



**Suffolk**  
Wildlife Trust

# Head of Land Operations Reserves



# The Opportunity

This is an exciting opportunity to take on a senior leadership role at Suffolk Wildlife Trust at a crucial point in our journey towards achieving our 2030 strategic goals. With an ambitious vision for “a wilder Suffolk”, the Head of Land Operations will play a vital role in ensuring the Trust’s reserve network is operationally strong, financially secure and well positioned for the future. This is a role with both strategic & practical importance, offering the chance to make a lasting contribution to the protection & recovery of Suffolk’s wildlife and habitats.

The role will lead on supporting the effective management of reserves across the county by providing high-quality operational land management support. This includes overseeing legal and land agency matters, maintaining systems and documentation relating to land holdings, ensuring agreements, licences and permits are in place and retaining oversight of key functions such as grazing, GIS and reserve-related income streams.

The post holder will ensure that the operational foundations of the reserve network are robust and well managed to deliver strong outcomes for wildlife while reducing risk and improving long-term resilience.



Worlingham Marshes

Alongside this, the Head of Land Operations will help future-proof the reserve network by leading on acquisitions and disposals, supporting the development of habitat banks, enabling restoration and habitat creation projects and identifying opportunities that strengthen the network over time. The role also contributes to strategic oversight across the reserves, helping staff understand their part in delivering the Trust's wider goals, supporting collaboration across leadership teams and driving continuous improvement.

This role is a significant opportunity for someone who can combine operational leadership, strategic thinking and a strong commitment to nature recovery, helping us secure and strengthen our landholdings in support of a wilder Suffolk.

The post holder must have strong experience in land management, ideally with a good understanding of nature conservation practices, funding schemes and land agency matters such as acquisitions, disposals and leaseholds.

They will need budget management experience, the ability to work effectively with partners, landowners and communities and a strong track record of working with teams to improve efficiency and secure funding. Strong people management, organisational, written and IT skills are also essential, along with a positive, adaptable approach, high levels of integrity and determination with a clear commitment to our mission, vision, culture and values.



**Alde Mudflats**

# Our Nature Reserves

Across the Suffolk county we manage over 50 nature reserves covering more than 2,900 hectares. Taken together, the reserve network includes a broad range of habitat types, including floodplain marsh, lowland fen, reedbed, open water, wet meadow, valley fen, lowland heath, grassland, ancient woodland, coppiced woodland, estuarine mudflats and saltmarsh. The sites vary considerably in scale and function, from large wetland complexes such as Carlton Marshes and Redgrave & Lopham Fen to smaller woods, commons and meadow sites that protect locally important assemblages and habitat fragments.

The reserves also reflect the ecological diversity of Suffolk itself, with coastal and estuarine sites in the Alde, Deben, Orwell and Blyth systems, lowland heath and acid grassland on the Sandlings, ancient woodland in central and west Suffolk and fen, marsh and grazing meadow habitats in the county's river valleys and Broads-edge landscapes. A substantial proportion of our reserves carry statutory or non-statutory designations, including SSSI, SAC, SPA, Ramsar, NNR and County Wildlife Sites' status, indicating the importance of the network for both habitat conservation and species assemblages at county, national and international scale.



