



Conservation Officer: Upper Caldew

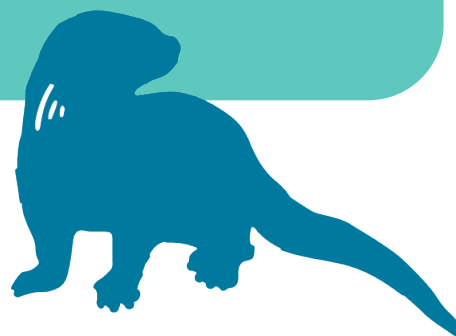
Recruitment pack



Thank you for your interest in working at Eden Rivers Trust.

Eden Rivers Trust is an environmental charity that is *Rethinking Rivers for Good* in the Eden catchment in Cumbria. With sixteen staff and an annual turnover of just over £1million, we are committed to change that has a positive impact for the environment and people of the Eden catchment.

This pack includes more information about our charity and the role. Please do get in touch if you would like an informal chat about the role before applying.



About us

Eden Rivers Trust

Eden Rivers Trust (ERT) is the Cumbrian conservation charity standing up for Eden's rivers, enhancing and protecting the river environment so that people and wildlife can thrive.

Since 1996, we have created and protected havens for wildlife, ensured that our precious fresh water is clean and safe for everyone, and spread the word about healthy, natural rivers far and wide.



Our vision is

clean and healthy rivers providing a brighter future for all

Our values are

Teamwork, Commitment, Relevance, Creativity, Partnership

Our strategy

We work to create more resilient rivers, stop the spread of invasives, enable nature recovery and water- and nature-friendly farming, and tackle climate change. The golden thread running through it all is the principle of working with communities and partners; farmers, volunteers, schools, parishes, agencies, universities, NGOs and more.

Our current strategic plan covers the period 2023- 2028 and is driven by the following ten-year goals for engagement, profile, natural habitats, water quality, species recovery, financial stability and governance.



More about our strategy <https://edenriverstrust.org.uk/our-impact/strategic-plan/>

The River Eden and its catchment

The Eden is more than just a river – it's a lifeline. Flowing 80 miles through east Cumbria from Hellgill Force to the Solway Firth, this stunning network of rivers, becks, and lakes spans 850 square miles of Cumbria. When Eden's rivers thrive, so do we.

The river is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and a Special Area of Conservation (SAC); one of England's finest large river systems on limestone and sandstone. 80 miles long, it is active and fast-flowing, and internationally important for its habitats and wildlife. It flows from south to north, forming an important aquatic habitat corridor connecting to the Solway Firth.

