

Essex Wildlife Trust

Senior Conservation Grazing Officer

Residential Position | Blue House Farm | North Fambridge | Essex



Essex Wildlife Trust



Welcome to Blue House Farm nature reserve

Welcome to Blue House Farm nature reserve, where freshwater grazing marsh meels, mudflats and saltmarsh, and seasonal wildlife spectacles are to be witnessed.

There are two trails around the reserve. For a wooded walk, follow the Orange Way Trail and overlook the River Crouch. Hear the piping calls of wading birds including through mudflats or catch a glimpse of marsh harriers scanning the tundra for their next meal. For a more open view, the sound of forest geese calling and landing fills the air. Arriving in their thousands, this is a rewarding sight.

For a shorter walk, follow the Woodland Trail into the heart of the coastal reserve. In spring, meadow plants tower high in the air and flowers brave winter through grasslands. Listen for the chirp of a water vole as they lumber in and out of ditches. Check out, look for the heart-shaped leaf of a graceful dam self.

Help us keep Blue House Farm special by becoming a member of Essex Wildlife Trust today.

Love Essex - Love Wildlife



Key	
Blue Way	Orange Way
Woodland Trail	Water Vole
Marsh Harrier	Wading Birds
Geese	Woodland
Geese	Woodland
Geese	Woodland



We are the county's leading conservation charity, committed to protecting wildlife and inspiring a lifelong love of nature.

Our climate is in crisis and nature needs our help. Together we can protect the future. Join us.

www.essexwt.org.uk



Essex Wildlife Trust



Essex
Wildlife Trust

We have an opportunity for a suitably qualified grazer and passionate ecologist to join us in this residential role, responsible for the management of the Trust's livestock and grazing-related infrastructure and reserve at our Blue House Farm site, and other grazing areas across Essex.

About Essex Wildlife Trust

We are the County's leading nature conservation charity, committed to protecting wildlife and inspiring a lifelong love of nature and are one of the largest Wildlife Trusts in the UK managing over 3,000ha.

This is the most important decade in the history of nature conservation and an exciting time to be joining us. If we are to tackle the climate crisis and the ecological crisis, we need the best people to rally around environmental protection.

Our values are Impactful, Collaborative, United and Proactive.

The Role

The Senior Conservation Grazing Officer is responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the Trust's county-wide grazing programme across its nature reserves and Nature Discovery Parks. The postholder will assist the Grazing Manager in ensuring the annual completion of each nature reserve's grazing plan and provide good day-to-day liaison with the Ranger teams and volunteer wardens throughout the grazing season.

Alongside this county-wide grazing programme support, the post holder is the lead officer for the grazing infrastructure and grazing oversight at two large reserves, Blue House Farm (287ha) and Langdon Hills Nature Reserve (181ha). The latter site is a complex SSSI grassland, scrub and woodland mosaic with open public access, which is a priority for the introduction of fenceless grazing. Liaising with the Langdon Hills Ranger team, the post holder is responsible for the improvement of the Reserve's grazing infrastructure through capital grant applications. At Blue House Farm Nature Reserve, in addition to the grazing operation, the post holder will promote a safe and welcoming environment for visitors, in liaison with the Senior Ranger (South Essex).

