

## Job Description

Job title	Tree Officer
Directorate	PLACE : Regeneration, Culture and Environment
Division	Community and Culture – Planning Service
Range	MPR 4
Reports to	Senior Tree Officer

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### Main purpose of the job:

To support the Senior Tree Officer on shaping and delivering the council's strategy and approach to managing and enhancing Medway's Urban Forest.

To provide advice and guidance relevant to planning policy, the development management process, tree preservation orders, trees in conservation areas, high hedge complaints, and hedgerow removal notices.

To provide advice on urban forestry matters for the public, Members, council officers, and external agents on matters such as facilitating regeneration projects, tree planting initiatives, and the management of Medway's urban forest.

Support the Senior Tree Officer in representing the council in matters involving trees and woodland. For example, at appeals and in response to unauthorised works to trees, appearing as an expert witness where necessary.

Liaise with stakeholders in a way that promotes the [vision and values](#) of the Council.

### Accountabilities and outcomes:

Support the Specialist Team. Provide specialised urban forestry advice, and effectively communicate and negotiate with the public, council Members, officers, developers, agents and applicants on issues relating to tree establishment, pests and diseases, trees on development sites, high hedges and protected trees. To ensure advice is fit for purpose, and that it aligns with relevant legislation, standards, best practice, and the council's policies and procedures.

Contribute to the review and update of Medway's Tree Policy and preparing supporting guidance. Assist in the production of Medway's Climate Change Action Plan, Conservation Area Appraisals, Design Codes and Landscape Character Assessment. To shape and deliver the council's approach to managing and enhancing Medway's urban forest.

Provide pre-application advice for the development management process, and input into planning applications, and the drafting and discharge of planning conditions. To identify critical issues, improve proposals, provide information relating to validation requirements and reduce the need for conditions.

Contribute to the making, reviewing, and modifying Tree Preservation Orders, responding to objections and support letters, preparing reports, and attending committee meetings as needed. To ensure trees and woodland that make an important contribution to amenity are protected, and that tree preservation orders are relevant.

Respond to enquiries and pre-application advice requests for tree preservation orders and trees in conservation areas. Make recommendations on tree preservation order applications and respond to conservation area 211 notices. Prepare reports, attend committee meetings, and support the Senior Tree Officer in appeals and inquiries as needed. To raise standards of tree care and ensure compliance with relevant legislation, regulations, best practice and processes.

Contribute to the investigation of alleged breaches of tree preservation orders and conservation area controls, pursuing prosecution if expedient in the interest of amenity. To build trust and act as a deterrent. To protect the environment, safeguard biodiversity, maintain green spaces, and contribute to the overall health of our environment.

Support with regeneration projects and tree planting initiatives. Provide expert advice, and prepare, contribute to, or review specifications, project plans, planning briefs, masterplans, and strategies. To ensure projects and schemes have a positive outcome and enhance Medway's urban forest.

Respond to Forestry Commission consultations on Felling Licence applications for protected trees and woodland. Contribute towards the processing, procedures, and responses for High Hedge Complaints under Part 8 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003. Make recommendations, prepare reports for clearance under delegated powers, or refer to committee as necessary. To ensure compliance with relevant legislation, regulations and guidance and a consistent and fair adjudication over complaints.

Support and promote the implementation and adherence to Medway's Tree Policy, Climate Change Action Plan, and tree-related planning policies and guidance. To contribute to managing and enhancing Medway's urban forest, delivering positive environmental outcomes.

Participate in appropriate development and training opportunities. To maintain CPD, ensuring the postholder keeps abreast of relevant legislative and regulatory context, best practice and guidance relating to urban forestry.

At the discretion of the Head of Service, such other activities as may from time to time be agreed consistent with the nature of the job described above.

### Key Corporate Accountabilities:

To work with colleagues to achieve service plan objectives and targets.

To understand and actively keep up to date with GDPR responsibilities, including completing regular refresher training.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: all employees are required to act in such a way that safeguards the health and well-being of children and vulnerable adults.

To participate in the Performance Appraisal process and contribute to the identification of own and team development needs utilising the Career Development Framework.

To actively promote the Council's Fair Access, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and observe the standard of conduct which prevents discrimination taking place.

To ensure full compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Council's Health and Safety Policy and all locally agreed safe methods of work.

To fully understand and be aware of the commitment to the duty under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to prevent crime and disorder.

Promote the Medway Carbon Neutral by 2050 commitment; supporting the Council action plan to ensure we play our part in addressing the climate emergency.

### Organisation:

This role reports to the Senior Tree Officer.

The post holder will not be required to line manage others but may be required to direct, coordinate or train other employees.

The post holder will be required to liaise with all stakeholders both internal and external to the organisation.

### Working Style:

HYBRID - a flexible working arrangement whereby an employee can undertake their work either in the office and/or partially or mainly from home on a temporary or permanent basis.

