

# Bat Conservation Trust



## Project Officer (Biodiversity Team) (Fixed 1 year contract, 3 days per week)

### Job description

#### 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. BCT's vision is a world rich in wildlife where bats and people thrive together. Our mission is to conserve bats for present and future generations. Through education, collaborative action and scientific research, we inspire individuals and organisations to value and speak out for bats.

BCT's strategic aims are:

- Discover: *To ensure scientific evidence is in place to support bat conservation*
- Act: *To secure and enhance bat populations and their resilience in a changing world*
- Inspire: *To win the levels of support required to secure and enhance bat populations*
- Strengthen: *BCT to achieve financial stability and sustainable staff workloads. Staff and volunteers are motivated and well led.*

BCT's core expertise includes: biodiversity delivery (an experienced lead partner for several bat species in the UK Biodiversity Strategy); the National Bat Monitoring Programme (coordinating more than 2000 volunteer surveyors each year); delivering advice about bats (through the National Bat Helpline and through long-term partnerships with the statutory nature conservation organisations); training professionals and volunteers; and engaging and educating wider audiences.

BCT's head office is in Vauxhall, London and we have offices in Wales and Scotland as well as some remotely based staff.

#### Partnership for Biodiversity in Planning

The *State of Nature 2016* report reviewed the state of the UK's wildlife and reported a worrying trend. Fifty six percent of species assessed in the report had declined over the last 50 years. The drivers of these declines are varied, however it is widely recognised that the cumulative impacts of construction and development pose a significant threat to biodiversity, although the magnitude of this threat has proved difficult to quantify. The planning sector therefore has a critical role to play in minimising harm to biodiversity as a result of development.

# Bat Conservation Trust



We want to see a planning system that delivers biodiversity benefits alongside social and economic improvements. However all too often planning and land management decisions lead to poor outcomes for biodiversity. We have identified two barriers that prevent the current planning system from reaching its potential to deliver gains for biodiversity: a lack of access to ecological expertise and a perception that environmental considerations, particularly in planning, are a hindrance to growth.

The key outcomes for this partnership project, which has been funded by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, are therefore:

1. An interactive tool that
  - a. allows non-ecologists to check whether expert ecological advice should be sought in relation to the impact of a proposed development on protected and priority species as well as statutory designated sites, and
  - b. provides a central point of reference for protected species guidance for use by those involved in the planning process.
2. Practitioners are aware of and increasingly using an ecologically informed method of searching for and interpreting species distribution data in the planning process.
3. The perception that biodiversity considerations within the planning process are a hindrance to economic growth has been challenged.

Led by the Bat Conservation Trust, the project, which started in December 2014, includes the following partner organisations:

Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Trust (ARC), Association of Local Government Ecologists (ALGE), Bat Conservation Trust (BCT), Buglife, Butterfly Conservation, The Mammal Society, People's Trust for Endangered Species (PTES), Plantlife and Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB).

The following are associate organisations to the project:

Association of Local Environmental Record Centres (ALERC), Chartered Institute for Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM), Greenspace Information for Greater London CIC (GiGL), Home Builders Federation (HBF), North Devon Council, Northumbria University, Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI), Somerset County Council, Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) and The Wildlife Trusts.

## Purpose of the job

To manage the day-to-day running of the Partnership for Biodiversity in Planning project with support from other members of the BCT team, the partner organisations and the associate organisations as appropriate and according to the work plan submitted with the funding application. To champion the tools developed by the project, promoting and securing uptake of the interactive tool by local planning authorities.

# Bat Conservation Trust



## Roles and Responsibilities

### 1. Project management

- Carry out the day-to-day project management of the Partnership for Biodiversity in Planning project to ensure delivery of the project as described in the funding application.
- Manage the project finances as a separate department according to the budget set out in the funding application with input from the Head of Biodiversity.

### 2. Communication and liaison

- Regularly liaise with the project partners and associates, including organising meetings and reporting back as appropriate.
- Regularly liaise with the Head of Biodiversity and Director of Conservation regarding the progress and strategic direction of the project.
- Contribute to BCT quarterly reports to update the BCT Senior Management Team and Trustees on project progress.
- Attend or submit fortnightly reports for BCT team meetings and respond to actions.
- Report to the project funder as required.

### 3. Delivering project outcomes 1 & 2

- Assist with the planning and delivery of a launch event for the interactive tool.
- Promote the interactive tool to local planning authorities and end users (householder applicants, architects, planning consultants, developers and/or their agents), secure the uptake of and support the rollout of the tool across local planning authorities (Key outcome 1).
- Promote the background data search guidance produced by the project to assist practitioners in interpreting the result of a background data search for ecological reporting in relation to development and planning (Key outcome 2).
- Explore, with BCT colleagues, partner and associate organisations, the potential of species distribution mapping to contribute to effective spatial planning for a variety of taxa across a broad range of strategic applications (Key outcome 2).

