

## Job Description: East Lammermuir Catchment Restoration Development Officer

---

*Fixed term · 4 days per week · circa 11 months*

<b>Responsible to</b>	Dr Philip Revell, Sustaining Dunbar
<b>Working with</b>	Forth Rivers Trust (technical lead); East Lammermuir landowners and land managers; energy developers and other businesses
<b>Location</b>	Primarily East Lammermuir / Dunbar area, with some remote working
<b>Salary</b>	In the range £35-£40k pro rata depending on experience. Or equivalent freelance day rate.
<b>Contract</b>	Fixed term, to end of March 2027, with potential extension into delivery phase subject to funding

### Background

Sustaining Dunbar, in partnership with Forth Rivers Trust (FRT), has secured development phase funding to prepare detailed, shovel-ready nature restoration plans for the Dry Burn and Spott Burn catchments in East Lammermuir. This project is part of a wider, long-term ambition to deliver [landscape-scale nature recovery](#) across East Lammermuir from summit to sea.

The development phase will identify and design a portfolio of restoration interventions — riparian tree planting, natural flood management measures, habitat connectivity improvements, and invasive species control — working across approximately 22 landholdings in the two catchments. The technical design work will be led by FRT. The role of this post is to make that technical work possible: by building the relationships with landowners and land managers that underpin it, and by coordinating the programme so that individual work packages fit together coherently across land boundaries.

The offer to landowners is deliberately simple: we will do the planning work, navigate the relevant processes, and present clear options — with no obligation to proceed until delivery funding is in place. This will require someone who can hold both the relationship and the coordination demands of the role simultaneously.

### Purpose of the Role

To coordinate this next phase of the project and act as the primary point of contact for landowners and land managers across the Dry Burn and Spott Burn catchments, building the trust and relationships necessary to develop coherent, spatially connected restoration work packages, and to coordinate these with Forth Rivers Trust so as to develop a portfolio of credible and fundable habitat enhancement and restoration projects.

### Key Responsibilities

#### Landowner engagement and relationship management

- Map and confirm ownership and tenure across both catchments, building on work already undertaken during the preceding Neighbourhood Ecosystem Fund scoping project.
- Establish contact with all key landholdings, agree preferred communication routes, and conduct one-to-one meetings with landowners, tenant farmers, and agents.

- Present the project offer clearly and honestly, managing expectations about timescales, obligations, and the distinction between the development and delivery phases.
- Maintain a live stakeholder log, tracking engagement status, attitudes, and any constraints or opportunities identified.
- Organise and facilitate peer-to-peer farm and site visits, drawing on examples from within and outwith East Lammermuir to build landowner confidence and buy-in.
- Progress engagement through to draft Memoranda of Understanding or Heads of Terms with key landholders, capturing scope, access, data sharing, and maintenance intent.

### **Work package coordination**

- Work closely with FRT's Development Lead to ensure that restoration opportunities identified through landowner engagement are translated into spatially explicit, costed plans that connect coherently across land boundaries.
- Coordinate the sequencing of site visits, surveys, and design work between landowners and FRT, ensuring that the technical programme remains on track.
- Maintain an overview of the emerging portfolio of work packages, identifying gaps, overlaps, and dependencies.
- Ensure that consents, licensing requirements, and funding eligibility considerations are flagged early and built into individual work package designs.

### **Programme management and reporting**

- Maintain the project risk register and flag emerging risks to the steering group.
- Prepare clear, concise progress updates for the steering group (monthly) and wider advisory group (quarterly).
- Support preparation of the final development report and delivery bid pack, ensuring that landowner agreements, work package designs, and monitoring provisions are consolidated accurately.
- Ensure all activities comply with funder procurement and reporting requirements.

### **Community and stakeholder engagement**

- Liaise with NatureScot, the ELCAN Biodiversity Collective, East Lothian Biodiversity Partnership, East Lothian Council Biodiversity Officer and ranger service, East Lammermuir and Dunbar Community Councils, Balanced Horizon and other relevant community bodies to ensure the project reflects and supports the wider landscape recovery agenda.
- Contribute to public-facing communications about the project as required.

### **Person Specification**

The competency framework below distinguishes between essential (E) and desirable (D) criteria. Assessment will be based on application, interview, and where appropriate a short practical exercise.

Competency	What we are looking for
<b>Landowner and rural community engagement (E)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrable experience of working directly with farmers, landowners, or rural land managers, ideally in an agri-environment, river restoration, or conservation context.</li> <li>• Able to build trust with people who are cautious about engagement, without overselling or rushing the relationship.</li> <li>• Understands the pressures and priorities of farm businesses and land management operations — can have a credible conversation without needing to be the technical expert.</li> <li>• Comfortable with slow progress and non-linear engagement; persistent without being pushy.</li> </ul>
<b>Technical literacy in land management and nature restoration (E)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sufficient knowledge of agri-environment, forestry, and/or river restoration practice to understand the substance of what is being proposed and communicate it clearly to non-specialists.</li> <li>• Able to interpret technical outputs from ecologists and hydrologists and translate them into accessible language for landowners.</li> <li>• Familiarity with relevant funding mechanisms — NRF, AECS, FGS — and an understanding of eligibility boundaries, even if not a funding specialist.</li> </ul>
<b>Coordination and programme management (E)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience of coordinating multi-partner or multi-site programmes, keeping track of multiple workstreams simultaneously.</li> <li>• Methodical and organised; maintains clear records and flags issues early.</li> <li>• Able to work independently and manage their own time effectively across a dispersed, field-based programme.</li> </ul>
<b>Communication and interpersonal skills (E)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent written and verbal communication, able to adjust register for farmers, community groups, technical partners, and funders.</li> <li>• Confident facilitator of small group meetings and farm visits.</li> <li>• Honest and direct; does not over-promise.</li> </ul>
<b>GIS and data management (D)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic familiarity with GIS mapping tools sufficient to contribute to spatial work package mapping.</li> <li>• Able to manage and maintain structured datasets and stakeholder records.</li> </ul>
<b>Knowledge of East Lothian / East Lammermuir context (D)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing familiarity with the farming and landowning community of East Lothian, or with the ecological and landscape context of the area.</li> <li>• Connections to relevant local networks an advantage.</li> </ul>

## Working Arrangements

This is a fixed-term post to the end of March 2027, working four days per week. The post will be home-based with regular field visits across East Lammermuir and the Dry Burn and Spott Burn catchments in particular. Attendance at steering group and advisory group meetings is likely to require occasional evening and weekend working. Some travel outwith East Lammermuir will be required eg. for peer-to-peer farm visits.

The post-holder will work closely with the Sustaining Dunbar project steering group and with FRT's Development Lead. Weekly coordination with FRT is expected. The post reports to Philip Revell, Trustee, Sustaining Dunbar.

Subject to successful delivery of the development phase and the securing of delivery phase funding, there is an intention to extend the post into the delivery phase. This cannot be guaranteed at the point of appointment.

## How to Apply

Please submit a CV and a covering letter of no more than two pages addressing the essential competencies in the person specification, with reference to specific relevant experience. Applications should be sent to [philip@sustainingdunbar.org](mailto:philip@sustainingdunbar.org) (with 'Catchment Development Officer' in the subject line) by 5pm on Sunday 19th April, 2026.

Sustaining Dunbar is committed to fair and open recruitment. We welcome applications from candidates with diverse backgrounds and experience. We are particularly keen to hear from candidates with direct experience of working with farming or landowning communities in a conservation or land management context. We are happy to discuss a job share arrangement.