

Coastal Community Engagement Officer

Recruitment pack



The
Wildlife
Trusts

Creating a **south coast**
where **nature** thrives

Introduction

Thank you for your interest in joining an exciting journey to restore nature at sea along Britain's south coast.

Our seas are home to a rich diversity of life. Under the surface, seagrass meadows and kelp forests provide feeding and nursery grounds for a vast array of species. Within and above our waves, seabirds, seals and dolphins can be sighted from our cliffs. But decades of degradation, pollution, and now climate change have pushed nature at sea to the brink. It is time for action.

The Wildlife Trusts believe that meaningful change happens when people and nature are brought together. That's why we're embarking on an ambitious project to drive forward efforts to restore coastal ecosystems across Britain's south coast – a project which must be underpinned by the voices and knowledge of local communities and stakeholders, including residents, fishers, businesses, environmental groups, policy makers and others.

We're recruiting two passionate and motivated Coastal Community Engagement Officers to work with the five participating Wildlife Trusts in this partnership project (Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, and Sussex). You'll build relationships with and consult coastal communities, identifying opportunities for nature's recovery across Britain's south coast, while developing a coalition of stakeholders who come together for the future of our seas.

While Cornwall Wildlife Trust is hosting the development phase of this project, the two engagement roles can be based anywhere within the project area (Cornwall to Sussex).

If you thrive in collaborative environments, believe in the power of people to protect nature, and are ready to take on one of the defining environmental challenges of our time, we would love to hear from you. Together, we can create a south coast where nature thrives — for wildlife, climate, and people.



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Ruth Williams
Head of Marine Conservation, The Wildlife Trusts

About us

The Wildlife Trusts is a federation of 46 local Wildlife Trusts and the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts, the central organisation that represents the movement nationally.

Cornwall Wildlife Trust is one of the five local Wildlife Trusts participating in this project (the others being Devon, Dorset, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, and Sussex), all with established marine programmes and a track record of delivering for our oceans.

While the new positions within the development phase of this project will work closely with all participating Wildlife Trusts (with strategic leadership provided by the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts), they will be managed by and sit within Cornwall Wildlife Trust, with the flexibility to work remotely.

The Wildlife Trusts' structure makes us uniquely placed to achieve impact at the community and national level. Local Wildlife Trusts are deeply rooted in our local areas, with sandy feet, wetsuits at the ready, and a formidable community of ocean volunteers standing with us. Nationally, the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts is a powerful voice for nature, influencing strategy and shaping marine policies.

We coordinate and train thousands of marine citizen scientists. We run active restoration projects, restoring vital habitats like native oyster reefs and seagrass. We campaign and advocate for the better protection of our seas. We collaborate with fishers to co-create opportunities for nature and livelihoods. And we work with, in and for coastal communities, empowering people to connect with and take action for the UK's remarkable marine environment.

But with marine life under threat and the future of our planet dependent on the health of our oceans, there's more to do. To turn the tide on the challenges faced, we need to think big.



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Collectively, the Wildlife Trusts movement is one of the largest ocean conversation organisations in Europe, with marine biologists, conservationists, policy experts, and engagement officers across the UK fighting for the future of our oceans.

Photo: Heather Hamilton (@cornwallunderwater)



A bold plan for Britain's south coast

Our ambition is to catalyse recovery across south Britain's seas, including key habitats, such as seagrass, maerl, saltmarshes, seabed sediments, and kelp. Despite their importance, many of these habitats have declined dramatically, with current recovery efforts often small-scale and fragmented.

We want to see impacts on our seas reduced, with people understanding, valuing and actively contributing to their recovery. We want to link arms with stakeholders from the fishing sector, tourism industry, local authorities, and communities to create an achievable vision for a thriving, valued seascape. Achieving this vision starts with a 15-month development phase to deliver the following objectives:

- Build a coalition of supportive and active stakeholders who have a role to play in protecting our south coast, including through future voluntary protection initiatives and catchment-scale projects.
- Identify priority areas across Britain's south coast with the highest potential for nature recovery.
- Identify barriers and opportunities for better statutory protection.

Ultimately, the development phase will conduct the extensive work required to create robust, costed plans for the delivery phase to achieve nature recovery across Britain's south coast, with input from communities and key stakeholders from the outset.

