

JOB DESCRIPTION



Farmer Cluster Officer

Function:	To establish and facilitate a farmer cluster in the Darent valley and seek opportunities across the Kent Downs AONB in partnership with the KDAONB unit.
Responsible to:	Senior Farmer Cluster Officer
Responsible for:	Stakeholder relationships, project development and delegated finances
Key relationships:	Farmer Cluster Officers, Darent Valley Landscape Partnership Team, KDAONB staff, Natural England

Kent Wildlife Trust

Kent Wildlife Trust (KWT) is a flexible employer that aims to be class-leading in the environment sector in the southeast. It is one of the largest of the 46 Wildlife Trusts, which together make up The Wildlife Trusts Partnership. We are supported by our 32,000 members, and have the simple ambition of enabling the recovery of Kent's wildlife. To this end, we own or manage over 80 nature reserves covering over 9,000 acres; we campaign and lobby politicians, decision makers and landowners to ensure site protection and good habitat management; and we run a full programme of education work with schools, colleges and adult groups. The Trust also has three Visitor Centres. We also have two income-generating subsidiaries (an ecological consultancy and a trading arm). Together with the charity these make up the KWT Group.

The Trust operates from its headquarters at Tyland Barn, just north of Maidstone. It is composed of over 100 professional and support staff who work within teams including Estates, Conservation Delivery & Partnership, Conservation Policy & Evidence, People Engagement, Marketing and Fundraising, Finance and Support Services.

Visit our websites to see the range of our services and activities;

www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk

www.kwtconsultancyservices.org.uk

Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

The Kent Downs AONB covers around a quarter of the County of Kent and is one of Britain's National Landscapes – the National Parks and AONBs. AONBs are internationally recognised as IUCN Category V Protected Landscapes. The purpose of the statutory designation is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the landscape. The Kent Downs is home to some of Kent's most important wildlife which forms a key component of the area's natural beauty.

A statutory AONB Management Plan is adopted by all of the relevant Local Authorities, at its heart the plan seeks to make the landscape greener, wilder, healthier, more welcoming and more beautiful. Around 70% of the Kent Downs is farmed and a positive relationship with farmers and

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Land Managers is a critical way to achieve the purposes of the AONB and to conserve agrobiodiversity.

Job Purpose

The Kent Wildlife Trust has a bold vision for creating a Wilder Kent. This involves engaging 25% of Kent's population into taking positive action for wildlife whilst working to restore nature directly across the county. This includes challenging conventional conservation thinking and testing innovative methods to reverse the declines in wildlife and combat the linked climate and biodiversity crises. More than 70% of Kent's landscape is farmed, as the defining land management practice it is essential that we engage directly and honestly with farmers to seek opportunities to reverse these crises.

We are seeking a highly motivated individual to join our Wilder Landscapes Team and develop new relationships with farmers and landowners in the Darent Valley, empowering them to make decisions that benefit wildlife and their long-term sustainability in the face of a rapidly changing sector. This will include taking advantage of a suite of Nature-Based Solutions (carbon sequestration, catchment resilience measures etc.), helping to identify natural capital assets and providing the latest advice on the new ELM scheme. The post will be jointly hosted by Kent Wildlife Trust and the Kent Downs AONB unit, with office space available at both Tyland Barn (ME14 3BD) and Castle Farm (TN14 7UB), to ensure an integrated approach with other land management advisors in the area.

1 Principal Duties

1. To act as the key facilitator of a new farmer led group in the Darent Valley, to support this group in establishing appropriate governance, direction and goal setting.
2. To assist in the development of a network of farmer contacts across the Kent Downs AONB to identify opportunity for further cluster establishment and suitable funding sources.
3. To work closely with farmers in the cluster and other stakeholders to develop a suite of land management interventions that benefit wildlife and enhance landscapes to be undertaken on farms in the area and get all necessary permissions to enable this work to happen.
4. To promote greater collaboration between farmers to enable them to share learning, foster innovation in regenerative agriculture and a sense of pride in the wider landscape.
5. To liaise with other land management advisors in the area, and signpost effectively to ensure coordination and prevent duplication of effort so that farmers can access the advice that they need when they need it.
6. To work with the KWT consultancy and members of the Kent Downs AONB Unit as needed to provide direct land management or other relevant advice to farmers.
7. To balance the needs of the farmers with the needs of wildlife and landscape character in the area, to seek common ground and provide steer at the appropriate points.