**Knettishall Heath**

Credit: Nick Jermy



Mickfield Meadow

# About Suffolk Wildlife Trust

**Suffolk Wildlife Trust is the county's nature charity, protecting and restoring Suffolk's wildlife.**

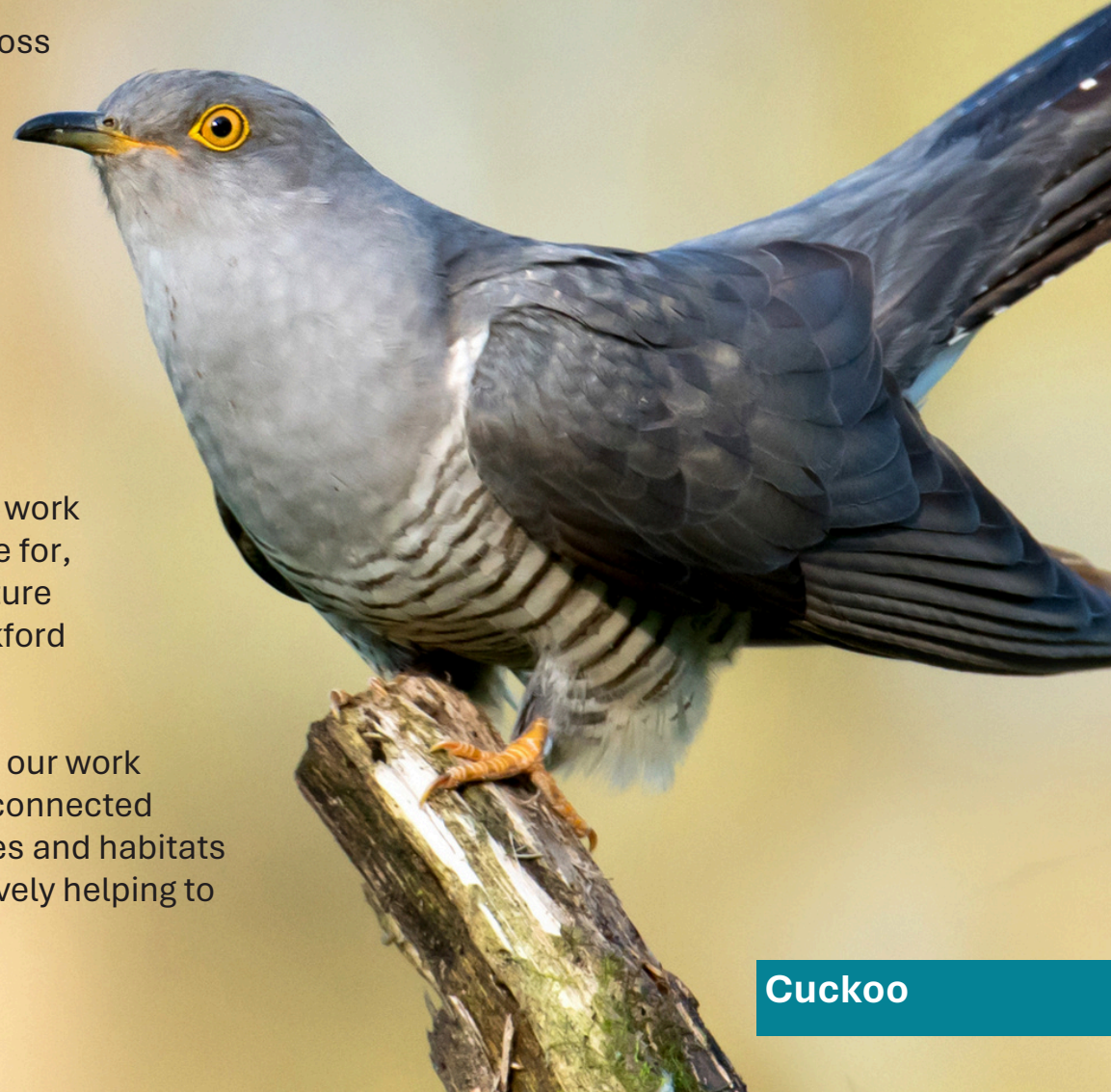
Founded in 1961, we have led conservation efforts across Suffolk for more than 60 years, safeguarding some of the county's most important wildlife areas as nature reserves.

**Our Mission:** Brining Nature Back to Suffolk

**Our Vision:** A wilder Suffolk, where nature is thriving and abundant, because everyone is united in valuing nature and doing more to help.

As a grassroots organisation, we deliver our ambitious work by inspiring people & empowering communities to care for, and act for, nature. Alongside this, we manage 50+ nature reserves & two visitor centres (Carlton Marshes & Lackford Lakes) and we advocate for wildlife across the county.

In the decade to 2030, we are committed to scaling up our work across the county. Our aim is for 30% of Suffolk to be connected and well looked after for nature by 2030, so that species and habitats can recover and thrive, and for 1 in 4 people to be actively helping to achieve this.



