



**Herefordshire
Wildlife Trust**

Recruitment Booklet for Nature Reserves Manager



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From the CEO

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in applying for the Nature Reserves Manager role.

We are seeking an exceptional and motivated individual to lead the management and restoration of our nature reserves. You will join our Nature Recovery team at an exciting time as we re-structure and grow our portfolio of reserves across Herefordshire. Reporting to the Head of Nature Recovery, you will play a vital role in delivering high quality conservation management and ensuring our reserves thrive for wildlife.

As Nature Reserves Manager, you will lead the reserves team co-ordinating a complex programme of habitat management, infrastructure improvements and volunteer activity. You will help shape and implement our vision for nature recovery by ensuring our reserves demonstrate best practice, contribute to landscape scale networks and inspire others.

Collaboration is central to this role: you will work with staff, volunteers, contractors, local communities and partner organisations to support effective and safe operations on our sites. If appointed, you will be supported by an experienced staff team, a skilled and committed board of trustees, an expanding volunteer network, and the wider Wildlife Trust movement.

We hope you are inspired to apply and look forward to hearing from you.

Saul Herbert

Chief Executive, Herefordshire Wildlife Trust



Our story so far...

This is an exciting, if challenging, time for all Wildlife Trusts. We know that whilst the connection of people to the natural world has strengthened, wildlife is declining, and we are seeing a joint biodiversity and climate crisis. The political and legislative context in which we work is also changing fast with uncertainty and pressure being placed on nature by the new government.

We now face a critical tipping point in reversing the fortunes of our wildlife, ecosystems and communities, and it is clear that all three are inextricably intertwined. We know that we can secure a thriving world for future generations that offers a stable climate, clean water, abundant food, health and happiness. But to do that, working together to restore and protect Herefordshire's nature is vital.

Herefordshire is a beautiful rural county in the Marches, the borderland with Wales, increasingly appreciated as a tourism destination with great outdoor recreational opportunities and known for its cider, beef and wonderful landscapes. People are moving to our countryside, looking for a high quality of life and local communities are working hard to sustain and adapt farming and land management as climate challenges increasingly impact.

Our central plain is largely productive arable land, but it is surrounded on all sides by upland fringe and commons and there are significant hilly enclaves, notable for their woodland cover and wood pasture interspersed with wildflower meadows. Notably, the county has the internationally protected Rivers Teme, Lugg and Wye which remain a focal point for the county's life and landscapes.

Following our very first land acquisition to protect and care for this wonderful place over sixty years ago, Herefordshire Wildlife Trust has grown in size, expertise, impact and support. Today, we manage over 600 hectares of Herefordshire's landscape for nature, across 58 nature reserves and have grown to a membership of over 8,000 and 400 active volunteers.

Guided by the Lawton Review (2010), which concluded that wildlife needs bigger, better and more connected places to live, we deliver nature recovery at a landscape scale, focusing on key corridors – The River Wye and Lugg; Hereford City, Woolhope Dome and The Doward, delivering this work with a wide range of partners.

We are located at Queenswood Country Park and Arboretum, in the centre of the county on the main A49 between Hereford and Leominster and are also working hard to develop a number of "flagship" nature reserves to improve access and connect people to nature, enabling people to then contribute to and become action takers for nature.

More recently we have also expanded our commercial operations with a charity shop in Ledbury and Hereford, a gift shop at Queenswood Country Park and now also run the café here too.

Looking ahead, we are working hard to be bolder - collaborating at a regional and national scale to recover nature; take tangible action for nature through campaigning and advocacy, with a focus on rivers and working to diversify our income, be that through green finance, philanthropy, or services for landowners.

Our strategy

Herefordshire Wildlife Trust has been the leading wildlife charity in Herefordshire for over 60 years and one of the 46 Wildlife Trusts across the UK. We are committed to the conservation of Herefordshire's wildlife: a commitment expressed in land management, habitat restoration, education, advocacy and action. Our ambition for nature is bigger and bolder than ever before. To achieve our long-term goal of nature being in recovery we want to see 30% of the land across Herefordshire well managed for nature by 2030.

'Wilder Herefordshire,' our strategy, will build on the ambition and achievements of our work to date to continue the journey to our new 2030 goal and beyond.

Vision: A Wilder Herefordshire: More Nature Everywhere

Mission: To lead local action for nature's recovery

Aligned to The Wildlife Trusts Strategy for 2030, our 23-26 strategy has three main goals.

