Countryside Manager

Introduction

Countryside managers are responsible for developing, maintaining and managing areas of the countryside, often including public access to these areas. They are concerned with the conservation and use of these areas. Countryside managers are responsible for areas such as parks, nature reserves, woodlands, historical sites and the public access network.

Also known as

• Conservation Manager

Work Activities

As a Countryside Manager, you can be involved in developing a site at the planning stage. For example, you might design a recreation site or work out how to create new countryside landscapes from derelict land. You can be involved in finding and applying for funding for the project.

You will encourage public interest and involvement in the development, eg, by holding events, setting up displays and writing leaflets. You might encourage community-based projects, eg, bringing in volunteer groups from the local community to take part in conservation work.

Also, you might liaise with Landowners to ensure that the public can access the site freely. You negotiate with conservation and voluntary organisations to secure their help in looking after the site's wildlife. You might record and assess local restrictions to rights of way, negotiating with landowners to solve problems.

Making sure that the public can access and enjoy the site could include planning the creation and maintenance of paths, cycle ways and picnic areas.

Countryside Managers might have to research and secure grants, sponsorship or other forms of income from a range of agencies, organisations and, possibly, local businesses. You might plan and lead fund-raising activities, and help to bring about community involvement.

Managers also have to ensure the health and safety of everyone working on or visiting the site. You ensure that volunteers and workers are properly trained, and plan how to respond to fires and accidents.

Managers of places such as country parks and visitor centres have similar duties. You recruit, supervise and train staff and volunteers, manage the budget and deal with day-to-day problems, including customer complaints.

You will produce management information such as reports, accounts and statistics for the owners of the site or funding agencies. For example, you might design a survey to gather visitors’ opinions about the site.

Managers also answer queries from the public and arrange educational activities such as classroom presentations. Countryside Managers produce promotional material such as newsletters and leaflets to keep visitors informed and to market the site.

Countryside Managers might spend a lot of time in an office, although you also visit sites.

Being able to read, write and speak Welsh may be an advantage when you're looking for work in Wales.

Personal Qualities and Skills

To become a Countryside Manager, you'll need:

• a strong knowledge of rural, conservation, environmental and planning issues, including relevant legislation and policies
• excellent management skills, for example, to supervise, train and motivate staff, handle budgets, make decisions
and solve problems
• communication skills to deal with a wide range of people, including the public, Landowners, local authority staff and representatives of conservation bodies
• presentation skills
• number skills to manage budgets
• written and computer skills to produce leaflets and newsletters

For some posts, you’ll need a full driving licence.

Pay and Opportunities

Pay

The pay rates given below are approximate.

• Starting: £27,000 - £29,000
• With experience: £32,500 - £36,500
• Senior Countryside Managers earn £39,500

Hours of work

Countryside Managers usually work 37.5 hours a week. However, early starts, evening and weekend work may be required.

Where could I work?

Employers include:

• local authorities (including National Park Authorities)
• conservation bodies such as the National Trust and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)
• the Countryside Council for Wales
• Natural England and Scottish Natural Heritage
• Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Opportunities for Countryside Managers occur in rural areas throughout the UK.

Where are vacancies advertised?

Jobs appear in online publications such as The Environment Post and on environmental, countryside and land-based job boards such as environmentjob.co.uk. Vacancies are also advertised in local/national newspapers, at Jobcentre Plus and on the Find a Job website.

GreenJobs is a job board aimed at people interested in green careers:

www.greenjobs.co.uk/browse-jobs/countryside-jobs/

Entry Routes and Training

Entry routes

Most entrants have a degree, HND, foundation degree, or equivalent, in a relevant subject. A postgraduate qualification can be an advantage.

An Intermediate or Advanced Level Apprenticeship will also help you to get into this job. Take a look at our information article ‘Apprenticeships – How do I apply’, for more details about applying for apprenticeship positions.
There are specialist courses in subjects like countryside, land and rural management. Entrants also have backgrounds in science subjects, especially biological and environmental science. A relevant subject combined with business studies would also be useful. Some entrants have backgrounds in planning.

It can be possible to work your way up into a management post from lower-level positions.

