

Senior Farm Advisor

Full Time

£35 000-42 000 dependent on experience

The Tees Rivers Trust is working at a whole catchment scale from source to sea to improve water quality and habitat. A key aspect of this is our farm advisory work and over the years we have helped over 200 farms with advice and capital interventions that have saved money, reduced soil loss and improved management of water.

We are now expanding the scope of our farm advice work and are excited to offer this opportunity to join us and help us grow. If you would like to work with a small, ambitious team of dedicated practitioners in an amazing part of the world, this could be the place for you!

More information about the Trust and the work that we do can be found at www.teesriverstrust.org

Objective of the job

Over 17 years, the Tees Rivers Trust have developed close working relations with farm businesses throughout the Tees. We aim to understand the needs of the business and integrate this with our environmental understanding to investigate and design cost beneficial measures that de-risk farms from and increase compliance with Farming Rules for Water whilst also making financial savings for farm businesses. The added benefit of well-placed interventions is an improvement to water quality and aquatic biodiversity.

With focus on both soil health and emerging green finance markets, we are seeking an experienced senior farm advisor to join an existing catchment management and biodiversity team whose purpose is to help farmers reduce the levels of phosphate, nitrate and pesticides entering the water environment and enhance biodiversity.

An important part of this programme is to identify and develop measures that can generate significant income for farms through Catchment Nutrient Balancing approaches (offsetting end-of-pipe removal of nutrients by working to address other sources for the same or greater impact but wider benefits) and from the sale of biodiversity net gain units and nutrient (N) credits. You will therefore ideally have a working knowledge of these emerging markets.

Key results expected

The post holder will develop an in-depth agricultural understanding of the Tees catchment, develop key relationships with land managers and other agricultural stakeholders, and lead on engagement plans to inform farm plans and assessments.

The post-holder will deliver a programme of farmer/agronomist engagement and training events, and undertake one-to-one farm visits to promote resource protection, habitat creation and a reduction in diffuse water pollution from agriculture, with a view to achieving wider environmental benefits.

The post-holder will raise awareness of the potential business opportunities of improving water quality and biodiversity by reducing diffuse pollution from agriculture through Catchment Nutrient Balancing approaches and other market-led opportunities.

Engagement with farmers will seek to create, through a voluntary approach, a vibrant peer led approach with the aim of increasing a sense of ownership and achievement within the farming community in relation to improving water quality in the Tees catchment.

Reporting arrangements

This post will report to the Trust' Agricultural and Fisheries Lead.

Key tasks

The post-holder will be required to carry out the following tasks to meet the requirements of the role:

- Carry out targeted landowner advisory site visits including taking soil and slurry samples.
- Produce follow-up Pinpoint whole farm plans including interpretation of soil and slurry analysis, nutrient management plans and water management plans
- Implement a capital grants scheme and assist landowners with applications to this scheme, administer the funds and oversee delivery of the funded work.
- Support landowners in complying with the Farming Rules for Water Silage Slurry and Agricultural Fuel Oil Regulations.
- Assist landowners with other grant applications such as Environmental Stewardship and EWCO.
- Contribute to a co-ordinated, partnership, landscape-scale approach to advisory provision across the catchments, with close liaison with Catchment Sensitive Farming, Campaign for the Farmed Environment, Environment, Agency Officers, Natural England Officers and others as required.