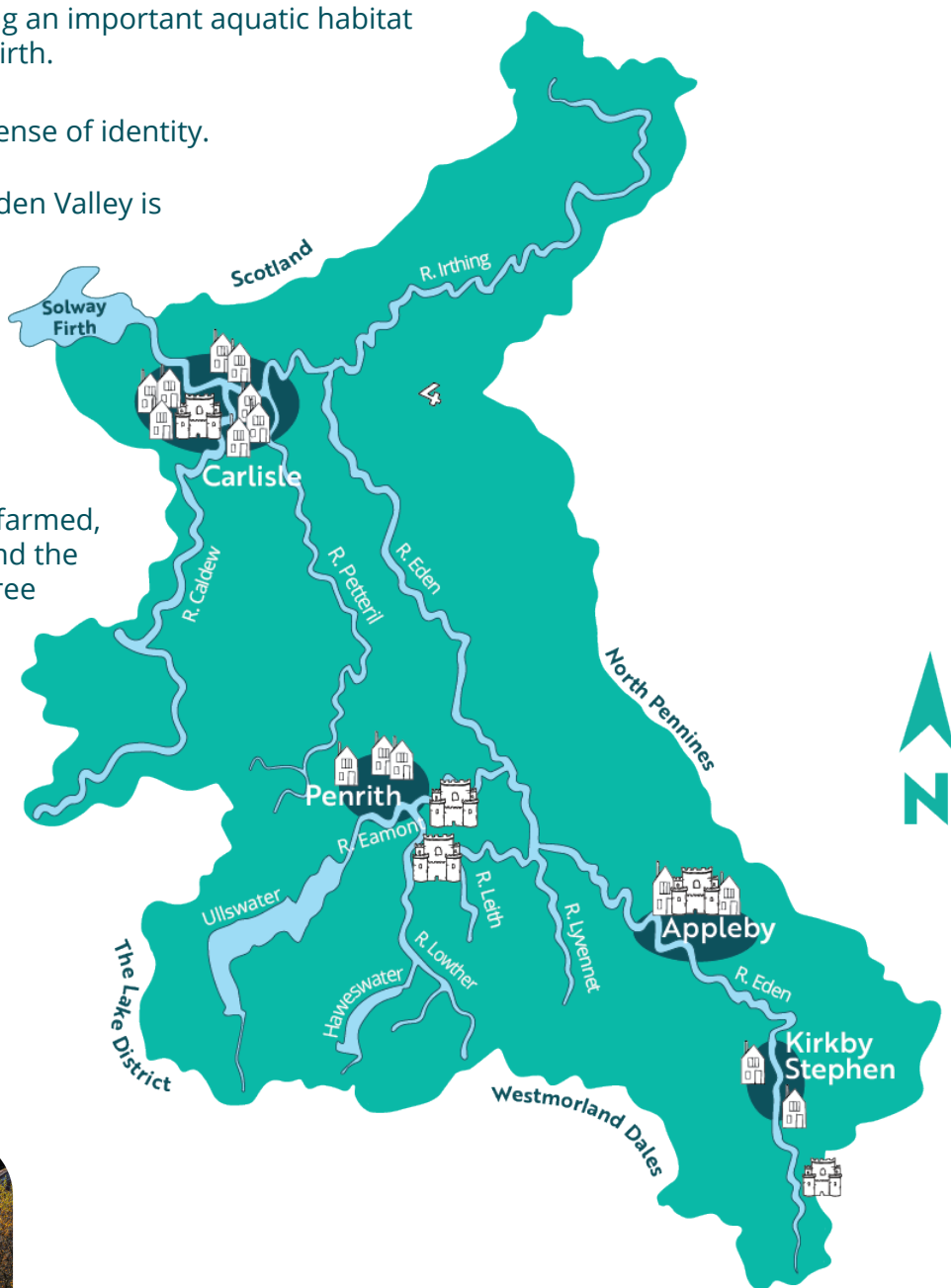
The Eden catchment has a strong sense of identity.

At its heart, the broad undulating Eden Valley is moulded into drumlins and eskers, with fertile soils. The landscape is dominated by small farms with significant areas of woodland, farm copses, mature hedgerow trees, stone walls and historic villages.

There are five main tributaries - all farmed, but each has their own character and the whole catchment is encircled on three sides by wilder uplands.

The catchment contains numerous additional SSSIs, and overlaps with three National Parks (Yorkshire Dales, the Lake District and Northumberland), and two National Landscapes (the Solway Firth and North Pennines). Hadrian's wall crosses its northern reaches.

It is a wonderful place to live and work.



© Rod Ireland Photography



© Andrew Currie



Our track record

Our more recent projects and initiatives are well documented on our website and many of our previous achievements can be found in our 25th anniversary publication.

Since then, highlights have included:

- Two large river restorations,
- reintroducing over 700 water voles to establish 3 new populations,
- Securing 57Ha of riparian woodland,
- An annual biosecurity roadshow around Ullswater,
- Executing water quality and habitat improvement projects on 30 farms,
- 1 new community tree nursery, and
- Started a major **Access to Eden: Breaking barriers, building bridges** partnership project worth £2.6 million.



visit edenriverstrust.org.uk



Read our [25th Anniversary magazine](#)

Our base, staff, trustees and volunteers

ERT's office is situated in the centre of the catchment - in the town of Penrith, within easy reach of the M6 and the West Coast main railway line.

The team is made up of 16 highly committed and well qualified staff.

The senior management team is made up of the CEO, the Head of Conservation Operations and the Finance Manager.