Strategic Goals:

- Putting Nature in recovery
- Taking action for nature
- Sustaining our future

We have also identified three key strategy shifts:

- Deliver nature recovery at scale through deeper collaborations, advice and services
- Enable a greater depth and diversity of people taking action and campaigning boldly
- Grow and diversify our income through providing services, advice and experiences



Holly Thompson leading a river survey, 2023 (c) HWT

Recent highlights

Restoring Herefordshire's Rivers

Through our Wye Adapt to Climate Change project, (funded by The National Lottery Community Fund Climate Action Fund,) we have been working with landowners to alter land management to make the land more nature-friendly and sustainable in the face of increasingly extreme weather events. This year, as well as providing advice, we have supported the implementation of practical actions including: tree planting, installing leaky dams to slow the flow of streams, hedgerow planting and management, fencing off watercourses from livestock, restoring meadows, creating ponds and scrapes.

Restoring Bartonsham Meadows

Our project to restore a mosaic of habitats at Bartonsham Meadows in Hereford continued this year, funded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund.

In the areas that we are restoring to floodplain meadow, we now have a management regime in place with regular cutting and grazing. This has allowed us to spread wildflower seeds into areas where the weed species like docks and thistles have now reduced after two years of this management. Volunteers have also planted 150 plugs of sneezewort, great burnet, pepper saxifrage and narrow leaved water dropwort - characteristic species of floodplain meadows.

Other areas of the site are being left to regenerate into a mix of scrub and grassland. We have now fenced these areas to allow light grazing and protect from disturbance.

Local Wildlife Sites

The Local Wildlife Sites project is funded by Herefordshire Council and delivered by our Nature Recovery Officer, Toby Fountain.

This year we developed new criteria for designating Local Wildlife Sites specific to butterflies and for traditional orchard habitat and mire/ heath habitats.

Surveys and management reports were completed for 22 Local Wildlife Sites, with a combined area of 425ha. This includes 14 new sites (375ha).

Lugg Meadows - species recovery

Our work at Lugg Meadows focused, this year, on restoring populations of two key species: narrow-leaved water-dropwort (*Oenanthe silaifolia*) and mousetail (*Myosurus minimus*). As well as directly planting thousands of small plug plants of these species into the meadow, we have also altered and improved aspects of the site management which will benefit a huge range of species. This includes completing the infrastructure that will allow the reserve to be grazed by cattle; opening historic drainage channels and improving the hay cutting regime. This project has been made possible by funding from Natural England through its flagship Species Recovery Programme.

Severn Treescapes

The Treescapes programme began in 2022 and is a partnership between the Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Gloucestershire Wildlife Trusts. It is creating a 60-mile corridor of enhanced tree cover from the Lower Wye to the Wyre Forest, assisting landowners to access funding for tree planting. Last year we planted 16 hectares of new woodland in Herefordshire and pipelined a further 85 hectares of woodland planting through other schemes. We are continuing to plan and plant new woodland sites throughout Herefordshire and have several in the late planning phases to be planted in the next couple of months.

Queenswood Country Park & Arboretum

Ensuring that everyone can enjoy all that Queenswood has to offer, this year we have introduced new ways for people with limited mobility to explore the country park and arboretum. These include two electric mobility scooters ("Trampers"), a swing for wheelchair users, automatic doors on the café and visitor centre and a "map for all" that can be read by sight and touch thanks to its braille lettering.

Nature Reserves Manager Role Description

Main Job Purpose:

- Managing the Trust's 58 nature reserves across the county, including our flagship site at Queenswood Country Park & Arboretum to support nature recovery within the county and further afield. To maintain them in good ecological condition and develop them as safe & inspiring places for public access, education, research and demonstration.
- Lead and inspire the Reserves Team, providing guidance, coaching and support to our Reserve Officers, volunteers and wardens to ensure that our reserves are managed in a way that demonstrates best practice and to maximise conservation benefits for key priority species.
- To contribute to the financial sustainability of HWT by monitoring and managing budgets and grant income, seeking new grant opportunities and maintaining the RPA schemes.

