

# Job Description



<b>Title:</b>	Watercress and Winterbournes Projects and Conservation Officer
<b>Salary:</b>	£ 25,000 plus 8% Employers Pension Contribution
<b>Contract:</b>	Until 31 March 2025
<b>Hours:</b>	Full-time, 37 hrs per week
<b>Location:</b>	Wessex RT Head Office in Salisbury and/or homeworking, and regular travel to W&W Satellite Office near Winchester
<b>Reporting to:</b>	Head of Project Delivery



## Background

The 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 small but rapidly 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.

Wessex RT is a key partner in a programme lead by Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust (HIWWT) that has secured £1.9m funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) to deliver an innovative 5-year chalk stream focused Landscape Partnership Scheme (LPS) – Watercress and Winterbournes.

The Watercress and Winterbournes Landscape Partnership Scheme focuses on the headwaters of two of the UK's most iconic chalk rivers, the Test and the Itchen. This is an area of distinctive chalk stream habitats and winterbournes, which supports a rich diversity of wildlife. Over time these streams have given rise to a landscape of wetland habitats, heritage industries, market towns and dotted villages. The area is world renowned for its fly-fishing and is central to the UK's watercress industry.

However, this landscape is at risk, with a range of factors threatening the character and quality of this chalk stream landscape. Together with partner match funding, this £3.1m scheme will focus on improving the resilience of our chalk streams and celebrating their unique qualities through key partnerships and community action. It involves the delivery of 20 ambitious projects incorporating the restoration of natural and built heritage, celebrating the chalk stream and associated cultural heritage and the delivery of a community grant scheme.

The project started in May 2020 and Wessex RT is now seeking to employ a Projects and Conservation Officer to join the Watercress and Winterbournes team.

## Job summary and purpose

The Watercress and Winterbournes Projects and Conservation Officer (WWPCO) will be responsible for **the delivery of the Watercress and Winterbourne Landscape Partnership Scheme** by working closely together with the other Watercress and Winterbourne LPS staff as well as Wessex RT's Project Delivery Team.

The WWPCO will **manage contractors and work directly with volunteers** to deliver river and wetland habitat restoration, fish migration, natural flood management, sediment pathway mitigation and other capital projects for the duration of the scheme. The WWPCO will also **scope and develop projects** for delivery towards the end of the scheme. The latter will include preparing detailed designs, commissioning and/or undertaking protected species surveys, submitting permit and licence applications, procuring contracts and all other aspects to deliver projects efficiently and successfully.

As part of the role the WWPCO will shape and run a *Chalk Stream Champions* scheme, focussing on **developing volunteering skills** that will empower local communities to look after winterbournes during the duration of the scheme and beyond.

## Duties and responsibilities

1 Project development, preparation and delivery	
1	With the support of the Watercress and Winterbournes LPS staff and the Trust's Project Delivery Team, develop ideas and proposals into deliverable projects on the ground. Activities to include effective stakeholder engagement, Licence and Permit acquisition, detailed design work and procurement.
2	Work with partners, landowners, contractors and consultants to deliver a range of environmental improvement projects on the ground.
3	Manage preparation and delivery of a several projects concurrently, optimising time used and resources.
4	Supervise the work of consultants and contractors as well as volunteers working on the delivery of restoration projects.
5	Contribute to the systems and processes to ensure effective record keeping and project management.
6	Manage equipment and materials to ensure appropriate quantities and qualities are in place at key times to help efficient project delivery.
7	Support volunteers in the set-up, delivery and reporting of monitoring and evaluation of selected projects.

2 Training programme for Chalk Stream Champions	
1	Develop an annual programme of training for the W&W chalk stream champions (local volunteers) working closely with the W&W Community Catchment Officer.
2	Oversee delivery of the training programme, and in some cases directly deliver training, working closely with the W&W team.
3	Collecting feedback and evaluation from the chalk stream champions, ensure that they are receiving the learning opportunities they require and that they are enjoying being part of the W&W scheme.

3 Project administration and fundraising	
1	Undertake day-to-day management of projects and keeping good records and administration.

2	Support the W&W Communications Officer with internal and external communication activities related to projects, including presentations, talks, brochures, interpretation panels and social and traditional media coverage.
3	Undertake project reporting, claiming and evaluation as required.

<b>4</b>	<b>Contributing to the work of the WCSRT in general</b>
1	Contribute to the Trust's external communications (e.g. through websites, social media and presentations), profile and good reputation
2	Positively contribute to the reputation of the Trust and the HLF Watercress & Winterbournes Landscape Partnership Scheme.

### Person specification

<b>1</b>	<b>Qualifications and required knowledge</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Desirable</b>
1	Educated at least to a degree level in a relevant field or equivalent work experience in the (aquatic) environment sector	X	
2	Professional qualifications and/or relevant industry memberships		X
3	Good understanding of freshwater ecology of rivers and ideally winterbournes	X	
4	Knowledge of river geomorphology and hydrology		X
6	Knowledge of the geography of the Test & Itchen headwaters		X
7	Thorough understanding of Health & Safety, CDM and other relevant regulations		X

<b>2</b>	<b>Experience</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Desirable</b>
1	Demonstrable experience of designing and/or delivering conservation projects	X	
2	Experience of working in partnership with a range of stakeholders and groups, e.g. local authorities, riparian managers, farmers and water companies	X	
3	Experience of working with and co-ordinating volunteers and developing volunteer training programmes		X
3	Demonstrable experience of successful budget and time management	X	
4	Experience of project development		X

<b>3</b>	<b>Skills and competences</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Desirable</b>
1	Excellent IT skills, including use of Office 365	X	
2	Proficient use of GIS (preferably AGOL) for mapping and design work		X
3	Creative and technical writing for diverse audiences		X
4	Confident in speaking and presenting to a broad range of audiences	X	
5	Practical countryside management skills (chainsaw qualifications etc.)		X

4	Personal attributes	
	2	Strong interpersonal and influencing skills
	3	Ability to quickly develop a detailed understanding of wide ranging and complex topics
	4	Ambitious, self-motivated and target driven and able to work on own initiative
	5	Genuine enthusiasm and passionate about restoring the winterbournes in Wessex
	6	Being able to develop excellent customer relationships
	7	Willingness to learn and turn hand to whatever is required

## Miscellaneous

The post will involve travelling throughout the Watercress & Winterbournes project area (East-Hampshire), 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. Occasional evening and weekend work may be required. We will also require the successful applicant to undergo a DBS check and provide satisfactory references.