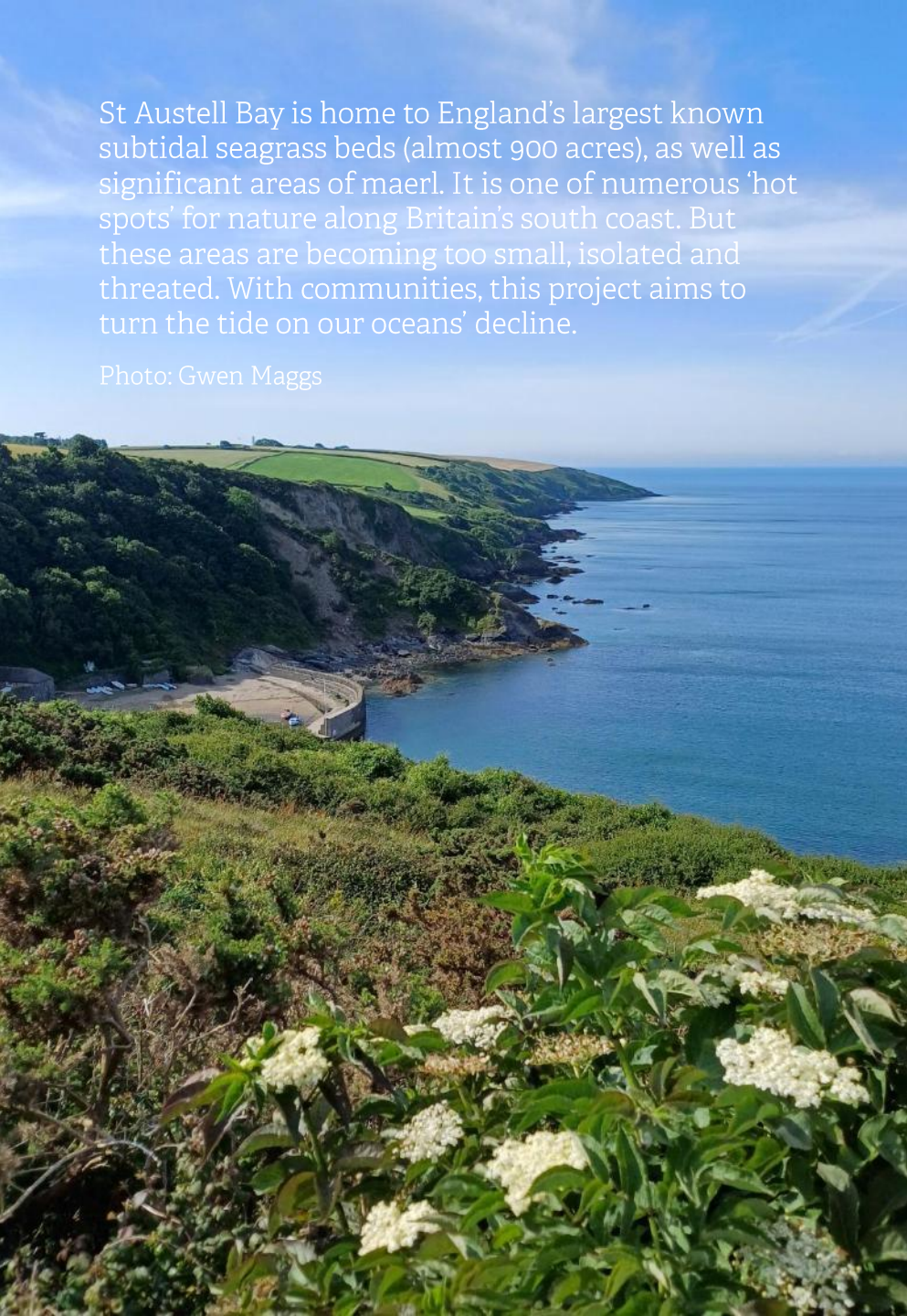
The development phase starts autumn 2025 (subject to notice periods of successful candidates) and will be followed by a five year+, multi-£million initiative (subject to successful fundraising).

The initial project team consists of three new positions (the Marine Recovery Project Development Manager and two Coastal Community Engagement Officers), with strategic leadership from the Head of Marine Conservation at the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts (Ruth Williams), and input from marine staff across participating Wildlife Trusts.

The development phase will be guided by a steering committee, consisting of participating Wildlife Trust staff, marine recovery experts from other organisations, and representatives from key stakeholder groups.

Photo: Cathy Lewis





St Austell Bay is home to England's largest known subtidal seagrass beds (almost 900 acres), as well as significant areas of maerl. It is one of numerous 'hot spots' for nature along Britain's south coast. But these areas are becoming too small, isolated and threatened. With communities, this project aims to turn the tide on our oceans' decline.

Photo: Gwen Maggs

Role summary

We're looking for two Coastal Community Engagement Officers who'll be at the heart of a bold marine recovery initiative along Britain's south coast. Your role will be to connect people with the project, secure input into its vision, champion local voices, and help communities see themselves as partners in restoring our seas.

You'll bring people together – fishers, residents, businesses, and decision-makers – to share knowledge, explore opportunities, and tackle challenges head-on. From leading inspiring workshops to forging strong partnerships, you'll ensure that local insight and enthusiasm drive the success of this ambitious programme.

