



Community Engagement Officer - Red Squirrels

Bright Green Nature

Scottish Borders / Hybrid

£31,200 pro rated to 2.5 days/week

Part Time • Fixed Term

Role Profile - Community Engagement Officer - Red Squirrels (Part-time)

Funded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund

Post Title: Community Engagement Officer - Red Squirrels

Location: Melrose with work across the Scottish Borders

Reports to: Chief Executive Officer, Bright Green Nature

Hours of Work: 0.5 FTE (2.5 days per week)

Salary: £31,200 pro-rated to 2.5 days/week (£15,600 per annum)

Duration of contract: Fixed term contract until March 2030

Holiday entitlement: 14 days plus UK statutory holidays

Our Origins, Mission and Strategic Objectives

Bright Green Nature was founded in 2022, motivated by:

1. The ability to empower people, all people, to be able to contribute to the mitigation of biodiversity loss and climate change, through restoring healthy functioning ecosystems
2. Restoring and protecting our natural world, our biodiversity and our heritage
3. Making the world a safer and more stable place for the next generation

Bright Green Nature is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation, No. SC051628.

Our mission is:

To protect, restore and connect natural ecosystems, to provide and facilitate development of nature-based knowledge, skills and wellbeing to people, and to connect communities with their natural and cultural heritage



Our strategic objectives are as follows:

1. Restoring and protecting the health and resilience of natural ecosystems and constituent biodiversity by:
 - Restoring, protecting and connecting habitats to conserve and improve abundance and resilience of native biodiversity
 - Restoring and protecting ecosystem function, health and resilience
 - Supporting and conducting research into ecosystem restoration practices; dissemination and interpretation of results
2. Connecting and engaging people with Nature by:
 - Connecting and engaging people with Nature so that they are motivated to protect it
 - Making Nature accessible to all; reaching new audiences through using Nature to connect with people in innovative ways
 - Connecting people with their natural and cultural heritage to understand its importance in shaping how we understand Nature and how we live with Nature in the future in a changing climate
 - Empowering communities and individuals to learn new Nature-based skills and knowledge, to improve wellbeing and employability

The Red Squirrel Recovery Network project

The Red Squirrel Recovery Network (RSRN) is a new project which aims to build on conservation efforts of the last 20 years and lay the foundations for species recovery. It is led by a partnership of four conservation organisations, with support from leading red squirrel conservation agencies and the network of volunteer-led squirrel groups.

The RSRN is a shared ambition for red squirrels in Northern England and Southern Scotland and which is funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Working at a super-landscape scale, this is the first time that any project has brought together groups from north and south of the English-Scottish border to co-ordinate effort across the whole red squirrel population range.

The RSRN will play an important part in wider partnership ambitions for nature recovery. This significant investment in species conservation must achieve lasting change within five years so that the future of an iconic species is secured as part of a natural and functioning ecosystem and supported by a well-connected and resilient network of volunteers within a wider network of engaged and aware local residents and visitors.



Purpose of Community Engagement Officer Role

The Community Engagement Officer post entails working with community groups, schools, individuals and households across the Scottish Borders to increase connection of people to Nature, specifically through enhancing awareness and understanding of red squirrels, their ecology and role within healthy ecosystems and the issues around their conservation.

The Scottish Borders is a very rural region, with a number of small towns in the region having some of the most socioeconomically disadvantaged communities in Scotland, still being impacted significantly by the loss of the local textiles industry. The Central and Western Borders have areas where red squirrels are present; many of these communities have the species in their gardens and community spaces and although awareness of red squirrels is high, the issues surrounding their conservation and their role in healthy functioning ecosystems are generally not as well understood.

The Community Engagement Officer's role is to reach and engage with more people and a wider demographic of people from these communities in conserving, monitoring and building awareness and advocating for red squirrels as key contributors in a healthy ecosystem. The CE Officer will reach out to new audiences, those who are typically underrepresented in conservation, nature restoration and the environmental sector, using the red squirrel as the 'flagship species' or "hook", to effectively engage people with nature, to increase connection to nature and generate motivation to take positive conservation action.

A key part of the role will be to work with the rest of the partnership, feeding back information and lessons learnt to the partnership group.

