

Ecologist & Environmental Planner

Information for Applicants



Our Organisation

Manx National Heritage (MNH) is the trading name given to the Manx Museum and National Trust. The Trust was constituted in 1886 with the purpose of creating a national museum of Manx heritage and culture. The Trust has grown steadily in scope and reach and it is now the Islands statutory heritage agency.

Manx National Heritage exists to take a lead in protecting, conserving, making accessible and celebrating the Island's natural and cultural heritage for current and future generations whilst contributing to the Island's prosperity and quality of life

MNH owns and manages around 3000 acres of land, welcomes around 400,000 visits to thirteen sites of historic and landscape significance every year and is home to the National Museum, National Archives and National Art Gallery.

Our Vision, principles and values

MNH's vision is "Securing the Future of Our Past".

Underpinning this vision are key principles and values which guide everyone who works for the organisation as they conduct their core business and their decision-making.

- Being led by and responsive to our visitors and users
- Working in collaboration
- Being open and transparent
- Providing value for money
- Making the most of our assets
- Using evidence-led decision-making and feedback from our users
- Providing equality of access
- Promoting and using the Manx Language
- Preserving and promoting traditional skills
- Consulting with key stakeholders and our community on what we do
- Managing risk and being safe
- Aiming for continuous improvement and developing our team

Purpose

Our strategic purposes can be summarised as follows:

- Look after MMNT buildings and lands
- Look after MMNT collections
- Protect the Island's wider heritage and landscape

- Increase access by users and visitors to Manx culture, landscape, heritage, and MMNT collections and information
- Understand and promote Manx culture, landscape and heritage
- Manage ourselves effectively

The Role

We are seeking an experienced ecologist and environmental manager who will share our vision and is passionate about the natural environment and community engagement.

Whilst providing input into the organisations response to planning applications and policy, the post holder will also have the opportunity to develop conservation management plans for some of our landholdings, build partnerships with other organisations and assist with the delivery of Manx Wildlife Week. Providing advice and support to MNH colleagues is a key responsibility of the role, working within a multi-disciplinary team to ensure the organisation meets its legal requirements in terms of planning and environmental legislation, as well as identifying areas/opportunities for ecological enhancement.

The Ecologist & Environmental Planner will need to have great interpersonal and leadership skills. Experience and knowledge of protected species, including either current or previously held licences, including bats, standard ecological survey methods and best practice are essential. Experience of conservation management planning would be highly beneficial as would some knowledge of environmental sustainability.

Knowledge of the Manx/UK planning system, relevant legislation and best practice is also considered essential.

Partnership working

MNH is committed to improving how it manages and cares for its natural heritage sites. This often requires liaison with other organisations outside of MNH, including the relevant government departments and non-governmental organisations. MNH envisages that the opportunities for partnership working will increase in importance as we move forward. MNH is also increasingly enjoying the practical support and enthusiasm of volunteers in delivering its services and our aspiration is to continue to make more opportunities for our friends and supporters to make a tangible and personally rewarding contribution to our work.

The following includes information on a number of sites which will be a focus of the role.

The Calf of Man Bird Observatory



The Calf of Man (Yn Cholloo) is an islet located half a mile off the southern tip of the Isle of Man. It comprises approximately 618 acres of heathland, acid grassland, maritime heath and coastal cliffs, with breeding populations of guillemot, razorbill, shag, fulmar and Manx shearwater. The Calf of Man Bird Observatory is at the heart of the islet, and is in its 60th year of operation, recording and ringing migratory and resident birds. The Observatory is run in partnership with Manx Wildlife Trust, who also conduct wider surveys, including marine mammals and lepidoptera.

