

Job Description



1 Job details

Job title:	National Park Access Ranger (Fixed-term for three years)
Team:	Ranger
Directorate:	Recreation Management and Learning
Post number:	Z00191
Hours per week:	37
Grade:	Band 6
Base:	Lymington Town Hall, Lymington
Accountable to:	Lead Ranger
Responsible for:	Volunteers and apprentices assisting with ranger duties
Indirectly responsible for:	None
Budget Responsible Officer (BRO):	No
Car user:	Casual user – Use of pool van and vehicles
Politically restricted:	No
Does this post involve working with children and/or vulnerable people?	No
Membership of professional body required:	No
Key liaisons: New Forest National Park Authority staff, Natural England, New Forest Access Forum, local highway authorities and wildlife conservation organisations, local education providers, recreation user groups and forums, visitor attractions, local community groups and members of the public, volunteers, tourism businesses, landowners, and other national parks	

2 Role summary

2.1 The post has four main functions:

- Manage the installation of infrastructure relating to the England Coast Path within the New Forest National Park.
- Develop local access projects that increase the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by local people and visitors whilst protecting the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area.
- Lead the delivery of the NPA's statutory Access Authority responsibilities in respect of the Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000, in particular relating to new open access land created through the England Coast Path and supporting the New Forest Access Forum.
- Assisting in the development and implementation of the New Forest Recreation Management Strategy.

3 Main duties and responsibilities

3.1 England Coast Path and open access land

In liaison with the Lead Ranger, project manage the installation of new infrastructure required for the new England Coast Path (approximately £250k-300k capital works) including:

- developing specifications for new infrastructure (e.g. gates, fencing, boardwalk) and working with specialists to commission more complex infrastructure;
- liaising with external contractors and estate workers to install the infrastructure, and where cost effective, directly deliver some practical work with support from other Rangers or volunteers (e.g. installing fingerposts, vegetation management);
- providing technical support to the finance and procurement team in the procurement of contractors and ensuring contracted work is completed to a high quality standard.

Ensure that the England Coast Path is well-managed in perpetuity by:

- assisting in the development of a plan for the ongoing maintenance and management of the route within the National Park. (This may involve a new Trail Partnership of Access Authorities along the South Coast);
- assisting colleagues in the NPA's Communications team and Natural England in the promotion of the England Coast Path, ensuring key 'caring for' messages are included;
- carrying out basic market research and visitor surveys to inform recommendations for improved management of the England Coast Path;
- providing advice to landowners affected by open access land under the CRoW Act 2000;
- if required, processing applications, and making non-application directions, for restrictions and exclusions relating to open access land along the coast – or open country access land elsewhere in the National Park.

3.2 Countryside access projects

Play a proactive role in raising the standard of public rights of way within the National Park to reflect public expectations in this special place, by:

- working with local highway authorities, communities and volunteers to develop and implement new capital projects;
- working with the Lead Ranger and Grants Officer in the development of grant applications to secure external funding for access projects;
- promoting high standards of access furniture and infrastructure amongst organisations involved in recreation management in the New Forest.

3.3 New Forest Access Forum

- Provide advice and support the delivery of the New Forest Access Forum, with assistance from the Forum Secretary and colleagues at Hampshire County Council.

3.4 Recreation Management Strategy

- Support the Head of Recreation Management and Learning, and partners involved in the Recreation Management Strategy Steering Group in the development and delivery of actions within the New Forest Recreation Management Strategy.
- Support the development of consultation activities and answer public enquiries relating to the management of recreation in the New Forest.

3.5 Other duties

- Recruit, supervise and develop volunteers assisting with practical countryside access works.
- Ensure any equipment used for practical tasks is kept in a good condition, by ensuring they are well maintained, used and stored correctly and safely.
- Follow all health and safety and lone working procedures, including carrying out site and task risk assessments and administering first aid where necessary.
- Attend and contribute to the National Parks UK Access Officers working group.
- Develop and maintain up-to-date knowledge of the New Forest and countryside access legislation to enable questions to be dealt with appropriately and to promote a positive and professional image of partnership work.

4 Problem solving

- 4.1 A commitment to the highest standards of customer care, and to the achievement of professional, timescale and financial targets will often require an appropriate prioritisation of work and the need to manage a diverse workload in an effective manner.
- 4.2 The post holder will be required to develop new procedures and practices only within their specific area of responsibility. More complex problems will be referred to the line manager and if necessary external specialist advice can be sought.

5 Decision making

- 5.1 Targets and objectives will be set in liaison with the line manager taking into account any national targets or statutory duties e.g. implementation of England Coast Path 2020 deadline.
- 5.2 The post holder will be required to act on his/her own initiative and to take day-to-day decisions that may affect the Authority's relationship with land owners and the Authority's reputation for managing public access.
- 5.3 The postholder will refer decisions outside of the post holder's own knowledge and responsibility to the line manager, or in their absence to other managers.

