**Job Description**

**Senior Ecologist – Nature Recovery**

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| **Service:** | Planning and Environment | **Team:** | Nature Recovery |
| **Location:** | County Hall, Preston |
| **Salary range:** | £36,298 - £41,496 | **Grade:** | 9 |
| **Reports to:** | Principal Nature Recovery Officer | **Staff responsible for:** | None |

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| **Job Purpose** |
| Lancashire County Council (LCC) is recruiting a temporary full time Senior Ecologist to drive the development of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for 'greater' Lancashire (Lancashire County plus the unitary authority areas of Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen). Initial seed funding is currently available for 12 months, however, we anticipate that this will be reviewed as the LNRS development may take up to 24 months to complete. Defra are expected to announce further funding to support the LNRS development process ahead of their planned April 2023 roll-out.Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRSs) are a new system of spatial strategies for nature established in the Environment Act 2021. LNRS are locally led, evidence based and collaboratively produced strategies which highlight existing areas of value for nature, identify opportunities and establish priorities for creating or restoring habitat, as well as seeking to deliver wider environmental objectives using nature-based solutions.The final LNRS will consist of a spatial plan that identifies key existing national and local wildlife sites, and habitats, and defines priority sites for future habitat creation. The spatial plan sits alongside a statement listing the priorities for habitat restoration and conservation and other opportunities to deliver wider environmental benefits.As strategy lead, you will have day-to-day responsibility for driving the collaborative LNRS process. To achieve this, you will work closely with Natural England and colleagues from a range of organisations, so you will need to be flexible and opportunistic in the role to be able to secure better outcomes for nature, whilst being responsive to the needs of our local partners.You will be central to forming strong working relationships with local authorities to enable them to establish LNRS in the context of local planning. You will undertake the development of the LNRS in accordance with the appropriate Regulations and Guidance.We seek passionate, motivated, candidates who share our desire to see better, bigger, and more connected nature-rich places throughout Lancashire, and who enjoy and recognise the benefits of collaborating with others who also want to help realise this vision.The successful candidate will have sound understanding of ecological principals and issues,they will have excellent organisational and data management skills (including GIS). They will have experience of partnership working and building relationships with stakeholders to make decisions or influence outcomes. As such, this new role presents an exciting opportunity for an experienced and highly motivated person to use their previous experience and transferable skills to bring a wide range of people and organisations together to plan for ambitious nature recovery at the local level which will also help underpin delivery at the National scale. The post reports to the Principal Nature Recovery Officer. You will join the Environment and Climate Team where you will work alongside other ecologists who are responsible for managing the local wildlife site system, providing advice on County Council schemes and development proposals (including BNG) and delivery of the Lancashire Environment Record Network (LERN), the local environmental records centre for Lancashire. The team has well developed links with the 14 district and unitary councils of Lancashire, as well as voluntary sector environmental and community bodies which operate within our region.The post will be based in County Hall, Preston. However, Lancashire County Council operates a flexible working policy where the requirements of the role permit it.We are planning to hold interviews on 04th April 2023.If you would like to discuss further details of this post then please contact Nik Bruce: nik.bruce@lancashire.gov.uk 01772 537695 |
| **Accountabilities/Responsibilities** |
| The post will primarily be undertaking and delivering work relating to the development of the Local Nature recovery Strategy for Lancashire, but may also be required to provide technical support for other environmental projects as needed. Accountabilities/responsibilities will include:* Working in accordance with appropriate Regulations, Guidance, other standards or supporting documentation, and delivery timescales which may be published;
* To provide effective day-to-day management for the LNRS development process: ensuring that project delivery is effective and in accordance with agreed timescales and budgets identified in the project plan;
* Encouraging and supporting engagement and close collaboration between statutory agencies, protected landscapes, planning authorities, environmental NGOs, Local Nature Partnerships and other local partners/communities to collaboratively drive the development of the LNRS;
* Working with local partners to identify and develop their capacity and skills and create LNRS networks to foster sharing of ideas and information;
* Establish, oversee and support thematic habitat working groups to identify opportunities and priorities. Work with groups to address any competing objectives which may arise;
* Coordinate and oversee evidence gathering, data and GIS activities;
* Engage with a variety of other key policy areas and delivery mechanisms to identify where there are opportunities to align the objectives of the LNRS, including on: climate change, Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), Environmental Land Management, Green Infrastructure and health and wellbeing, and air quality.
* Shape strategic approaches that enable a wide range of people to connect with nature.
* Liaise with neighbouring strategies and establish connectivity across different LNRS areas.
* Coordinate the production and dissemination of the final strategy
* Providing technical advice, mentoring and support, and steering the day-to-day work of any more junior posts that may be established;
* Ensure compliance with relevant data protection, copyright and information security legislation in the delivery of the project and design of solutions.
* Providing specialist ecological advice and support to the County Council's wider Environment and Climate Programme;
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| **Other** |
| * **Equal Opportunities**

