

Job Specification for Wey & Arun Canal Development Manager

Summary: The development manager will be a major contributor to implementing the restoration strategy for the Wey & Arun Canal. The task is to strengthen and develop relationships with government and private organisations, for the benefit of the restoration project.

Experience: The post would suit someone with experience in local government planning, perhaps as a local authority officer or planning committee member. Someone with experience of dealing with local authority planning teams as a “customer” could also be suitable. A good knowledge of the area between Guildford, Surrey and Pulborough, Sussex, would be helpful.

This is primarily a “political” role and detailed expertise in engineering, environmental and navigational areas is not required. However, any experience of these subjects would be helpful.

Detailed responsibilities: The development manager will fully understand the planning policy framework for the restoration and will seek to influence its future direction. He or she will need to become familiar with the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy for the South-East, with the existing County Structure Plans and the Local Development Frameworks (LDFs) now being produced for each local authority area. He or she will also need to understand the Canal Completion Strategy commissioned by the stakeholder group in 2006-7. The manager will seek opportunities to contribute to the development of each framework to ensure that it is fully compatible with future restoration of the Wey & Arun Canal and gives restoration the appropriate support.

The development manager will seek to strengthen and develop the Wey & Arun Canal Trust’s relationships with the local authorities and other agencies (for example, Natural England, Environment Agency) whose contributions will be vital to the future restoration of the canal. He or she will build up regular contacts with the principal officers in the relevant departments (e.g. Environment, Tourism, Planning) and with elected members responsible for those areas, so that they are fully aware of the Wey & Arun Canal, its development strategy and its potential to contribute to their objectives. The manager should also build on existing contacts with private industry and seek opportunities for developing new relationships.

At a local level, the development officer should be aware of all proposed developments near the canal route that could influence future restoration and where possible will act to ensure an optimal solution for all parties. He or she should use contacts with local organisations to understand local views relevant to canal restoration.

The development officer will identify options for future funding of his/her post, ideally on a full-time basis. One possible model here could be the partnerships established between canal societies and local authorities elsewhere in the UK. It is not the development officer’s primary role to seek funding for the restoration of the Wey & Arun Canal.

The development manager will initially be responsible to the Council of Management (CoM) of the Wey & Arun Canal Trust and may if appropriate be appointed to the CoM. He or she will be a member of the Canal Completion Steering Group (which includes representatives from all stakeholders) and may eventually become its Chairman. He or she should co-operate closely with the Trust’s Landowner Liaison Group and should be aware of the work being done by the Restoration Group.

Skills: The development manager needs to have excellent interpersonal and presentational skills, with a good command of written English. Familiarity with standard office IT tools (Word, Excel, Powerpoint, e-mail) is expected.

Conditions: To be discussed at interview. The Wey & Arun Canal Trust is a registered charity. Initial appointment will be for a trial period of 6 months on a voluntary basis.

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