

JOB DESCRIPTION

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| Job Title | Farming Engagement Officer | | |
| Directorate | Economic Development, Skills & Climate | | |
| Reporting to | Mendip Hills National Landscape Manager | | |
| Grade | 12 | | |
| Evaluation ref: | AU1550 | Job ref: | Family RPG12 |
| Role purpose | | | |
| <p>To support the delivery of the Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) programme, that awards grants to farmers and land managers, on behalf of the Mendip Hills National Landscape. The role will be the first point of contact with potential applicants, guide them through the process, advise the Assessment Panel and then monitor the successful applicant's progress.</p> | | | |
| Responsibilities | | | |
| <p>To provide a first point of contact between the Mendip Hills National Landscape and potential applicants to the FiPL programme.</p> <p>To support applicants with their applications (and where necessary help guide subsequent delivery), especially those applicants that are 'harder to reach', or cluster/ group applications.</p> <p>To lead on conservation, land management and access advice and guidance, to promote high quality applications to the programme.</p> <p>To score applications prior to presentation to Local Assessment Panel or National Landscape Manager for final decision.</p> <p>To present and explain applications to the Local Assessment Panel.</p> <p>To support the monitoring of progress towards the completion of funded projects.</p> <p>To support project and programme level evaluation, including reporting to Defra and the Mendip Hills National Landscape.</p> <p>To help to ensure that action undertaken through the Programme is consistent with the established purposes and complementary to the statutory purposes of the Mendip Hills National Landscape.</p> <p>To ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of support offered under the programme, including the management of multi-year agreements.</p> <p>Ensure financial and Health & Safety compliance as set by Somerset Council, the hosting authority for the National Landscape.</p> | | | |
| Impact | | | |
| <p>The FiPL allocation for the Mendip Hills National Landscape is approximately £350,000 until 2026. Awards will be made via an application process to the FiPL Local Assessment</p> | | | |

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Panel. Applications <£5000 will be awarded by the National Landscape team. The role holder will coordinate and oversee the awards and assist the Mendip Hills National Landscape Manager and FiPL Support Officer in administering the grant.

The role holder will work alongside an existing full time Farming Engagement Officer, FiPL Support Officer, accountable to the National Landscape Manager.

| | Essential | Desirable | |
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| Knowledge | | | |
| Knowledge of current agri-environment schemes and emerging opportunities through ELM. | X | | |
| Knowledge of High Nature Value Farming, its opportunities and challenges. | X | | |
| Knowledge of characteristic habitats and species of limestone habitats. | X | | |
| Knowledge of natural beauty conservation, rural issues, farming challenges - particularly those affecting the Mendip Hills and protected area management. | X | | |
| Experience | | | |
| Successful working with farmers and land managers to achieve conservation objectives, including through agri-environment schemes. | X | | |
| Practical experience of habitat management in limestone areas – assessment, survey, restoration and management. | X | | |
| Qualifications / Registrations / Certifications | | | |
| Degree in an environment, ecology or land management related subject. | X | | |
| Full UK driving licence. | X | | |
| Skills | | | |
| Ability to negotiate and build relationships with farmers, land managers and landowners to enable them to collaborate for nature conservation and ecosystem service outcomes. | X | | |
| Good ecological field skills, particularly relating to limestone habitats. | | | |

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| <p>Ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing and to articulate and win support for habitat management and the integrated management of the Mendip Hills, particularly with farmers.</p> <p>Ability to develop strong partnerships and co-operation between organisations and between conservationists and land managers.</p> <p>Ability to represent the Mendip Hills AONB at public and other meetings</p> <p>The implementation and monitoring of management plans and programmes of work.</p> <p>Managing contractors.</p> <p>Project and budget management.</p> <p>Writing detailed and accessible reports.</p> <p>IT software packages such as Excel and Word and GIS.</p> <p>Considerable tact, strong relationship building and negotiating skills.</p> <p>Ability to inspire trust and to facilitate collaboration – particularly amongst farmers and land managers.</p> <p>Articulate, and capable of making a positive impact on the area and its communities.</p> <p>Ability to work using own initiative, to generate ideas and to motivate others</p> <p>An organised approach to work and a capability to work under pressure of deadlines and a heavy workload.</p> <p>Ability to develop ideas and present them persuasively</p> <p>Self-confidence, reliability and self-reliance and the ability to work without close supervision.</p> <p>Ability to meet the transport requirements of the post.</p> | | | |
| Working Conditions | | | |
| Office based with the option to work from home when needed. Travel to and from farms independently, at all times of the year. | | | |
| Working Arrangements | | | |

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Somerset Council's dynamic Working Strategy will be applied to this position.

Corporate Responsibilities

Understand, uphold and promote the aims of Somerset Council's equality, diversity and inclusion policies; health, safety and wellbeing of self and others; and Organisational values in everything you do. Equality and Diversity practice covers both interaction with staff, service users and communities and includes challenging discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity for all.

Date: June 2025