JOB PROFILE

JOB PROFILE SUMMARY

Job Title: Assistant Tree Officer
Reports to: Conservation and Design Manager, Planning Policy Service
Date: October 2026
Grade: C

Organisation Chart

The role will work across the Planning Service, including Development Management and Planning Policy

MAIN PURPOSE OF JOB

- To provide general arboricultural information on tree matters to customers by telephone, correspondence and in person, to deal effectively and efficiently with a personal workload as allocated to them, and to assist the Tree Officer with the preparation of Tree Preservation Orders and advice to planning officers. To be part of a team providing an efficient and helpful service to all customers in respect of tree matters.

KEY DUTIES/ACCOUNTABILITIES

Planning Applications

1. On receipt of applications for Tree Preservation Order Consent (TPO's), works to trees in Conservation Areas (TCA's), Hedgerow applications and other tree related applications, to determine and initiate internal and external consultation processes.

2. To assist the Tree Officer on application site inspections in urban and rural parts of the District and South Downs National Park.

3. Under the direction of the Tree Officer to prepare correspondence.

4. Under the guidance of the Tree Officer to explain the process, key considerations and amendments/revisions to submitted proposals, as necessary to customers. .

5. To assist the Tree Officer with the preparation of reports on applications for works to trees and requests for tree preservation orders for consideration by the Development Manager, Principal Planning Officer or Planning Committee.

6. To deal with all general enquiries by letter, email, telephone or in person.

7. Under the guidance of the Tree Officer to provide information to other Officers within the District Council, Councillors and customers in respect of legislation, discharge of conditions relating to tree aspects of planning, requests for TPOs, works undertaken and reviews on dead or dangerous trees, works by statutory undertakers and to assist with the duty officer service when required.

8. To assist the Tree Officer as required in liaising with West Sussex County Council (WSCC) and the Forestry Commission on applications relating to felling/thinning licences and woodland grant schemes.

9. To support the work of the administration processes on our data system relating to tree inquiries, tree applications, planning applications and emails.

Appeals

10. To assist the Tree Officer, with the preparation of appeal documents.

11. To support the TSO's in the administration of appeal procedures and Tree enquiries on our data (uniform) system.

Enforcement Duties

13. To assist the Tree Officer and our Planning Enforcement Team in the investigation of complaints alleging a breach of planning control in relation to tree matters (i.e. check planning history, aerial photographic records, undertake document management and filing tasks).

ADDITIONAL DUTIES AND ACCOUNTABILITIES

1. To take an active role in the team and in relation to arboricultural matters.

2. To demonstrate a commitment to always providing excellent customer care.

3. Undertake correspondence; filing; administrative tasks; telephone queries and administrative duties diligently and accurately.

4. Understand fully the Health and Safety demands of the job and meet all the demands as and when required.

5. Attend training courses when asked to do so.

6. Comply fully with general statutory requirement such as Data Protection and statutory requirements specific to the role.

7. Follow the Council's staffing policies at all times, including: dress code; flexible working practices, email and internet use.

8. To support the effective operation of the agency agreement with the South Downs National Park Authority in accordance with the Service Level Agreement as appropriate.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & EXPERIENCE

Essential Plant/Tree Knowledge and Technical Skills

- A general understanding of tree-related planning matters, including assessing the impact of development on trees and consideration of their amenity value within a urban or rural landscape.

- The ability to interpret Tree Regulations 2012 planning legislation (Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and related policy documents.

- Ability to accurately input data into IT systems

- Ability to communicate effectively verbally and in writing, ensuring communication is polite, clear, and concise.

- Experience of analysing information and identifying key issues and deciding which actions should be followed.

- Sound interpersonal and communication skills.

- A commitment to providing customer care at a high level, ability to deal with people of all ages and abilities in a professional and discreet manner

- Competent keyboard skills and familiarity with use of computer applications - experience of using Microsoft Office packages.

- A valid UK driving licence and daily access to a car for business purposes (Site visits)

- A level of numeracy sufficient to analyse basic data and draw conclusions from statistics.

Qualifications

- 3 A-levels A-C or equivalent qualifications (e.g. level 3 National diploma, certificate or NVQ in Arboriculture).

- Relevant experience working in an arboriculture role, such as a qualified Tree Surgeon (no climbing trees required for the role) or recently qualified with an Arboriculture qualification or already have a role as an Arboricultural Assistant is desirable but not essential. Relevant experience of working in a customer facing role is desirable but not essential.

Personal Attributes/Competencies

- Able to demonstrate enthusiasm and determination to achieve objectives with an ability to work efficiently and methodically under pressure to meet deadlines and targets.

- Reliable and resilient individual.

- Diplomatic and confident when dealing with the public, applicants and agents and members including challenging customers.

- Adaptable and able to embrace system and procedural changes

- Able to work with colleagues to achieve service targets and develop trust and respect for professional opinions and views.

- Effective and articulate communication skills.

END OF THE RECRUITMENT PROFILE