



**Durham**  
**Wildlife Trust**  
From Tees to Tyne

# City of Nature Officer

## Applicant Pack



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## About Durham Wildlife Trust

### Our Vision

Nature restored from Tees to Tyne

### Our Mission

To deliver nature's recovery from the Tees to the Tyne with the backing of our supporters, partners and wider society; providing opportunities for participation, education and enhanced health and wellbeing.

### Our Goals

Nature in Recovery (30 % of land and sea by 2030)

- 40,000ha of additional land improved for nature and the restoration of natural processes.
- 1000ha of this to be additional land managed by Durham Wildlife Trust.
- Robust local metrics and data gathering to monitor progress.
- Exemplary land management of our own estate.

Meaningful Action (1 in 4 people involved)

- Adopting the 'Team Wilder' approach and a sub-region operational model based on local communities.
- Embracing supporters of all kinds and diversifying our audiences.
- Providing improved visitor destinations.
- Growing our public profile, operational partnerships and influence to bring about real change.

Nature-based Solutions (nature central to solving local and global problems)

- Durham Wildlife Trust is the local leader in Biodiversity Net Gain and other natural capital solutions.
- There will be an evidenced-based well-being focus across our activities.
- We will have a strategic approach to projects with nature-based benefits to highlight natural flood management, carbon sequestration, eco-tourism, water quality benefits (e.g. as realised by the Great North Fen).

### The Organisation

The Wildlife Trusts are a grassroots movement of people from a wide range of backgrounds and all walks of life, who believe that we need nature and nature needs us. We have more than 900,000 members, over 39,000 volunteers, 3,600 staff, 600 trustees and 2,600 nature reserves.



Durham is one of 46 Wildlife Trusts, part of a national federation. Each individual Wildlife Trust is a place-based independent charity with its own legal identity, formed by groups of people getting together and working with others to make a positive difference to wildlife and future generations, starting where they live and work.

Durham Wildlife Trust operates across County Durham, Darlington, Gateshead, South Tyneside and Sunderland and is part of the local community. The City of Nature Officer role will be based solely within the Sunderland part of the Trust's patch, connecting with Sunderland communities.

The organisation is led by a Board of Trustees drawn from its membership, who among them have the broad range of skills and knowledge needed to ensure effective governance. Vital support across all the Trust's activities is provided by more than 250 regular volunteers. The Trust believes strongly in partnership, and we work with a wide range of organisations to deliver our work.

For over 50 years Durham Wildlife Trust has protected and restored nature, making a real difference for people and wildlife. Today we own or manage over 50 sites across 1300 hectares, protecting rare and threatened habitats and species, and delivering nature's recovery at a landscape scale. We deliver projects that provide solutions to the ecological and climate emergencies and offer opportunities for participation and learning to thousands of people every year.

Over the next few years our charity will continue to grow, providing opportunities for a wide range of talented people to join us to deliver our *Strategy 2030*. By 2030 Durham Wildlife Trust aims to deliver 30% of land and seas for nature, and 1 in 4 people taking meaningful action. To achieve those aims we will deliver our existing work to the highest possible standards and develop innovative new approaches.

## Working for Durham Wildlife Trust

Durham Wildlife Trust is the leading organisation in environmental land management, nature conservation and rewilding in our region because of its dedicated staff.

Successful candidates will be joining our passionate and talented team of educators, influencers, fundraisers and skilled practical conservation officers and managers. To address the significant challenges faced by nature we need to recruit and retain committed and talented people and support them to develop further.

Central to the Durham Wildlife Trust staff journey is the ethos of personal and professional development. We offer a fun and stimulating working environment, with a competitive salary, holidays and benefits package -



- Staff welfare package, including access to online GP appointments for you and your family.
- Access to the unrivalled training and development opportunities available across the Wildlife Trusts national federation, as well as training provision by Durham Wildlife Trust.
- Flexible and hybrid working arrangements.

Durham Wildlife Trust is an inspiring and energetic place to develop your career and we welcome applications from anyone who wants a role that makes a difference. We are creating a work environment that's inclusive as well as diverse – where all our people can be themselves. Every idea, insight and perspective is valued.