6 Operational responsibility

- 6.1 Responsibility for ensuring NPA-owned access facilities are installed and maintained to a high standard.
- 6.2 Responsibility for volunteers and apprentices assisting with countryside access projects.
- 6.3 Contribute to corporate plans, developing improvements and promoting the Authority's delivery of countryside access projects.
- 6.4 There may be access to sensitive and confidential information on some projects.

7 Communication

- 7.1 Excellent communication skills both oral and written are required as is a degree of political sensitivity when dealing with local New Forest user groups.
- 7.2 The post holder will be skilled in communicating to a wide range of audiences communicating agreed policies not personal views at all times.
- 7.3 Both internal and external communications will be essential to this post. The post holder will be expected to work with a wide range of staff throughout the Authority and

with a diverse range of partners including Authority members, New Forest Access Forum, landowners, town and parish councils, local businesses, local community groups, government officials, professional representatives, the media and the general public.

- 7.4 The post will require the skills to diplomatically negotiate with the public, partners, landowners, objectors and other staff. 30% internal / 70% external communication.

8 Working conditions

- 8.1 The post holder will work from an office base but will be required to spend much of his/her time elsewhere within and just outside the boundary of the National Park.
- 8.2 At times, there will be a requirement to work outside normal office hours (early or late in the day and at weekends) in order to meet the needs of the job.
- 8.3 The position may involve personal contact with people with differing views to the Authority's policies.
- 8.4 Requires some lone-working in relatively remote locations; woodlands, heathland and the coast.

9 General

- 9.1 The post holder must at all times carry out his/her responsibilities with due regard to Authority policy and procedures.
- 9.2 All staff have a responsibility to participate in the Authority Appraisal Scheme and to contribute to their own development, and the development of any staff they appraise or are responsible for.

10 Confidentiality

- 10.1 In the course of your employment you will have access to confidential information relating to Authority business. You are required to exercise due consideration in the way you use such information and should not act in any way prejudicial to the Authority's interests. Information which may be included in the category which requires extra consideration covers both access to and the general business of the Authority and information regarding individuals. If you are in any doubt regarding the use of information in the pursuit of your duties you should seek advice from your manager before communicating such information to any third party.

11 Health and safety

- 11.1 Employees must be aware of the responsibility placed on them under the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) to maintain a healthy and safe working environment for both staff and visitors. Employees also have a duty to observe obligation under the Authority and departmental Health and Safety policies, and to maintain awareness of safe practices and risk assessment.

12 Financial regulations

- 12.1 All staff are responsible for security of the property of the Authority, avoiding loss or damage of property, and being economical and efficient in the use of resources. Staff should conform with the requirements of the Authority's financial procedures.

13 Job description agreement

- 13.1 The above Job Description is not intended to be exhaustive, the duties and responsibilities may therefore vary over time according to the changing needs of the service.

Person Specification

National Park Access Ranger

Criteria	Essential	Desirable	Assessed by
Education / qualifications			
A degree or HND in countryside management or related discipline or equivalent qualification/experience	Y		A
Have or be prepared to obtain a first aid certificate	Y		A / I
Valid driving license	Y		A
Experience			
Demonstrable experience in a similar role	Y		A / I
Experience of project management	Y		A / I
Practical experience of designing and implementing access projects	Y		A / I / T
Practical experience constructing and maintaining access infrastructure e.g. gates, fingerposts, fencing, vegetation management, surfacing.	Y		A / I / T
Experience of visitor management within a National Park or countryside site		Y	A / I
Experience of working with landowners, stakeholders and partner organisations from the public, private and/or voluntary sectors	Y		A / I
Knowledge			
Knowledge of Countryside Access legislation e.g. Countryside and Rights of Way Act, Marine & Coastal Access Act	Y		A / I
Knowledge of the natural and cultural heritage of the National Park		Y	A / I
Knowledge of health and safety issues including risk assessments in countryside locations	Y		A / I

Criteria	Essential	Desirable	Assessed by
Skills			
Strong communication, inter-personal and presentation skills. Able to communicate in a way which is easily understood and assists in promoting the key messages of the National Park Authority and partners	Y		A / I
Highly motivated and able to work with minimal supervision with the ability to manage time and identify the resources needed to deliver work to deadlines.	Y		A / I
Good organisational skills and an ability to effectively manage a workload which combines both reactive work and planned initiatives.	Y		A / I
Good IT skills and knowledge of current systems including GIS, Microsoft (Word, Excel, Outlook) with the ability to adapt to new systems	Y		A
Proven ability to manage conflicting demands and resolve issues	Y		A / I
Valid trailer licence		Y	A
Impact and attributes			
Keen team worker, who can share ideas and information with colleagues and seek input to solve problems	Y		A / I
Ability to understand the need to treat sensitive information confidentially	Y		A / I
Public and political awareness in sensitive situations	Y		A / I

Evidence assessed by key:

- A = Application form
- I = Interview
- T = Testing / assessment