

Want a career that does more than just pay the bills?

Willing to put in the work? It is rarely just 9 to 5 in the green economy

#GoGreen #Greenjobs



This leaflet has been produced by the East Suffolk Greenprint Forum as part of our role in helping local people share information and develop then run projects to improve the lives of people and the natural environment.

It covers a few examples of other careers and their environmental links because we believe there are very few roles that cannot help improve or at least reduce environmental impacts.

All it needs is a willingness to learn and to try.



Case study one—Senior Environmental Scientist/Environmental Manager Starting salary in 1999 £3.60/hr—currently on £20/hr

My career, like that of so many, has been varied. As a teenager I volunteered in an Oxfam shop, read for the blind and volunteered in environmental conservation roles. Then I temped through various administrative and finance roles. After returning to university as a mature student (aged 22) to study Environmental Science, undertaking three placements and numerous part time jobs to keep the money coming in, I gained a job as a Park Warden which, whilst involving menial tasks like toilet cleaning and bin emptying, was a opportunity to meet great people and was great experience which helped me move on to become an Environmental Projects Assistant with a local council.

I then gained a role as an Environmental Sustainability Officer in the public sector and after ten years, with further study achieving a Masters in Environmental Management achieving membership of [IEMA](#) along the way, joined the private sector as a Snr Environmental Scientist/Environmental Manager in a manufacturing plant for a global company.

This is a fascinating role requiring agile thinking and the ability to switch from admin tasks like data entry, to practical tasks such as borehole inspections and environmental sampling, to investigations, auditing, training, strategic planning and compliance reporting.



Case study two—Environmental Sustainability Officer Starting salary in 2000 £100/week – currently on £17.00/hr

Whilst attending university to study Ecology & Environmental Biology I gained practical experience at weekends with the local conservation group, and took the opportunity of a 6-week summer placement arranged by the University and funded by the borough council to undertake a waste audit at the local hospital.

This placement was a key experience along with my degree in securing my first step on my environmental career path shortly after graduating, enabling me to move on from temping in retail to be a Recycling Officer for the local district council – initially as a 6 month maternity cover which led to a permanent role – and later included a fixed-term secondment with the local cross-council waste partnership as a Project Manager.

More recently I moved back into local government as an Environmental Sustainability Officer. This role has brought me into contact with so many passionate and committed individuals not only within the community, but in local businesses, the district council and other neighbouring local authorities and working with them to promote best practice and deliver action on the ground that helps reduce our environmental impact. The best part of my role is being part of a wider network of people working towards a positive vision in a mutually supportive way.



Case study three— Rising High Intern, now East Sussex Council Data Analyst.

Rising High salary National minimum wage for age.



During my time at university I was offered the opportunity to have a summer working within the council at East Suffolk. During my 3 months at the council I was working as an intern within the environmental service. Some of the main tasks I was challenged with undertaking during this time were: to create reports on the annual carbon footprint of the council, rewrite the Joint Environmental Policy as well as working with the team to host a number of events for the Greenprint Forum.

What degree did you do?

I Studied BSc Politics at the University of Southampton.

How did the Suffolk Rising High Internship help you with getting this job?

My internship at East Suffolk was one of the key factors behind my being offered my role at the East Sussex Council. A lot of my work during my internship was statistically driven, giving me the on-the-job experience needed to succeed in a data analysis role.

What would you say were the strengths of the Greenprint Forum having had a brief chance to get to know the network?

The Greenprint Forum not only provides an opportunity for the local community to become actively engaged in events and schemes that they might not otherwise know about, it also runs its own events, workshops and awareness programs for people to get involved in. During my time working within the Forum we held awareness events on topics ranging from the protection of hedgerows to the increased usage of electric vehicles.

Is there any advice you would give to a young person looking to work in the environmental sector?

Almost every bit of work in every department of the government be it at a local, national or international level links back the environmental sector; its importance cannot be underestimated. So regardless of what area your interests may lie, there is a high chance that part of them will have an effect on the environmental sector. So whilst the topics I have mentioned may not sound appealing to you, there are thousands of others that are just waiting for someone to take on and bring to the forefront of environmental politics.

Case study four — Environmental Enforcement Officer

Starting salary in 1995 £10,000 pa, currently £32,000 pa

Having grown up on the back of a horse, I left school, excited about the prospect of studying to become a riding instructor. After the first year I decided it wasn't for me and went to work for my parent's pest control company in 1995.

After my initial training, I was put on the contract to provide pest control on behalf of the local district council, this was the free pest control service that was offered to residents in the district. It was sub-contracted out and our company had the contract. Having worked on the contract for two years, the Council decided to take the service back in house and combine it with the dog warden service, which coincided with my parents selling their business.



So in 1997 I joined the district council as a Pest Control Officer and Dog Warden. Having always been a doggy person, I couldn't wait to start picking up the strays!

In 2011 the first of the government cuts were made and the subsidised pest control service was one of the first services to lose its subsidy. It then became a chargeable service but with very little uptake, the service was withdrawn altogether. There was then a re-structure within our department, followed by a redundancy, and a retirement and I emerged as a Waste Management Officer. I still picked up the stray dogs, but my day-to-day work now consisted of dealing with fly tips, littering, dog fouling, abandoned vehicles, and anything else to do with waste enforcement.

Fast forward to 2024, I'm no longer picking up stray dogs but still doing all the above and some! It's a very varied role, no two days are the same and I really enjoy the investigatory side of it.



