

create a better place



Environment Officer

Candidate Information Pack

Please consider the environment and only print this document if you really need to.

<http://www.gov.uk/environment-agency>

Job title: Environment Officer, Waste Team or Land and Water Team
Job location: Lichfield, Tewksbury, Stafford, Shrewsbury, Kidderminster
Date: September 2018
Reference: 8545

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1. Our organisation

Our organisation

We are the Environment Agency. We protect and improve the environment. Acting to reduce the impacts of a changing climate on people and wildlife is at the heart of everything we do. We reduce the risks to people, properties and businesses from flooding and coastal erosion. We protect and improve the quality of water, making sure there is enough for people, businesses, agriculture and the environment. Our work helps to ensure people can enjoy the water environment through angling and navigation. We look after land quality, promote sustainable land management and help protect and enhance wildlife habitats. And we work closely with businesses to help them comply with environmental regulations. We can't do this alone. We work with government, local councils, businesses, civil society groups and communities to make our environment a better place for people and wildlife.

Of course, none of this will be possible without the professionalism and dedication of our staff. We are committed to promoting equality and diversity in all we do, and to valuing the diversity of our workforce, customers and communities.

We're committed to helping our people to find new ways of working and to maintain our focus on creating a better place for people and wildlife. For more information on the Environment Agency and what we do, please visit:

www.environment-agency.gov.uk/aboutus

[Website](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [Instagram](#) | [Flickr](#) | [YouTube](#)



2. Salary and benefits

Join us in this role and you will enjoy the following benefits:

Grade Rate:	£20,234 which increases as you progress through our structured training programme.
Location:	Fradley (Lichfield), Tewksbury, Shrewsbury, Stafford, Kidderminster
Hours of work:	37 hours, Permanent Contract
Leave entitlement:	<p>Your leave allowance in this role will be 25 days plus bank holidays (pro-rata - if part time or an assignment).</p> <p>We offer up to two days paid environmental outcome days each year. These give you the opportunity to take part in community activities with a clear environmental outcome for people and wildlife.</p>
Pension:	<p>We will enrol you into the Environment Agency Pension Fund (EAPF) on commencing employment, if your employment contract is for 3 months or more. The EAPF is part of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). It is a career average scheme, which means you will build up benefits based on your pay each scheme year rather than your final salary.</p> <p>We will base your pension contributions on your actual pay and you will receive tax and national insurance relief on your contributions. The pension contribution rates currently range between 5.5% to 12.5%. Whilst you are in the scheme we will also pay an employer contribution into your pension pot. We currently pay 18.5%, so this is a very generous scheme.</p>



2. Salary and benefits continued

Work/life balance:

We support flexible working hours and practices to help you strike a good balance between your work life and your personal life. We will also encourage you to keep developing your skills and professional knowledge throughout your career.

Diversity:

We are committed to diversity and inclusion. We aspire to be the best employer in the country for equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) and want all our staff to feel valued and respected and to see this as a great place to work. From our EDI executive champions to our EDI employee networks, everyone has a part to play to embed equality, diversity and inclusion in our organisation. Diversity: it's in our nature.

Lease Car:

Our Environment Officers are provided with a lease car. Please note you'll pay taxable benefit on the full value of the vehicle.



3. The role

Role

Being an Environment Officer is one of the most important roles at the Environment Agency. As an Environment Officer, you will be on the front line of environmental protection and regulation in the West Midlands. Environment Officers regulate everything from waste management sites to farms and other agricultural/land management activities across a range of urban and rural sites, all of which may impact on the local environment.

You will be responsible for regulating a range of activities to ensure they are carried out without polluting the environment or causing harm to people. Sometimes we have to take tough action to achieve these aims and, at times, you will need to investigate environmental offences. You may also be required on occasion to give evidence in a court of law. You won't need to do this until you're fully trained and feel ready, and you'll be supported by our legal and Environmental Crime teams.

The role will require you to take preventative actions as well as supporting wider incident management. This may include taking part in a duty rota to provide a 24 hour response to incidents. This is a team role and you'll never be on your own – you'll have back up from colleagues and incident support staff.

The day to day work can be very varied with new technologies, unusual locations and environmental settings to consider. The initial stages of your career at the Environment Agency is very well laid out with training, mentoring and coaching available at every stage of the process until you become confident in the role. We have teams across the West Midlands and the country so we need to ensure we are up to date with the latest advice and guidance, to be consistent in our decision making. There is the opportunity to specialise in different areas so you can be in charge of your own development and career path (see the Training and Development section for more info).