Salary: £28,000 - £31,000

Hours: Full time (37.5 hours). Likely to require some evening and weekend work for which Time Off In Lieu (TOIL) can be claimed

Contract type: Fixed Term (15-month contract with further opportunities possible within the project's delivery phase)

Location: The primary base of successful candidates can be flexible (working from home and / or the office of a participating Wildlife Trust). There is a requirement for travel, spending time at the HQs and in the communities of participating Wildlife Trusts' counties

Focus area: It is likely the two Coastal Community Engagement Officers will cover different areas within the project (for example, one Devon, Cornwall, and Dorset, the other Hampshire, Isle of Wight and Sussex). Specifics will depend on successful candidates

Reports into: Marine Recovery Project Development Manager (Britain's South Coast)

Line reports: None, although may manage volunteers

Key relationships: Staff from participating Wildlife Trusts, funding partners, local project partners

Responsibilities

- **Build trusted relationships to foster collaboration and mutual understanding:** This includes community groups, harbour authorities, fishers, conservation bodies, managing bodies, recreational industries, and other local coastal businesses within the role's geographic remit. This may involve joining fishers at sea to identify impacts, barriers, and potential for collaboration.
- **Partnership development:** Build successful partnerships (formal and informal), developing shared aims, expectations, and ways of working.
- **Gather community insights:** Work with participating Wildlife Trusts to build trusting relationships with local communities, including groups whose voices are currently under-represented in marine recovery and decision-making processes. Actively listen to local perspectives, concerns, and ideas to shape marine recovery plans that reflect real needs.
- **Facilitate inclusive workshops:** Plan and lead engaging workshops for key stakeholders to encourage participation, idea-sharing, and joint problem-solving.
- **Translate project aims:** Turn scientific and technical goals into clear, accessible messages that resonate with different audiences.
- **Promote awareness:** Help people connect, understand, and appreciate the importance of the marine environment in their area.
- **Spot opportunities and challenges:** Identify potential benefits, barriers, and solutions early to strengthen project delivery. This includes working with communities to identify areas where there is particular support for increasing marine recovery.
- **Project development:** Ensure community and stakeholder voices are reflected in the planning of the project's delivery phase, also bringing your own knowledge and expertise, and supporting the Marine Recovery Project Development Manager as required.
- **Support collaboration across sectors:** Work with scientists, policymakers, and community organisations to align efforts and share expertise.
- **Track and share progress:** Monitor engagement activities, evaluate impact, and keep communities informed about outcomes and next steps.
- **Fundraising:** Play an active role engaging funders and securing support for the project's delivery phase, meeting potential funding partners and contributing to grant applications as required.
- **Encourage capacity building:** Identify and promote opportunities for training, skills development, and economic benefits linked to marine recovery.
- **General support:** Undertake other work required within the project, including project support, communications, media work and administration.



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Person specification

Experience

- Proven experience in community engagement, stakeholder liaison, or public outreach roles (E)
- Experience working with coastal or rural communities (E), including fishers or marine-related stakeholders (D)
- Track record of planning and facilitating workshops, meetings, and public events (E)
- Experience building partnerships with diverse organisations and interest groups (E)
- Demonstrated ability to gather, analyse, and present community feedback to inform projects (E)

Skills

- Excellent interpersonal and relationship-building skills, with the ability to engage a wide range of people (E)
- Strong facilitation skills, creating inclusive and constructive group discussions (E)

- Confident verbal and written communicator, able to adapt style for different audiences (E)
- Skilled at simplifying complex or technical information for non-specialists (E)
- Organised and self-motivated, able to manage multiple tasks and deadlines (E)

Knowledge

- Awareness of marine conservation issues, challenges facing UK seas, and approaches to marine recovery (E)
- Familiarity with participatory approaches and co-design methods in community projects (E)
- Knowledge of the south coast's fishing sector and the work of Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (D)
- Understanding of the social, cultural, and economic factors influencing coastal communities along Britain's south coast (D)

Personal qualities

- Approachable, empathetic, and respectful in all interactions (E)
- Positive, solutions-focused mindset (E)
- Curious and open-minded, valuing different perspectives and lived experiences (E)
- Passion for marine conservation and belief in community-led, evidence-informed recovery (E)
- Resilient, with capacity to work constructively through uncertainty and maintain strong relationships in demanding situations (E)
- Commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion, especially in community engagement and decision-making processes (E)
- Degree or postgraduate qualification in marine biology, conservation, environmental management or a related field (D)

Please note

- (E) indicates essential. (D) indicates desirable
- Some locations in the project may be underserved by public transport. It is therefore desirable that candidates have a driving licence

Finally ...