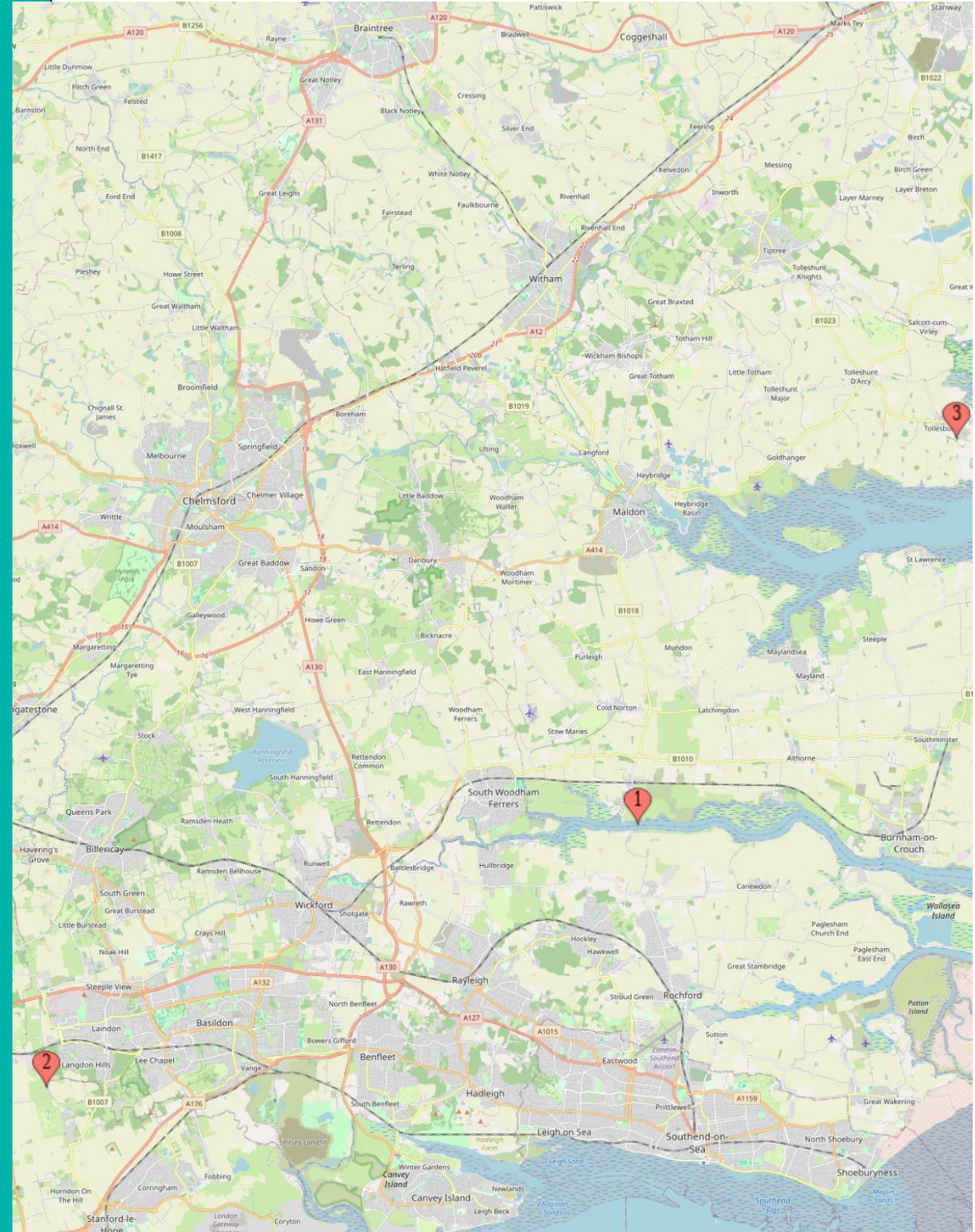
The role will assist the Grazing Manager with the management of the health and welfare of the in-house livestock throughout the year, in line with the 'five freedoms', and also the management of the Blue House Farm infrastructure, the grazing machinery and all equipment. The postholder will also assist the Conservation Grazing Manager, as and when required, in the oversight and management of the Trust's grazing licensees on other nature reserves.



Blue House Farm Nature Reserve (1)

Blue House Farm in North Fambridge, nestled along the picturesque River Crouch, embodies a blend of ecology, wildlife conservation, and sustainable land management. Rich in biodiversity, this haven serves as a sanctuary for a plethora of wildlife species. The vast fields provide essential grazing grounds for livestock, contributing to the preservation of traditional farming practices while promoting natural habitat diversity.

