

Head of Major Planting & Ecology Projects – Southern Region



JOB DESCRIPTION AND PERSON SPECIFICATION

JOB TITLE:	Head of Major Planting & Ecology Projects – Southern Region
BASED:	Dock Offices, Canada Water, London SE16 but remote working is likely for much of the week
SALARY:	£36,000 - £41,000 per annum
PENSION:	7% contribution by The Tree Council
TERMS:	Fixed-term, two-year contract, with potential for renewal, 25 days annual leave, plus Public Holidays and period between Christmas & New Year

REPORTING TO: Director of Trees, Science & Research

LIAISON WITH: Chief Executive, Director of Programmes, Partnerships & Comms, Head of Major Planting Projects (Network Rail – other regions), National Tree Warden Scheme Co-ordinator and wider Tree Council team

External liaison: Network Rail, Local Authority Tree Officers, stakeholder groups including volunteer Tree Warden Networks, charity partners, academic partners, community groups and railway interest groups

Network Rail Southern Region has made an exciting pledge to plant trees and hedgerows and improve biodiversity in communities across the Southern Region over the next three years. This new programme will complement an existing £1m programme, initiated in 2020 and focused on other regions of the UK. In the first year, the target is to plant 11,000 trees in the Southern Region by March 2022. The “Southern Region” refers to Kent, Sussex, Surrey, Hampshire and Dorset. The Tree Council has been appointed to deliver the programme.

We’re looking for a qualified Head of Planting and Ecology Projects, based in (or adjacent to) this region, with minimum five years’ experience project managing tree planting programmes and/or biodiversity projects. You must be able to demonstrate a detailed knowledge of trees and their ecology as well as a comprehensive understanding of the impact of trees on a site’s biodiversity. You will also have a proven track record of writing effective habitat management plans and evaluation reports.

The role involves identifying and delivering appropriate planting or habitat management projects and liaising with a wide variety of stakeholders, including local authorities, landowners, and our volunteer Tree Wardens. Planting is likely to focus on hedges, urban trees, orchards and some small, mixed, community initiatives. Some projects may not involve planting but will require management recommendations to improve the site’s biodiversity.

You will also be responsible for ensuring project delivery, managing budgets, preparing regular reports for Network Rail and evaluating the programme annually with an independent

consultant. You will travel around the region and be prepared to work some weekends and evenings.

You must possess excellent people skills and have experience of leading volunteer activities in the field. You will be inspired by the idea of working in a small, ambitious team, in a fast-paced environment. You will be at the heart of this new Southern Region programme where active communication, attention to detail and determination will be vital to success.

This new role will also support The Tree Council's Director of Trees, Science & Research on other Network Rail related activities as needed, including shaping and contributing to research projects.

JOB PURPOSE: Develop and deliver the new Network Rail Southern Region programme in partnership with local authorities, other organisations and volunteer Tree Wardens (where appropriate) against agreed targets

Prepare habitat management plans for multiple sites to deliver meaningful biodiversity improvements

Create a strategic programme that Network Rail Southern and The Tree Council can be proud of with wide-ranging benefits for the environment, wildlife, and the health and wellbeing of local communities

Safely engage volunteers, including Network Rail employees, in appropriate planting or habitat management projects

RESPONSIBILITIES

Deliver agreed targets

- Working closely with the Project Steering Group, deliver a strategic portfolio of projects that will plant minimum 11,000 trees in the Southern Region by 31 March 2022, with further targets thereafter. This will include hedgerow and street tree planting
- Help scope and deliver a report on Biodiversity net gain by 31 July 2022 (scope yet to be agreed)
- Advise on management activity that can be initiated on selected NR sites to improve their biodiversity
- Informed by the successes and challenges of Year One, develop the strategic evolution of the programme over subsequent years with the Tree Council leadership and Network Rail Steering Group
- With strategic objectives in mind, use agreed criteria to identify, prioritise and confirm project sites with local authorities, tree warden networks and other conservation charities and community groups
- Work with the wider team to ensure that the Network Rail Southern programme amplifies and blends positively with The Tree Council's National School Programme, our Defra research programmes and the Tree Wardens scheme
- Represent The Tree Council at community plantings (or may be National Tree Warden Scheme Co-ordinator where appropriate) and other local stakeholder events and site visits. Give talks and provide training where needed

Monitoring, Evaluation & Reporting

- Manage the programme budget, keeping detailed records of income and expenditure for each aspect
- Maintain an up-to-date database of trees planted and their locations, together with a calendar of future projections
- Support the Director and Project Steering Group with planning, preparation and drafting quarterly and annual reports, monitoring planting and progress against budget
- Prepare short, quarterly progress reports for The Tree Council Board of Trustees
- Tender and manage an independent process to verify and evaluate the programme (including biodiversity improvements) for reporting annually to Network Rail

Liaison with Network Rail

- Attend and contribute to Project Steering Group meetings, other Network Rail meetings, workshops and conferences, including assisting the Director with the wider Network Rail programme and engagement with other aspects of the science & research team's activities as necessary
- Engage Network Rail teams and community volunteers with the programme. Coordinate and oversee the safe delivery of practical work days
- Support The Tree Council's Head of Comms by providing active information on notable events and key milestones so they can be promoted on national, local and social media
- Explore relevant Awards which might be entered and help with their preparation and submission