## About City of Nature Sunderland

City of Nature Sunderland is a three-year, community-led environmental programme delivered by Durham Wildlife Trust and the International Community Organisation of Sunderland (ICOS). The partnership aims to engage Sunderland's most disadvantaged and marginalised communities in nature-based activities, combining environmental action with social inclusion and wellbeing.

Funded through the National Lottery Community Fund (Reaching Communities), the programme responds to community feedback highlighting barriers to engagement with nature such as lack of environmental knowledge, safety concerns, and limited opportunities. By offering free, local, culturally tailored activities, it seeks to build environmental confidence, improve wellbeing, and foster community cohesion.

City of Nature Sunderland will deliver a roving community hub of seasonal workshops on nature and sustainability topics based on community needs. Examples include waste reduction, energy saving, winter wildlife, sustainable food growing and habitat creation. Translated materials will be provided alongside culturally relevant content, evening/weekend sessions, and transport support to reduce barriers. Programme activities will be co-designed through listening sessions and participant-led evaluation, ensuring local voices shape delivery.

In addition, collaboration with local organisations will offer hub activities to existing groups within the City of Sunderland, networking with VCSE networks. City of Nature will work closely with Sunderland Council's Connecting Through Nature to ensure alignment with the Nature Towns & Cities programme for long-term impact.

## About this role: City of Nature Officer

The City of Nature Project Officer will lead the delivery of City of Nature Sunderland, the three-year, community-led environmental programme designed to engage Sunderland's most disadvantaged and marginalised communities in nature-based activities. The role combines environmental education, community organising and partnership working to engage residents to take action for nature and sustainability.



Working alongside the ICOS Translation and Support Officer, you will produce activities which enable Sunderland residents to take action for local nature and learn sustainable behaviours which improve their own wellbeing and the environment.

This role forms part of the Trust's Development and Communications team. As well as the opportunity to feed into this team's other areas of work, you will meet regularly with colleagues delivering engagement in other projects in order to share best practice and coordinate activities for maximum impact.

As an organisation, we are open to new thinking and ideas. We welcome applications from people already working in nature conservation, or who come from other sectors and have the skills, ideas and knowledge needed.

As an employer, Durham Wildlife Trust provides as much flexibility as it can. This is a hybrid role, with at least one day per week based at the Trust's Rainton Meadows offices as part of a rota. The remainder of the week is free to work from home, or Trust offices if preferred. Evening and weekend working will be required to meet the needs of the project and local communities. The Trust operates a time off in lieu system.

## The Process

If you have any questions about the role, or want to discuss potential hours and working patterns before submitting an application, please contact Emily Routledge, Head of Development and Communications by email in the first instance – [eroutledge@durhamwt.co.uk](mailto:eroutledge@durhamwt.co.uk)

To apply, please complete the application form available on the Trust's website and provide a personal statement (maximum two sides of A4) setting out your suitability for the role. Submit the form and statement as two documents by email to – [jobs@durhamwt.co.uk](mailto:jobs@durhamwt.co.uk)

Please put City of Nature Officer in the subject line.

**The closing date for applications is 5pm on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2026, interviews are scheduled to take place at Rainton Meadows Nature Reserve, DH4 6PU on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2026. Should you have any concerns regarding availability for interview, please contact**

**[eroutledge@durhamwt.co.uk](mailto:eroutledge@durhamwt.co.uk)**

**Please note, CVs and/or covering letters will not be accepted.**



## Job Description

### Identification of Post

Post title:	City of Nature Officer.
Function:	To build environmental knowledge, nature connectedness and sustainability confidence in communities in Sunderland.
Responsible to:	Head of Development and Communications (Durham Wildlife Trust).

### Purpose of Post

- To lead nature and sustainability engagement activities and initiatives for City of Nature in Sunderland.

