

Proposal for Colleges Biodiversity Baseline Assessment

College Biodiversity Assistant

The purpose of this assignment will be to work with the Cambridge Colleges to conduct a comprehensive desk-based analysis of existing College land holdings, to identify existing habitat and species data, catalogue gaps in information and to collate best practice of any existing progress made in enhancing areas of the Colleges' land holdings for biodiversity.

The work is being commissioned by the College Biodiversity Sub-Committee (CESC). The Assistant would sit within the [Sustainability Section](#) of Estates Division. The Assistant would be line managed by Rachel Steward, Environmental Manager, who currently leads on biodiversity and is secretariat for the University's [Ecological Advisory Panel](#) (EAP). The EAP members would provide additional advice and guidance.

Outputs

The key outputs for this project will be:

- A full report detailing findings on a College by College basis
- A summary document synthesising the state of biodiversity data across the Collegiate estate and existing management practices
- An engaging presentation of information summarising existing measures taken by Colleges to enhance land holdings for biodiversity which in turn analyses best practice to encourage College gardeners to learn from each other
- A gap analysis with recommendations for additional ecological survey work
- Regular progress reports to both the BESC and the EAP

Job description

- Liaising with College Bursars and other College officers to determine the most effective method of gaining information
- Desk based research exercise gathering information on the operational estates both land and buildings for all 31 Colleges
- Liaising with College Bursars to include where possible rural land holdings and engaging with external land management agents to gather information
- Provision of a biodiversity baseline summary map for all Colleges, based on existing information available
- Mapping will include any designated sites, existing management plans and historical ecological survey information, where available
- Determine existing schemes or measures in place at Colleges which already work to enhance any College land holdings for biodiversity
- Collate existing examples of good biodiversity management practices to enable sharing of best practice amongst all Colleges, aiming to encourage more good practice across Colleges
- Complete a gap analysis of significant omissions of habitat and species data across the College land holdings
- Compile a report detailing the land holdings for each College alongside any existing habitat and species data for each land holding and, if appropriate, details of any existing enhancement for biodiversity, site designations, management plans and historical ecological data
- Draft a suitable summary report
- Compile a report detailing the gap analysis of missing ecological data on College land holdings

- Make recommendations for ecological survey work resulting from the gap analysis
- Limited survey work may be undertaken dependant on skills and experience and time available

Person specification

Essential criteria

Qualifications

- Relevant ecological academic or professional qualifications to degree level

Experience and knowledge

- A broad knowledge of habitats, protected species and wider biodiversity issues
- Experience working in a relevant ecological field demonstrating sound knowledge of ecological issues, land management, including protected species
- Experience of large and complex desk based research projects
- Familiarity of, or the aptitude to learn, the use of ArcGIS to facilitate collation of any existing mapping work, data analysis and completing additional mapping work, where required
- Knowledge and understanding of habitat and protected species survey requirements for biodiversity baseline data collection
- Understanding best practice for managing land for biodiversity

Skills and abilities

- Good partnership working and influencing skills
- Ability to seek information from a wide range of sources
- Ability to comprehensively review, understand, analyse and collate information in a clear and coherent manner
- Ability to provide clear and coherent advice and information both orally and in written form
- Good organisational skills with a methodical approach to their work
- Excellent report writing ability
- Ability to work independently and remotely
- The candidate needs to be flexible, as the assignment is likely to be varied

Desirable criteria

- Experience of ecological surveying
- Capacity to independent travel to a variety of sites to complete survey work

Timescales and location

Note that it is highly likely that the gap analysis will demonstrate a need for additional ecological surveys. The cost for these will be dependent on the outcomes of the gap analysis. The benefit of completing the desk based exercise during the Michaelmas and Lent terms would provide an opportunity to complete ecological survey work in the more optimal time of Spring 2022.

The post would be for a full time position (36.5 hours per week) over 6 months or part time pro rata over 9 months, preferably starting in October 2021.

The rate of pay for this assignment will be £15.30 per hour.

Any applicant will be required to evidence their right to work in the UK.

The University of Cambridge is committed to a proactive and inclusive approach to equality, more information can be found [here](#).

It is envisaged that hybrid working arrangement will be in place for this post, with provision for home working, an office base at the University's Greenwich House and site visits within the Cambridge area. There will be a requirement for some on site visits to Cambridge Colleges.