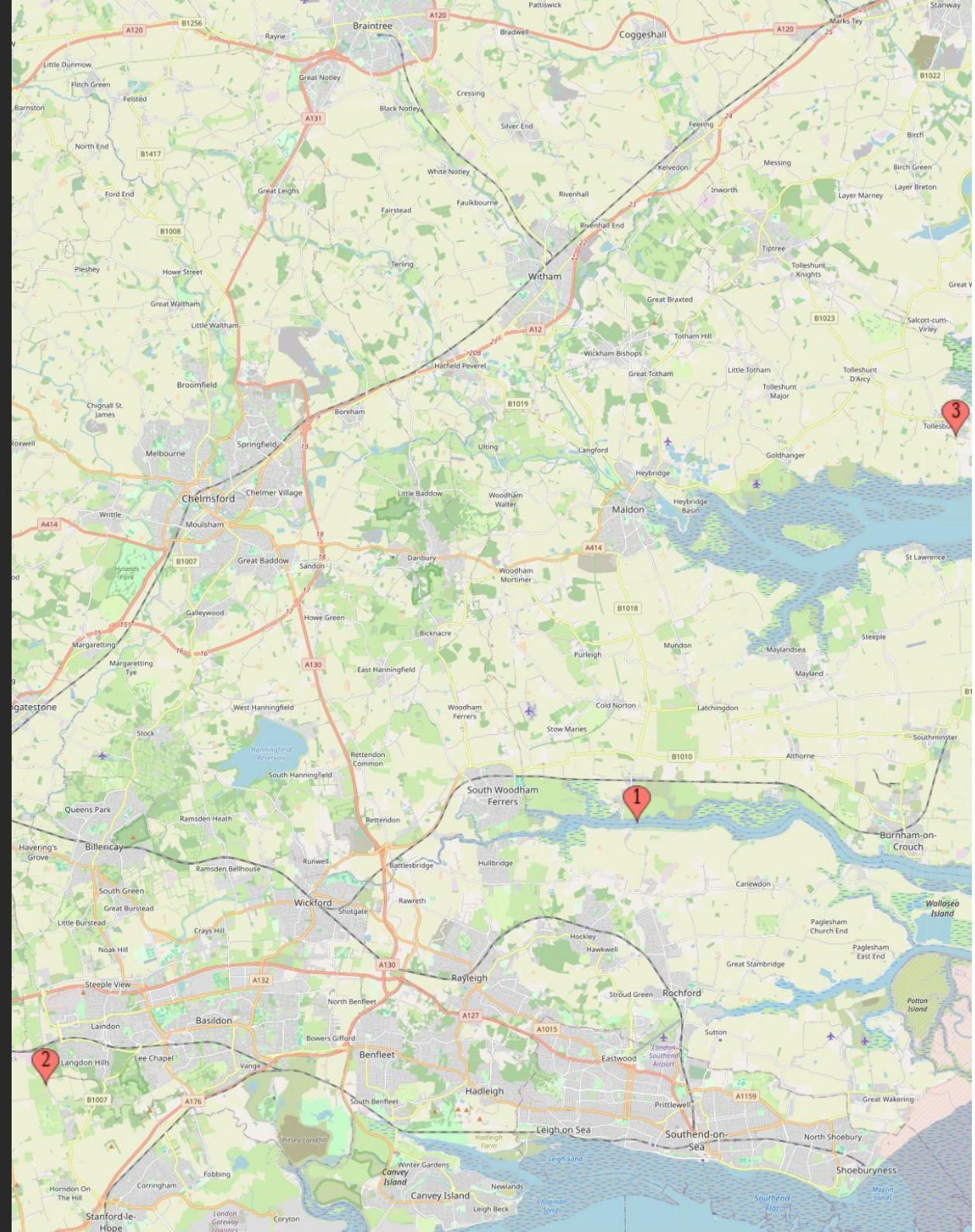
Here, amidst the rolling meadows and flourishing hedgerows, a symphony of life thrives, with native plants and animals. From the gentle hum of bees pollinating vibrant wildflowers to the graceful flight of birds soaring overhead, every corner of Blue House Farm teems with vitality. Through meticulous stewardship, this idyllic estate not only sustains local wildlife populations but also fosters a deep connection between people and the natural world, ensuring a legacy of conservation for generations to come.