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8. To investigate novel methods of funding farmer cluster work and make it sustainable in the long term.
9. Liaise with KWT Conservation Evidence Team to ensure conservation actions taken are evidence-based and effectively managed.
10. To work with communication and marketing colleagues at KWT and the Kent Downs AONB Unit to develop engaging online content and resources that inspire landowners and land managers to take action.
11. Work with other Farmer Cluster Officers to develop engagement activities that are locally relevant and of interest to farmers and landowners.
12. To keep accurate records and comply with the UK General Data Protection Regulation.
13. Have due regard to health & safety and diversity issues, including ensuring that all works by volunteers conform to health & safety best practice and the Equalities Act (i.e. as a minimum are in accordance with the Health & Safety At Work act 1974).
14. Any other duties as reasonably required by the Chief Executive.

2 Skills, Qualifications & Experience

The post holder will:

	Essential	Desirable
A proven track record of developing lasting professional relationships	X	
Experience of working in or with the farming community	X	
An excellent local knowledge of land management issues	X	
An understanding of Natural Capital and Nature - Based Solutions		X
Knowledge of farm economics and diversification		X
A good understanding of the natural history and landscape of the South East, and the pressures affecting it	X	
Highly self-motivated, able to seek out new project and funding opportunities without instruction within the limits of authority	X	
Good presentational and negotiating skills	X	
Excellent interpersonal skills, and a proven record of engaging individuals and organisations in nature conservation work	X	
Demonstrable ability to work as part of a close team	X	
Well presented, approachable and confident	X	
Educated to degree level in a relevant subject		X
A full current driving licence	X	

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Required Competency Level – Band 2

- Takes pride in achieving high quality outcomes; committed to personal development.
- Objectively reviews data and information sources to recommend workable solutions; makes day to day decisions within own work area.
- Takes initiative and works smarter/more efficiently to achieve objectives; owns and implements projects in own work area.
- Takes pride in delivering excellent projects and outcomes.
- Actively contributes to creating a sense of team spirit; pulls the team together and involves everyone.
- Supervises others; sets objectives, reviews performance and suggests development actions.
- Collaborates effectively and proactively with colleagues, external stakeholders, and customers; sets standards for others.
- Demonstrates a clear understanding of KWT's potential and place in the sector and identifies and delivers improvements within own team.

3 Other Considerations

1. The post is advertised as a full-time post but flexible, part-time arrangements will be considered providing that they apply throughout the year.
2. The post is offered on a fixed term for 12 months with possibility of extension.
3. Appointment will be subject to a six-month probationary period.
4. No person shall be treated less favourably than another on the grounds of sex, sexual orientation, marital status, race, ethnic or national origin, religion, colour, age or disability.
5. Appointment is conditional upon receipt of satisfactory references.
6. Kent Wildlife Trust is an equal opportunities employer and applicants for staff vacancies shall be short-listed for interview and appointed purely on the grounds of their suitability for the post as laid out in the advertised job description.
7. All staff share a common duty to recruit members and volunteers and enhance the good reputation of the Trust whenever the opportunity arises.
8. KWT aims actively to enhance, wherever possible, the opportunities for people with disabilities to experience, understand and enjoy the natural environment. All staff share the responsibility in achieving this. Further information is available from the Head of People Engagement.
9. Under Section 7 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, all staff have a legal responsibility to:
 - a. take all reasonable care of their health and safety while at work;
 - b. ensure as far as reasonably practicable the safety of other persons, whether other employees or members of the public, who may be adversely affected by their own actions
 - c. co-operate with the Trust to enable it to discharge its obligations satisfactorily.

4 Employment Package

The Farmer Cluster Officer post is offered at up to £27,800 per year pro rata dependant on skills and experience. This is a fixed term post for 12 months with the possibility of extension. This is a full-time post offered at 37.5 hours per week.

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Normal KWT office hours are 9.00 am to 5.30 pm (including an hour for lunch) 5 days per week, which will involve some evening and weekend working. Some flexibility will be possible within the demands of the post. Overtime is not paid, but time may be taken off in lieu. The KWT holiday allowance for full time workers is 23 days a year plus 8 days' statutory holidays.

After 3 months in post, eligible staff will be automatically enrolled into a workplace pension scheme. Trust will contribute 9% of gross salary provided the employee contributes a minimum of 4%.

5 Procedure for Applicants

Applications

To apply, please visit our website to download an application pack. Applicants should read the Guidance Notes carefully before completing the applicant information form supported by Cover Note and CV.

If you wish to discuss this post, please telephone Stan Smith on 07733 205264 or Chloe Sadler on 07500 057863

The closing date for applications is midday on 25th June 2021

Interviews

Interviews will be held on 5th July 2021 and will include a presentation (subject to be sent to shortlisted candidates) and formal questions.