

Countryside Officer

Grade 7

About the Service

Based in the Economy, Infrastructure & Skills Directorate, Environment & Countryside is responsible for the management and development of Staffordshire County Council's country parks and green spaces, 4500km of statutory public rights of way and the associated definitive map, the provision of high-quality environmental advice across SCC functions and externally, the conservation of Staffordshire's natural and historic environment and the management of environmental data and spatial information. The service hosts the Cannock Chase National Landscape Partnership and is leading the development of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Staffordshire and Stoke. It is also involved with other strategic environmental partnerships across the county.

About the Role

Staffordshire County Council Countryside Officers are integral to the Council's aims of creating a greener and more sustainable environment in Staffordshire. They play a key role in delivering quality greenspaces that deliver excellent recreational, nature conservation and landscape resources to residents and visitors to Staffordshire.

Reporting Relationships

Responsible to: Cannock Chase Site Manager / Country Parks Manager

Responsible for: Volunteers

Key Accountabilities:

1. Manage the operational running of the countryside estate / Cannock Chase Country Park.
2. Support the development, and be accountable for the delivery, of site management plans as directed by the Country Parks Manager / Cannock Chase Site Manager.
3. Complete programmes of site inspections, appropriate surveys and deliver works to ensure the sites are safe, clean and accessible, ensuring any contractors operate safely on site.
4. Support emergency response work under direction of the manager, including fire safety, supporting emergency services and potentially deer callout duties.
5. Under direction of manager / ecologist, deliver tasks required under Countryside Stewardship and other environmental management schemes including grazing, mechanical and herbicide management, ensuring implementation of work to bring habitats into favourable condition, and wider work for wildlife and heritage.
6. Under direction of manager, support development and delivery of projects with appropriate partners to achieve site management plan objectives.
7. Ensure vehicles and equipment are deployed and maintained in a safe and timely manner.
8. 8. Responsible for the visitor experience on site ensuring that it is engaging, enjoyable and safe.
9. Ensure that events and activities are compliant with legal and policy requirements and increase awareness of the need to care for special features on the sites.
10. Ensure constructive relationships with neighbouring landowners, tenants, local businesses and user groups and identify opportunities for new ways of working and efficiencies.
11. Engage with visitors and develop materials to increase public awareness of the special features and qualities of the sites and how visitors can support their conservation.

12. Ensure physical structures and premises are monitored and maintained to appropriate standards and that issues are promptly reported to an appropriate manager.
13. Practical implementation on site of the volunteer strategy ensuring volunteers are effectively supervised, supported and deployed day to day. This will include supervising groups of volunteers on site to deliver management tasks, surveys etc.
14. While this post is focused on the countryside estate / Cannock Chase, all roles need to be flexible and you may be required to support work across Environment & Countryside to meet business needs commensurate with the general nature and grading of this role.

Person Specification

Qualifications/Professional membership

- Degree or equivalent in countryside management or appropriate discipline
- At least two of the following and knowledge of others
 - (NPTC) Level 2 qualifications in chainsaw use & maintenance;
 - Strimming;
 - Mowing (pedestrian);
 - Brush cutters and trimmers;
 - Pesticides / spraying;
 - Off road driving;
 - Winching;
 - Tree safety management;
 - ATV handling; digger driving;
 - Use of trailers;
 - Tractor driving and related operations;
 - Tractor mounted mowers;
 - Topper (rotary and flail);
 - Firearms licence;
 - Protected species licences;
 - Level 1 deer management qualification.
- First aid certificate

Knowledge and Experience

- Sound understanding and experience of countryside management policy and practice and managing public sites.
- Significant experience of practical site management and safe use of tools and equipment.
- Experience of basic procurement procedures and working with contractors
- Knowledge and experience of surveys and conservation requirements of key species and habitats and general management of historic features.
- Knowledge and experience of health and safety management, inspection procedures, emergency procedures and risk assessment.
- Knowledge and experience of engaging with the public and interpreting natural and cultural heritage.
- Experience of working with the public, volunteers and external organisations.

Skills

- Effective communication and interpersonal skills including ability to engage the public



- Excellent team working skills
- Good general IT skills (word processing, spreadsheets etc) and basic knowledge of GIS
- Ability to deal with difficult situations and respond to emergencies
- Current driving licence and ability to drive off-road vehicles
- Physical fitness including ability to walk reasonable distances and undertake physical work outdoors in all weathers

This post is designated as a Casual Car user

The content of this Job Description and Person Specification will be reviewed on a regular basis.