

Job Description



Title:	Catchment Programme Officer
Salary:	£28,000 - £31,000 depending on experience plus Employer's Pension Contribution (9%)
Contract:	Fixed term 24 months (6 months probationary period). Includes cover for Maternity Leave.
Hours:	Full-time, 37.5 hours per week
Location:	Hybrid working (remote plus Wessex RT Head Office in Salisbury)
Responsible to:	Catchment Programme Manager

Wessex Rivers Trust

Wessex Rivers Trust (Wessex RT) is an environmental charity, dedicated to the protection and conservation of rivers and chalk streams in the Wessex area. Wessex RT is a growing regional Trust at the cutting edge of the Rivers Trust movement, the umbrella organisation looking after most of the UK's and Ireland's rivers.

Our expanding portfolio requires a dedicated Catchment Programme Officer (CPO) who, as an experienced environmental scientist, will lead on a range of work packages, including Invasive Non-Native Species management, hosting the Test & Itchen Catchment Partnership, environmental monitoring, and the design and delivery of nature based solutions. The CPO will also support the Catchment Programme Manager across a variety of projects, ranging from engagement with farmers and citizen scientists to project design with water companies and environmental regulators.

Job summary and purpose

The CPO will be responsible for ensuring the planning and effective delivery of the Test & Itchen Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) Project, hosting the Test & Itchen Catchment Partnership (TICP), and undertaking environmental river based monitoring across Wessex RT's area. Delivery of the Test & Itchen INNS Project will be on a part-time basis for a period of ~10 months (maternity cover) only. The CPO will then be deployed onto a broader range of projects upon completion of the maternity cover period.

Test & Itchen Invasive Non Native Species Project coordination role

Wessex RT and fellow members of the Test & Itchen Catchment Partnership (TICP) have secured funding from a range of stakeholders to deliver an ambitious multi-year project which focuses on managing the threat posed by one of the key issues affecting the health of our river catchments – Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS). INNS have a devastating impact on native plant and animal species, out-competing, preying upon, or displacing native species. INNS can cause devastating changes to the sensitive environment of a chalk stream's ecology and heritage. Actions will be informed by the current project strategy, with the CPO leading on the delivery of a catchment-wide, prioritised programme of INNS surveys and management, data co-ordination, and GIS mapping. The CPO will work with a small but diverse volunteer network under their guidance, and liaise with a number of key delivery partners, including councils, NGO's and private companies.

Test & Itchen Catchment Partnership host role

As host for the TICP, the CPO will work closely with range of stakeholders across this prestigious chalk stream catchment to identify and develop environmental improvement projects in both rural and urban areas, from source to sea. Project topics include diffuse pollution from rural and urban sources, river and floodplain habitat management, water resources/quantity challenges, and data and evidence management. This role includes delivering aspects of the Anton Chalk Stream Restoration Programme, a 5 year CaBA project in partnership with the Trust's Habitats and Education & Engagement Teams.

Other projects and environmental monitoring

As the maternity cover role for the Test & Itchen INNS Project comes to an end in late 2025, the CPO's input towards wider Catchment team projects, and environmental monitoring, will increase. Projects will include the identification, design, and delivery of a variety of nature based solutions to tackle issues affecting river and floodplain health. A number of our current and future projects involve collecting and assessing a range of environmental data and evidence. The CPO will support the team to develop and implement these monitoring programmes, including desk and field based work.

Duties and responsibilities

1 Test & Itchen INNS Project coordination (2024/25 only)	
1	Work collaboratively to refresh the INNS strategy for the Test & Itchen Catchment
2	Commission INNS management via contractors, where appropriate
3	Coordinate INNS management work across the catchment, working closely with Local Authorities, fishery managers, and the Watercress & Winterbournes Landscape Partnership project in particular
4	Help grow the INNS network, building new volunteer groups and expanding the partner membership
5	Report to funders on project progress and with other information as required

2 Test & Itchen INNS Project volunteer management (2024/25 only)	
1	Coordinate and safely deliver INNS management with an enthusiastic volunteer workforce
2	Deliver training to any new volunteers associated with the T&I INNS Project

3 Test & Itchen INNS management and delivery (2024/25 only)	
1	Deliver coordinated INNS management on the ground
2	Coordinate volunteers and contractors undertaking INNS management on the ground, including planning activities and landowner and liaison
3	Ensure high H&S standards are embedded throughout the project
4	Co-ordinate and deliver annual INNS surveys

4 Test & Itchen Catchment Partnership (2025+)	
1	Identify and co-develop projects in partnership with stakeholders across the Test & Itchen catchment
2	Organise and host Catchment Partnership meetings and events to facilitate action amongst stakeholders

	3	Report to funders on progress and with other information as required
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5	Other projects and environmental monitoring (2026+)	
	1	Support the Trust in the delivery of nature based solutions, such as wetland design and creation, and floodplain catchment management
	2	Support delivery of citizen science based monitoring projects and data analysis
	3	Support the team with a range of environmental monitoring based projects, including water quality and aquatic ecology (field sampling and data analysis)

6	Contributing to the work of the Wessex RT in general	
	1	Contribute to delivering the Trust's objectives
	2	Help maintain the Trust's reputation (especially with funders, regulators, contractors, landowners and partner organisations).
	3	Undertake other duties that may be appropriate to the position from time to time

Person specification

1	Qualifications and required knowledge		Essential	Desirable
	1	Educated to a degree level in a relevant field of environmental science / education or equivalent	x	
	2	Knowledge of river ecosystems	x	
	3	An understanding of the principles of engaging with volunteers in nature conservation		x
	4	An understanding of the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders who play a part in determining the health of our rivers		x
	5	Knowledge of Invasive Non-Native Species	x	
	6	Practical experience of working in/near water and an understanding of the risks associated with field work	x	

2	Experience		Essential	Desirable
	1	Experience of project management and coordination	x	
	2	Working with a range stakeholders, including volunteers or community groups from a range of backgrounds		x
	3	Good time and budget management, including successful fundraising		x
	4	Implementation of Health & Safety policy and practice	x	
	5	Working with members of the agricultural sector		x
	6	River based environmental monitoring and lab work	x	

3	Skills and competencies		Essential	Desirable
	1	Good IT skills, including use of Office 365	x	
	2	Application of GIS based mapping skills	x	
	3	Able to communicate with a wide range of audiences	x	
	4	Excellent administrative and organisational skills	x	
	5	Understanding the needs of volunteers	x	
	6	Ability to manage workload effectively and prioritise to demanding timelines	x	

4	Personal attributes		Essential	Desirable
	1	Flexibility	x	
	2	Self-starter	x	
	2	A natural team player / leader	x	
	3	Empathy and people-focus	x	
	4	Self-motivation	x	

Miscellaneous

The post will involve travelling throughout Wessex RT's working area, therefore a full UK driving licence and use of own vehicle is essential. Mileage expenses will be paid at 45p per mile as set out in HMRC's Approved Mileage Allowance Payment. During busier months some flexibility for working hours may be required, covered by the Trust's Time – Off In Lieu (TOIL) system. Occasional evening and weekend work may be required. A DBS check will be required.