The Area

West Midlands is one of our largest regional areas employing around 600 people from Staffordshire in the North to Gloucestershire in the South, bordering Wales to the West and including Birmingham and Coventry conurbations to the East. The River Severn and River Trent play a major role in what we do with water resources, improving water quality and delivering environmental regulation. Our size allows us to work with a diverse range of cultures, communities, businesses and habitats.

What skills do you need?

The role of an Environment Officer is varied and you will need to demonstrate a number of key skills and personal characteristics. You will be expected to:

- Manage your time and organise your workload
- Meet team and personal performance targets
- Adapt your communication style to different people and situations
- Make, and justify, sound and timely decisions
- Build strong relationships with your customer
- Work independently when required, but also work well with your team to share your learning
- Be computer literate
- Enjoy working in an office environment and out on sites
- Be passionate about the environment and have a willingness to learn about environmental regulation.

Top capabilities

As part of the application and interview process, we will be looking for you to tell us exactly how you demonstrate some of the following capabilities:

- Achieve results
- Take decisions and solve problems
- Communicates effectively
- Build and sustains relationships with others
- Influences and persuades others
- Works in teams
- Focuses on customers and partners
- Focus on efficiency
- Manage data and record information

What experience do you need?

It is not essential that you have experience of environmental regulation, however, ideally you will have some experience of, and an interest in, the environmental sector.

Whilst relevant work experience would be an advantage, it's less important to us than your ability to demonstrate the key transferrable skills and the personal qualities that we're looking for.

What qualifications do you need?

Don't be put off if you haven't got a degree. Many of our Environment Officers have experience and qualifications in regulated industries, and some are recent graduates. You will need a full driving licence.

What matters is a willingness to learn and an enthusiasm for the role.

What else do you need to know?

You will have the opportunity to get involved in incident response. If you choose to, you will receive training on a specific incident management role.

This is an office based role, but you may occasionally be required to travel to different locations for training, site visits or meetings.

To bring the role to life, here are some views from current Environment Officers:

Waste Officer – Jamie Hayes



The Environment Officer role is rewarding, varied and challenging. It requires someone who can think on their feet, learn quickly and balance an ever changing set of priorities. A morning site visit could see you explaining environmental controls to a scrap yard owner who is unaware of his legal responsibilities, whilst an afternoon could be spent in the board room with a Environmental manager of a national organisation discussing changes to their environmental permit. You need to be someone who can adapt their communication style to achieve the right outcomes for each situation.

Regulating for the environment agency requires using the framework of Environmental legislation and practical decision making to create a level playing field for the waste & recycling industry. You need to be someone who can use logic and reasoning to inform your decisions, highlighting the cost vs benefit of environmental performance. This could see you justifying taking legal action against a site that represents a fire risk or providing advice to an operator on how to minimise impacts of emissions on the environment.

Waste Environment Officer – Katie Henderson



I started as an Environment Officer in the Waste team in February this year after working as a Water Resources Permitting Officer for the Environment Agency for two and a half years. Having no prior waste background, it was a bit daunting coming into this role, however with the training and support offered, I quickly settled in. Each member of my team has a certain number of sites to regulate annually and the sites range from transfer stations, end of life vehicles to metal recycling sites.

The role is very flexible and diverse and it is what you make it, I've found that the more I've put in, the more I have gotten from it.

We also provide incident response. I've been a Flood Support Officer for a few years and am currently training to become an Environment Management Duty Officer and a Site Controller and will be able to provide out of hours response when I feel happy with doing so. As part of my training I spent three days at Cardiff Fire and Rescue training centre undertaking exercises consisting of a variety of environmental incidents preparing me for these roles.

My team currently ranges from new members like me to members with years of experience and everyone has provided me with plenty of support and they're always keen to help me and take me to sites to gain experience.

Waste Environment Officer – Francis O'Regan

I have been an EO for the last 10 years and now work in the specialist Hazardous Waste team. My team specialises in regulating hazardous waste producers in the Midlands. One day you can be on site investigating an illegal operation and the next you are in the boardroom of a major multinational discussing how they can comply with national regulations. It's a varied role and it's satisfying knowing I am helping to keep the really nasty stuff out of harm's way.

As well as this I have an emergency response role and regularly find myself out investigating pollutions. This is one of the most satisfying parts of the role, going out and protecting members of the public and the environment from harm. I still remember all the times people have been glad to see me arrive and thanked me for doing my bit to make the world a little bit better.

