



Nature Connection & Recovery Project Officer

This post is funded by The National Lottery Climate Action Fund via the Eden Project.



CLOSING DATE:

12:00pm

Monday 27 July 2026

Ulster Wildlife
McClelland House
10 Heron Road
Belfast
BT3 9LE
recruit@ulsterwildlife.org
www.ulsterwildlife.org

ABOUT ULSTER WILDLIFE

We are Northern Ireland's largest local nature conservation charity, established in 1978. We're working to bring nature back on land and at sea, inspire people to take action for nature and climate, and play our part in ending climate and ecological emergencies. We manage 21 nature reserves; save species at risk from native oysters to hedgehogs; restore and connect habitats such as peatlands; influence government policy and empower people to stand up for nature. We are one of 46 independent Wildlife Trusts, collectively working across the UK to bring nature back. We are driven and supported by over 14,000 members.

Nature is in crisis and declining at rates unprecedented in human history. Ulster Wildlife has a plan to not only slow the loss of nature, but to actively reverse its decline.

Our Vision - A wilder future where people and nature are thriving together.

See – www.ulsterwildlife.org for more information about us and our important work.

NATURE CONNECTION & RECOVERY PROJECT

The Eden Project has appointed Ulster Wildlife to develop and deliver a community programme supported by The National Lottery Climate Action Fund. The programme called "**Nature Connection & Recovery**" will connect people with nature to boost health and wellbeing, while equipping communities with the skills and confidence to take climate-positive action locally.

Activities in the programme will provide ideas and inspiration to enable people to take planet positive action where they live and contribute to the climate challenge, especially people experiencing mental health difficulties.

The project activity will take place in **Ards & North Down** and is part of a UK-wide campaign to highlight the role of nature in solving the climate emergency and how nature connection and recovery can also support physical and mental health and well-being. The National campaign also includes projects in Cornwall, Liverpool, Morecambe, Dundee and Newport. These areas represent rural, urban and coastal communities across the UK. Delivery will ensure greater numbers of people participate in nature connection and recovery activities and a legacy of nature 'guardians' and facilitators are empowered to protect and help develop natural spaces locally.

The project will focus on greater access, engagement, co-design and involvement in nature recovery of people and communities experiencing poverty, discrimination and disadvantage as these are groups likely to be most impacted by environmental changes. Throughout the delivery of the project, we will commit to tackling inequities and identifying opportunities to increase engagement and meaningful participation in project related decision making from these communities.

A total of 225 people will be engaged over a two-year period and 10 Nature Recovery sites will be developed through this engagement. Ulster Wildlife has established links with the Ards & North Down 3rd Sector Hub who will support delivery of the programme with local people and community groups across the area.

RECRUITMENT PROCESS

APPLICATION FORM

Please download an application form from www.ulsterwildlife.org/jobs. The completed application and monitoring form must be received no later than **12 noon on Monday 27 July 2026** in Microsoft Word format (NOT PDF) via email to recruit@ulsterwildlife.org. Applications received after the deadline will not be accepted. CVs will not be accepted.

Under the section headed 'Role Requirements' it is essential that applicants clearly demonstrate through the use of examples how they meet the essential and/or desirable criteria required for the post. It is not acceptable to simply restate the criteria. The shortlisting panel will not make assumptions and if applicants do not demonstrate, through examples, how they meet the criteria they will not be shortlisted to the next stage of selection.

Ulster Wildlife reserves the right to interview only those who demonstrate on their application form that they fully meet the essential criteria and desirable criteria. Ulster Wildlife reserves the right to apply additional criteria to facilitate the shortlisting process where necessary.

All applicants will be contacted regarding the outcome of their application. However, regretfully due to limited resources, Ulster Wildlife cannot provide feedback regarding your application.

Ulster Wildlife makes employment decisions based solely on merit however any offer of employment is conditional on the receipt of two satisfactory references, certificates to support stated qualifications, and proof of the right to work in the UK. Please note Ulster Wildlife does not hold a Sponsor License.

Candidates who score above the minimum threshold during a recruitment selection process, but whose scores mean they are ranked lower than other successful candidates, may be kept on a reserve list for similar roles for a period of up to 12 months.

Canvassing will automatically disqualify.

Ulster Wildlife supports the principles of equality of opportunity. Ulster Wildlife's Safeguarding Commitment Statement can be found here www.ulsterwildlife.org/safeguarding-statement.

Ulster Wildlife is committed to protecting the privacy and security of your personal information. You can read about how and why Ulster Wildlife uses your personal information here www.ulsterwildlife.org/privacy-notice.

INTERVIEW

Following shortlisting successful candidates will be invited to a face-to-face interview. The interviews are planned for **Wednesday 12 August 2026**

The interview will consist of a presentation or job-related task (which will be relayed to candidates following successful shortlisting) followed by a set of interview questions asked by a panel of Ulster Wildlife staff.

If you have any questions about the role or assessment process, please contact us at: recruit@ulsterwildlife.org or call 07485 329716.



JOB DESCRIPTION

Role:	Nature Connection & Recovery Officer
Salary:	£29,697 - £32,016. Access to employer's contributory pension scheme - maximum 10% per annum
Hours:	37.5 hours per week. Flexible working hours will be required including evening and weekend work.
Location:	Ulster Wildlife Offices, 10 Heron Road, Belfast, BT3 9LE with travel across the Ards and North Down Council Area. A combination of office and home working will be possible along with working out in the community, delivering on the ground. This role will require lone working.
Contract:	18 month fixed term contract with potential for renewal (subject to funding). This post is subject to a 6-month probationary period.
Leave:	24 days per annum plus 12 days statutory holidays.
Reporting to:	Community Engagement Manager.
Other benefits:	Health cash-back plan, flexi-time system and onsite parking.

