



# ECOLOGIST Applicant Recruitment Pack

Sefton is a really great place to live and work



# Welcome

Hello, thank you for your interest in the Ecologist role within Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service (MEAS), a shared local authority environmental service hosted by Sefton Council, covering the districts of Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, St. Helens Sefton, Wirral and West Lancashire.

We are seeking two highly motivated Ecologists (one permanent and one 2-year fixed term appointment) to join our dynamic team and specifically at ambitious individuals who wish to develop their ecology / planning careers and play a leading role in driving nature recovery in our City Region.

The Ecologists will provide specialist technical advice to our local authority customers on statutory and regulatory ecology, biodiversity, nature conservation duties including Habitats Regulations Assessments and Biodiversity Net Gain through review of planning applications and policy preparation.

The role offers important support to nature recovery, Local Site monitoring and biodiversity net gain. Experience in protected species is particularly welcome; possession of protected species licences would be advantageous. Experience in working with statutory agencies and developers and a proven ability to identify and facilitate environmental solutions would be welcomed. If you are working towards a professional membership that would also be helpful.

The Job Description and Person Specification for this role are included within the job pack. If you have any questions about the vacancy, please refer to the job pack for the appropriate contact details.

If, when you've finishing reading this pack, you like what you see, and Sefton's Vision and Values align to yours then we can't wait to hear from you.

Best of luck!

Lesley Bye  
Environment Manager



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## About the Borough of Sefton

Sefton is a confident and well-connected Borough, stretching from Bootle in the south to the coastal resort of Southport in the north. Home to more than 275,000 residents, Sefton encompasses a range of vibrant towns and communities, including Bootle, Litherland, Seaforth, Crosby, Formby, Maghull and Southport.

It is a fantastic place to live and work. As the northern-most Borough within the Liverpool City Region, Sefton offers a unique blend of beautiful coastline, countryside, attractive villages, thriving industrial areas and the busy Port of Liverpool.

With 22 miles of stunning coastline, Sefton is a leading coastal destination with a growing visitor economy. It is home to the iconic Antony Gormley *Another Place* installation, expansive beaches and protected sand dunes that support several rare species.

While each town and village has its own distinctive character, it is the people of Sefton who make the Borough truly special, creating diverse, welcoming and energetic communities in which to live, work, invest and visit.

Alongside its miles of golden sands, Sefton offers those who work here access to a world-renowned racecourse, prestigious golf courses, and National Trust nature reserves, ideal places to unwind, explore and enjoy leisure time.

The Borough benefits from excellent transport links, providing easy access to major North West cities including Liverpool and Manchester, and placing the Lake District and North Wales within reach for weekend breaks.

Whether you prefer vibrant town centres, friendly commuter towns, picturesque villages or stunning rural and coastal locations, Sefton offers a place to suit everyone. With house prices and rents typically lower than in neighbouring Liverpool and Manchester, you can enjoy coastal living while still being close to the buzz of city life.



## Our Vision and Values

At Sefton Council, our vision is to deliver high-quality services that make a real difference to the lives of our residents, visitors, and communities. Everything we do is guided by a strong set of values that shape how we work and interact:



- **We put people at the heart of what we do** – ensuring our services are responsive, inclusive, and focused on improving lives.
- **We listen, value, and respect each other’s views** – fostering a culture of collaboration and mutual respect.
- **We develop a culture of challenge, ownership, innovation, and improvement** – encouraging creativity and continuous development.
- **We are ambassadors for Sefton** – promoting the Borough positively and proudly representing our communities.
- **We are responsive and efficient** – delivering services that are timely, effective, and customer-focused.
- **We are clear about what we can and cannot do** – being transparent and honest in all our communications and actions.

These values underpin our commitment to excellence, inclusivity, and innovation, ensuring that Sefton remains a great place to live, work, and visit.

## Our Successes and Key Projects

Sefton Council is proud of its recent achievements and ongoing commitment to delivering high-quality services. Our Adult Social Care services were recently graded



Good by the Care Quality Commission (CQC), and our Children's Services also achieved a Good rating from Ofsted. These successes reflect the dedication and professionalism of our teams and our focus on continuous improvement.

Alongside these achievements, Sefton Council is actively delivering a range of major capital projects that will transform the Borough and stimulate economic growth. These include the Marine Lake Events Centre in Southport, the Strand Shopping Centre redevelopment in Bootle, and exciting developments such as the Cove Resort and Enterprise Arcade in Southport. We are also proud to support cultural and community initiatives like Salt and Tar, Bootle's vibrant events space, which hosts live music, comedy, and family-friendly activities, bringing people together and boosting the local economy.

These projects form part of our strategic investment programme to attract private sector-led development and create vibrant spaces for residents and visitors. We work closely with local communities to ensure these projects reflect their needs and foster a sense of ownership and pride.