Langdon Hills (2)

Langdon Hills in Essex stands as a testament to the harmonious coexistence between wildlife and sustainable land management practices, with grazing playing a pivotal role in shaping its unique ecosystem. Traditional grazing methods not only maintains the lush grasslands but also promotes the proliferation of wildflowers, crucial for pollinators like bees and butterflies.

The careful rotation of livestock ensures that vegetation remains at optimal levels, preventing the dominance of invasive species and promoting the growth of native flora. This delicate balance attracts a diverse array of wildlife, from small mammals like field voles to magnificent birds of prey such as the common kestrel. Amidst the gently rolling hills and verdant pastures, Langdon Hills stands as a model of conservation where grazing serves not only as a tool for habitat management but also as a cornerstone of ecological vitality.

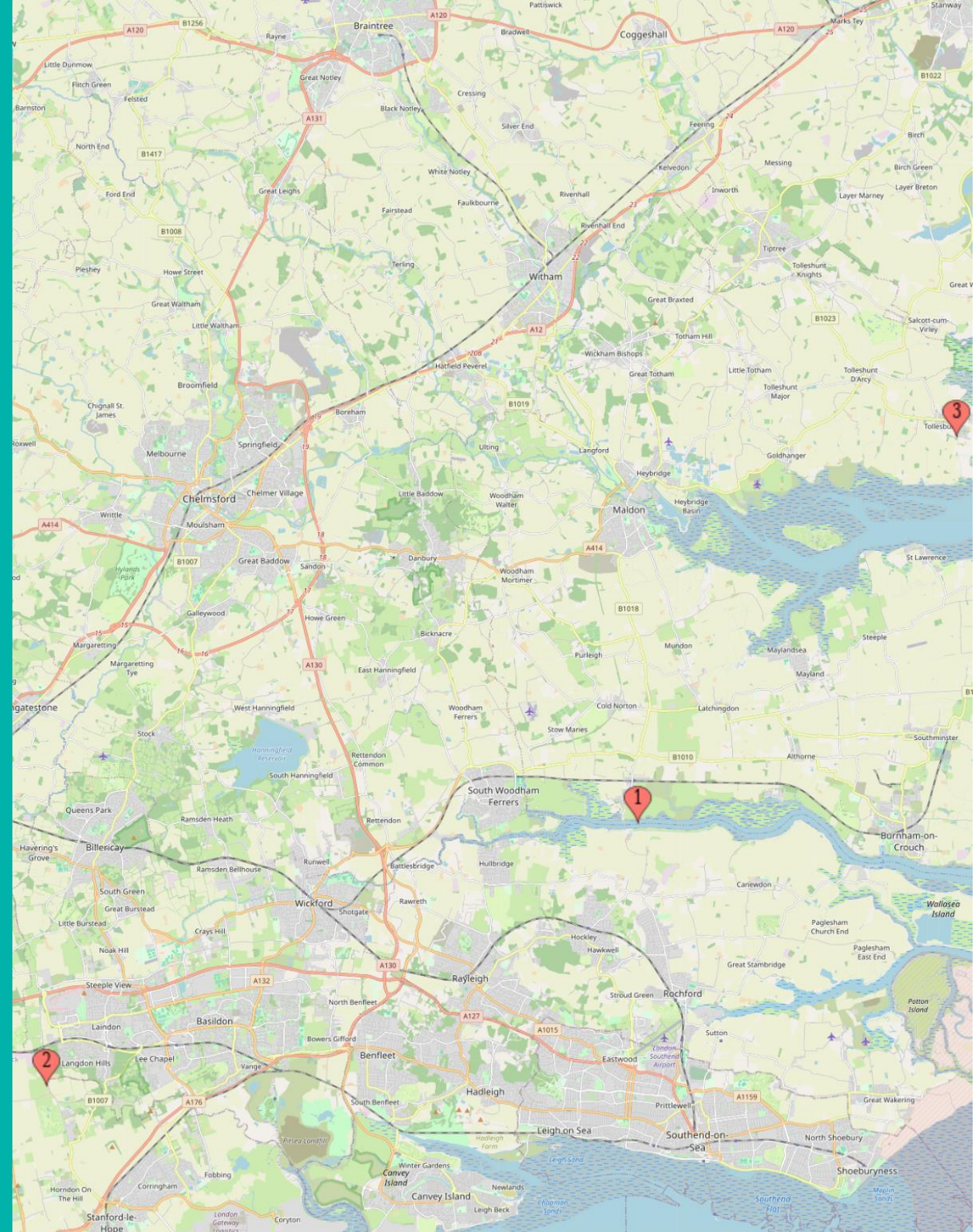


Tollesbury Wick Nature Reserve (3)

This coastal freshwater marsh nature reserve has been worked for decades by traditional methods to help wildlife, so it now boasts a wonderful diversity of species. Clouded Yellow butterflies flutter above the grassland in summer, noisy Brent Geese gather on the grassland in winter and the majestic Marsh Harrier soars above, coming to roost at dusk.

Essex Wildlife Trust's flying flock of sheep and cattle are crucial in helping to manage this freshwater grazing marsh in the most sustainable way possible.

The rough pasture is also perfect habitat for small mammals such as Field Voles and Pygmy Shrews, which makes this reserve the ideal hunting ground for numerous birds of prey species.









Grazing and Essex

Grazing in Essex plays a critical role in maintaining the region's landscapes and biodiversity. Essex boasts a diverse range of habitats including grasslands, woodlands, wetlands and coastal areas. Grazing animals such as cattle, sheep and ponies are often employed as an effective tool for habitat management in these areas.

Essex's varied landscapes support a wide array of wildlife, including rare and endangered species. Grazing animals help to control vegetation growth, prevent the dominance of invasive plant species, and create diverse habitats that support a rich biodiversity.

