



River and Wetlands Assistant Project Officer

Tenure: 2 year fixed-term contract (full-time), with an aspiration to convert to open-ended (subject to organisational needs and funding).

Salary:

- Assistant Project Officer £28,000-34,000

Location: Wheatley (near Oxford)

The role:

This is an exciting opportunity to employ and develop a range of technical and project skills across a diverse portfolio of conservation projects undertaken by the Trust. You will support the conception, design, delivery and monitoring of projects encompassing in-river habitat enhancement, fish passage solutions, wetland creation as well as nature-based-solutions to achieve reduced flood risk, improved water quality, and species recovery. The role offers the opportunity to develop both office and field-based skills, with an expectation of 25% – 50% of time working in the field. A component of your role will be to provide GIS technical support to projects. Your role will sit within the Trust's River and Habitats Team but will also work across the entire Trust (including the land management team), in particular in providing GIS support. Liaison with partner organisations, volunteers, community groups and landowners to develop and deliver projects will be an important component of the role. Geographically the role will operate across the Thame Catchment (spanning parts of Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire).

About the River Thame Conservation Trust

Founded in 2012, the River Thame Conservation Trust (RTCT) is a charitable environmental organisation dedicated to safeguarding the River Thame, its catchment and wildlife, ensuring that these benefits can be enjoyed by people. We are a team of seven staff supported by a Board of Trustees, and with a grounding in local communities through a vibrant network of volunteers, close cooperation with landowners, and partnership with a range of statutory, private and charitable bodies.

The Trust delivers its charitable objectives in a number of ways:

through **practical on-the-ground habitat creation and enhancement** projects such as “re-wiggling” artificially straightened and deepened reaches of rivers, removing barriers (or installing fish passes) which otherwise impede fish migration, and impact on the naturalness and ecological value of rivers, and re-connecting the river with its floodplain: through creation of scrapes, backwaters and wetlands.

By **promoting water and wildlife friendly farming**: With about 80% of the catchment used for agriculture, working with farmers to promote and enable water and wildlife friendly farming is a priority for the Trust. We achieve this in part through our role as facilitators of the Thame Catchment

Farmer Cluster allied with philanthropic funding which enable us to undertake knowledge exchange, provide farm environmental advice and pursue further opportunities for farming and the environment. A notable component of land management work is our delivery of the Defra-funded Ock and Thame Farmers Landscape Recovery programme (delivered in partnership with the Freshwater Habitats Trust). The project is seeking to secure large-scale, long-term private and public funding to attain landscape-scale nature recovery in the catchment, whilst also contributing to financial resilience of participating farmers.

Promoting public and community participation in nature. We have strong traction with local community groups with whom we collaborate extensively, and through our network of volunteers which are active in undertaking citizen science e.g. in our programme of monthly, catchment-wide water quality monitoring. As well as facilitating efforts and interests of the public, we fulfil a similar convening role for organisations with a water-related remit within the catchment, through our role as co-hosts of the Thame Catchment Partnership.

Influence, advocacy and understanding: Through data collected by the Trust and others through citizen-science initiatives, our extensive knowledge of the catchment, and the mandate provided through our traction with the public and partner organisations, the Trust is able to advocate strongly for the river and its wildlife. We do this through public commentary on key issues as well as responding to consultations on initiatives, strategic plans, and specific planning applications. RTCT benefits from being part of a wider family of rivers trusts, under the umbrella of the national body the Rivers Trust. Affiliation with the Rivers Trust provides a basis for knowledge exchange, sharing of resources, and representation to government and other national bodies, through national-level advocacy and campaigns led by the Rivers Trust.

Responsibilities

Supporting and delivering a range of nature-based solution projects relating to habitat enhancement/restoration, water quality improvement and biodiversity in the River Thame, comprising the following specific responsibilities:

Specific responsibility	indicative % of role time
• Collation of site details through field visits and ecological observations, survey and recording	25%
• Liaison with landowners to discuss, promote and agree project ideas, plans and delivery	10%
• Work with senior staff on supervision and direction of contractors' on-site in delivery of RTCT projects according to agreed designs	5%
• Provision of GIS mapping outputs on a range of projects across the Trust's project portfolio, and support the wider team with their use of GIS.	15%
• Provide spatial analysis and reports of ecological and land use data based on the above data as required by RTCT colleagues as required	5%
• Liaison with partners, regulatory bodies and planning authorities including over consents and planning approval required for the delivery of projects	25%

• Support the delivery of RTCT's volunteer engagement and citizen science programmes	5%
• Team coordination, project management, admin, health and safety, wellbeing, equipment management and other tasks as required	10%

Skills and Experience Required:

Essential

- Educated to degree level in a relevant subject which includes modules such as environmental science, biology, hydrology, conservation management, geography, or possessing demonstrable equivalent knowledge and capability
- Working knowledge and capability in GIS. If the candidate has experience solely in QGIS, a willingness and capability to develop ARC GIS required (training is available).
- Ability to communicate effectively with colleagues, land managers, regulators and other stakeholders, employing tact and diplomacy, whether through written or spoken communication
- Good IT skills across a range of commonly used IT software, including the MS Office Suite
- Flexibility, adaptiveness and pragmatism required to work in a small, dynamic organisation
- A full driving licence and the use of your own car for work purposes (insured for work use)
- The legal right to work in the UK

Desirable

- Demonstrable technical capabilities in the technical fields of river and wetland habitat management
- Experience of ecological survey
- Experience of citizen science relating to the environment
- Knowledge or experience of Biodiversity Net Gain
- Spatial analysis and volumetric calculations in GIS

Benefits

Home and Flexible working: A degree of working in the Trust's office is preferred in order to stimulates integration with the team and maximise the potential for learning from experienced colleagues. However, flexibility exists for a degree of homeworking, to suit personal circumstances. Within the requirements for core hours working and project needs, a flexible working system also operates.

Annual leave: 27 days as standard, plus public holidays.

Pension & Life Assurance through the Rivers Trust Pension Scheme (9% Employer and 6% employee contribution).

Opportunity for professional development. The size of the trust and its diversity of projects mean that the post holder will have extensive opportunity to develop a range of skills and experience. This will be supported through both external and on-the-job training, and immersion within an organisation and a wider Rivers Trust movement operating at the vanguard of conservation and catchment management.

Application Process

To apply for this role please forward the following to the RTCT Administrative Officer Jane Willis (jane@rivethame.org):

- **A covering letter** (not more than two pages) outlining your motivation for the role, how you meet the required skills and experience, and how you would bring these to bear in delivering the role.
- **A two-page CV.**

Applications must adhere to the above requirements in order to be considered.

Application Deadlines and Timescales

Deadline for applications: 09:00 on Friday 31st October 2025.

Applicants invited to interview will be informed week commencing Monday 3rd November.

Interviews scheduled for Tuesday the 18th November, in-person at RTCT's offices in Wheatley, Oxfordshire.