For more information on these projects and to stay updated on progress, visit the Sefton Council website at [www.sefton.gov.uk](http://www.sefton.gov.uk)

## An Inclusive Workplace

We are committed to fostering an inclusive Council that reflects the diverse communities we serve. Our workforce brings a wide range of experiences and perspectives, and we value an environment where everyone feels respected, supported, and able to reach their full potential.

Sefton is proud to be the first local authority in the Liverpool City Region to achieve **Navajo** accreditation, recognising our commitment to LGBTQ+ inclusion. We are also a Disability Confident employer and continue to build a workforce that represents our communities.

We support several staff networks, including groups for Black and Ethnically Diverse colleagues, LGBTQ+ staff, women, disabled employees, and a Christian Workplace Group.

As an Equal Opportunities Employer, we base recruitment solely on skills, experience, and suitability for the role. All applicants are treated fairly, and we have also recognised 'care experienced' as a protected characteristic within Sefton.



For more information, please refer to our [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy](#)

## Liverpool City Region Fair Employment Charter



Sefton Council is proud to support the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Fair Employment Charter, an initiative that promotes fair, healthy, inclusive, and just workplaces across the region. The Charter celebrates good employers and encourages the highest standards in employment practice, including fair pay, secure work, opportunities for progression,

strong employee voice, and a commitment to staff wellbeing. By aligning with the Charter, we demonstrate our dedication to providing a fair day's pay for a fair day's work and to fostering an equitable and supportive working environment for all colleagues.

### What We Can Offer You

- A supportive and collaborative working environment.
- An agile approach to working.
- Opportunities for professional development and career progression.
- A role where your work makes a real difference across the organisation.
- Flexible working arrangements supporting work-life balance.
- A strong commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion.



You will benefit from a comprehensive local government employment package which includes the following:

- Competitive salary in line with NJC Local Government Pay Scales.
- Membership of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS), providing a secure, defined benefit pension with employer contributions.

### **Annual Leave and Work-Life Balance**

- Generous annual leave entitlement, 28 days annual leave rising to 33 days with 5 years continuous service.
- Additional public (bank) holidays.
- Flexible working options to support a healthy work-life balance, subject to service needs.
- Option to purchase additional annual leave.

### **Learning, Development and Career Progression**

- A comprehensive induction programme.
- Access to a wide range of training, apprenticeships, learning, and development opportunities.
- Support for professional development and role related qualifications.
- Opportunities to develop your career within a large and diverse local authority.

### **Health, Wellbeing and Support**

- Enhanced sick pay scheme.
- Employee wellbeing initiatives and access to occupational health support.
- Policies that promote physical and mental wellbeing in the workplace.

### **Family-Friendly and Inclusive Policies**

Our family-friendly policies and flexible working arrangements help staff maintain a healthy work-life balance.

- Family friendly policies, including enhanced maternity, paternity, adoption, neonatal care and special leave to support with time off work to deal with issues when life events happen.



- A strong organisational commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- Reasonable adjustments and support to enable disabled employees to thrive.

## About the Role

The Ecologist role provides specialist technical advice to our local authority customers on ecology, biodiversity, nature conservation, Habitats Regulations Assessments and new statutory and regulatory duties including under the Environment Act 2021, including review of planning applications, preparation of policy and project development and implementation.

The role offers important support to nature recovery, Local Site monitoring and biodiversity net gain. Experience in protected species is particularly welcome; possession of protected species licences would be advantageous. Experience in working with statutory agencies and developers and a proven ability to identify and facilitate environmental solutions would be welcomed. If you are working towards a professional membership that would also be helpful.

The key responsibilities include:

- Advise on the impact of planning applications, including Environmental Impact Assessments, on biodiversity, ecology and nature conservation resources on behalf of the constituent authorities. Recommend and advise on the acceptability of surveys, method statements, planning conditions, monitoring requirements and conservation management. Act as Expert Witness as required.
- Advise as part of the Ecology Team, on the ecological implications of the Authorities' plans, projects and programmes and assist with development of appropriate projects, including Local Development Documents.
- Be responsible for, co-ordinate and complete, HRA reports on protected sites and species, including HRA screening reports, Appropriate Assessment and Three Test Assessments for European protected species, of plans, policies and projects.
- Be responsible for strategic and site-specific liaison with Natural England, Environment Agency, Forestry Commission, Countryside Council for Wales and Defra on ecological and HRA matters, and the Mersey Forest.

This role suits someone who is ambitious, motivated and passionate about developing their ecology / planning careers and play a leading role in driving nature recovery in our City Region.



Please see **Appendix A (page 10)** for a full copy of the Job Description and Person Specification.



