

**Citizen Science Co-ordinator Role
River Chess Smarter Water Catchment Initiative**

JOB INFORMATION PACK



About the role

This is a great opportunity to join a committed and friendly team making a positive difference to the chalk streams and landscapes of the Chilterns.

The successful postholder will work across the Chess catchment and the Chilterns AONB to co-ordinate volunteer Citizen Science activities, to build strong and trusted relationships with Citizen Scientists, and to encourage, support and facilitate collaborative investigations. You will deliver and co-ordinate training in appropriate techniques, develop the Citizen Science activities, maintain feedback between Chess Smarter Water Catchment programme and the Citizen Scientists, and help analyse and visualise data from the different activities. Your work will help achieve a better functioning river catchment with multiple benefits for nature and people.

This work is part of the five-year ground-breaking **Smarter Water Catchment** (SWC) Initiative in the Chess Valley – funded by Thames Water and delivered through a partnership project co-hosted by the Chilterns Chalk Streams Project - a partnership project led by the Chilterns Conservation Board – and the River Chess Association. The initiative aims to restore the health of one of the Chilterns' finest chalk stream catchments, by using an intensive approach to catchment management and with the resources to make a real difference.

Chalk streams and their valley landscapes are a characteristic and attractive feature of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Chilterns Chalk Streams are, however, amongst the most threatened of all chalk streams in the world. Currently, none of the Chilterns' chalk streams are in good ecological condition but they still support an abundance of wildlife and are loved by the communities through which they flow.

The successful candidate will work with local community river groups to coordinate and support citizen science and volunteer conservation work. You will also work with a wide range of partner organisations such as water companies, statutory bodies and wildlife groups as well as farmers and landowners.

The post will be based at the Chiltern Conservation Board's offices in Chinnor, Oxfordshire with the successful candidate being required to travel to multiple sites across the catchment and across the wider Chilterns. However, the role may comprise a blend of office and home working from time to time. Some work outside of normal office hours will be required (e.g. running and facilitating training sessions at weekends, holding meetings with Citizen Scientists in the evenings).

About you

We are seeking a motivated professional with experience in recruiting, co-ordinating and facilitating volunteer activities for Citizen Scientists. You will be an excellent communicator, able to engage with, inspire and build relationships with

the public and a range of stakeholders. You will have good data handling and visualisation skills, and a track record of developing and maintaining project-wide relationships.

You will have a good knowledge of river management and conservation, and an understanding of catchment-based approaches for river management.

You will be excited about working proactively in this sector and will bring energy, enthusiasm, experience, and pragmatism to the role.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Thames Water Smarter Water Catchment Initiative

The River Chess is a chalk stream that flows for 10 miles through the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It is one of three river catchments where Thames Water is piloting its Smarter Water Catchments initiative between 2020 and 2025. The purpose of the pilot initiative is to trial a more intensive approach to catchment management, using a holistic approach to improve the environment.

A catchment plan has been developed by stakeholders and Thames Water is investing £3 million as seed-funding to support its delivery. The catchment plan covers six main themes: Improving water quality, Managing flow, Control of Invasive Non-Native Species, Improving wildlife corridors, Involving people and Working together. For the full catchment plan see:

<https://www.thameswater.co.uk/about-us/responsibility/smarter-water-catchments>

The Chilterns Chalk Streams Project - hosted by the Chilterns Conservation Board - jointly hosts the River Chess Smarter Water Catchment (SWC) initiative, alongside the River Chess Association. The Chilterns Conservation Board and Chiltern Society are both key stakeholders and are leading the delivery of a number of actions within the plan.

See map of the catchment [here](#)

About the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

The Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is a landscape of remarkable beauty and distinctive character stretching from the River Thames in South Oxfordshire to Hitchin in Hertfordshire. The AONB extends over 833km² and is a home to over 80,000 people. A further 1.6 million people live within 8km.

The Chilterns is one of 34 AONBs in England part of the designated landscapes family which also includes National Parks. Its designation as an AONB in 1965 recognised that the Chiltern Hills contain some of the finest landscapes in the

country which are worthy of protection at the highest level. The Chilterns AONB is a living, working area of countryside whose character has been shaped through the interplay of people, geology, ecology and climate through the centuries.

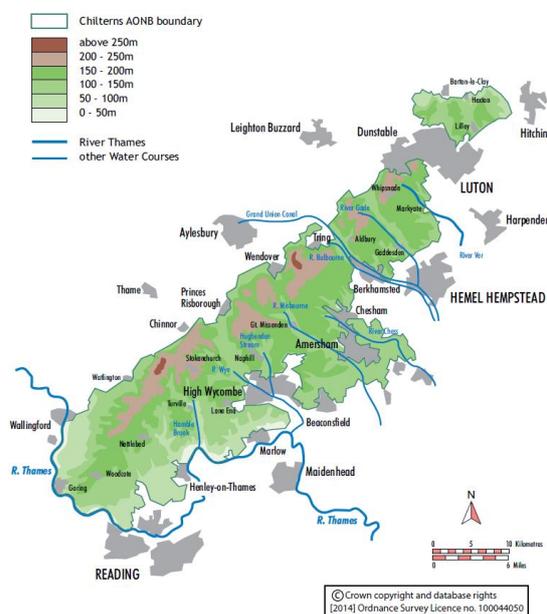
Chalk streams are a key feature of the Chilterns landscape. Nine major chalk streams flow through the AONB as well as numerous chalk springs which rise from the foot of the north-west facing scarp slope.