We currently operate a trainee position in the summer months and university placement students are welcomed for various periods when opportunities arise.

Our Board contains nine trustees from across the Eden Catchment, with a diversity of skills, age and gender.

Sectors represented include: land management and farming, riparian management, education and public engagement, academia, safeguarding and health.

We have approximately 60 active volunteers who are highly valued members of the ERT team. Their contribution to our programme is enormous and indispensable; they undertake every sort of practical conservation activity, as well as surveys and monitoring, and event support.

2001: Eden Rivers Trust relaunches following the settlement of compensation from the Ploughlands Beck pollution incident

2008-13: ALFA Project, EU-funded European project to focus on flood and drought issues in the Eden Valley



2010-2014: Chosen as one of three UK catchments to be part of the Defra DTC (Demonstration Test Catchment) testing on-farm measures that would reduce diffuse pollution without affecting food production



2005: Flooding in Carlisle

2009: Wetland Discovery Trail at Aglionby opens

1996: On October 12 The Eden Rivers Trust was formed

2005: Launch of Go Wild, the roving angler scheme for the Eden Valley

2010: New decade, new logo!



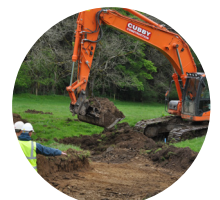
1997: Alasdair Brock appointed as Environmental Manager and soon gets to work delivering his first project at Bampton Grange



2001: Prince Charles awarded us the English Nature Site of Special Scientific Interest Award for outstanding achievement

2009: Work starts on improving the river and habitat on the River Petteril with the Environment Agency, Wild Trout Trust, and Penrith Angling Association

2014: Cutting a new, meandering river channel on the Lyvennet at Barnskew



2011: Eden River Restoration Strategy begins – initially billed as a six-year partnership with EA and Natural England to restore key stretches of Eden's rivers, the programme ran until 2025 as part of an overall Cumbria River Restoration Strategy

A dedicated set of those volunteers has grown around our Community Tree Nursery. This was established in 2022 on an allotment close to our office, and is the source of considerable pride for staff and volunteers alike.

Our finances

Our average income is just above £1 million per year - the majority of which is made up of grant funding from an increasing diversity of sources.

Further information on our finances can be found with our annual reports on the Charity Commission website under **The Eden Rivers Trust**. Registered Charity, Number 1123588. Company limited by guarantee number 06460807, registered in England and Wales.

Our partners

Partnership working is central to everything Eden Rivers Trust does. We don't own land, therefore establishing and maintaining good relationships with those who do is crucial.

Farmers and land managers are the most important partners that enable our practical conservation work, but as we increase activity in urban areas, relationships with local government are becoming more significant too.

Other crucial organisational partners include the Environment Agency, Natural England, Defra, the local National Park and National Landscape Authorities, the National Lottery Heritage Fund, United Utilities and other environmental NGOs active in Cumbria.

We are an independent charity but work with 65 Rivers Trusts in Britain, Northern Ireland and Ireland, as a member of The Rivers Trust Movement.

This national body provides an umbrella organisation for the Movement, and supports all local rivers trusts with additional expertise, data and opportunities, and enables us to share our local knowledge and experience to influence policy at national level.

Locally, we work particularly closely with the other Cumbrian Rivers Trusts (West Cumbria, South Cumbria and Lune) and those based in other river catchments in the North West.

Like many local rivers trusts we host a Catchment Partnership – in our case the Eden Catchment Partnership. This body brings together over 30 individual and organisational stakeholders who work on water management in the Eden catchment.

We work together to deliver the aspirations laid out within Revitalising Eden: The Eden Catchment Plan (2020). This document, developed by the Partnership, contains the our collective aspirations for improving integrated water management in the Eden, and has since been acknowledged nationally as an exemplar.

2014: Eden Apprentice scheme launched as part of our second major community engagement programme supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

2016: Awarded the 2016 UK River Prize (as part of the Cumbria River Restoration Strategy team)

2018: Cairn Beck NFM project commences after receiving funding from the EA as part of the Defra NFM project

2020: The Eden Catchment Partnership, led by us, launches Revitalising Eden: The Eden Catchment Plan setting out plans to improve the Eden catchment over the next 10 years.