The Calf was previously home to a sizeable colony of Manx shearwater, believed to number tens of thousands. Historically harvested for the meat and oil of the chicks, pressure on this population was dramatically increased in the late 1700's when a shipwreck introduced brown rat. By 1812, the Manx shearwater was extinct on the Calf. Breeding shearwaters have been suspected on the Calf since the 1980's but were finally confirmed by the Manx Bird Atlas in 2000. In 2012, MNH and partners implemented the Manx Shearwater Recovery Project, which saw a large-scale, intense eradication of brown rat. Whilst ongoing monitoring occasionally detect their presence, the decrease has enabled the Manx shearwater numbers to grow, with approximately 500 occupied burrows in 2018.

A new conservation management plan is currently in draft and will be the driver behind the work plan on the Calf. Working with the Calf wardens, the Ecologist & Environmental Planner will play a key role in implementing management and monitoring the success of the plan, adapting it as and when is required, and identifying areas for further research. From time to time the role will require you to work and stay on the Calf and enjoy its unique mixture of charm and challenge.

The Ballaugh Curraghs (Ramsar site and Area of Special Scientific Interest)



The curraghs are a uniquely Manx habitat which could be described as wet willow-dominated woodland. Whilst other areas of Curragh are present on the Isle of Man, the Ballaugh Curragh is by far the largest and most ecologically intact. Occupying the bed of the post-glacial 'Lake Andreas', it comprises a mosaic of interconnected wetland habitats including wet willow scrub, modified bog, wet mesotrophic grassland and traditional hay meadows, with areas of deep peat. Spanning numerous land ownerships, MNH owns the largest section of the curraghs, with neighbouring landowners including Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture and Manx Wildlife Trust.

The curraghs are home to numerous protected and notable species, including hen harrier, European eel, common frog, bog bean, royal fern and several species of orchid. The curraghs also support a feral population of red-necked wallabies. Aside from natural heritage, the Curraghs also have archaeological and cultural heritage interests and MNH maintains a network of pathways and boardwalks throughout the area.

The development of a new conservation management plan for the curraghs is a priority, with opportunities for partnership working with other organisations and landowners for a landscape scale approach.

Cregneash, Spanish Head, the Chasms and The Sound



Cregneash village is a living illustration of a farming and crofting community in the 19th and early 20th century. It sits at the northern point of a much larger MNH landholding which includes a farm that works to maintain the traditional field structure and operates at low intensity to conserve and promote biodiversity. The farm includes unimproved species-rich acid grassland, garey grassland (equivalent to Rhôs pasture), wet meadows and traditional sod hedgerows.

MNH is currently in the process of working towards a working partnership with an agricultural tenant to progress our low intensity and nature-friendly farming policy and work towards meeting the Conservation Performance Indicators we have set ourselves for the landholding.

Aside from the enclosed farm area, this landholding encompasses heathland and coastal brooughs which stretch down to Spanish Head and the Chasms, as well as smaller area at The Sound. The Chasms and nearby stacks, such as The Sugarloaf, support breeding seabird colonies. Cough are also abundant in this area, feeding on the coastal grasslands as well as in some of the more coastal fields of the working farm.

The Ayres (National Nature Reserve and Area of Special Scientific Interest)



The Ayres is a sand dune system on the northern tip of the Isle of Man, stretching approximately 8km from Cronk Y Bing in the south to the Point of Ayre in the North. As with the Ballaugh Curraghs, the Ayres is in multiple ownership.

The dune system comprises shingle beach and marram dune, but is most important for its extensive areas of lichen, or grey, heath, being the singular location on the island for this habitat, and only occurring in small patches elsewhere in the British Isles.

The Ayres supports notable plant species including Isle of Man cabbage, the only plant to take its name from the island, moonwort, adders tongue and several orchid species. Green tiger beetle and labyrinth spiders are common, along with viviparous lizard. The Ayres is also important for a number of bird species, with breeding little tern, skylark and lapwing, and species such as northern gannet frequently observed feeding offshore.

DEFA are a significant landowner on the Ayres, with MWT also having a reserve at the southern end. Coupled with the recent acquisition of the nearby gravel pits by Manx BirdLife, there is scope for a joined up, collaborative approach to nature conservation at a landscape scale in this area.