Main responsibilities

- Planning and delivering a programme of events and engagement activities to involve groups and individuals in the RSRN project and to improve their connection to nature.
- Support local squirrel groups to recruit new volunteers to help them protect and champion local red squirrels.
- Provide training and skill sharing opportunities for community groups and volunteers.
- Devise and deliver new and innovative approaches to engaging a wide range of people in the community.



- Work with project staff in Merseyside, Cumbria, Northumberland and Dumfries and Galloway to share best practice, develop new ideas and learn from each other.
- Provide monitoring data, information and case studies for the RSRN Data Officer and project evaluation.
- Work closely with the RSRN Advocacy Officer to provide advice/expertise/ideas to support red squirrel conservation advocacy activities in Southern Scotland as needed.
- Manage the RSRN Project Assistant role (early career post) and support them to develop skills, confidence and experience to progress a career in the conservation or nature restoration sector
- Support project communications including writing, news items and social media content (in line with the RSRN Communications Plan)
- Prioritise and champion equality and inclusion and work with the RSRN team and volunteers to diversify the range of people that are participating in red squirrel conservation and connecting to nature via red squirrels.
- Complete risk assessments and ensure health and safety procedures are met.
- Order resources, equipment and materials as needed.
- Compile progress reports for funders and other stakeholders.
- Contribute to the Project Advisory Group, RSRN management team, partnership board and funder reports as needed.

Person specification

Knowledge & attributes

Essential

- Knowledge of and commitment to good practice in working with diverse communities, young people and volunteers.
- Understanding barriers to engagement in areas of social-economic deprivation, marginalised groups or health inequalities and how they may be overcome
- Understanding of the pathways to nature connectedness and the importance of increasing connection to nature for everyone.
- Knowledge of different techniques, resources, tools and activities to engage new audiences with nature and improve nature connectedness.
- Proven ability to communicate, network and build effective relationships with a range of stakeholders from different backgrounds.
- Ability to occasionally travel to other areas within the RSRN project area.



- Excellent communication skills including experience of producing concise, engaging and focused reports, presentations, recommendations and/or grant applications.
- Good working knowledge of word processing, spreadsheet and database software.
- Understanding of the principles of red squirrel conservation and willing to promote and support all aspects
- Good understanding of safeguarding procedures and risk assessments.

Desirable

- Knowledge of the target community areas.
- Understanding of red squirrel conservation in the UK.

Skills & experience

Essential

- Experience of working in community settings and/or with diverse community groups including delivering activities to engage and train a wide range of audiences of different ages, backgrounds and experience.
- Experience of planning and delivering all aspects of community events (including promotion, risk assessment, organising a team, ordering equipment, booking venues etc)
- Experience in delivering events which engage people with nature and training, community coordination and organisation and in supporting people to create change
- Experience of working with volunteers.
- Experience of adapting activities or resources to suit the needs of different groups/individuals/audiences.

Desirable

- Previous experience of red squirrel conservation/engagement activities (e.g. survey techniques, grey squirrel control, identification)
- Experience of delivering activities which raise awareness about local species and habitats.
- Previous experience of project and financial reporting.
- Previous experience of line management or mentoring/supervising others.
- Experience of using digital engagement tools including social media.



Other

Essential

- Full current driving licence and use of car.

Desirable

- Completed relevant training such as community organising, Forest School, environmental education or similar, or equivalent level of vocational experience. Recent training in safeguarding (or willingness to undertake)

Personal

Essential

- Excellent people and communication skills able to work effectively with a range of audiences and a range of perspectives.
- Innovative and creative.
- Excellent team player.
- Be self-motivated, a good organiser and skilled at delivering within agreed timescales.
- Positive attitude to work focused on solutions and making things happen.

Safeguarding and Equal Opportunities Statement

Bright Green Nature are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people, and protected adults. Where a role involves relevant contact or responsibilities, the successful candidate will be required to undertake appropriate safeguarding training and membership of the Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme, in line with statutory requirements and Disclosure Scotland guidance.

We are an equal opportunities employer and welcome applications from all suitably qualified candidates regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. All recruitment decisions are made on the basis of merit and role requirements.



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