



Job Description

Job title:	Assistant Sustainable Development Officer
Team/Section:	Sustainable Development Team
Location:	Norfolk / Suffolk / South Lincolnshire / North Cambridgeshire Head office is Kings Lynn, Norfolk
Responsible to:	Senior Sustainable Development Officer
Responsible for:	No Line Management Responsibilities.
Salary:	£25,000 to £30,000
Hours	37 (Full Time) although part-time would be considered.

Context

The **Water Management Alliance** is a group of like-minded Internal Drainage Boards (“IDBs”) operating in the Anglian Region of the United Kingdom who share vision, values and standards, and have chosen to jointly administer their affairs in order to reduce costs, strengthen their own organisations and increase influence at both a national and regional level.

Internal Drainage Boards (“IDBs”) are local public authorities that manage flood risk and land drainage within areas of special drainage need in England. Each IDB has permissive powers to undertake water management activities within their Internal Drainage District. The purpose of delivering this work is to reduce flood risk to people and property and to manage water in a way that meets the local needs of business and agriculture, including during times of drought, whilst also dealing with its obligations and commitments to the environment. IDBs exercise a general power of supervision over all matters relating to water level management within their district whilst conducting their work in accordance with a number of general environmental duties and promoting the ecological wellbeing of their districts.

The **Sustainable Development Team** within the Water Management Alliance uses each Board’s powers under the Land Drainage Act 1991 (including the Board’s Byelaws) to meet the team’s **key purpose** of ensuring that development is carried out sustainably within the Boards’ Drainage Districts and upland catchment areas. This is done by regulating works on, or affecting, the watercourses within their Internal Drainage Districts. The Sustainable Development Team also advises Planning Authorities by commenting on planning applications within (or near to) each Board’s District. The aim of this activity is to ensure that new developments will not increase flood risk within the Internal Drainage District and that applicants are aware of the Board’s regulatory controls and requirements.

Role Overview

An Assistant Sustainable Development Officer (SDO) will assist with the proactive engagement with new development / planned changes within the WMA catchments by commenting on planning consultations and processing applications for Land Drainage Consent. An Assistant SDO will work alongside colleagues within the team on more complex cases.

Role Description

The role will engage with party works by advising the Local Planning Authority on development proposals as well as regulating works using the 'Land Drainage Consent' process. The role will therefore require the following tasks to be undertaken largely independently using policies, procedures, advice and guidance from the Senior Sustainable Development Officers and the Sustainable Development Manager:

- Interpretation and analysis of planning applications and consent applications (including technical designs, plans and model outputs) to assess the likely impact of proposals on flood risk / drainage and whether the Board's consent is likely required.
- Provision of advice to Local Planning Authorities and applicants to promote best practice, ensure the Board's requirements are met and reduce the impact of development on flood risk locally.
- Consultation with internal stakeholders (engineers, environmental officers and operations teams) and analysis of existing data sources (maps, models, historic data).
- Liaison and negotiation with Local Planning Authorities, applicants and other external authorities.
- Attendance at site visits to assess proposals, ensuring Health and Safety is paramount at all times and that Health and Safety objectives are promoted and achieved.
- Maintaining accurate records of all cases reviewed and processed using the team case file register and email inbox.
- Keeping knowledge current and up to date, by way of continuous professional development.
- Any other duties that may reasonably be required.

The following tasks will be undertaken alongside colleagues:

- Interpretation and analysis of complex planning applications and consent applications (including technical designs, plans and model outputs) to assess the likely impact of proposals on flood risk / drainage.
- Application of relevant conditions where land drainage consent is granted.
- Application of WMA policies.

Person Specification	
Qualifications	
Essential	Desirable
A relevant degree in an engineering, geographical or water management-related subject OR notable, relevant and transferable industry experience.	
Experience	
Essential	Desirable
- Experience liaising, corresponding and negotiating with a variety of stakeholders. - Experience interpreting plans, model outputs or other technical information.	- Experience working in a regulatory or technical role within the Water Industry, a Local Authority, the Environment Agency or other public body such as a Lead Local Flood Authority ("LLFA"). - Experience working with land drainage engineering techniques and surface water management.
Skills/Knowledge	
Essential	Desirable
- Ability to prioritise effectively and organise workloads to meet deadlines and to remain calm under pressure. - Ability to analyse, interpret and communicate complex material, as well as having a methodical approach to work, demonstrating an attention to detail as well as accuracy in record keeping. - Ability to competently use computer software such as Microsoft packages. - Well-developed written and spoken communication skills (including letter writing, presentation skills and interpersonal communication). - Ability to work well with others at all levels both internally and externally. - A full and valid driving licence. - Ability to work independently	- An understanding of water management and drainage design for new development. - An understanding/knowledge of planning practice. - An understanding of Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) including Land Drainage Law. - An understanding of environmental policy and legislation. - An understanding of GIS software. - The ability to interpret and apply technical information (e.g. British Standards, Codes of Practice, technical reports and plans). - A detailed understanding of Planning Legislation, including Development Consent Orders and the TCPA.

• Be resilient and persuasive, with the ability to deal with challenges and questions confidently. • Creative problem solving skills with an ability to identify areas for development and improvement.	• An understanding of the Boards regulatory and enforcement powers and procedures.
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Other Job Information (e.g. any special factors or constraints)

- The work will involve walking around watercourse and drainage catchments. Such areas are potentially difficult to access, dirty, remote and/or subject to dense vegetation.
- On occasion the post holder will be expected to work outside of 'normal' office hours to represent the Water Management Alliance and its member Boards at public meetings, events and committees.
- All work performed/duties undertaken must be carried out in accordance with relevant Water Management Alliance, Board and Departmental policies and procedures, within legislation, and with regard to the needs of our customers.
- Work within the public and Flood and Water Management sectors can involve dealing with new and emerging legislation. As such further duties or refinements of current workload may alter the remit of this role to meet the impact of new work areas in the organisation and/or relevant member Board's. This highlights the importance of the post holder in being an effective advocate for this service area and having a good insight into the wider remits of the organisation.
- You will be required to actively consider the impact of your working arrangements on the organisation's carbon footprint. Post holders should regularly review the necessity of printing hard copies of electronic documents and seek alternatives to work related travel where it is not essential and work objectives can be met by other means such as video conferencing.

Declaration and acknowledgement

I confirm that as of the date stated below the information in this job description is accurate and reflects the requirement of the role. Please note the details of the job description will be updated should substantive changes to the role occur or be proposed.

Line Manager:	Mark Ogden
Position:	Sustainable Development Manager (WMA)
Date:	30/06/2026