The Chilterns Conservation Board

The Chilterns Conservation Board (CCB) is an independent statutory body established by Parliamentary Order in 2004 to care for the Chilterns AONB. It is one of two conservation boards in the country as set out in the Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000. The CCB team is based in our office in Chinnor, Oxfordshire, and is currently largely working from home. We work with a wide range of people and organisations to care for and protect the area, and to encourage others to enjoy and understand it. Partnership working is key to how

we achieve our objectives. To find out more about the structure and work of the CCB, please visit: www.chilternsaonb.org.

The Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



Chilterns Chalk Streams Project

Led by the Chilterns Conservation Board, the Chilterns Chalk Streams Project is a partnership that was set up in 1997 to conserve and enhance all major chalk streams in the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and to encourage enjoyment and understanding of them. The project's partners include water companies, the

Environment Agency, local authorities and local conservation charities.

About our work with Citizen Scientists

The Chilterns Conservation Board is committed to supporting Citizen Science activities that collect data and investigate scientific questions to help restore natural processes, build better functioning river catchments and deliver multiple benefits for nature and landscape, for farming businesses and local communities.

Citizen Science activities that have been initiated in the first year of the Chess Smarter Water Catchments initiative include:

MudSpotter: a technique we are trialling which is designed to identify locations of fine sediment inputs to rivers

Modular River Survey: designed to assess the quality of physical habitat and function of river systems to sustain water-dependent wildlife

SmartRivers: a technique to identify the pollution pressures on fish using invertebrate monitoring

Our Citizen Science activities in the wider Chilterns AONB to date include 'Tracking the Impact' which involves landscape-scale monitoring of birds, butterflies and plants across 50 1km squares alongside bird, bird ringing, reptile and small mammal surveys across the 18 farms in the Central Chilterns Farm Cluster; identifying and interpreting archaeological features from LiDAR data through a Web Portal created for our 'Beacons of the Past' project, and training and supporting [ARMI riverfly](#) volunteers to monitor the health of Chilterns rivers by identifying and counting riverfly species.

We believe that, to have real and lasting impact, our engagement with Citizen Scientists should be sustained, supportive, and inclusive, embracing the multivocality of experience and ideas that Citizen Scientists bring to our projects.

HOW TO APPLY

To apply for this role, please download the **application form**, together with the equal opportunities monitoring **form**.

Completed forms should be emailed to: office@chilternsaonb.org

The closing date for applications is **9am, 8th August 2022**. Successful candidates will be invited to interview week commencing **15th August 2022**.

Applicants must be willing to undergo screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers.

For further information or informal discussion contact:

Kate Heppell, Chilterns Chalk Streams Project Officer, Chilterns Conservation Board
Tel. 01844 445017
kheppell@chilternsaonb.org

or

Allen Beechey, Chilterns Chalk Streams Project Officer, Chilterns Conservation Board
Tel. 07798 734662
abeechey@chilternsaonb.org

JOB DESCRIPTION

Citizen Science Co-ordinator Role

80% River Chess Smarter Water Catchment Initiative / 20% Chilterns Chalk Streams Project

Job title: Citizen Science Co-ordinator

Salary: £30,000 - £32,000 per annum depending on experience

Benefits: Excellent package including local authority pension and access to healthcare scheme

Hours: 37.5 hours per week. Fixed term contract until 31st March 2025.

Employer: Chilterns Conservation Board

Location: Chilterns Conservation Board Offices, Chinnor, Oxfordshire, OX39 4HA

Reports to: Kate Heppell, Chilterns Conservation Board

Responsible for: Citizen Science volunteers

Key accountabilities

1. Co-ordinating, supporting and facilitating volunteer Citizen Science activities in the River Chess, and other Chiltern Chalk Streams catchments.
2. Recruiting, inducting and training volunteer Citizen Scientists.
3. Maintaining and calibrating and quality assuring six high-frequency real-time water quality sensors in the River Chess.
4. Ensuring data is stored and collected appropriately in line with GDPR regulations.
5. Managing communications with volunteer Citizen Scientists (newsletters, webinars, in person events, data) including feedback of data.