Cuckoo

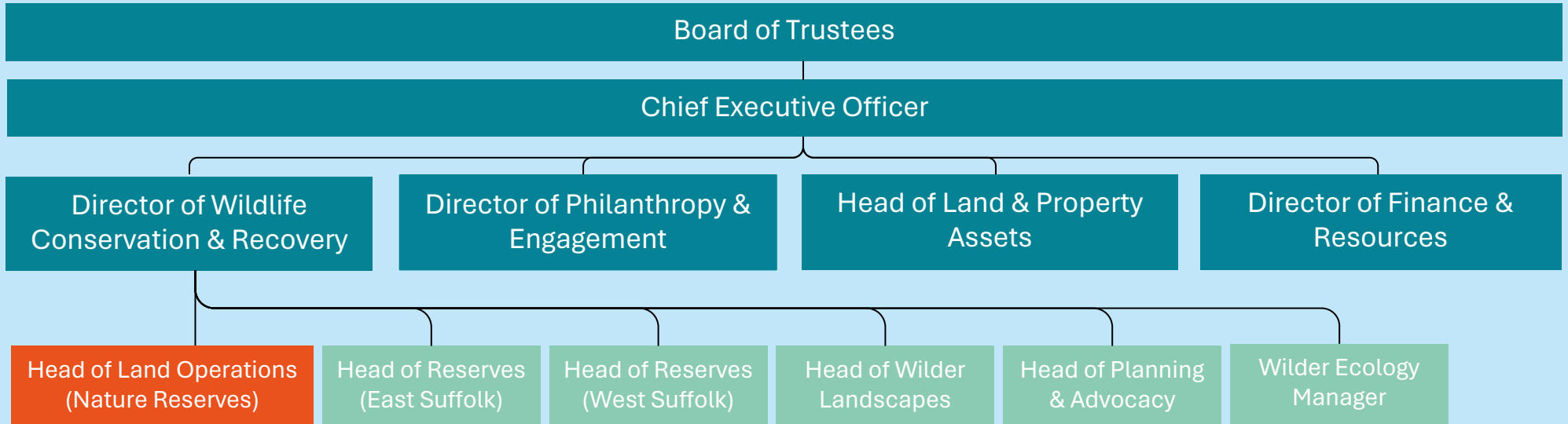
Suffolk Wildlife Trust is an organisation that makes a difference.



We are a registered charity with a Board of Trustees, 1,300 volunteers & 28,000 members. We are part of The Wildlife Trusts – a UK federation of 46 local Wildlife Trusts through the UK that together has a powerful collective voice with over 850,000 members & caring for more than 2,300 nature reserves.



We employ around 100 staff across 15 departments, organised within three main directorates. Each directorate is led by a Director, and each department has an Operational Lead who provides leadership for a key area of activity.





# Suffolk Wildlife Trust



# Our Beliefs, Values & Culture

At Suffolk Wildlife Trust, our organisational culture matters to us. It enables us to achieve more for wildlife and it shapes how we work together every day. Your job description explains the three key areas of focus for your role. What is equally important is how you do it. We are a gutsy organisation - we show courage, determination & spirit - learning from experience & embracing new ideas. We are driven by our shared beliefs, organisational values & passion to achieve more for nature and by supporting each other - staff & volunteers - to be the best we can to deliver for nature.

## Our Beliefs Anchor Us

Everything we do, and how we do it, is anchored in our fundamental belief in the natural world.

### **We believe:**

Nature has value in its own right.

We all share a responsibility for nature.

Society thrives when nature thrives.

## Our Values Guide Us

Our values guide how we operate and the decisions we make, so we can achieve more for nature:

**Tenacity:** We lead by example and are gutsy in our ambition for nature and in how we use our voice.

**Inclusion:** We value and respect diverse voices & thinking to advocate and act for nature.

**Pragmatism:** We are impact-led in the methods, solutions and partnerships we choose to drive nature's recovery.

## Our Culture Empowers Us

Our culture is how we work together, supporting each other, and empowering our county, to achieve more for nature:

**Nature-led:** We are driven by a shared passion for nature and support each other to be the best we can.

**Collaborative:** We communicate and collaborate brilliantly to amplify our impact and celebrate each other's achievements.

**Trusting:** Our staff and volunteers are trusted and accountable to deliver our ambition for nature.

**Reflective:** We are evidence-led, we challenge ourselves, and we embrace new ideas and learn from experience.

**Safe:** We always work safely and responsibly.

# Role Description

Every role has three key areas of focus known as the “Power of 3” to support our mission, vision & strategic goals. Typically, you should expect to spend 80% of your time on the following:

## 1. Provide effective operational land management support:

- Lead on all legal and land agency matters relating to reserves, acting as a conduit for legal and land agent advice and support between the Board and the Conservation Leadership Team.
- Maintain the reserve electronic and hard copy filing system for conveyancing and other legal documents relating to our land holdings.
- Through the Reserves Officer, ensure all agri-environment agreements, consents, permits and licences are in place as required, adhering to Cross Compliance, effectively delivering high quality outcomes for wildlife and SSSI requirements.
- Through the Grazing Manager, retain oversight of grazing across the reserves, looking for opportunities to deliver improvements, efficiencies and trialling new methods and approaches.
- Managing income streams for the reserves related to wayleaves, rents and easements.
- Act as the reserve lead on GIS, working with SWT’s internal GIS Officer and as a Reserves link to TWT.
- Working with the two Head of Reserves, ensure all reserve policies and processes are maintained and up to date.