Term: Permanent/Full time 37 hours per week

Reports to: Head of Nature Recovery

Location: Queenswood Country Park, Hybrid Home working, Site visits across the county and occasional travel across the UK

Management Responsibility: Nature Reserves Team 3.4 FTE staff plus trainees and volunteers

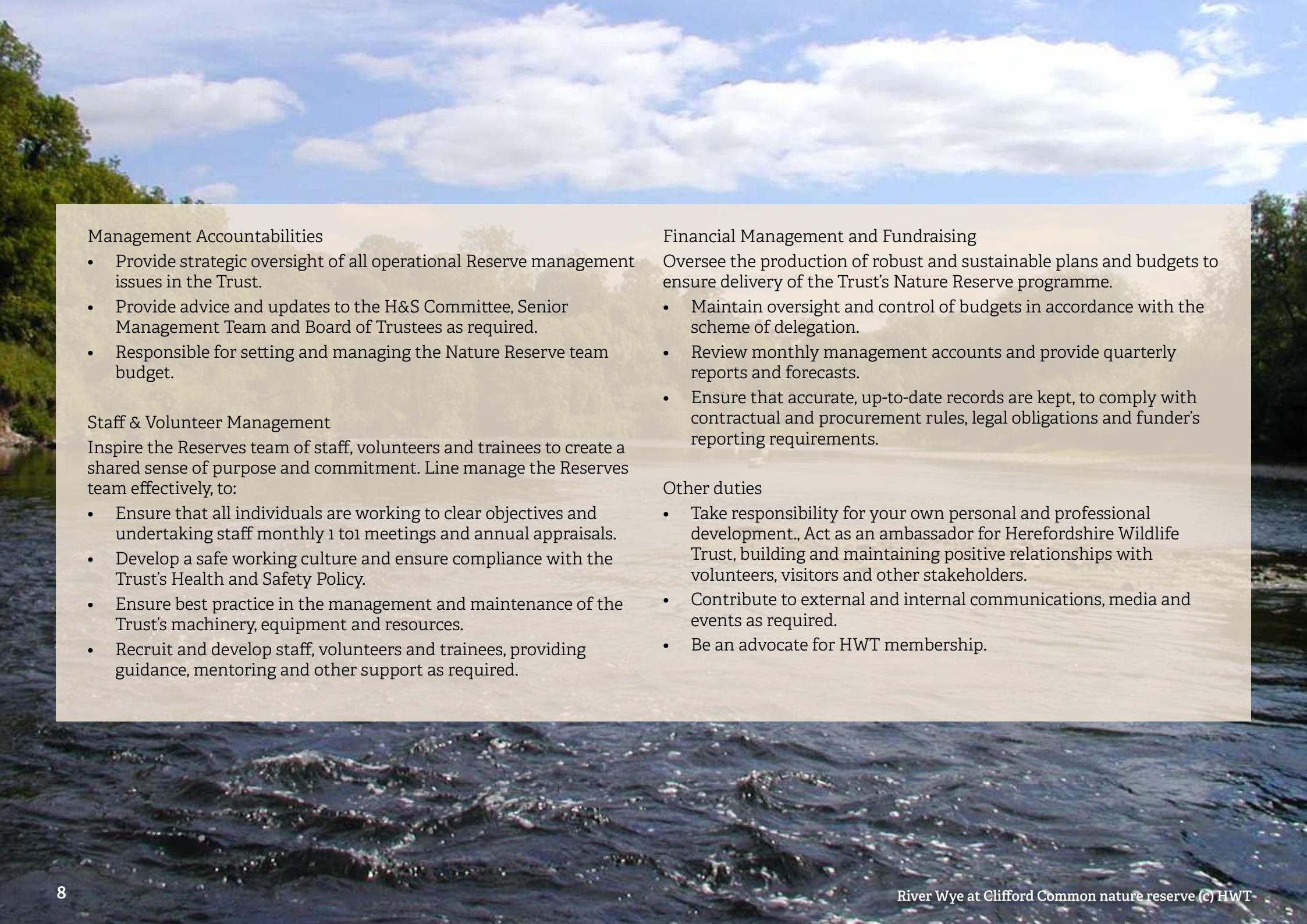
Liaison with: CEO, Senior Management Team, Staff and volunteers, Contractors, Internal and External organisations

Key Responsibilities:

Leadership:

Lead the development, implementation and review of the Trust's reserves management programme, ensuring its approach to land management demonstrates best practice in nature conservation and sustainability.

- Explore new funding opportunities for our reserves including Sustainable Farming Incentives and Biodiversity Net Gain.
- Maintain relationships with legal advisers, government agency teams, contractors and partner organisations.
- Ensure legal and regulatory compliance relating to agreements, leases, contracts, agri-environment schemes, European Protected Species and other obligations.
- Assess potential new site acquisitions, against the agreed criteria.
- Liaise with colleagues to:
 - maximise the potential for people involvement in nature reserves, including oversight of physical access infrastructure, interpretation, events and learning opportunities.
 - create and build on opportunities to position our nature reserves as key elements of living landscapes and nature recovery networks.