[Essex Wildlife Trust](#) plays a significant role in managing and conserving the county's natural spaces, including those where grazing is utilised as a management tool. We manage numerous nature reserves across Essex, each with its own unique habitat and wildlife. These reserves often include grasslands, wetlands, heathlands, and woodlands, all of which benefit from appropriate grazing regimes.



We work closely with local farmers and landowners to implement sustainable grazing practices that benefit both wildlife and agricultural interests. By carefully managing the number and type of grazing animals, as well as the timing and duration of grazing, the Trust ensures that habitats are maintained in optimal condition for wildlife while also supporting the livelihoods of local farmers.

We use traditional grazing methods to restore and maintain habitats. Livestock are introduced to areas where vegetation has become overgrown or degraded. Through targeted grazing, these animals help to reduce the dominance of certain plant species, promote the growth of more diverse vegetation and create suitable conditions for a variety of wildlife.

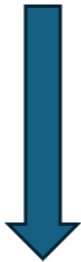
We also engage in educational and outreach activities through our Wilder Learning team to raise awareness about the importance of grazing in conservation and to involve the local community in habitat management efforts. Through guided walks, talks and volunteering opportunities, the Trust encourages people to connect with nature and participate in conservation initiatives.

Grazing Team Structure

Head of Nature Reserves and Natural Capital

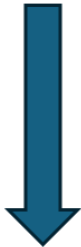


Conservation Grazing Manager (CGM)



- Responsible for adherence to all legal obligations and commitments relating to the Trust's grazing operation, and designing and implementing the county-wide annual grazing programme
- Manage a duty rota and out-of-hours-call-out response team ensuring year-round cover for grazing and breeding programmes
- Budget holder, responsible for herd and flock management including managing the out-wintering operation, breeding programme, grazing licences, livestock movements and inspections
- Part of the Nature Reserves Management Team and member of the Trust's Grants & Compliance Management Group
- Manage and maintain relationships with all grazing licensees on Trust reserves