### Main Responsibilities

- Coordinate and deliver a roving community hub and seasonal workshops on themes such as waste reduction, energy saving, biodiversity restoration and sustainable food growing.
- Build trusted relationships with local groups and attend community meetings.
- Build relationships with other relevant organisations and initiatives operating across Sunderland.
- Recruit and support community ambassadors to extend reach and representation.
- Oversee volunteers, providing induction, training, and ongoing support.
- Work with external evaluators to implement participant-led evaluation processes and adapt delivery based on community needs.
- Maintain a risk register and produce risk management and mitigation reports quarterly.
- Lead on communications about *City of Nature* project.
- Maintain records and prepare reports relating to *City of Nature*, including budget monitoring and reporting.
- Present required information to the project Steering Group, funders and other stakeholders as and when required.

### General Duties

- To attend training courses, meetings and events as and when required.
- To liaise with all Trust staff, honorary officers and volunteers on relevant issues.
- Undertake any other duties as requested by senior management in line with the seniority and nature of the post and the aims of Durham Wildlife Trust, which will include joining the Duty Officer Rota after 2 years in post.
- To follow Trust policies and procedures, and promote the Trust's charitable objectives and strategy, including promoting membership of the Trust.





## General Terms and Conditions

**Salary:** For a full time (37.5 hours/week) role, the salary is £29,741.00 per annum – pro rata for part time.

**Pension:** Employees will be automatically enrolled into the Durham Wildlife Trust pension scheme. Minimum employee contribution 3% of salary and employer contribution 6% of salary. Employees can decide to dis-enroll from the pension scheme if they choose.

**Hours of work:** Normal working hours are 9 to 5, with a 30 minute meal break. Evening and weekend work will be required.

**Holidays:** The number of days paid holiday per year is 31 days for a 37½ hour week inclusive of Bank and Statutory Holidays. Part-time employees are entitled to pro-rata holidays and public holidays.

If you start your employment during the leave year, the holiday entitlement will be calculated on a pro-rata basis depending on the number of completed months of service and hours worked.

After two years of continuous employment, you will be entitled to one extra paid day of leave per year worked, up to a maximum of five extra days per year.

**Place of work:** Usual place of work will be Rainton Meadows, Houghton-le-Spring, DH4 6PU.

Durham Wildlife Trust currently allows hybrid-working arrangements, with a mix of office-based working and working from home as set out in a rota. Note, hybrid working arrangements are at the discretion of Trust management and may be subject to change.

**Duration of post:** This is a fixed term post for 3 years from appointment.

**DBS required:** Enhanced level to be renewed every 2 years.

## Person Specification

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Education and Training	Substantial experience in a similar role.  Full UK driving licence and use	Accredited Qualification in Community Organising,





	<p>of own vehicle.</p>	<p>Community Development or Volunteering.</p> <p>Accredited qualification in conservation, ecology or substantial experience.</p> <p>First Aid at Work</p>
Experience	<p>Experience of working with others to enable change.</p> <p>Experience of developing positive relationships.</p> <p>Experience of working in environmental education and/or community engagement.</p> <p>Experience of developing and supporting community activities and projects.</p> <p>Experience of meaningful community development and engagement activity, particularly in the environment sector.</p> <p>Experienced communicator, able to convey information clearly and succinctly to diverse audiences.</p> <p>Experience of engaging and inspiring individuals and organisations.</p> <p>Experience of partnership working. Delivering projects collaboratively with people and organisations and managing relationships diplomatically.</p> <p>Experience of promoting community activities to build up new audiences.</p>	<p>Experience of working with voluntary and community groups.</p> <p>Experience of working within the nature conservation sector.</p> <p>Experience of working within an Environmental NGO.</p> <p>Experience of working in a small team/small organisation.</p> <p>Experience of delivering a National Lottery Community Fund project and recording relevant data and information.</p> <p>Experience of working in underserved communities with high levels of deprivation and health inequalities.</p> <p>Experience of evaluating community engagement projects.</p> <p>Experience of networking and making contact with other local groups and organisations.</p>