A great way to get into this career is through an internship. Take a look at our information article 'Internships', for more details.

**Work Experience**

Some entrants have gained skills and knowledge through relevant work experience, eg, in leisure management, environmental or conservation work, or town or country planning.

**Training**

Training can be on-the-job, perhaps with in-house training courses. Some employers support Countryside Managers to take relevant postgraduate qualifications.

If you would like some more training, then City & Guilds offer a level 2 course in countryside and environment. This course has been specifically designed for people who are new to the industry. The mandatory and optional units for this qualification include:

- introduction to boundary habitat conservation
- tractor driving: introduction to boundary habitat conservation
- undertaking ecological surveys and techniques
- understanding ecology of trees, woods and forests
- introduction to game management
- introduction to environmental studies

Other courses could be available in your area.

**Progression**

Countryside Managers can go on to specialise in particular areas, including woodland management and rural tourism. Some Countryside Managers move into research, for example, in a university or research institute. Others go into teaching or consultancy work.

**Qualifications**

For entry to a degree course in countryside management, the usual requirement is:

- 2/3 A levels where some universities specify a science subject, such as biology or environmental science
- GCSEs at grade C/4 and above in your A level subjects
- a further 2/3 GCSEs at grade C/4 and above where some universities specify English and maths

To get onto an Intermediate or Advanced Level Apprenticeship, you'll usually need five GCSEs at grade C/4 or above, possibly including English and maths.

Equivalent qualifications, such as a BTEC or City & Guilds Level 3 qualification and the International Baccalaureate Diploma, might be acceptable for entry - please check college/university websites carefully.

Some universities accept the Welsh Baccalaureate as equivalent to 1 A level.

**Adult Opportunities**

**Age limits**
It is illegal for any organisation to set age limits for entry to employment, education or training, unless they can show there is a real need to have these limits.

**Skills/experience**

Some entrants have gained skills and knowledge through relevant work experience, eg, in leisure management, environmental or conservation work, or town or country planning.

**Courses**

If you don't have the qualifications needed to enter a degree, foundation degree or HND course, you might be able to start one after completing an Access course. You don't usually need any qualifications, but you should check individual course details.

Manchester Metropolitan University offers postgraduate qualifications in Countryside Management by distance learning.

**Further Information**

**Contacts**

- **LGjobs**
  Local government vacancies
  Website: [www.lgjobs.com](http://www.lgjobs.com)

- **myjobscotland: Scottish local government vacancies**
  Scottish enquiries
  Email: myjobscotland@cosla.gov.uk
  Website: [www.myjobscotland.gov.uk](http://www.myjobscotland.gov.uk)

- **Lantra**
  Skills for land-based and environmental industries
  Address: Lantra House, Stoneleigh Park, Coventry, Warwickshire CV8 2LG
  Tel: 02476 696996
  Email: reception@lantra.co.uk
  Website: [www.lantra.co.uk](http://www.lantra.co.uk)

- **GreenJobs**
  Email: info@greenjobs.co.uk
  Website: [www.greenjobs.co.uk](http://www.greenjobs.co.uk)

- **Institute of Horticulture (IoH)**
  Tel: 01992 707025
  Email: ioh@horticulture.org.uk
  Website: [www.horticulture.org.uk](http://www.horticulture.org.uk)

- **Grow**
  Horticulture careers
  Tel: 0845 7078007
  Website: [www.growcareers.info](http://www.growcareers.info)

- **Natural England**
  Address: Foundry House, 3 Millsands, Riverside Exchange, Sheffield S3 8NH
  Tel: 0845 6003078
  Email: enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk
  Website: [www.naturalengland.org.uk](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk)

- **Countryside Jobs Service (CJS)**
  Address: The Moorlands, Goathland, Whitby, North Yorkshire YO22 5LZ
  Tel: 01947 896007
  Email: ranger@countryside-jobs.com
  Website: [www.countryside-jobs.com](http://www.countryside-jobs.com)
• Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management (CIWEM)
  Address: 15 John Street, London WC1N 2EB
  Tel: 020 7831 3110
  Email: frontofhouse@ciwem.org
  Website: www.ciwem.org