Senior Conservation Grazing Officer (SCGO)



- Assist the CGM in implementing the county-wide grazing programme across its nature reserves
- Be part of the out-of-hours-call-out response team ensuring year-round cover for grazing and breeding programmes
- To lead the management and enhancement of grazing and grazing infrastructure at Blue House Farm and Langdon Hills Nature Reserves
- Lead and implement the *NoFence* grazing operation, including training, assessment and maintenance
- Assist the CGM with breeding and herd/flock management, veterinary interventions and animal movements

Conservation Grazing Officer (CGO)

- Be responsible for livestock grazing at Tollesbury Wick Nature Reserve
 - Carry out daily livestock checks
 - Work with the Senior Ranger to monitor and maintain grazing infrastructure
 - Re-establish and support the volunteer group
- Support the CGM and SCGO with the county-wide annual grazing programme, carrying out
- In collaboration with Area Officers, responsible for volunteer 'lookers' and work parties for other grazing sites

Job Description

- To implement the annual in-house grazing programme at each site, directing the Conservation Grazing Officer and liaising proactively with the Nature Reserves Managers, and their Ranger teams, to ensure a secure infrastructure and favourable condition of the habitats of each reserve, while adhering to the ‘five freedoms’ for livestock.
- To line-manage and mentor the Conservation Grazing Officer, through regular 1-2-1s and timely completion of SMART appraisals.
- To lead the recruitment and provide ongoing support for grazing volunteers (“lookers”) and ensure both their integration with the Grazing Team and their safe deployment.
- With the Conservation Grazing Manager, to be part of the out-of-hours call-out response team ensuring year-round cover for the grazing and breeding programmes (calving and lambing), and, with the Grazing Team, to run an effective duty rota to cover daily livestock checks and regular grazing infrastructure inspections.
- To lead the management and enhancement of the Blue House Farm and Langdon Hills Nature Reserves’ grazing infrastructure, to maintain site security and to manage the access network to provide a safe and welcoming place for staff, volunteers, and visitors.
- To lead the fenceless grazing operation including setting up secure training areas, training and assessing cattle annually, and maintaining the equipment and collars as required.
- To assist the Conservation Grazing Manager in adhering to all legal obligations, statutory management requirements, cross compliance, other environmental regulations, planning conditions and other binding commitments related to the Trust’s grazing operation.
- To assist, as required, with effective breeding herd and flock management, including the recording of all animal movements across holdings, and preparations for and effective responses to any external inspections.

- To assist the Conservation Grazing Manager with all veterinary interventions, including meeting all health testing and reporting obligations within the required timescale and ensuring the secure storage and auditing of all medicines.
- To assist the Conservation Grazing Manager with monitoring grazing programme-related budgets and to provide monthly purchase card updates.
- To work closely with the Conservation Grazing Manager to manage all vehicles, machinery and equipment assigned to the grazing operation, and to ensure the health and safety of staff and volunteers.
- To assist the Conservation Grazing Manager to monitor grazing licensees on Trust reserves.
- To assist the Conservation Evidence and Reserves teams with monitoring and research work at the Blue House Farm and Langdon Hills Nature Reserves, in particular, as well as any other grazing-related surveys elsewhere in the County, if required.
- Work effectively and proactively with colleagues across the Trust and demonstrate the values of being Impactful, Collaborative, United and Proactive and develop skills, attitudes, and behaviours in line with the Trust's Leadership Competencies Framework.
- To be an energetic advocate for the Trust and to work closely with colleagues to communicate with local groups, volunteers, and visitors to encourage participation in managing the Trust's reserves.
- To carry out any other duties that are within the scope, spirit and purpose of the role, and the contract of employment, as requested by the Conservation Grazing Manager or Head of Nature Reserves & Natural Capital.