### 4. Delivering project outcome 3

With BCT colleagues, partner and associate organisations:

- Use the tools developed as part of the project to demonstrate that biodiversity considerations can be assessed in a straightforward yet robust manner.
- Contribute to the delivery of a comprehensive publicity strategy to champion the tools developed as part of the project.
- Secure support for the interactive tool and recognition of the benefits of the tool to local planning authorities from key stakeholders.
- Contribute information to enable the Head of Biodiversity and Director of Conservation to lobby for Government support for the project.

# Bat Conservation Trust



## Working relationships

### Inside the organisation

Reports to the Head of Biodiversity.

### Outside the organisation

Regular contact with the partner organisations, associate organisations and others as is appropriate to fulfil the aims of the project.

## Other relevant factors

Compliance with BCT's Staff Handbook policies, including Green Housekeeping and Health and Safety.

## Salary

The salary is in the range of £26,000 to £28,000 (£15,600 - £16,800 pro rata'd) depending on experience.

## Length of post

This is a fixed term contract for one-year, working on a part-time basis of three days a week. There is an initial three month probationary period with one week's notice, then one month's notice.

We anticipate the post starting the first week of September.

## Holiday

25 days annual leave plus bank holidays (33 days in total), pro rata'd.

## Benefits Package

BCT offers Childcare Vouchers, Cyclescheme and an Employee Assistance Programme which you may join after satisfactory completion of a probation period.

## Pension

BCT will automatically enrol you into a Group Pension Plan after you have been employed by BCT for three months. Currently, employee and employer contributions are 3% (minimum) and 4% respectively. Pension contributions will be reviewed and increased in line with pension reform legislation.

## Usual time of work

This is a part time post, 9am – 5.30pm including one hour for lunch (22.5 hours per week). There may be occasional evening and weekend work for which time off in lieu is given, although not necessarily on a one for one basis.

## Place of work

The main BCT office in Vauxhall, South London.

# Bat Conservation Trust



## Person Specification

This section details the experience, competencies, knowledge and personal qualities desirable for the post.

Quality	Essential	Desirable
<b>Experience</b>	<p>A professional with a solid grounding in the issues surrounding biodiversity in the planning process, informed by personal experience.</p> <p>At least 2 years of experience in managing and delivering successful projects.</p> <p>Experience of producing high quality reports.</p> <p>Experience of public speaking to a range of audiences.</p> <p>Experience of inspiring others about conservation and motivating them to act.</p>	<p>Professional experience in the planning sector.</p> <p>Professional experience in ecological consultancy.</p> <p>Experience in managing partnership projects.</p> <p>Experience of managing project budgets.</p> <p>Experience in the development of web-based interactive resources.</p> <p>Experience of lobbying and advocacy at a governmental level.</p>
<b>Knowledge</b>	<p>Knowledge of the planning and ecological consultancy sector.</p> <p>Knowledge of UK planning and conservation policy and relevant legislation.</p>	<p>Relevant degree or equivalent experience.</p> <p>Knowledge of bat ecology, and behaviour.</p> <p>Broader ecological knowledge informed by personal experience.</p> <p>An existing network of contacts relevant to the project.</p> <p>An understanding of the cross sectoral conflicts involved in wildlife conservation.</p>
<b>Competencies</b>	<p>Excellent communication and interpersonal skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— able to deal confidently with a wide range of people.</li> <li>— excellent networking and representation skills.</li> <li>— good lobbying/influencing skills.</li> <li>— able to bond well with others from a wide range of backgrounds, understand their perspective, and inspire them to act.</li> </ul>	<p>Ability to take account of / represent other species groups where appropriate</p> <p>Ability to absorb and understand policy / legislation</p>

# Bat Conservation Trust



Quality	Essential	Desirable
	<p>Excellent organisational and project management skills.</p> <p>Good at identifying and acting on opportunities as they arise.</p> <p>Good presentation and report writing skills.</p> <p>Advanced user of standard IT packages including Word, Excel and PowerPoint.</p> <p>Good team worker.</p>	
<p><b>Personal qualities</b></p>	<p>Able to understand the perspective of others and to convey that understanding.</p> <p>Able to convey authority.</p> <p>Strong personal motivation.</p> <p>Strong commitment to conservation and environmental issues</p> <p>Self-aware, open to constructive feedback and desire to develop skills and competencies.</p> <p>Able to inspire confidence in BCT colleagues, funders, amateur and professional bat workers.</p> <p>Willing and able to travel within the UK.</p>	