



Helpline Manager – Technical Specialist

Background

The Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) is proud to be the leading non-governmental organisation devoted solely to the conservation of bats and their habitats. Our mission is to secure the future of bats in a changing world.

BCT's strategic aims are:

- Discover: To establish the capacity of the landscape to support viable populations of bats
- Act: To secure and enhance bat populations to the full capacity of the landscape
- Inspire: To win the level of support required to achieve and maintain these bat populations
- Speak out: For BCT to act as the authoritative voice on bat conservation

BCT operates a National Bat Helpline to provide the general public, owners of buildings containing a bat roost, and professionals with easily accessible and accurate information. Myths and misunderstandings about bats together with intolerance and fear have always been obstacles to their conservation, and by informing and supporting people who come into contact with bats BCT works towards its vision of a world where bats and people live in harmony.

The Helpline is contracted by Natural England to manage statutory bat casework in eight regions in England. The Helpline also plays a critical role in ensuring that the public and bat workers have the most up to date guidelines on bats and rabies issues. In 2011, the National Bat Helpline dealt with over 13,500 enquiries, and this is expected to increase in 2012.

Purpose of the Job

A second Helpline Manager is needed to help ensure that technical advice given by helpline staff is robust, to help lead and manage staff, manage service provision and relationships with funders. The overall aim is to ensure that the helpline continuously provides a high quality, cost effective service. This role is full-time and the responsibilities listed below will be carried out jointly, working closely with the current Helpline Manager. However, individual managers will take a lead in specific areas depending on their skills and strengths.

Main Responsibilities

1. Strategic planning

- Take a strategic overview of the helpline service. Review and develop the strategy on an annual basis, and implement any necessary changes
- Update and monitor helpline milestones and targets within the wider BCT strategy
- Review ways to continuously improve the service, including technical advice, structure, technology and future funding priorities
- Work with other departments to maximise the potential of the helpline to BCT as a whole (for example, use of data)

2. Team management

- Line manage some helpline staff
- Overall team management: ensure that team members adhere to roles and rotas, monitor team workload and time management, put in place effective strategies to manage workload at peak times of year, set team objectives, build team morale
- Recruit new staff and manage change within the team
- Address any HR issues within the team

3. Service provision and quality assurance

- Work with other staff to ensure that helpline staff have access to up-to-date advice and information
- Develop the technical training programme for helpline staff
- Set in place systems to ensure that all helpline advice given is correct and in line with BCT standards
- Ensure that service targets are met
- Provide guidance to helpline team members and other staff on difficult cases and issues
- Respond to any complaints relating to the helpline

4. Funding and reporting

- Oversee relations with funders, including Natural England and Defra
- Work with other staff to identify funding opportunities and obtain future funding for the helpline
- Manage the Natural England tender and work with other staff to secure a new contract
- Monitor service targets and put in strategies to ensure these are met
- Oversee the reporting process, including ensuring that staff are allocated to write all reports throughout the year
- Approve all reports

5. Information technology

- Oversee the helpline database system and work with the team to improve this and use it more effectively within BCT
- Oversee the information risk aspect of the Natural England casework

6. Financial

- Prepare and manage helpline departmental budgets, and monitor income and expenditure
- Provide forecasts and financial information to the Chief Executive
- Work with the team to ensure that service is cost-effective

Reports to

Deputy Chief Executive

Length of post

This is initially a fixed term contract. The current Natural England contract runs from October 2008 through to October 2012. However, we are hopeful that a new contract will be procured and that the post will be extended. There is an initial three month probationary period with one weeks notice, then two months notice.

Salary

The salary is in the range of £23,000 – £28,000 depending on experience.

Holiday

33 days annual leave including bank holidays.

Benefits Package

BCT offers a stakeholder pension scheme with Friends Provident and matches contributions of up to 3% of staff salaries. BCT also offers Childcare Vouchers and the option to join our Cyclescheme. All benefits are only available to join after satisfactory completion of a probation period.

Usual time of work

9am – 5.30pm including one hour for lunch (37.5 hours per week). All helpline staff act as back up staff for the Out of Hours project in the summer which involves some additional evening and weekend work.

Place of work

BCT's London office (Quadrant House, 250 Kennington Lane, SE11). There is some scope for working at home one or two days a week, in consultation with the current Helpline Manager.

Person Specification

Quality	Essential	Desirable
Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree or equivalent work experience • Knowledge of helpline service provision issues • Good understanding of bat ecology and conservation • High-level knowledge of the wildlife sector, protected species legislation and licensing processes • Knowledge of the planning process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of roost visitor system • Understanding of the principles of bat mitigation
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of leading a team • Experience of recruiting staff • Project management experience • Line management experience • Financial management and budgeting experience • Report writing experience • Experience of working with protected species within the planning system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of working in environmental sector • Experience of bat consultancy • Experience of preparing tenders • Experience of working in a non-profit organisation
Competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic planner • Excellent communication and interpersonal skills • Ability to lead a team and maintain a positive attitude • Ability to manage constant change and continuously improve service provision • Good report writing skills and attention to detail • Ability to deal with working under pressure • Excellent organisational, planning and project management skills • Good diplomacy skills • Ability to deal confidently with a wide range of people • Proficient in Microsoft Office Programmes • Professional approach to work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring and evaluation experience
Personal qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to work closely with joint Helpline Manager through excellent communication and planning skills • Good team manager – ability to motivate others • Commitment to conservation and environmental issues 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strong personal motivation	
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