## Person specification

All criteria at level A are considered essential unless stated otherwise.

### Qualifications

#### Level A

##### Professional Qualification

- A degree in Arboriculture (or equivalent)

Or

##### Professional Experience

- At least two years' experience of tree management matters in a planning environment.
- A minimum of 3 A Levels or other Level 3 qualification

#### Level B (in addition)

- Foundation Membership of the Arboricultural Association and with at least two years first-hand experience in a similar role at a local planning authority.

#### Level C (in addition)

- Evidence of continued professional development
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### Knowledge

#### Level A

- Knowledge of arboricultural best practice in a similar role.
- Knowledge of the science and practice of Arboriculture, with particular emphasis on trees in the context of development, tree preservation orders and trees in conservation areas.
- Knowledge of the legislative framework and guidance related to tree preservation orders and trees in conservation areas.
- A good understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion.
- A good understanding of GDPR legislation and best practice in relation to information sharing.

#### Level B (in addition)

- Knowledge of processing applications relating to Tree Preservation Orders, trees in conservation areas.
- Have specialist working knowledge and experience of British Standard 5837; British Standard 3998; British Standard 8545, and other industry guidance and best practice with regards to trees and development, tree planting/establishment, and tree management/pruning.
- Good level of understanding of local government operations and the planning system.
- Good understanding of council computer systems, including GIS.

#### Level C (in addition)

- Working knowledge of the science and practice of arboriculture, with particular emphasis on trees in the context of development, tree preservation orders and trees in conservation areas.
  - Working knowledge of the legislative framework, best practice guidance, and case law related to tree preservation orders, trees in conservation areas, High Hedges and Hedgerow Removal Notice.
  - Knowledge of legislative processes and Council liabilities in relation to Arboriculture.
  - LANTRA Professional Tree Inspection award.
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## Experience

### Level A

- Experience in tree care, management, and maintenance.
- Experience of working with initiative, and as part of a team.
- Experience of using Microsoft Office and/or other relevant IT applications.
- Experience of interpreting and analysing data from a variety of sources and systems, including manual and computer-based records.

### Level B (in addition)

- At least two years first-hand experience in a similar role at a local planning authority.
- Experience of recognising and responding appropriately to a range of observable bio-mechanical and biological tree features and identify and understand the consequences of a range of commonly seen pests, diseases, and disorders that affect tree condition.
- Experience in presenting and or providing expert advice to members.
- Working effectively with colleagues and external stakeholders.

### Level C (in addition)

- Meeting multiple deadlines, including some non-negotiable and managing own work.
- Demonstrable experience of contributing to change and listening to new ideas.
- Demonstrable experience of coping well under pressure and difficult situations, able to identify and act on own development needs.
- Experience of preparing of design sections in appeal statements and/or proofs of evidence.

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## Skills

### Level A

- Proficient in the use of Microsoft Word, Excel, Teams and Outlook.
- Uses appropriate language, style and methods depending on audience and the purpose of communication.
- Excellent listening skills, being able to extract relevant and important information.
- Can identify and prioritise customer needs.
- Adopts a professional approach to customers.
- Pays attention to details and able to focus on all areas of a task, no matter how small.
- Able to successfully handle competing demands effectively. To meet statutory deadlines and targets and maintain high standards at all times.
- Able to interpret and analyse data from a variety of sources and systems.
- Ability to measure scaled plans on paper and electronically.
- Full UK driving licence required but reasonable adjustments will be considered for those with a disability.
- Ability to undertake site visits which may include working conditions such as standing for extended periods of time, climbing, walking over uneven terrain and working in poor weather; with reasonable adjustments made to accommodate where possible.

### Level B (in addition)

- Proficient in the use of relevant design and GIS software for the analysis, interpretation, and production of work within the team.
- Able to communicate information and ideas clearly and effectively, both verbally and in writing.
- Negotiate and discuss issues with colleagues in the public and private sector.

- Ability to perform tasks professionally and with innovation; being adaptable to changing plans and priorities quickly to meet operational needs, committed, and motivated in approach.
- Analytical and problem-solving skills and the ability to evaluate varied planning applications.
- Able to work successfully within a multi-disciplinary team and ability to work in partnership with other internal services and external bodies to deliver effective co-ordinated services.

#### Level C (in addition)

- Able to illustrate concepts and ideas and critique proposals in both written and graphical form.
- Recognises priorities, weighs up different options and evaluates risks.
- Ability to work effectively and share information with colleagues at all levels, across a range of council services, treating all with respect.
- Takes responsibility for own time and effectiveness.
- Team working skills with the ability to inspire and encourage others.
- Ability to manage challenges situations.
- A demonstrable ability of being highly proactive in enhancing service delivery.
- Committed to personal development.
- Evaluates previous judgements in order to improve.
- Able to positively react to change and adapts to new situations quickly.