It's not a job without its humorous moments, I remember one time we had a report of somebody shooting fish in a pool. The informant had found a number of fish with clean holes cut through them and was convinced a sniper was taking pot-shots at the fish. After investigations it turned out to be the work of a hungry heron and not a mysterious fish assassin.

One thing I have observed over the years is that to be a good Environment officer you need both persistence and a good sense of humour.



Land & Water Environment Officer – Russel Price

Having been an Environment Officer for 15 years I can safely say that I enjoy the job on the whole!

Currently I am a Land and Water EO, as the name suggests preventing pollution of land and water.

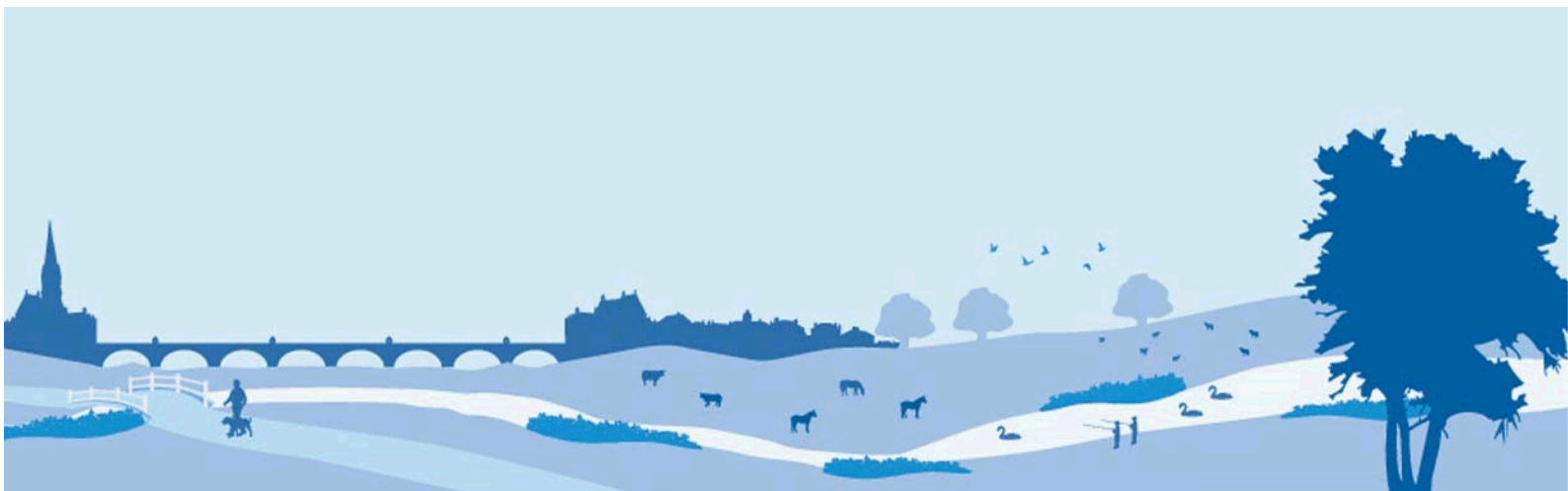
The primary role I undertake is incident response, so for instance a call from the public may come in reporting hundreds of struggling fish in a watercourse somewhere. I then have to investigate the pollution,

track it down, stop it and remediate where possible, using initiative and thinking on your feet. This could have come from a host of sources, including sewage pipes, farms, fires, illegal discharges, the list goes on.

Having done a fair bit of fishing in my time, having a good knowledge of fish species has done me no harm at all. One particular day I went to a report of a large number of dead fish in the River Trent in Burton. Sure enough there were around 20 dead fish on the river bed, but on closer inspection they were clearly a fish from the sea, as they were Mackerel. You never know what you might come across in the job, I have certainly seen a few unusual and amusing things out and about in the countryside...

The role also entails enforcement and regulation of sites amongst a multitude of other tasks. Although it sounds a cliché, the role can be very satisfying as you can actually make a real difference by your direct actions. You have to be a determined, confident, likeable individual capable of getting on with and influencing people on all levels from a company director to a site operative to get the results you need. At times you need to be an engineer, consultant, legal advisor, environmentalist, salesman, sweet talker and enforcer to get the job done.

The Environment Agency is a very flexible place to work with a large proportion of the role in the field which suits me personally! To quote Blur's Parklife "It gives me an enormous sense of wellbeing".