## Top Tips on How to Apply

Submitting a strong application gives you the best chance of progressing to the next stage of the recruitment process. The following guidance applies to all roles and will help you prepare a clear, compelling application:

### 1. Read the Job Description and Person Specification Thoroughly

- Make sure you understand the key duties, expectations, and essential criteria.
- Use the person specification as your guide when writing your application.

### 2. Provide Clear Evidence of Your Skills and Experience

- Show *how* you meet the criteria using specific, real examples.
- Consider using the **STAR method** (Situation, Task, Action, Result) to structure your responses.

### 3. Tailor Your Application

- Avoid generic statements. Focus on experience that directly relates to the role you are applying for.
- Demonstrate how your strengths align with the organisation's values and priorities.

### 4. Highlight Your Achievements

- Include examples of work you are proud of or significant contributions you have made in previous roles.
- Emphasise impact – improvements, efficiencies, positive outcomes, or innovations.

### 5. Be Clear About Qualifications and Training

- List all relevant qualifications and professional training, including dates and awarding bodies.
- If you are working towards a qualification, include expected completion dates.

### 6. Showcase Transferable Skills

- Skills such as communication, teamwork, problem-solving, digital literacy, and organisation are valuable across all roles.



- Provide examples that demonstrate these effectively.

### 7. Check Your Application Carefully

- Review your responses for clarity, spelling, and completeness.
- Ensure all sections of the application form have been filled in fully.

### 8. Submit Your Application Before the Deadline

- Note the closing date and allow plenty of time to prepare your application.
- Late submissions usually cannot be considered.

### 9. Prepare for Potential Next Steps

- If shortlisted, you may be invited to an interview, assessment task, or presentation.
- Be ready to discuss your experience, approach to work, and examples of how you meet the role's requirements.

## Application and Selection Information

The closing date for this vacancy is **Friday 26<sup>th</sup> June 2026** (or earlier in the event of high volume of applications being received).

Provisional interview dates are **week commencing 13<sup>th</sup> July 2026**.

We are an Equal Opportunities Employer; all candidates will receive equal treatment. Our decision to appoint will be based upon whether an individual's skills, experience, qualifications, and abilities make them the most suitable candidate for the role.

All disabled and care experienced applicants will be offered an interview where they meet all essential criteria on the person specification.

**Please ensure that you meet all the essential criteria outlined in the person specification before submitting your application. Only applicants who demonstrate that they meet all essential criteria will be considered and invited to interview.**



## Appendix A – Job Description and Person Specification

### **Post: Ecologist (one permanent position, one 2-year fixed term appointment)**

<b>Directorate:</b>	Planning
<b>Location:</b>	Hybrid/Court Hey Park, Knowsley/Magdalen House, Bootle
<b>Division:</b>	Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service
<b>Post:</b>	Ecologist
<b>Grade:</b>	H (£37,280– £40,777)
<b>Reporting to:</b>	Principal Ecologist

### **Purpose of the Role**

Provide specialist technical advice to the Merseyside authorities on ecology, biodiversity, nature conservation and Habitats Regulations Assessments (HRA) under the management of the Merseyside EAS Director and Principal Ecologist.

### **MAIN DUTIES**

1. Advise on the impact of planning applications, including Environmental Impact Assessments, on biodiversity, ecology and nature conservation resources on behalf of the constituent authorities. Recommend and advise on the acceptability of surveys, method statements, planning conditions, monitoring requirements and conservation management.
2. Be responsible for the co-ordination and delivery of development control work, including Environmental Impact Assessment for Merseyside EAS as directed by the Merseyside EAS Director and Principal Ecologist. Act as expert witness when appropriate.
3. Be responsible for the co-ordination and development of a consistent Merseyside approach to Local Site (wildlife & geological) systems, including monitoring and co-ordination of Defra's Single Data set performance reporting.
4. Advise as part of the Ecology Team, on the ecological implications of the Authorities' plans, projects and programmes and assist with development of appropriate projects, including Local Development Documents.



5. Be responsible for, co-ordinate and complete, HRA reports on protected sites and species, including HRA screening reports, Appropriate Assessment and Three Test Assessments for European protected species, of plans, policies and projects.
6. Be responsible for strategic and site-specific liaison with Natural England, Environment Agency, Forestry Commission, Countryside Council for Wales and Defra on ecological and HRA matters, and the Mersey Forest.
7. Assist with delivery of the Merseyside authorities' NERC duty for biodiversity by implementing the LCR Ecological Framework and the North Merseyside Biodiversity Action Plan. Be responsible for co-ordinating and reporting progress to Defra and the Merseyside Authorities.
8. Assist the Authorities in their monitoring and reporting duties for nature conservation and biodiversity duties (with specific reference to Local Development Frameworks, Local Sites, LCR Ecological Framework, North Merseyside Biodiversity Action Plan, HRA and development control). Develop and implement agreed mechanisms for nature conservation and ecological data exchange, validation, quality assurance and interpretation, with partners including Merseyside BioBank.
9. Assist in commission and management of consultancy services for the Merseyside authorities. Provide technical advice, quality assurance and review of consultancy outputs to the client and/or contractor.
10. Provide technical support to the operation and development of Merseyside EAS GIS systems and databases.
11. Assist the Merseyside authorities in complying with nature conservation legislation and duties (including biodiversity) through the provision of user-friendly information, advice and by finding solutions to resolve issues.
12. Provide technical support and deputise for the Principal Ecologist and/or other officers at events and meetings as required.
13. Participate in effective employee relations and undertake appropriate departmental training courses to improve effectiveness in tasks set.