6. Reviewing and managing data that has been generated, preliminary data analysis and visualisation (including on-line data dashboards).
7. Promote joined up approaches to citizen science engagement with stakeholders and project partners.
8. Identify opportunities to use datasets to greatest effect to support improvements to river status and inform catchment mitigation options.
9. Support and contribute to the work of River Chess SWC themes to ensure delivery of projects and milestones.
10. Work with volunteer Citizen Scientists to explore Citizen Science-generated questions.
11. Produce and present papers, reports, briefing notes, press releases, articles, guidance as necessary.
12. Contribute to mapping of multiple benefits across actions within the catchment plan.
13. Contribute to the work of the River Chess SWC steering group in reviewing the catchment plan on an annual basis.
14. Develop and nurture relationships with a wide range of stakeholders to raise the profile of the River Chess SWC and Chilterns Chalk Streams Project.
15. Produce written case studies of projects, short videos, and press releases and use material produced by partners to publicise successes through a variety of platforms including social media, newsletters, and partner websites.
16. Commission and manage contracts with external contractors as required.
17. Contribute to monitoring, evaluation and reporting on delivery outputs and impacts.
18. Work flexibly and responsively in line with organisational requirements appropriate to the post

This job description does not constitute a 'term and condition of employment'. It is provided only as a guide to assist the employee in the performance of their job and the job description is not intended to be an inflexible or finite list of tasks and may be varied from time to time after consultation/discussion with the post holder.

Person Specification

Requirements	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications	Educated to degree level or equivalent experience	Geography or Environmental Science qualification
Experience and knowledge	<p>Experience in recruiting and managing volunteers to assist with Citizen Science</p> <p>Knowledge and practical experience of GDPR regulations</p> <p>Experience using spreadsheets and graphics software for data analysis and data presentation</p> <p>Knowledge of GIS</p> <p>Experience of co-ordinating volunteer Citizen Science activities including regular feedback of knowledge that has been generated</p> <p>Project management, co-ordination and delivery experience</p> <p>Understanding of catchment-based approaches</p> <p>Understanding of natural flood management and approaches to address diffuse pollution.</p> <p>Knowledge of habitat assessment and management</p> <p>Experience in producing presentations and reports to a high standard</p>	<p>Experience of maintaining water quality sensors</p> <p>Experience of using open-source software such as R for data analysis and graphical presentation of data</p> <p>Experience of catchment management</p> <p>Good understanding of characteristic habitat and species of the Chilterns</p> <p>Experience of developing and maintaining collaborative partnerships</p>
Skills and abilities	<p>Considerable tact, strong relationship building and negotiating skills</p> <p>Ability to inspire trust and to facilitate collaboration</p> <p>Able to use initiative, to generate ideas and to motivate others.</p>	<p>Good field skills (geographical and ecological), particularly relating to lowland habitats (fluvial and terrestrial)</p> <p>Field experience of specific Citizen Science techniques such as Modular River Survey</p>

Other	<p>An organised approach to work and able to work under pressure of deadlines.</p> <p>Able to work independently, and apply problem-solving and influencing skills to achieve desired outcomes</p> <p>Excellent IT skills including Microsoft Office, ArcGIS and Teams</p> <p>Good project development skills, able to translate high level objectives into workable projects</p> <p>Ability to travel independently to all parts of the AONB.</p> <p>Willingness to work outside normal office hours on occasions.</p>	<p>A personal commitment to, and interest in, the Chilterns and its chalk streams</p>
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Summary of Terms and Conditions of Employment

1. **Employer:** Chilterns Conservation Board
2. **Location:** Chilterns Conservation Board, The Lodge, 90 Station Rd, Chinnor, Oxfordshire OX39 4HA
3. **Salary:** £30,000 - £32,000 per annum
4. **Duration of role:** Until 1st March 2025
5. **Working hours:** 37.5 hours per week. No overtime is payable but time off in lieu can be taken for out of hours work when previously authorised
6. **Leave:** The basic annual leave entitlement will be 26 days plus public / bank holidays pro rata
7. **Travel:** The post-holder may be required to travel throughout the AONB area and attend meetings elsewhere in the UK. The postholder will be entitled to claim travelling and subsistence expenses incurred in the course of work in accordance with the Chilterns Conservation Board's policy

8. **Pension:** The CCB is a member of the Buckinghamshire Council Local Government Pension ([Local Government Pension Scheme, Buckinghamshire Council](#))
9. **Probationary period:** Six months, during which the notice will be one month by either party. Subsequent to that, notice will increase to two months by either party. A full probationary review will be carried out in the fifth month.
10. All employees are expected to comply with the Chilterns Conservation Board's terms and conditions, rules, policies, procedures, codes of conduct, values, quality standards, authorisation processes, risk management, and other policies, in addition to relevant external regulations.

The CCB strives to be an equal opportunities employer and actively works on developing an inclusive working environment. We select candidates based on merit and ability, and seek ways to further diversify our organisation so that we represent and reflect different groups across society. We particularly welcome applications from candidates belonging to marginalised groups that have been under-represented, but not limited to: Black, Asian and ethnically diverse people, people who identify as LGBTQ+ and disabled people.

This summary is for information only and does not constitute a contractual agreement.