OVERVIEW

The Nature Connection & Recovery Officer will be a talented programme co-ordinator and community organiser. They will be highly personable, passionate and organised, and equally comfortable building relationships in communities as they are engaging with organisations and project partners. The postholder will be committed to supporting community powered change and facilitating local people to empower themselves to act for nature. They will also be skilled in utilising the environment as a focus for bringing people together from different communities, identities and traditions.

DUTIES OF THE POST

Community Engagement

- Scope, develop and facilitate work within and between communities across the Ards & North Down Council area. This will involve overseeing community liaisons, maintaining strong links with community leaders and champions and enabling community leaders to share learning.
- Work with community organisations within the areas of focus and facilitate community conversations to co-design innovative actions for nature's recovery within shared green spaces.
- Work with project partners to plan and deliver a series of short-term nature connections groups which focus on improving wellbeing through connection to nature and small-scale nature recovery activities. Groups are likely to be about 6 weeks in duration and no longer than 12 weeks.
- The creation of 10 nature recovery 'demonstrator' sites where participants have been supported to take nature and climate positive action.
- Build a shared network of stakeholders and relationships with other community organisations to support the project.

- Build positive relationships between Ulster Wildlife and other similar community-based organisations to support objectives, reach wider and more diverse audiences, and promote effective partnership working.
- Act as main point of contact for community enquiries regarding the programme.
- Work with project partners to establish a 'Learning Network' to facilitate the sharing of knowledge, skills and experience.

Project Coordination and Delivery

- Ensure positive relationships with funders and partners.
- Co-ordinate project partnership meetings.
- Achieve key project targets and outcomes - development of 10 community-led Nature Recovery sites, involving at least 225 people and a minimum of 10 community and voluntary groups engaged.
- Work with the Community Engagement Manager to ensure budget and associated spending is tracked effectively and actively explore funding opportunities to extend the capacity and impact of the project.

Evaluation and Data Collection

- Contribute to the monitoring and evaluation framework for the project, ensuring all monitoring and evaluation requirements are completed and records managed securely and effectively.
- Comply with all funder requirements including communications and marketing, participation monitoring, progress reports monthly update meetings and financial claims.
- Encourage and support participants, as required, to complete online wellbeing questionnaires and demographic information required to support their participation and demonstrate project impact.
- To provide short, anonymised case studies and (consented) photographs of activities and visible changes in natural spaces, as a result of activities.
- To work with Eden Project and other partners including external evaluators and National Lottery Community Fund to capture the impact of the programme and to relay the national campaigns locally.

Supervise People

- To supervise, support and mentor project volunteers.
- Maintain positive working relationships with a range of relevant stakeholders including community representatives, local authority staff and wider supporters.

ORGANISATION-WIDE RESPONSIBILITIES OF POST

While every member of staff has their own specific tasks and duties to perform on a day-to-day basis, there are also a number of additional areas of work that you will be expected to take part in for the overall development and delivery of the organisation's aims. These include:

- Participation in the development and implementation of the Ulster Wildlife's overall strategy and operational plan.
- Play a proactive and positive role in Ulster Wildlife's team.
- Develop strategic partnerships with other organisations.
- Support the fundraising activities of the organisation.
- Adhere to the policies and practices of Ulster Wildlife at all times and to respect the policies and practices of project partners.
- Identify and implement Learning & Development processes.
- Co-operate with and support volunteers and where appropriate supervise them.
- Participate in staff meetings.

- Ensure that contact with others is of a style and quality consistent with Ulster Wildlife's ethos.
- Respond to internal and external requests for advice and information

No job description can cover every issue which may arise and subsequently the post-holder may be expected to carry out other duties broadly consistent with those itemised above.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Essential Criteria

1. A degree level qualification in a relevant subject* and 1 year relevant experience working with community organisations and nature conservation OR 3 years relevant experience working with community organisations and nature conservation.
2. A keen interest and knowledge of nature and wildlife conservation issues.
3. An ability to communicate effectively, both written and verbal – effective presentation skills and the ability to converse with a diverse range of people at all levels.
4. Experience of organising and delivering training and other forms of support for communities.
5. Experience of implementing health and safety policies and procedures, including undertaking risk assessments.
6. Effective organisational skills to include the ability to manage and prioritise workloads and meet deadlines.
7. Experience of monitoring and evaluation, project reporting and budget tracking.
8. An ability to work independently without direct supervision.
9. Strong digital skills, including a solid understanding of Microsoft Office and the ability to adapt to new technologies, including AI-based tools.
10. Have access to transport for business purposes which will enable the fulfilment of the requirements of the post.
11. Able to work hours outside of standard office hours when required to fulfil the duties of this post (e.g. evenings and weekend working – for which time off in lieu will be given).

Desirable Criteria

1. Experience of working in the voluntary/charity sector.
2. Experience of supporting community organisations to carry out local environmental improvement projects.
3. Experience of facilitating community relations work and developing positive cross community engagement.
4. Knowledge and experience of communities across Ards & North Down Council area.
5. Experience of producing material for social media.

* Relevant subjects include Environmental Biology/studies, Geography, Biological Science, Environmental Management, Youth and Community Development, Health and Wellbeing.

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