• Countryside Management Association (CMA)
  Address: Writtle College, Lordship Road, Writtle, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 3RR
  Tel: 01245 424116
  Email: cma@writtle.ac.uk
  Website: www.countrysidemanagement.org.uk

• Natural Resources Wales
  Welsh enquiries
  Address: Ty Cambria, 29 Newport Road, Cardiff CF24 0TP
  Tel: 0300 0653000
  Email: enquiries@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk
  Website: naturalresourceswales.gov.uk

• Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust (GWCT)
  Address: Burgate Manor, Fordingbridge, Hampshire SP6 1EF
  Tel: 01425 652381
  Email: info@gwct.org.uk
  Website: www.gwct.org.uk

• National Trust (NT)
  Website: www.nationaltrust.org.uk

• National Trust for Scotland (NTS)
  Scottish enquiries
  Email: information@nts.org.uk
  Website: www.nts.org.uk

• Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)
  Address: The Lodge, Potton Road, Sandy, Bedfordshire SG19 2DL
  Tel: 01767 680551
  Website: www.rspb.org.uk

• Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH)
  Scottish enquiries
  Address: Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW
  Tel: 01463 725000
  Website: www.snh.gov.uk

• Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM)
  Address: 43 Southgate Street, Winchester, Hampshire SO23 9EH
  Tel: 01962 868626
  Email: enquiries@ieem.net
  Website: www.ieem.net

• Wildlife Trusts
  Address: The Klín, Waterside, Mather Road, Newark, Nottinghamshire NG24 1WT
  Tel: 01636 677711
  Email: enquiry@wildlifetrusts.org
  Website: www.wildlifetrusts.org

• Environment Agency
  Address: National Customer Contact Centre, PO Box 544, Rotherham S60 1BY
  Tel: 0370 8506506
  Email: enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk
• **Scottish Wildlife Trust**  
  Scottish enquires  
  Address: Harbourside House, 110 Commercial Street, Edinburgh EH6 6NF  
  Tel: 0131 3127765  
  Email: enquiries@swt.org.uk  
  Website: scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk

• **Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) Scotland**  
  Scottish enquires  
  Address: 2 Lochside View, Edinburgh Park, Edinburgh EH12 9DH  
  Tel: 0131 3174100  
  Email: membership@rspb.org.uk  
  Website: www.rspb.org.uk/Scotland

• **Scotland's National Nature Reserves**  
  Scottish enquires  
  Email: information@nts.org.uk  
  Website: www.nnr-scotland.org.uk

• **Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)**  
  Scottish enquires  
  Address: Erskine Court, Castle Business Park, Stirling FK9 4TR  
  Tel: 01786 457700  
  Website: www.sepa.org.uk

• **Environmental Jobs**  
  Tel: 01268 450024  
  Email: jobs@environmentjobs.co.uk  
  Website: www.environmentpost.co.uk

• **environmentjob.co.uk**  
  Publisher: Working Planet  
  Tel: 01392 491578  
  Email: admin@environmentjob.co.uk  
  Website: www.environmentjob.co.uk

• **Careers Wales - Welsh Apprenticeships**  
  Tel: 0800 028 4844  
  Website: ams.careerswales.com/

• **RSPB Wales**  
  Address: Sutherland House, Castlebridge, Cowbridge Road East, Cardiff, CF11 9AB  
  Tel: 029 2035 3000  
  Email: cymru@rspb.org.uk  
  Website: www.rspb.org.uk

• **Wildlife Trusts Wales**  
  Address: Baltic House, Mount Stuart Square, Cardiff, CF10 5FH  
  Tel: 029 2048 0070  
  Email: info@wtwales.org  
  Website: www.wtwales.org

**Related Careers**

- Forest Worker  
- Forester  
- Garden Centre Assistant  
- Commercial Horticultural Worker  
- Gardener
• Horticultural Therapist
• Groundsperson
• Tree Surgeon
• Countryside Ranger
• Horticultural Scientist
• Landscape Architect
• Landscape Scientist
• Landscape Manager
• Environmental Conservation Officer
• Horticultural Manager
• Park Warden
• Golf Greenkeeper
• Rewilder
• Agroecologist