Knowledge	<p>Good knowledge of health and safety and safeguarding systems and principals.</p> <p>Knowledge of Sunderland communities and heritage.</p> <p>Understanding of inclusion and issues relating to voice and influence.</p> <p>High level of IT competence and excellent knowledge of Microsoft Office applications.</p> <p>An understanding of the barriers to community involvement and how they may be overcome.</p> <p>Knowledge of principles of sustainable living.</p>	<p>High level of social media and digital competence.</p> <p>Knowledge of local habitats and wildlife relevant to the North East of England and specifically the flora and fauna of Sunderland.</p> <p>An understanding of the principles and practices that underpin effective community organising.</p> <p>Knowledge of evaluation techniques.</p>
Skills and Abilities	<p>Ability to work with a diverse range of people and groups from different backgrounds.</p> <p>Excellent organisational skills; able to prioritise and manage a varied workload and work to deadlines.</p> <p>Excellent communicator with a proven track record in developing strong relationships with key individuals and stakeholders.</p> <p>Able to work on own initiative and with a high degree of autonomy and see links for project development where appropriate.</p> <p>Ability to create a safe and supportive working environment for colleagues and volunteers,</p>	<p>Excellent public speaker.</p>



	<p>demonstrating empathy and encouraging excellence.</p> <p>Ability to work effectively with colleagues, demonstrating a mutually supportive not competitive attitude.</p>	
Personal	<p>Commitment to equal opportunities.</p> <p>Highly motivated and enthusiastic.</p> <p>Tactful and diplomatic, respectful of others.</p> <p>Able to work occasional weekends and evenings.</p> <p>Warm, approachable and courteous manner combined with a good sense of humour.</p> <p>Good people skills, able to develop strong relationships.</p> <p>Ability to listen, absorb and allow effective conversation.</p>	<p>Passionate about addressing the ecological emergency.</p> <p>Passionate about Sunderland.</p>

**Please Note** - Durham Wildlife Trust takes its Safeguarding responsibilities extremely seriously. Information on our commitment to safeguarding and safeguarding policies is available on the Trust's website. The successful applicant for this role will be subject to an Enhanced Level DBS check that will be repeated every three years. Any offer of employment made in relation to this role will be subject to satisfactory DBS check

## Relevant Policies

Please read the policy information below before completing your application.

## Safeguarding

Durham Wildlife Trust (DWT) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all vulnerable adults, and children and young people engaged in the breadth of its activities. DWT acknowledges its duty to act appropriately to any allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse or neglect.



DWT implements the approved disclosure procedure for criminal record checking through the Disclosure and Barring Service for all staff and volunteers who work regularly with children or adults at risk.

In doing so, DWT will ensure that they comply fully with the DBS Code of Practice and its obligations under the General Data Protection Regulations and any other legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure information. We require the applicant's consent before requesting this check.

## Employing ex-offenders

This written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders is made available at the start of the recruitment process to all applicants for roles requiring a Disclosure and Barring Service check.

As an organisation assessing applicants' suitability for positions which are included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order using criminal record checks processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), Durham Wildlife Trust complies fully with the [code of practice](#) and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly.

Durham Wildlife Trust undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a criminal record check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.

Durham Wildlife Trust can only ask an individual to provide details of convictions and cautions that Durham Wildlife Trust are legally entitled to know about. A DBS certificate at either standard or enhanced level can legally be requested where the position is one that is included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 as amended and, where appropriate, Police Act Regulations as amended.

Durham Wildlife Trust can only ask an individual about convictions and cautions that are not protected.

Durham Wildlife Trust is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.

Durham Wildlife Trust actively promotes equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records.

Durham Wildlife Trust select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.



An application for a criminal record check is only submitted to DBS after an assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a criminal record check is identified as necessary, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that an application for a DBS certificate will be submitted in the event of the individual being offered the position.

At interview, or in a separate discussion, Durham Wildlife Trust ensures that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.

Durham Wildlife Trust makes sure every subject of a criminal record check submitted to DBS is aware of the existence of this policy and makes a copy available on request. Durham Wildlife Trust undertakes to discuss any matter revealed on a DBS certificate with the individual seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