Mole-DX
SUPER ENERGY 30 SLITS

Person Specification

- Degree or HND in land management, nature conservation, ecology, environmental science and/or equivalent work experience (including essential practical field experience) in one or more of those subjects.
- Proven experience and demonstrable knowledge of animal husbandry and management systems for both breeding cattle herds and sheep flocks, including basic veterinary procedures (desirable).
- Significant practical grazing and/or farming operations experience in the UK, including the deployment and maintenance of a range of agricultural vehicles, machinery, equipment, and materials (essential).
- Evidence of current or recently held NPTC/Lantra (or suitable equivalent) training certificates for a range of land management machinery and equipment, brush-cutter and chainsaw operation. Where current desirable certificates are not held, the post-holder will be expected to obtain the range of up-to-date training certificates within the probation period, with the full support of the Trust.
- Full, current UK driving licence. The role also requires the completion of tractor training and completion of a DVSA-accredited trailer-towing course for moving livestock, within the first two months, if not already completed.
- Demonstrable IT skills with Word and Excel, and desirable to have had experience with specialist livestock/farming software.
- Proven experience of timetabling, communicating, implementing, and reporting on work programmes through spreadsheets or other farm/grazing planning software.
- General knowledge of UK grassland habitats, species and their conservation requirements.
- A demonstrable knowledge of health & safety procedures, their implementation and assessment, including undertaking risk assessments, producing method statements, and the effective deployment and maintenance of a range of protective equipment.
- Demonstrable knowledge of managing budgets, purchase card accounts and producing basic budget/expenditure reports.

- Proven experience of coordinating and directing team-work, as well mentoring and on-the-job training of grazing staff. Can work both individually without supervision and cooperatively within a team environment.
- Proven experience of the day-to-day supervision of contractors on conservation sites.
- Proven experience of day-to-day volunteer management, including leading work parties and organising volunteer work programmes, and desirable to have experience within, or understanding of, the voluntary and charitable sector.
- Good organisational skills and demonstrable ability to handle multiple tasks to deadlines.
- Good verbal and competent written communication skills, with a demonstrable ability to prepare short reports and action plans.
- Proactive and enthusiastic, with a willingness to take responsibility and with a demonstrable passion for wildlife and landscape conservation.

Additional Information

- The role is residential requiring availability for a 24hr emergency call-out response.
- The role entails evening and weekend working as part of a Grazing Team duty rota.
- The role requires regular lone-working and working outdoors, with livestock, in relatively remote sites in a wide range of weather conditions.
- The role requires an interest in working for a charity that is determined to protect wildlife for the future and for the people of Essex.
- The role is residential and based at Blue House Farm, North Fambridge, Essex, but requires regular travel to Langdon Hills Nature Reserve, across the county and, occasionally, beyond.
- If not held, passing a First Aid certificate will be required within the first 3 months of employment.

Residential Post

Blue House Farm | North Fambridge | Essex

This is a residential post for the postholder's better performance of their duties, which include shared responsibility, with the Conservation Grazing Manager, for animal welfare throughout the year and at all times as required.

The role will require the postholder to be available on a call-out rota throughout the year (on a rota with the Conservation Grazing Manager) to provide an emergency response and to be able to oversee all livestock housed at Blue house Farm, and at out-wintering locations, particularly during the calving and lambing seasons and for veterinary interventions.





Credit: Emilv McParland

Terms

The position is a permanent role with a starting salary of £29,150.00 per annum plus residence at Blue House Farm. The hours of work are 37.5 hours per week with a team rota in place for grazing cover and call out. The rent deduction will be inline with the HMRC accommodation offset rate.

Annual leave entitlement starts at 26 days per annum increasing annually to 29 days plus Bank Holidays. We provide company sick pay increasing with length of service, an employee assistance programme, a combined 8% contribution pension scheme, staff social days, colleague nomination scheme and discounts in our Nature Discovery Centres.

How to Apply

To apply for this opportunity, please submit an application via People First by 9:00am on Thursday 11 April 2024. The interviews will be held on Thursday 25 April 2024.

Thank you for your interest in this position and I look forward to receiving your application.

Kim Wallis, Head of Nature Reserves and Natural Capital.