2021: Major river restoration project at Thrimby to protect rail infrastructure and improve habitat

2024: £2.7m Heritage Fund supported partnership project, *Access to Eden: Breaking barriers, building bridges* begins

2022: Break ground on the Eden Community Tree Nursery

2023: First releases as part of our Water vole reintroduction in the Lowther catchment



2015: In December Storm Desmond ravages Cumbria, affecting the natural and built environment

2018: Eden Rivers Wonder World exhibition is held. More than 10,000 people visit the interactive exhibition depicting the amazing life found in Eden

Job description

Conservation Officer: Upper Caldew

Location:	Penrith, Cumbria
Contract:	4 or 5 days – initially 18 months with opportunity to extend
Reports to:	Head of Operations (Conservation)
Direct reports:	None
Works with:	Various specialist ERT conservation officers and the Volunteer and Community Engagement Coordinator
Salary:	£28,000-£30,000 per annum (full-time), plus contributory pension

Purpose of job

To support the Conservation Manager:Upper Caldew in developing a programme of riparian conservation in the Upper Caldew catchment in north Cumbria in direct collaboration with farmers, landowners and the communities downstream for the project **Re-Connecting & Reviving the Caldew Phase 1**.

The role has a particular focus on working with farmers, specifically supporting water-friendly farming; coordinating a farmer group; undertaking farm walkovers; writing farm focused water and environment improvement plans, and developing environmental improvement projects using nature-based solution and for on farm infrastructure.

There is also an expectation that the Officer will be involved in the delivery of the capital works within some of these projects, by signposting farmers to appropriate funds and schemes as well as through direct coordination of works; utilising resources secured by Eden Rivers Trust (ERT) throughout the project.

The projects will promote water-friendly farming, wetland and woodland creation, river restoration, natural flood management and species conservation.

Key Responsibilities:

1. Farmer group management

Develop and coordinate the Upper Caldew farmer group. Organise meetings and events to bring farmers together to share best practice, explore ways of working together, access expert advice and training on relevant skills and knowledge.

2. Farm plans and project development

Work with the Conservation Manager: Upper Caldew, ERT's Woodland officer, farmers and landowners, to undertake a total of 25 individual farm surveys, and produce water and environment improvement plans for individual and groups of farms.

Under the guidance of, and working with, the Conservation Manager: Upper Caldw, use these plans to develop projects that utilise nature-based solutions to support riparian habitat conservation.

Work alongside other staff at ERT to identify opportunities for capital delivery. e.g. appropriate agri-environment schemes, or other funding sources.

3. Budget management and reporting

Support the Conservation Manager: Upper Caldw in ensuring excellence in narrative and financial reporting to the National Lottery Heritage Fund and any other project funder that supports your work at ERT.

Liaise with the Woodland Officer to ensuring any woodland creation plans are integrated into the Water and Environment Plans for the Caldw farms.

4. People management and relationships

Develop and maintain constructive working relationships with the farmers, landowners and communities of the Upper Caldw catchments.

Build trust with stakeholders in Eden Rivers Trust's ability to deliver environmental improvements that are positive for farm businesses.

Provide practical farming knowledge to ERT staff who are delivering river restoration, biodiversity, natural flood management and engagement work with farms and local communities.

5. Technical

Develop your specialist knowledge on nature-based solutions that deliver water-friendly farming: including farmyard measures, river restoration and natural flood management.

6. Organisational responsibilities

Adhere to the Trust's policies and procedures with reference to Health & Safety and Safeguarding and support all team members and volunteers to do the same.

Work to deliver all project activities on time, to budget, and to a high quality.

Support the Conservation Manager in their work to ensure claims are submitted on time with high quality reports and clear financial statements

Work closely with the Marketing and Communications Manager to ensure promotion of your project work through all communications channels (newsletter, social media, press etc). Ensure that communications resource is accounted for in new project proposals.

Work with the Volunteer Coordinator and Outdoor Learning Manager to identify opportunities for integrating engagement activities with your programme (schools, community groups etc.)

