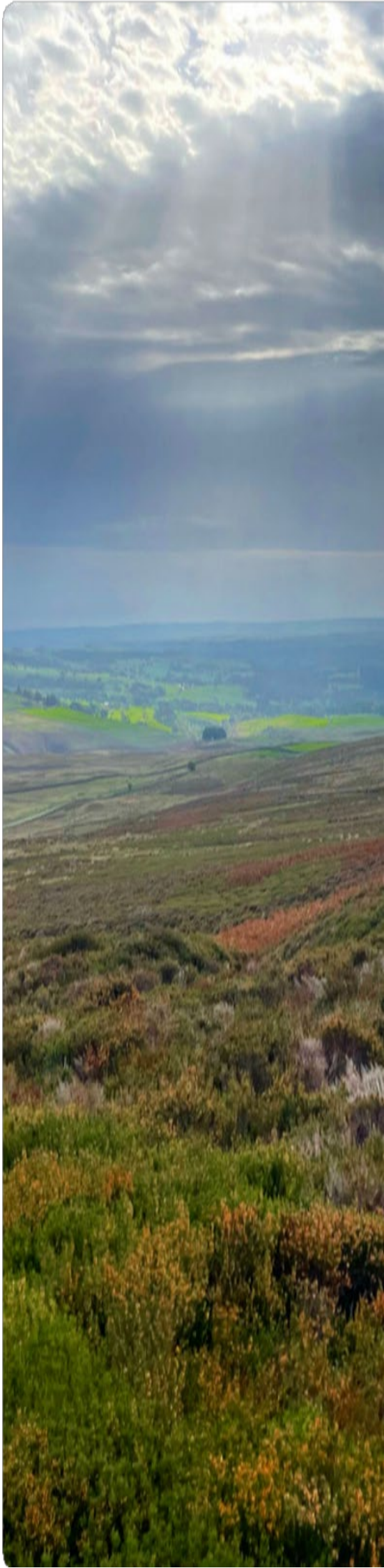
Durham Wildlife Trust
From Tees to Tyne

JOB PACK

Conservation Trainee

Salary: £15736.50 per annum (£26,227.50 FTE). Paid monthly.
Location: Rainton Meadows and Low Barns
Term: 22.5 Hours per week for 10 months
Closing date: 8am, Monday 30th November 2026
For more details contact:
Andy Wadds, awadds@durhamwt.co.uk





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Photo: Enid Hoseason

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

Goal 1. From Tees to Tyne, people care about nature and are taking meaningful action to support nature recovery.

For nature to be protected and restored from Tees to Tyne, people have to care for nature. People care for nature as they experience it and come to appreciate it. Around 1.75 million people live or work between the Tees and the Tyne. Their access to and love of nature is our goal. As the leading wildlife organisation operating across our area, with over 50 nature reserves providing a valued local resource, the Trust will help more people to experience, care for and take meaningful action for nature, more often. The Trust will support farmers, land managers, politicians, community groups and councils with advice, partnership, expertise and, where appropriate, delivery support.

Goal 2. Nature is recovering from Tees to Tyne. Habitats are thriving and connected and wildlife is more abundant.

Durham Wildlife Trust's area runs from the Tees to the Tyne – boundaries of the historical County Durham – the southern and northern and covers around 270,000 hectares. Our vision is to restore our region's rich natural heritage and landscapes and the species that live in them. We also recognise that nature recovery at the scale we need requires action far beyond land directly managed by the Trust and we will work in partnership with others to deliver that aim. 3 As well as managing exemplar nature sites on our reserves we will influence, advise and campaign to encourage other stakeholders to improve land for nature. Our goal is for nature to thrive across the range of landscape from the Tees to the Tyne, from private homes to large estates and everything in between. Already this goal is shared with many.

Goal 3. Nature-based solutions are recognised and valued as making our region more resilient and its people safer and better off.

Society faces many challenges from climate change and pollution, from conflict and social polarisation, from inequality and mental health. These challenges are often global and can seem huge and overwhelming. Yet there are reasons for optimism as reversing nature loss – which itself is increasingly recognised as a global challenge that is deeply connected to many of the others – can often provide the simplest and most robust solutions. Nature based solutions often require long-term commitment, but their economic value is growing in recognition, and through them nature restoration

has a growing role to play in making society safer and better off. Whilst nature recovery remains the Trust's central goal, the wider benefits it creates are central to the story we will tell. We will continue to champion nature-based solutions and in our regional partnerships we will contribute to their implementation.

Goal 4. Durham Wildlife Trust is the trusted leader in nature recovery from Tees to Tyne and has the resources needed to deliver lasting impact.

There needs to be ongoing attention paid to strengthening the charity and its ability to play the leadership role in nature recovery that is required. We will invest in the recruitment, retention and reward of our staff. We will explore avenues for income growth to support greater delivery and we will spend for maximum impact for nature recovery. We will professionalise our use of data and technology.

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 and 600 trustees.

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

Durham Wildlife Trust operates across communities in County Durham, Darlington, Gateshead, South Tyneside and Sunderland. The organisation is led by a Board of Trustees, drawn from its membership, with a broad range of skills and knowledge to ensure effective governance. 250 regular volunteers provide vital support across all activities and strong partnerships assist the delivery of our work.

For more than 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 coming years, the charity will continue to grow, providing opportunities for a wide range of talented people to join us to deliver our Strategy 2030: delivering 30% of land and seas for nature, with 1 in 4 people taking meaningful action for nature. Achieving this will demand 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 join 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 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.



Conservation Trainee

The Wildlife Trust vision is of a thriving natural world, with our wildlife and natural habitats playing a valued role in addressing the climate and ecological emergencies, and everyone inspired to get involved in nature's recovery.