### **SPECIAL CONDITIONS**

Ability and flexibility for frequent independent travel to meeting venues, events and other locations (e.g. for site survey and monitoring, Local Site monitoring purposes, together with monitoring implementation of the biodiversity duty) within the Liverpool City Region.

Sefton's casual car users allowance and travel expenses policies apply to this post.

Occasional work outside normal hours is required.



## **GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

This job description is a representative document. Other reasonably similar duties may be allocated from time to time commensurate with the general character of the post and its grading.

All staff have a duty to take care of their own health & safety and that of others who may be affected by your actions at work. Staff must co-operate with employers and co-workers to help everyone meet their legal requirements.

The Authority has an approved equality policy in employment and copies are freely available to all employees. The post holder will be expected to comply, observe and promote the equality policies of the Council.

Since confidential information is involved with the duties of this post, the postholder will be required to exercise discretion at all times and to observe relevant codes of practice and legislation in relation to data protection and personal information.

The appointed person will be expected to work flexibly and the exact nature of the duties described above is subject to periodic review and is liable to change.

The appointed person will be expected to undertake, and participate in training, coaching and development activities, as appropriate to the role.

**Note:** Where the postholder is disabled, every reasonable effort will be made to support all necessary aids, adaptations or equipment to allow them to carry out all the duties of the job.



### PERSON SPECIFICATION

**Job Title:** Ecologist, Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service

**Grade:** Grade H (SCP 26 - 30)

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES REQUIRED	Essential (E) or Desirable (D)	Assessment Method
<b><u>Qualifications</u></b>		
1. First Degree in biology or ecology or a related subject.	D	A, Cert.
2. Membership of relevant professional organisation.	D	A, Cert.
3. Post-graduate qualification in ecology or a related subject.	D	A, Cert.
<b><u>Experience</u></b>		
1. Demonstrated practical experience of identifying and reviewing ecological implications of policies, plans, programmes and projects, for example: EIA and HRA, and the development of nature conservation policies.	E	A, I (reports)
2. Detailed experience in ecology and biodiversity theory with practical experience in at least two of the following: coastal environments; development control; identification skills; invasive species; land use planning and management plans.	E	A, I (reports)
3. Experience of data analysis, interpretation of environmental information and preparation of reports.	E	A, I
4. Biodiversity, ecology and nature conservation policy and legislation experience, for example the Habitats	D	A, I



<p>Regulations, NERC, Wildlife &amp; Countryside Act.</p> <p>5. Experience of commissioning of services and management of consultants and contractors.</p> <p>6. Experience of the development control process and working with private sector developers. Preparation and technical review of HRA reports.</p> <p>7. Experience of project management.</p>	<p>D</p> <p>D</p> <p>D</p>	<p>A, I</p> <p>A, I</p> <p>A, I</p>
<p><u>Knowledge/Skills/Abilities</u></p> <p>1. Ability to work effectively both as part of a team and on own initiative to prioritise and deliver agreed deadlines, goals and performance targets.</p> <p>2. Excellent communication skills.</p> <p>3. Solution focused and business-friendly approach. Development of self-reliance and competence in the Merseyside authorities.</p> <p>4. Commitment to continuing professional and personal development.</p> <p>5. Clear presentation skills.</p> <p>6. Well-developed IT and good organisational skills.</p>	<p>E</p> <p>E</p> <p>E</p> <p>E</p> <p>D</p> <p>D</p>	<p>A, I</p> <p>A, I (reports)</p> <p>A, I</p> <p>A, I</p> <p>I (reports)</p> <p>A, I</p>



<u>Special Conditions</u>		
1. Ability and flexibility for independent travel to meet the requirements of the post.	E – see special conditions	A
2. Prepared to work occasional evenings and weekends.	D	A, I
3. A level of physical mobility to undertake work on sites of difficult terrain is required.	D	A

**Assessment Method Key: A: Application Form, Cert.: Certificate, I: Interview, P: Presentation, I(reports): reports brought to interview.**