We are committed to achieving equal opportunities in the way we deliver services to the community and in our employment arrangements. We expect all employees to understand and promote this policy in their work. * **Health and safety**

All employees have a responsibility for their own health and safety and that of others when carrying out their duties and must help us to apply our general statement of health and safety policy. * **Customer Focused**

We put our customers' needs and expectations at the heart of all that we do. We expect our employees to have a full understanding of those needs and expectations so that we can provide high quality, appropriate services at all times. |
| **Our Values** |
| **We expect all our employees to demonstrate and promote our values:*** **Supportive**

We are supportive of our customers and colleagues, recognising their contributions and making the best of their strengths to enable our communities to flourish.* **Innovative**

We deliver the best services we possibly can, always looking for creative ways to do things better, putting the customer at the heart of our thinking, and being ambitious and focused on how we can deliver the best services now and in the future.* **Respectful**

We treat colleagues, customers and partners with respect, listening to their views, empathising and valuing their diverse needs and perspectives, to be fair, open and honest in all that we do.* **Collaborative**

We listen to, engage with, learn from and work with colleagues, partners and customers to help achieve the best outcomes for everyone. |

**Person Specification**

**Senior Ecologist – Nature Recovery**

All the following requirements are essential unless otherwise indicated by \*

Your ability to meet the job requirements will initially be assessed by the information provided on your application but further assessment will be undertaken at interview and, in some cases, by using other types of assessment(s).

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| **Qualifications** |
| * Significant vocational experience, demonstrating development through involvement in a series of progressively more demanding relevant roles.

OR * Degree qualified (or equivalent) in relevant subject plus 3 years' experience in a similar role.

OR * Formal professional qualification within specialism.
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| **Experience**  |
| * Experience of working independently with relevant specialised systems, equipment and IT software including Geographical Information Systems (preferably ArcMap or Pro).
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| * A minimum of 3 years' experience in a relevant area.
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| * Experience of partnership working and building relationships with stakeholders from public and voluntary sector organisations and land managers to inform decisions or influence outcomes.
* Experience of spatial planning and producing strategic plans and/or policy documents (or similar).
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| * Experience in identifying and applying relevant biodiversity legislation, policies and processes to deliver effective and proportionate evidence-based advice and solutions.
* Experience of the provision of conservation management advice including agri-environment schemes. \*
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| **Essential knowledge, skills & abilities** |

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| * Sound knowledge of ecological principals.
* Up-to-date and thorough knowledge and understanding of the work practices, systems, standards, regulations, legislation and policies relating to the protection and conservation of biodiversity.
* Sound understanding of appropriate habitat classification systems.
* Sound understanding of data handling principals and issues.
* Knowledge of appropriate conservation land management practices and issues.
* Understanding of the wider challenges and opportunities affecting biodiversity and land management.
* Proficiency in Microsoft Office applications (e.g. Word, Excel, Outlook, Access, PowerPoint).
* Understanding of GIS applications (preferably ArcMap or ArgGIS Pro).
* Good written and verbal communication skills.
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| * An understanding of the importance of responsible handling, management and verification of both environmental and personal data.
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| * Excellent data management skills, including experience in following a defined procedure.
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| * Demonstrable knowledge of statutory and non-statutory wildlife site systems.
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| * Demonstrable knowledge of the development planning system. \*
* Ability to train and mentor other professional staff.
* Full driving licence and access to a vehicle with appropriate insurance.
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| **Other essential requirements** |
| * Commitment to equality and diversity.
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| * Commitment to health and safety.
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| * Display the LCC values and behaviours at all times and actively promote them in others.
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