**Dormouse**

## **2. Develop and future proof the reserves network, to create long term operational security and ecological resilience:**

- Lead on all acquisitions and disposals, acting as first point of contact. Maintain and enhance our processes working with the Director of Wildlife Conservation and Recovery and the CEO to deliver timely papers to Board.
- Progress the development of existing and new BNG habitat banks, overseeing legal registration, survey needs, negotiations and registering BNG unit sales.
- Act as support for the Project Manager for periodic large scale habitat restoration and creation projects on our reserves.
- Apply for planning permissions to facilitate habitat management creation works on reserves as required.
- Provide support to the Philanthropy and Partnerships Team to develop occasional large scale fundraising bids involving the reserve network.
- Working with local teams, horizon scan for projects on reserves that will help to protect and enhance the reserve network into the future.

## **3) Help maintain strategic oversight across the reserve network**

- Champion SWT's strategy to 2030 with staff, helping them to understand the role they play in the wider context of what we are trying to achieve.
- Act as an effective conduit of information for reserves staff in the management of reserves.
- Contribute effectively into Operational Leadership Team (OLT) and Conservation Leadership Team (CLT) meetings and work collaboratively to achieve outcomes.
- Be an active member within Reserves Operational Meetings (ROM), working with the Heads of Reserves to find opportunities to strive for continuing improvement.



# Person Specification

## Essential

- A personal commitment to Suffolk Wildlife Trust's mission to bring nature back to Suffolk.
- Experience of land management, preferably with good knowledge of nature conservation practices and funding schemes used to support them.
- Experience of working within project teams and supporting project managers in delivery of large projects.
- Budget management experience.
- Proven ability to work effectively with external partners, landowners and communities.
- Track record of working across internal departments, including delivery of efficiencies and sourcing of funding.
- Experience of people and line management including supporting, developing and guiding team members to achieve individual and organisational objectives, ensuring compliance with policies and fostering a positive working environment.
- A strong sense of responsibility and personal motivation, with a positive and adaptable approach.
- High level of personal integrity and honesty, with the ability to maintain confidentiality and professionalism.
- Excellent IT skills, including use of Microsoft Office365 suite (i.e. Outlook, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Teams & SharePoint) and GIS software. Awareness of and willingness to learn and implement appropriate use of task specific software and technology such as HR systems.
- Supremely organised with a flair for making life simpler for everyone through effective systems and process management.
- Excellent written skills, with experience of writing reports, management plans & presentations.

## Desirable

- Experience of land agency related work, such as acquisitions, disposals and leaseholds, would be desirable. The successful candidate who does not have previous direct experience of land agency work, will be given full support & training.



# Terms & Conditions

## Terms & Conditions

This is a permanent, full-time position working 37.5 hours per week (Monday to Friday from 9:00am to 5:00pm). We operate flexible homeworking arrangements where colleagues spend more time working together than homeworking. The base of work will be Brooke House and the starting salary will be up to £48,645.00 per annum depending on skills, knowledge and experience.

## Employee Benefits

Annual leave entitlement starts at 33 days per annum (including Bank Holidays), increasing annually to 38 days, plus employees receive an additional day off for their birthday.

We offer a 9% employer pension contribution with no employee contribution required, free 24-hour Employee Assistance Programme, free life insurance from day one of employment, free access to a private GP for themselves and their household and discounts at high street retailers. Staff can also enjoy a 10% discount in our visitor centre cafes, including retail plus public engagement staff receive logo clothing.

## Disability Confident Employer

We are a Disability Confident employer committed to making our recruitment processes & workplace culture inclusive & fair for all. Information can be provided in alternative & accessible formats on request to [peopleandculture@suffolkwildlifetrust.org](mailto:peopleandculture@suffolkwildlifetrust.org). We offer an interview to disabled applicants who meet the minimum criteria for the role and provide reasonable adjustments where needed during recruitment and in the workplace.



**Bluebell**

Credit: Matthew Clarke

# How to Apply

To apply for this opportunity, please submit an application via our website by 9:00am on Friday 15 May 2026.

The interviews are planned for week commencing 01 June 2026 at Brooke House in Ashbocking.

If you would like an informal discussion about the role, you can email me on [ben.mcfarland@suffolkwildlifetrust.org](mailto:ben.mcfarland@suffolkwildlifetrust.org).

Thank you for your interest in bringing your talents, experience and skills to Suffolk Wildlife Trust. I look forward to receiving your application.

**Ben McFarland**

Director of Wildlife Conservation & Recovery



**Dragonfly**



**Together, we can create a  
wilder Suffolk for everyone**