

Essex Wildlife Trust

Job Description and Person Specification



Job title: Project Manager (Bottengoms Farm)

Location: Abbots Hall

Reports to: Head of Strategy and Impact

Job Purpose

Essex Wildlife Trust is the recipient of a significant estate and restricted fund from the writer Ronald Blythe, following his death in January 2023. As the internationally renowned author of 'Akenfield', Ronnie was considered the finest contemporary writer on the countryside and an icon of many of the UK and America's most famous naturalists and nature writers.

Probate has now been granted, and Ronnie's home – Bottengoms Farm and gardens – has passed to the Trust. Bottengoms Farm was once the home of artists John and Christine Nash, and is almost as famous amongst writers, naturalists and artists as Ronnie himself.

We want Bottengoms to continue to inspire generations to come, just as it inspired its past inhabitants. This Project Manager role has therefore been established to determine the best outcome for the Bottengoms estate and for Essex Wildlife Trust, liaising closely with the Bottengoms Advisory Group, made up of executors, close friends of Ronnie's, and other stakeholders.

In this Project Manager role, you will apply your project management skills, knowledge, and experience to develop a long-term financially sustainable vision and plan for Bottengoms. The vision and plan will include identifying key stakeholders and organisations who will have a long-term commitment to and involvement in the project, taking into account the specialisms associated with this legacy, the property and the grounds and gardens.

You will be responsible for delivering all aspects of the developmental phase of the project (Phase I) to time, cost, and quality, and in accordance with agreed targets and objectives, making recommendations for subsequent phases.

You will apply the Trust's Project Management Framework, ensuring impact-focused outcomes, and you will lead on the high-level stewardship of funders and corporate partners, drawing on your commercial experience and demonstrating a strong grasp of the context of this project, and the 'fit' with the Trust's charitable objectives.

Key Tasks

- Identify the project goals and scope
- Manage all aspects of the project, ensuring that they are delivered effectively to time, cost and quality, following the Trust's Project Management Framework
- Work closely with the Fundraising Team to ensure excellent fundraising oversight and relationship management of all potential funders and private partners, advising them of any changes to the project as appropriate
- Liaise directly with prospective partners and stakeholders, with a view to determining the future of the Bottengoms legacy
- Develop appropriate strategies, plans, and targets to ensure that the project delivers against any defined objectives or criteria
- Develop bids, including for project continuation, working with internal and external stakeholders, including consultants, contractors, and any other professional advisors
- Matrix manage the workstream and delivery team responsible for any education and engagement aspects of the project, ensuring high-quality outcomes and impact

- Matrix manage the workstream and Conservation team responsible for delivering any conservation and site infrastructure aspects of the project, ensuring agreed outcomes
- Manage any staff, either contracted or employed, directly involved in the Bottengoms estate, for example a horticulturist or gardener
- Manage relationships with internal and external stakeholders, including staff, volunteers, and local authorities and communities, providing key information as appropriate
- Manage the relationship with any third parties involved in project evaluation and ensure that any work is delivered to specification and to a high standard
- Produce regular reports for the Bottengoms Advisory Group to report on key objectives, including proposing solutions to any issues or problems
- Ensure that any staff involved in your projects are working in accordance with Trust policies, procedures, and processes, particularly safeguarding and health and safety practices
- Ensure excellent record-keeping, as appropriate, working in line with the Trust's GDPR policy, and ensuring that the project legacy is recorded, celebrated and recorded for posterity
- Manage project budgets and financial performance, including cash flows and expenditure, forecasting accurately, and working to ensure best use of resources
- Ensure compliance with regulations and relevant standards and that all reporting, governance, quality assurance and escalation responsibilities are discharged
- Work effectively with colleagues across the organisation and demonstrate the Trust's core values of being Impactful, Collaborative, United and Proactive
- Promote and protect the Essex Wildlife Trust brand
- Undertake any other duties assigned that are within the scope of the role and the contract of employment

Knowledge and Skills

1. Has highly developed project management skills, with an excellent understanding of project management lifecycles, processes, and practices
2. Has a proven track record of successfully delivering complex projects that comprise both operational and strategic elements, and ideally include aspects of commerce and historic property/gardens
3. Can lead delivery by prioritising, setting clear milestones, and establishing unambiguous measures of success
4. Has outstanding organisational skills and the ability to handle multiple priorities simultaneously whilst meeting deadlines
5. Is adaptable, with the ability to acquire expertise quickly whilst managing a complex set of shifting priorities
6. Has excellent verbal and written communication skills with strong attention to detail and the ability to communicate and influence senior stakeholders, including corporate partners and clients
7. Has experience of inspiring and motivating project teams, building collaborative working environments and getting the best out of people
8. Has confidence when dealing with uncertainty and the ability to maintain a broad view of a situation, identifying the key elements while keeping an overview of the detail
9. Has sound analytical and problem-solving skills, with the ability to switch between being creative and analytical
10. Has proven risk management skills and recognises when and how to escalate issues appropriately
11. Has highly developed facilitation skills with the ability to bring together a broad range of stakeholders with different views and build collaborative decision-making
12. Is proactive and enthusiastic with a willingness to take responsibility
13. Can work independently and in a team environment
14. Has experience of the charity sector or a similar sector, ideally with knowledge of a specialist area such as historic properties or conservation projects
15. Has a high level of computer literacy on Microsoft packages and other standard software
16. Has a passion for wildlife and conservation and an awareness of the key challenges facing conservation charities
17. Has a passion for art and culture, especially related to nature

Additional Information

- The role may entail some evening and weekend working
- The role requires an interest in working for a charity that is determined to protect wildlife for the future and for the people of Essex
- The role requires the ability to drive, including a full driving licence and use of a vehicle, though pool vehicles may sometimes be available
- The role is based at Abbots Hall, Essex, but may require travel across the county and beyond, with mileage paid for additional travel

Disability Confident Statement

As a Disability Confident employer, we are committed to offering an interview to anyone with a disability that meets all the essential criteria for the post. Please let us know if you require any adjustments to make our recruitment process more accessible.