The Conservation Trainee role is a 10-month training placement, providing an exciting opportunity to gain the skills and knowledge needed for a career in conservation. Working with Durham Wildlife Trust and our partners, trainees are able to put their learning into practice while working to restore natural habitats and protect wildlife.

The role involves working within the Conservation team, typically with a Reserves Officer and our volunteers, to support operational delivery and practical management for nature across our reserves. There is direct supervision and support provided throughout the scheme, which Durham Wildlife Trust has been successfully running for over 20 years.

Initial training focuses on providing the practical skills and industry recognised education and certification needed so machinery and tasks can be operated safely. Trainees will also develop their natural history knowledge and species identification skills while learning about the frameworks used in nature conservation and planning.

As Conservation Trainees progress through the traineeship, they will be expected to take more of a lead role in planning tasks, assessing risks, and supervising practical delivery on reserves with volunteers. There will also be opportunities to work across the wider Trust and gain the experience relevant to communicating the importance of nature conservation to the public via education and engagement events.

Throughout the placement Durham Wildlife Trust will provide support with job applications, CV writing, and interview techniques to prepare trainees for the next stage in their career.

The traineeship is a highly rewarding and varied role, and the successful candidate will gain a strong foundation for a future career in conservation.

Two trainee positions are available. Over the 10-month traineeship, Conservation Trainees will switch between working from Rainton Meadows (DH4 6PU) and Low Barns (DL14 0AG) at 6 months through the traineeship.

We're particularly interested in receiving applications from people living in the Tyne and Wear area and those from under-represented groups who are interested in developing a career in the sector.



The Process

If you would like to find out more, in the first instance please contact Andrew Wadds Reserves manager, by email – awadds@durhamwt.co.uk.

To apply for this post please complete the Application Form. The closing date for applications is 08:00am on 30th November 2026.

For those selected, formal face to face interviews are expected to be held at Rainton Meadows on Wednesday 16th December.



Job Specification

IDENTIFICATION OF POST

Post Title:	Conservation Trainee
Function:	This is a training role. The role supports Reserve Officers in their work, particularly the management of the Trust's nature reserves and planning and leading volunteer tasks.
Responsible To:	Reserves Manager
Responsible For:	Volunteers

PURPOSE OF POST

- To complete the Conservation Traineeship, including undertaking in-house and externally certified courses to develop the practical skills and experience needed for a career in nature conservation.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- To deliver practical habitat conservation across the Trust's nature reserves and other sites where the Trust has management responsibility.
- To plan and risk assess habitat management work and ensure that health and safety policies and working practices are in place and adhered to.
- To provide leadership and mentoring to Durham Wildlife Trust volunteers.
- To recruit, interview, and induct new volunteers and help make them feel welcome when they join Durham Wildlife Trust.
- To maintain tools, machinery, vehicles and equipment in good working order.
- To undertake data entry and record keeping on Durham Wildlife Trust and volunteer activities.
- To write communications, blogs, and newsletter articles for our supporters.
- To gain knowledge and experience in community engagement and education events, fundraising and membership development.
- To carry out ecological surveys and monitoring.
- To carry out all other reasonable tasks as required.

PARTICULARS OF POST

Tenure
This post is offered on a 10-month, fixed-term contract.

Salary
£15,736.50 per annum (£26,227.50 FTE). Paid monthly.

Pension
Employees will be automatically enrolled into the Durham Wildlife Trust pension scheme. Details of the scheme and contributions are provided in the Durham Wildlife Trust Policy – Remuneration and Benefits. Employees can decide to disenroll from the pension scheme if they choose.

Hours of Work
This post is 22.5 hours per week. Normal working hours are between 8:30am and 4:30pm, with a 30-minute unpaid meal break. The working pattern will be agreed with the Conservation Trainee. Weekend and occasional evening work will be required.

Holidays
The Conservation Trainee post holder will be entitled to 25 days holiday pro-rata, plus Bank and Statutory 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.

Place of work:
Rainton Meadows, Houghton le Spring, DH4 6PU **and** Low Barns, Witton-le-Wear, DL14 0AG

Disclosure & Barring Service check required:
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. Any offer of employment made in relation to this role will be subject to a satisfactory DBS check.

Person Specification

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Education and Training	A full UK manual driving licence. Good numeracy and literacy skills are required to complete the training courses – pass at GCSE maths and English or equivalent as a minimum.	An educational background in a subject related to nature conservation, such as ecology or countryside management.
Experience	Spending time outdoors in nature.	Previous experience in the nature conservation sector, whether as a volunteer or employee. Experience of using and maintaining machinery.
Knowledge	Be able to demonstrate a basic knowledge of the natural world and nature conservation.	Knowledge of the wildlife of the Durham Wildlife Trust area. Knowledge of nature conservation and ecology.
Skills and Abilities	Physically fit and able to deliver manual activities outdoors across all terrains and happy to work outdoors in all weathers. Commitment to personal development and learning new skills. Enthusiastic, friendly, and able to quickly form positive working relationships with colleagues and volunteers. Good organisational skills. Good attention to detail. Able to use Microsoft 365 apps e.g. Outlook, Teams, Word, Excel. Able to empathise with and encourage and support others.	Land and habitat management skills, whether gained as a volunteer or employee. Practical DIY skills including the use of hand and power tools.
Other	Appointment is dependent upon an enhanced DBS check.	

	To champion diversity in all its forms. Occasional evening, weekend, school holiday and bank holiday work will be required.	

Relevant Policies

Please read the policy information below before completing your application.

Safeguarding

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

Durham Wildlife Trust 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, Durham Wildlife Trust 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.