- Communicate regularly with other advisors in the project areas to ensure delivery is co-ordinated, and is complementary to overall project aims & objectives and that farmers are not approached by multiple advisors.
- Provide detailed records of project activity against work programme targets and assist in the production of reports and publicity material.
- Be willing to undertake any other tasks as can be reasonably required as part of this post. Prepare and submit monthly progress reports to ensure adequate monitoring of the programme, engagement activity
- Contribute to annual reporting schedules for Tees Rivers Trust
- Participate in relevant partner activities where these are complimentary to the core programme, assist in the development of water environment focussed projects in target areas and participate in Catchment Partnership activity appropriate to the catchments being targeted

Core skills

The successful applicant will be expected to have:

- Relevant environmental qualification/s /experience pertinent to role applied for.
- Relevant professional qualifications in relation to providing agricultural sector advice – for example BASIS, FACTS or other CPD activities
- Preferably a minimum of five years' experience of working directly in an advisory capacity to farmers and land managers
- Knowledge of soil management and nutrient planning
- Knowledge of Forestry and Countryside Stewardship Schemes and the development and application of ELMS
- Knowledge of Water Framework Directive, Farming Rules for Water, cross compliance and NVZ requirements
- A strong background in understanding water quality issues and awareness of nature based solutions
- A sound understanding of upland and lowland farming systems, wetland ecology, rural sustainable drainage and catchment management
- Clearly demonstrate knowledge of the farmed environment, catchment management and biodiversity net gain and other emerging green finance markets
- Computer literacy, being adept in the use of MS Office
- GIS mapping experience
- A Full Driving Licence and your own vehicle

Desirable skills

You may already have, or you will develop in the role:

- Expert knowledge of the principles of Catchment Nutrient Balancing, Biodiversity Net Gain, Nutrient Neutrality and opportunities for farmer participation in these schemes

- Use of UAV / USV in survey and analysis with CAA certification
- Working knowledge of a range of funding mechanisms to undertake farm and catchment interventions and when they can be applied at a farm level, for example Countryside Stewardship.
- Holds or is working towards RICS membership

Candidate suitability

This post is suited to someone who is able to communicate technical information in a straightforward and accessible manner to a broad range of participants. You will be able to inspire and enable partners and stakeholders to take an active part in assessing and improving their water environment. You will be able to negotiate effectively with farmers and landowners and provide tactful and effective support to engage and meet programme targets. You will have good time management, organisational skills and the ability to prioritise a varied workload. You will be a positive and energetic team player, able to influence change and an ability to work at pace with a willingness to innovate and adapt to deliver most impact for farmers and best impact for the environment.

Some weekend, Bank Holiday and evening working will be required.

The post-holder will be expected to conform to Tees Rivers Trust policy, practices and professional standards in line with national and legal expectations and requirements.

Agricultural Advisor Role

Salary:	£35-42k per annum + pension contribution (see <i>below</i>) depending on experience. Cost of living awards are normally awarded annually with effect from 1 April subject to the employer's ability to pay.
Hours:	40 Hours per week. Full time, flexible hours. The nature of the post's duties may from time-to-time require evening and weekend work.
Pre employment checks:	The post does not require a DBS check. The successful applicant will need to provide proof of right to work in the UK
Probationary period:	All Trust appointments are subject to the satisfactory completion of a probationary service of six months.
Contract	Initially a one year fixed term contract available but high likelihood of continuation
Holidays:	A full-time member of staff has 25 working days per annum in addition to 8 normal public holidays. An additional day is added for each 5 year's service up to a maximum total of 28 days holiday
Pension:	After three months the employee will be eligible to join the Trust's group personal pension scheme and if they pay a minimum of 3% of salary the Trust will contribute 9% of salary to this scheme.
Notice Period:	During your probationary period, the period of notice for termination of your employment will be one week on either side. After successful completion of your probationary period the minimum period of notice is two months on either side.
Place of Work:	The post will be based at Tees Rivers Trust, Clocktower Lodge, South Park, Darlington. DL1 5TG. Significant travel around the catchment is required.
Home working	Home working is available. IT kit will be provided.
Travel:	The use of your own vehicle will be necessary. You are required to have insurance to cover business use and a mileage allowance of 45p per mile will be payable for such journeys. If you use a pedal cycle you may claim a mileage allowance of 20p per mile.
Training:	The Trust is fully committed to personal development and training through its annual review and progress meetings.
Closing date:	TBC
Interview dates:	TBC