



**Volunteer Role:** Volunteer Conservation Officer (VCO) – Cambridgeshire  
(for 18+ years age)

<b>Support Person</b>	Conservation Officer
<b>Location</b>	Cambourne, Cambridgeshire with travel to sites across the county
<b>Role Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To contribute to the delivery of the survey and monitoring programmes (habitats and species) of the Wider Countryside team, providing advice and support to landowners and communities across the county</li> <li>• To provide the VCO with increased knowledge, skills and hands-on experience in nature conservation work.</li> <li>• To enhance the opportunities of the VCO to access the professional conservation field</li> </ul>
<b>Specific Tasks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surveys of habitats such as woodland, grassland, hedgerow and watercourses</li> <li>• Planning and undertaking targeted species surveys (e.g. water voles, great crested newts, bats, non-native invasive species)</li> <li>• Assist with the ongoing monitoring programme of County Wildlife Sites including undertaking surveys and producing survey reports</li> <li>• Create Phase 1 habitat maps using GPS and GIS mapping software</li> <li>• Landowner liaison as part of the team's ongoing work</li> <li>• Participate in practical habitat management tasks</li> <li>• Preparation for volunteer work parties e.g. completing risk assessments, tool maintenance and site preparation work</li> <li>• Delivery of community engagement events</li> </ul>
<b>Skills and Qualities Needed</b>	<p>We're wild about inclusion! We want our volunteers and staff to be as diverse as wildlife. As an inclusive employer we recognise that our workforce needs to better reflect the communities in which we live and work. We actively encourage applications from people of all backgrounds, identities and cultures. We believe that a diverse workforce will help us create our vision of 'people close to nature, with land and seas rich in wildlife'.</p> <p>Essential skills and qualities for this role are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-motivated, flexible and willing to work hard outdoors in all weather</li> <li>• Able to work with a range of people of all ages and backgrounds</li> <li>• Keen interest in pursuing a career in wildlife conservation</li> <li>• Good team player with the ability to foster collaborative working and a positive attitude</li> <li>• Good oral and/or written communication skills and the ability to engage a variety of audiences</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reliable and able to prioritise and organise own time and resources effectively on a daily basis, including meeting deadlines</li> </ul> <p>Desirable skills include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Computer literate</li> <li>Good general knowledge of British natural history</li> <li>Some experience of practical management in nature reserves or similar greenspaces</li> <li>Some experience of habitat and/or species surveying</li> <li>Some experience of using Geographic Information System mapping software (e.g. QGIS)</li> <li>Understand and respond to Health and Safety needs</li> <li>Relevant education</li> <li>Hold a valid driving licence</li> </ul>
<b>Commitment</b>	3 days per week (ideally Tuesday-Thursday) for a period of 7 months, subject to a trial period of one month. A normal working day is from 9am to 5pm with the option of occasional evening/weekend work.
<b>Support and Training</b>	<p>The volunteer will gain experience in a number of ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working alongside the Wider Countryside team, which holds many years of experience in nature conservation, in the wide range of habitats and sites present across Cambridgeshire</li> <li>In-house training including species identification, species and habitat surveying techniques (e.g. water voles, great crested newts, Phase 1 Habitat, UKHab), use of GIS software, health and safety</li> <li>Formal training – certificate in First Aid At Work</li> <li>Attendance on Wildlife Trust training workshops</li> <li>Catch-ups with your Support Officer</li> </ul>
<b>Expenses</b>	Out of pocket expenses for travel will be reimbursed
<b>Expectations of WTBCN Volunteers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Punctual</li> <li>Enthusiastic</li> <li>Willing to learn from colleagues</li> <li>Commitment to attend training offered</li> <li>Willing to work as part of a team</li> <li>Sign Volunteer Agreement</li> </ul>
<b>Location of volunteering</b>	Based at the Wildlife Trust BCN's headquarters in Cambourne, this role will take you to locations across Cambridgeshire, and occasionally into Northamptonshire or Bedfordshire.

## Cambridgeshire Volunteer Conservation Officer position

### What is it like to work here?

#### Diversity of habitats

This role offers the opportunity to work in a broad range of interesting and specialised habitats across the county. From ancient woodlands and meadows, to wetlands and ponds, the role is incredibly varied and requires a range of species and habitat surveying and liaising with landowners, other conservation organisations and communities.



Thorpe Wood Nature Reserve  
(County Wildlife Site)



Cat's Water Drain  
(County Wildlife Site)



Southorpe Meadow



An orchard near Cambridge  
(County Wildlife Site)

### Diversity of the role

The role is focussed on the various survey and monitoring programmes within the Wider Countryside team (outdoors in all weathers) and there is plenty of opportunity to get involved with other aspects of the Trust, subject to the interests of the VCO and availability of other staff. Current projects and activities within the Wider Countryside team include:

- Water vole surveys along the Bourn Brook
- Ongoing monitoring programme of County and City Wildlife Sites (of which there are 500 across the county), including surveying, report-writing and providing advice to landowners
- Pond creation, restoration and monitoring (using eDNA) for Natural England's Great Crested Newt District Level Licensing Scheme
- River Restoration along the River Granta
- Working with farmer clusters
- Specific surveys to provide an evidence-base for nature conservation (e.g. Protected Road Verges, Nature Networks)
- Biodiversity Net Gain assessments
- Working with volunteer groups
- Attending meetings and committees, e.g. Local Sites panel, Road Verges committee

### Supportive Colleagues

The Cambridgeshire Wider Countryside team is a small and supportive group with many years of experience and knowledge to share. Many of them started their career at the Wildlife Trust in the VCO, or similar, role!



*Undertaking practical management at Fleam Dyke*





*Lunchtime at Houghton Meadow*



*Our VCOs from 2025*

### Great Facilities

Although you will be working across the county, you will be based at the Cambourne office, the headquarters for our three counties. As well as access to surveying equipment and tools for practical tasks, there is an extensive library of books about wildlife and conservation which you will be welcome to use.

Teams working at the Cambourne office include our Executive Board, Finance, Fundraising, Supporter Engagement, IT and Communications Teams, and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Environmental Records centre share the building. Access to all areas on the ground floor (where you will be based) are level or ramped and there are stairs and a wheelchair accessible lift to the first floor. The office garden makes a lovely space for breaktimes and casual wildlife observations, and in inclement weather the kitchen is a sociable place for lunch.