Actively participate in team meetings and other Trust meetings/events and external for as required.

Contribute to the continual improvement of ERT's policies, procedures and ways of working.

Maintain an efficient filing system.

From time to time undertake other duties that may be required by Eden Rivers Trust's Chief Executive.

Person Specification

Essential qualifications and technical knowledge

- Educated to degree level (or equivalent work experience) in a relevant discipline.
- In-depth technical knowledge in one or more of the following: river restoration, natural flood management, water friendly farming.
- Hold a full, UK driving licence.

Essential competencies

- Track record of successful collaboration/working with farmers.
- Track record of developing fundable project proposals.
- Good problem-solving skills, a pragmatic approach, meticulous.
- Clear and persuasive communication, both written and verbal.
- Excellent interpersonal skills with the tact, diplomacy and negotiating skills to develop and maintain good relations with the owners/managers of land on which you are working.
- High degree of professionalism, initiative and self-reliance.

Demonstrable experience

Essential experience

- At least 3 years' experience in developing, managing and successfully delivering large-scale habitat improvement projects on privately owned land.
- Writing water and environment improvement plans.
- Managing budgets.

Desirable experience

- Delivery of National Lottery Heritage Fund projects.
- Working in the charitable sector/for a conservation charity.
- Securing commercial funds/investment for environmental projects.

Additional information about the role

Contract This post is initially offered as a full-time (5 days a week) role for 18 months, however could also be offered as a 4 day contract instead (salary pro-rata). Occasional evening and weekend work will be required.

Working hours Normal working hours are 9 am to 5 pm, 5 days each week, equating to a 37.5 hour working week (with a 30 minute unpaid meal break).

Location The usual place of work will be ERT's office in Penrith, with travel around the county as required in the performance of the role.

Criminal records check the successful applicant will be required to complete a Disclosure and Barring Service check (DBS) and provide satisfactory references. Please read the guidance for completing the application form about our policy regarding the employment of ex-offenders and DBS checks before you complete the application form.



Looking after our staff

Annual leave Full-time employees are entitled to **33 days of paid leave per year** which includes Bank Holidays and Statutory Holidays. This entitlement will increase by two days after three years' service and another day after five years of continuous employment to a maximum of 36 days. This entitlement will be pro rata if you join/leave within the current holiday year or work part-time.

Pension Employees may join either The Rivers Trust pension scheme or the NEST pension scheme. Employees can decide to dis-enrol from the pension scheme if they choose. If you join The Rivers Trust pension scheme, you contribute a minimum of 6% (of your salary) and we contribute 9%.

Life Assurance is also included in The Rivers Trust Scheme. We pay three times your pensionable salary if you die.

Tools for the job We'll provide the essentials you'll need to carry out your role – laptop, mobile phone and personal protective equipment (PPE) plus any other equipment as necessary.

Time off in lieu You may be required to work additional hours e.g. in the evening or at weekends for which time off in lieu (TOIL) will be available. These additional hours must be agreed and approved by your manager in advance.

Free parking at ERT's office in Penrith.

Mileage expenses This post will involve travelling around the county and mileage expenses will be paid at 55p per mile (private vehicle). ERT also has two vehicles that you may be able to use.

**Eden Rivers Trust, 4 Cowper Road, Gilwilly Industrial Estate,
Penrith, Cumbria, CA11 9BN.**

Tel: 01768 866788

**The Eden Rivers Trust is a Registered Charity, Number 1123588.
Company limited by guarantee number 06460807, registered in England and Wales.**

Application process

Application forms are available from the Eden Rivers Trust website:
<https://edenriverstrust.org.uk/vacancies/> and click on the job title.

To apply for this role please complete the Application Form and email it to office@edenrt.org

Deadline for applications: **9am, Thursday 18 June 2026.**

Interviews for this post will take place week beginning **Monday, 06 July.**

If you wish to arrange an informal conversation about this role, you are welcome to contact John Rattray, Head of Conservation Operations at john.rattray@edenrt.org to do so.

Thank you for your interest in applying for a role with Eden Rivers Trust