Management Accountabilities

- Provide strategic oversight of all operational Reserve management issues in the Trust.
- Provide advice and updates to the H&S Committee, Senior Management Team and Board of Trustees as required.
- Responsible for setting and managing the Nature Reserve team budget.

Staff & Volunteer Management

Inspire the Reserves team of staff, volunteers and trainees to create a shared sense of purpose and commitment. Line manage the Reserves team effectively, to:

- Ensure that all individuals are working to clear objectives and undertaking staff monthly 1 to 1 meetings and annual appraisals.
- Develop a safe working culture and ensure compliance with the Trust's Health and Safety Policy.
- Ensure best practice in the management and maintenance of the Trust's machinery, equipment and resources.
- Recruit and develop staff, volunteers and trainees, providing guidance, mentoring and other support as required.

Financial Management and Fundraising

Oversee the production of robust and sustainable plans and budgets to ensure delivery of the Trust's Nature Reserve programme.

- Maintain oversight and control of budgets in accordance with the scheme of delegation.
- Review monthly management accounts and provide quarterly reports and forecasts.
- Ensure that accurate, up-to-date records are kept, to comply with contractual and procurement rules, legal obligations and funder's reporting requirements.

Other duties

- Take responsibility for your own personal and professional development., Act as an ambassador for Herefordshire Wildlife Trust, building and maintaining positive relationships with volunteers, visitors and other stakeholders.
- Contribute to external and internal communications, media and events as required.
- Be an advocate for HWT membership.

Nature Reserves Manager Person Specification

Qualifications

Degree or similar in Biological/Environmental Science, Ecology, or Countryside Management or demonstrable extensive experience in Conservation management.

Experience & Knowledge

- Extensive Experience of practical conservation land management.
- Experience of leadership, supervision, recruitment and training of staff and volunteers.
- Experience of developing and reviewing land management plans, budget management, managing contractors, managing and applying for grants.
- Experience of budget management and grant funded projects.
- Understanding of environment land management schemes.
- Ability to maintain and develop strong relationships with neighbours and stakeholders.
- Good ecological knowledge.
- Personal commitment to nature conservation.

Essential Skills

- Problem-solving skills and a proactive approach to conservation challenges.
- Project management experience and skills.
- Excellent organisational and communication skills.
- Excellent team working skills.

Other Requirements

- Valid full driving licence with business insurance.
- Willingness to work at weekends and outside office hours.
- Willingness to work outdoors sometimes in inclement weather.

Personal Attributes

- Friendly, flexible, creative and inspirational.

Terms

This is a permanent, full-time role based at Queenswood Country Park and Arboretum in Herefordshire, HR6 0PY, giving you the opportunity to work and live in a beautiful rural county with a relatively low cost of living.

The role is offered at a salary range of between £33,000 - £35,000, depending on experience, with employer's pension contributions at 5%. Staff benefits include: life assurance, enhanced maternity & sick pay, a Health Cash Plan and Employee Assistance scheme with Westfield Health, free parking and Herefordshire Wildlife Trust branded work wear.

Our annual leave allowance starts at 25 days per annum plus all bank holidays, with an extra day per year of service up to 30 days leave. We operate a range of flexible working options.

Herefordshire Wildlife Trust will provide continuous investment in you - with ongoing learning and training opportunities. This is enhanced by the Wildlife Trusts' intranet - Wildnet - which provides an opportunity to meet, collaborate and learn from your peers within the wider Wildlife Trust movement.

How to apply

To apply:

- Please download and complete the diversity monitoring form
- Upload your CV, covering letter and diversity form by clicking on the Apply button on our website .

We hope that you will tell us in your supporting statement how your skills and experience relate to the Job Spec. outlined here and make you a suitable candidate for this role.

The closing date for applications is 5pm on 22nd February 2026.

Interviews are planned for Tuesday 3rd March 2026 at Queenswood Country Park. Feedback will be given to all candidates from the interview stage.

For further information visit www.herefordshirewt.org

or contact Eleanor Cherry Operations Manager hr@herefordshirewt.co.uk Tel: 07377526504



Fieldfare (c) Peter Stamper

Cover image: Snake's head fritillaries, Lugg Meadow (c) Katherine Beasley