional references will be required