Other details

- While Cornwall Wildlife Trust is hosting the development phase, we welcome applications from candidates across the south coast. The role holder will have opportunity to work from offices across participating Wildlife Trusts.
- Applications welcomed from candidates from under-represented groups within the environmental sector.
- Enhanced company holiday entitlement – 25 days plus bank holidays, with additional time off between Christmas and New Year.
- Cornwall Wildlife Trust offers excellent flexible working and TOIL arrangements.
- Employees have access to the Employee Assistance Programme (24/7 counselling service) and Employee health and wellbeing portal upon successful completion of probationary period (three months).
- Stakeholder pension of 5% employer contribution.

To apply

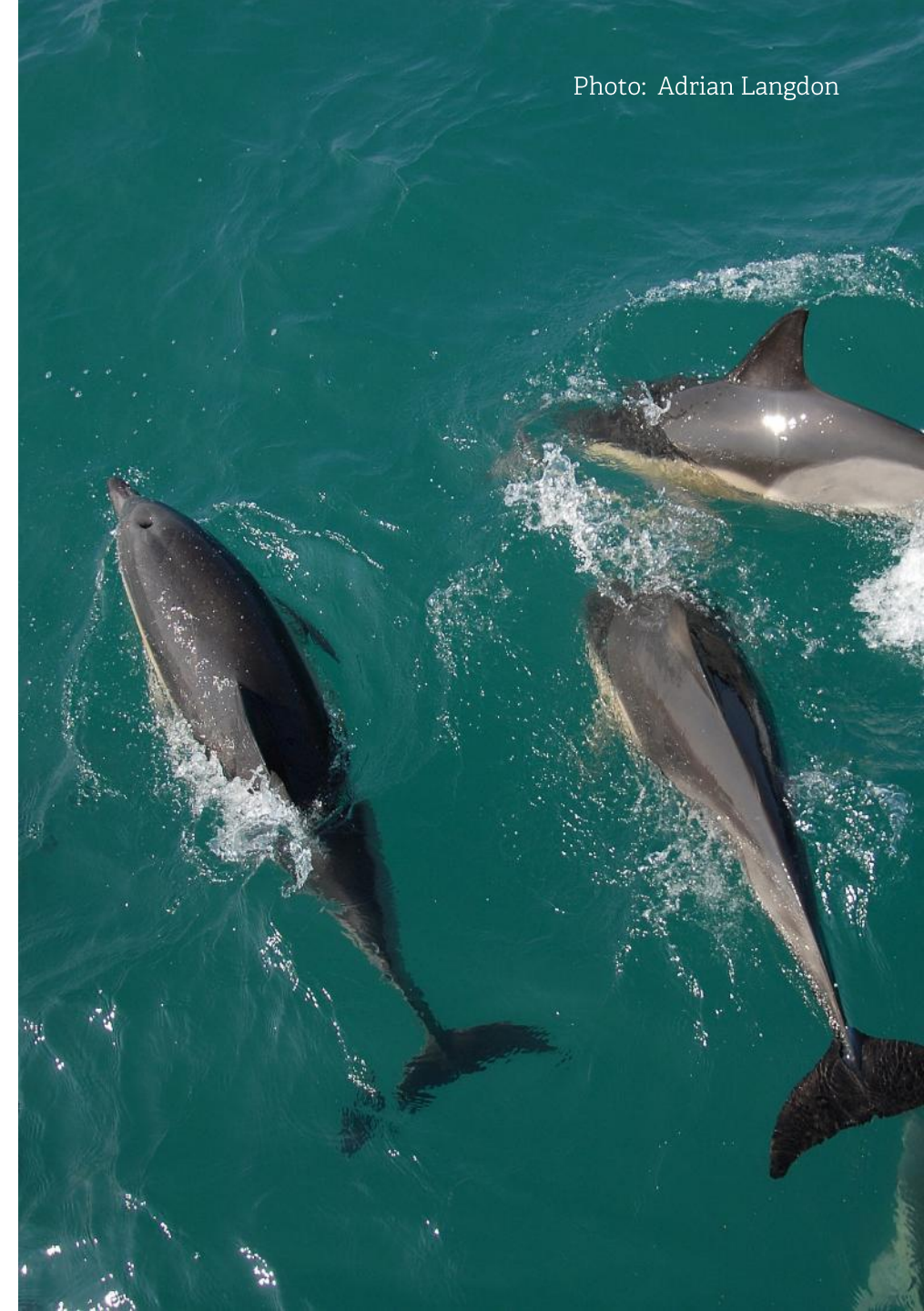
Please send a CV and supporting statement **outlining your suitability against the person specification** to recruitment@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk by midnight on Sunday 12th October.

First round interviews are planned for Thursday 23rd and Friday 24th October.

Photo: Adrian Langdon



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Thank you

**for your interest in joining our work to
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