With the wider Tree Council Team

- Use your expert tree and ecology knowledge to help non-qualified team members answer questions that arise from the public via email or social media
- Help the Head of Comms update the FAQ section of The Tree Council website
- Attend team meetings and (when possible) share cake!
- Throw yourself wholeheartedly into helping out whenever and wherever needed at autumn regional forums, shows and exhibitions.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Person Specification	Criteria *	
Qualifications		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ecological qualification, or a degree in a closely related discipline, or extensive employment in a related area or equivalent 	E	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arboricultural qualification or extensive employment experience 		D
Experience		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum 5 years' experience of leading ecology projects with demanding targets 	E	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum 5 years' experience managing tree planting programmes in the field 		D
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-depth knowledge of tree id and biology, tree law, tree management, tree health 		D
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience working within or alongside Local Authorities 		D
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience working with government agencies 		D
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience working with volunteers 	E	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience dealing with high pressure & sometimes delicately balanced situations 	E	
Skills		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possess strong organisational skills, often working to tight deadlines, with a calm and confident manner 	E	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Able to prioritise a heavy workload, multi-task and perform effectively under pressure with excellent attention to detail 	E	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excellent written and spoken English with an impeccable telephone and email manner 	E	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience in the use of GIS systems and habitat mapping 		D
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numerate and forensic with budgets and targets 	E	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confident building relationships with a wide variety of stakeholders 	E	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Driving license and willingness to travel in the Southern Region, with occasional trips further afield across the UK. Own car is very desirable as this role would be difficult to fulfil using 	E	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IT proficient with good knowledge of all MS Office programmes including Word, Excel, Outlook and Powerpoint 	E	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-motivated, high-energy, pro-active, with a 'can do' attitude and a tendency to smile rather than frown 	E	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Willingness to "muck in" and be hands-on, including with everyday / routine tasks 	E	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Able to explain complex details in an accessible and engaging way, verbally and on paper 	E	

(*) E= Essential D=Desirable

PERSON SPECIFICATION continued

Attitudes:

- Diplomatic and collaborative, 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
- Able to work weekends / evenings with some overnight stays (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

The Tree Council is a charity 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.

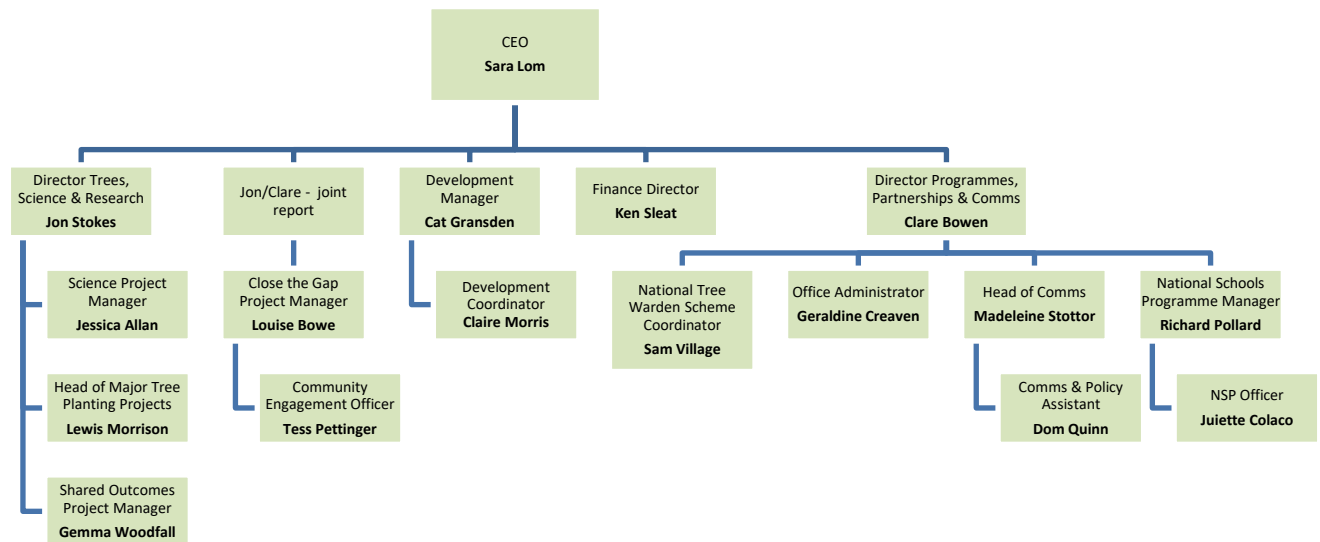
We inspire people to plant and care for trees – the trees in your city street, your local park or school playground, in orchards and hedgerows and rural pastures around the UK. (Other charities focus on forests and larger woodlands.)

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

Our work includes:

- Support for a fantastic network of volunteer Tree Wardens who help plant and establish trees in communities across England, Scotland and Wales
- Seasonal community programmes, which connect people with trees and the natural world, including 'National Hedgerow Week' in May and 'National Tree Week' at the end of November, to celebrate the start of the winter planting season
- A national schools programme, engaging thousands of teachers and pupils
- A 'small 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 leading UK universities
- Relationship as 'critical friend' to Network Rail along 20,000 miles of railway corridors
- Partnership with our 120 member organisations including other charities, local authorities and corporates

OUR TEAM:



The Tree Council is an equal opportunities employer. We welcome applications from everyone regardless of age, disability, gender, ethnicity, religion and sexual orientation.

TIMETABLE

If you are inspired by this new role at The Tree Council and would like to be considered for interview, please email a short CV and cover letter (max 2 sides of A4) to hr@treecouncil.org.uk

The deadline for applications is midnight on **Tuesday 12 October 2021**

Candidates selected for interview will be notified on **Wednesday 13 October by 5pm**

First interviews will take place online on **Friday 15 October 2021**

A DBS check will be carried out for the successful candidate and two professional references will be required.