

Ecology & Habitats Advisor

35 hours per week, temporary contract until December 2028

We are Chester Zoo

We're not *just* an amazing, award-winning visitor attraction that's home to 20,000 incredible animals inside 128 acres of stunning gardens. We're not *just* the UK's most popular zoo. We're a major wildlife charity that's committed to the recovery of endangered species, globally. And, as the world faces an extinction crisis, we're making a hugely significant contribution to conservation at a time when it's needed most. We are Chester Zoo and we prevent extinction.

The Role

We now have an exciting new role for an Ecology & Habitats Advisor. This role is part of the *Networks for Nature* project team.

Networks for Nature spans c60 square miles from the River Dee to the River Mersey, including Chester and Ellesmere Port. This is a collaborative partnership project working with Cheshire West and Chester Council, The Land Trust, Cheshire Wildlife Trust, Canal and River Trust, and Sustrans with the aim to drive nature recovery in a mixed-use landscape, creating diverse habitats for species to thrive now and for years to come. We will empower communities to have an active role in conservation action and stewardship and will focus on making nature more accessible to and inclusive for everyone to enable connection and improve wellbeing. To find out more about Networks for Nature visit [Networks For Nature | Conservation at Chester Zoo](#).

As the Ecology & Habitats Advisor you will plan, design, co-ordinate and deliver ecological survey and analysis across the project area, helping to achieve the vision of a more connected habitat corridor across the landscape.

The post holder will provide ecological support to colleagues, project partners, and stakeholders as needed. They will engage with landowners and land managers to conduct baseline ecological surveys, identifying existing priority species and habitats on site. This information will inform appropriate recommendations for habitat creation or enhancement, helping to improve ecological connectivity across the project area. These efforts will align with habitat improvements in progress on partner-owned lands, including the Chester Zoo Estate.

The Ecology & Habitats Advisor will support the provision of training, information and advice regarding biodiversity action where required to community groups, school partners and volunteers engaged in Networks for Nature.

We're looking for someone who can:

- Complete **ecological surveys** (Phase 1 habitat mapping and condition assessments), develop habitat creation recommendations and write management reports.
- Manage a budget (approximately £20,000 annually) for **ecological consultancy** to be used to complete more in-depth flora and fauna surveys where required. This budget will be managed with oversight from Estate Biodiversity Manager and NFN Project Manager.
- Understand habitat connectivity and lead strategic, landscape-scale ecological planning across the project area, and work to ensure that habitats are connected as effectively as reasonably practicable.

This will involve regular consultation and collaboration with internal teams, external stakeholders, and consultants.

- Ensure **ecological data** is managed, analysed, reported and disseminated appropriately to support management decisions, and track progress against the biodiversity targets of the project.

What makes Chester Zoo a great place to work?

Well, where do we start? Here goes...

We're a huge team of conservationists, scientists, educators, animal welfare experts, marketeers, visitor experience professionals, environmental policy influencers; the list goes on. Each and every one of us is on a mission to make Chester Zoo the best in the world, and our planet a better place.

As the UK's biggest and best zoo, we have ambitious goals, exciting plans, and there's always lots going on here. We're an inclusive and diverse organisation, made up of over 600 permanent and 500 temporary team members, and we know how important it is to invest in our colleagues to help boost their career development. We have ambitious goals, and we want you to be with us for the long term on our exciting journey.

Our working environment could not be more different from a typical office – where else can you see critically endangered orangutans from your office window, or stroll among rare giraffes and tigers on your lunch break?

The Package

- Temporary contract until December 2028
- 35 hours per week, generally Monday-Friday with occasional need to work evening and weekends for which time off in lieu will be given
- Salary £27,938.29
- 33 days annual leave plus the option to buy or sell up to 5 days (pro rota)
- Staff pass so you can visit the zoo during your time off, plus multiple complimentary tickets for your friends and family
- Cycle to work scheme
- Healthcare plan and employee assistance programme
- Discounted gym membership
- Discounts on cinema tickets, restaurants, high street shops and more via Perks
- Pension scheme with generous employer contributions up to 9%

Our Requirements

- An understanding & affinity to the organisation's mission, vision & values, with a strong interest in the conservation of UK nature.
- Strong **knowledge of conservation** and the key issues threatening the natural world today, particularly with a focus on UK wildlife. This is likely to be demonstrated by a relevant degree and/or experience of working within a conservation organisation, ecological consultancy, or similar environment, ideally in a UK setting.
- Good understanding of the principles of **ecological restoration** and **practical conservation**.
- Experience of **ecological consultancy** work or similar experience. Competent in Phase 1 Habitat Surveys.
- Experience in dealing with **stakeholders** with a variety of different knowledge levels, and interests.
- Authoritative knowledge in at least one **taxonomic group** (e.g., GCN or birds) and accomplished knowledge in a range of taxonomic groups.
- Experience of carrying out and planning of **monitoring**, survey, habitat management and mitigation activities.
- Knowledge of **landscape scale ecology** and the ability to look at how specific areas and habitats fit into the wider picture.

- Experience of working with **external consultants/contractors**.
- **IT skills:** Skilled in the use of all key Microsoft packages and experience of GIS.
- **Organisation skills:** Excellent time management, administration, project management and planning skills. Ability to coordinate multiple activities, meeting deadlines and ensuring appropriate quality control.
- **Interpersonal skills:** Good diplomacy and interpersonal skills. Ability to work effectively under own initiative and as part of a team.
- **Reporting:** Experience in data handling and basic statistical analysis, plus report writing skills.
- Full driving license

Although not essential, the following would be desirable:

- **Appropriate licenses** to conduct/oversee core ecological services including a GCN licence.
- Practical experience in habitat management techniques – meadows, reed beds, or woodland for example, and experience of agri-environment schemes desirable.
- Knowledge of UK wildlife related law.
- Experience of working on large, landscape scale projects.
- Experience of Phase 2, NVC, or other habitat assessments tool desirable.

The closing date for applications is **midnight 1st June 2025**

Shortlisting of applications and interviews for the role will take place while the advert is live; the advert will close once the successful candidate is found and it is possible this will be prior to the advertised end date.

Candidates are therefore encouraged to submit applications as soon as possible.

Networks for Nature is made possible with The National Lottery Heritage Fund, thanks to National Lottery players.