I want to help people attain, retain or recover their health and wellbeing so that they can look after themselves and their families and feel that they contribute to society.

Care workers. Doctors. Nurses. Social Workers, Paramedics, Radiographers, Podiatrists, Physicians, Midwives, Pharmacists etc. www.prospects.ac.uk/jobs-and-work-experience/job-sectors/healthcare/overview-of-the-healthcare-sector-in-the-uk

“Human health and wellbeing depends on air, food, shelter and water, all partly or fully derived from the natural environment. Evidence indicates that biodiversity is critical to underpin ecosystem functioning and the delivery of goods and services that are essential to human health and wellbeing.” (Defra, 2017) There is also growing evidence of links between landscape scale environmental processes and human health outcomes.

<https://beyondgreenspace.net/2017/03/09/defra-evidence-statement-on-the-links-between-natural-environments-and-human-health/>

These are things to be aware of—because you may be able to influence them indirectly through your work— climate change impacts can be reduced through lower demand on fossil fuels for example.

In terms of direct help for people from nature: “There is relatively strong and consistent evidence for mental health and wellbeing benefits arising from exposure to natural environments, including reductions in stress, fatigue, anxiety and depression. (Defra, 2017).

<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/127020>

<https://nhsforest.org>





I am practical, physically fit, like to be outside whatever the weather, like to communicate with people of all ages and I will drive to wherever the job takes me.

[Countryside Ranger](#)/Warden/Outdoors Officer £20,000 to £28,000

Volunteer in the UK and try to get work experience doing practical outside work — an apprenticeship or an internship can be a route in. Get known. Work hard. Keep a sense of humour. Combine this with a degree in conservation, environmental management or similar subject to get the better paid jobs.

www.nationalparks.gov.uk/about-us/jobs-and-volunteering/workingforus/ranger

www.suffolkwildlifetrust.org/volunteer-opportunities

www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org/volunteering

www.groundwork.org.uk/Sites/east/Pages/volunteer-with-us-east



Very useful sites: www.countryside-jobs.com and <http://naturenet.net/people/getajob.html>

[Farm Hands](#) /labourers minimum wage to £25,000



Its all about experience and connections. Volunteer at local farms, try WOOFING www.woof.org.uk

Join a 12-month industry and development programmes www.nfuonline.com/sectors/next-generation/



I like a mix of desk work and getting outside. I am practical and academic and like to communicate with people of all ages and I will travel to wherever the job takes me.

Contractor £22,000 to £60,000

A good honours degree is the minimum entry qualification in one of the sciences or engineering or social, economic or business studies. Experience and membership of a recognised body such as IEMA will help.

Ecologist £22,000 to £45,000

A degree in a relevant subject (ecology, zoology, conservation biology etc.). Plus practical field surveying experience through volunteering. Use of National Biodiversity Network (NBN) Gateway <https://data.nbn.org.uk>, Suffolk Biodiversity Information Service www.suffolkbis.org.uk/ MAGIC mapping www.natureonthemap.naturalengland.org.uk/

Energy Professional £27,000 to £55,000

An Energy Institute accredited degree course is recommended followed by joining a graduate scheme. Volunteering with a local community buildings committee to help them investigate and develop energy projects would add to your CV. Undertaking continuing professional development will help.



<https://energyinst.org/membership-and-careers/careers>

www.edfenergy.com/careers/early-careers/internships

Environmental Health Officer £27,500 to £54,000

You will need an environmental health degree or postgraduate degree approved by the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) www.cieh.org/ and experience.



Environmental Manager/Sustainability Officer £25,000 to £100,000

A degree in a relevant field is needed. Experience and membership of a recognised body such as [IEMA](#) will help.

Planning Officer 30,000 to £100,000



Studying a RTPI accredited undergraduate or postgraduate course at university is the main route to becoming a Chartered Town Planner. There are also apprenticeships in town planning technical support and occasionally opportunities for interns/work experience at local authorities through Rising High.

www.rtpi.org.uk/education-and-careers/become-a-planner/your-next-steps/#apprenticeship

Recycling officer £22,500 to 45,000

Many employers will ask for an HNC, HND or degree in waste management or environmental sciences, accredited by the Chartered Institution of Wastes Management (CIWM) www.ciwm.co.uk. In addition an apprenticeship, internship or voluntary work will help.



Water management or engineering, hydrology or modelling £24,000 to £60,000

Usually civil engineering degrees accredited by the appropriate engineering body, for example the Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE) are expected. For a list of accredited qualifications see the Engineering Council. Membership of a professional body is expected www.ciwm.co.uk and www.instituteofwater.org.uk



Further information

Two good environmental job sites:

- [Environmental jobs | Environmentjob.co.uk](#)
- www.greenjobs.co.uk

A good site to join in order to network and connect with professionals in not just the environmental sector but all sectors, is [Linked In](#).

In Suffolk you can get a good start with a **Rising High** internship, graduate placement, work experience or an apprenticeship. See www.risinghighsuffolk.org.uk for links to all these schemes.

The [Greenprint Forum](#) is a free, voluntary network of people from all walks of life including business and public sector representatives and community enthusiasts for grass roots environmental action.

It is free to join and open to anyone, just email greenissues@eastsoffolk.gov.uk with the message title: Greenprint Membership request and give your name and area of interest relating to the environment, or sign up online via the website above.

Good luck in pursuing your environmental career!