Training and development

You will receive full training and development to ensure that you have the skills needed to perform the role of an Environment Officer to a high standard. This will include a mixture of on the job training, mentoring, e-learning and some structured classroom based learning sessions. The training and development programme is vital for ensuring you have a good understanding on all aspects of environmental regulation, can respond to incidents and to maximise your future career options.

Your work will focus on either Waste or Land & Water work and you will be encouraged and supported to excel in one of these areas.

How long will it take?

New Environment Officers join us at Level A. This is a training and development level which provides you with the basic training to do your job. The training is broken down into three stages – Induction, Training Stage 1 and Training Stage 2. All new recruits join us at the induction stage.

Level A Training	Salary per annum	Timescale to complete
Induction	£20,234	Minimum of 6-9 months
Training Stage 1	£21,336	Minimum of 6 months
Training Stage 2	£21,908	Minimum of 6 months

Induction Stage

Here you will receive induction training as well as coaching in the skills, knowledge and behaviour required for the Environment Officer role. This stage runs alongside the normal probationary period for all new recruits. A minimum of six months must be worked in the Induction stage before you can progress to Training Stage 1.

Training Stages 1 & 2

At these stages you will apply the skills gained at the induction stage.

Environment Officer Level A is a development stage and continuous self-development is important for career progression to the next level of Environment Officer, Level B. Level A is just the start and we expect all our recruits to be able to progress sufficiently to achieve Level B and an increase in salary to £27,138.

We all learn at different rates and you will be given time to put what you've learnt into practice. There is flexibility to extend the time spent in each training stage according to individual needs – you will learn at your own pace and progress only when you and your Team Leader feel you're

absolutely ready to. Level A training typically takes around 18 – 21 months however please note that this is a guideline only.

What will the training cover?

The introductory training programme (Level A) will cover the basic aspects of the Environment Officer role including:

- Health, safety and wellbeing
- Operational procedures
- Legislation and regulation
- Incident response
- Water quality issues
- Enforcement
- Sampling and monitoring procedures
- Pollution prevention
- Waste issues

What will I achieve?

At the end of the training programme you will be able to carry out a range of crucial environmental activities such as:

- Site inspections
- Taking environmental samples
- Attending and responding to pollution incidents
- Giving advice on pollution prevention and waste minimisation issues

In short, you will be well placed to make an immediate contribution to environmental protection and as you build the key skills and competencies, you will start to make a real operational contribution to your team during the training period.

What will the training be like?

The training is all geared towards developing the ability to do something, rather than simply knowing about it. Therefore the training process provides you with the opportunity to apply your acquired knowledge and demonstrate competence.

At the start of the training you will be issued with a development log to guide you through and document your training. It is a highly demanding but rewarding training programme. To succeed you will need to be self-motivated and take active ownership of your personal learning and development.

The training will be a combination of:

- formal classroom based learning, which will contain elements of case study, group work, discussion and presentation
- self-learning through e-learning and distance learning which will give you an opportunity to develop new knowledge at your own pace and at an appropriate time
- structured field based work, where you will be trained in field or office based tasks by expert colleagues

Please note that some of the training may be residential but we will aim to give you plenty of notice in order for you to make arrangements to be away from friends and family.

Your learning and development doesn't stop once you have completed the introductory development programme. We continue to invest in ensuring you have the right skills to do your job by offering modular based development programmes linked to your role.

What we need are inquisitive people with a real thirst for knowledge!

Career progression

Career progression opportunities are good for Environment Officers – many Environment Officers develop their technical knowledge sufficiently to successfully apply for Environment Officer roles at higher grades (up to Senior Environment Officer level). As well as working on more complex work, they get involved in project work to shape and improve the service as a whole.

Other Environment Officers have developed through these roles, to progress to within the Environment Agency to roles up to and including senior management. The West Midlands and Environment Agency is a great place to work, with a huge opportunity to develop your career.

Is this the right career for you?

The Environment Officer role is varied and demanding, but it is very rewarding too. We're a great team, who look after each other and help colleagues to become brilliant in their job. You'll be fully supported in your development and offered many opportunities. As with all jobs, some people are better suited to the role than others.

To help you decide if this is the right career for you have a look at the following list of situations you may find yourself in as a fully-trained Environment Officer. You won't encounter these situations every single day, of course. But we would like to be honest with you so that you know if the role is something you will enjoy doing. If you are not sure whether the job is really for you, ask yourself and be honest, about how you would react to these situations having received the relevant training and development.

- You work on a number of complex sites, each very different. It can be difficult to prioritise which you should spend your time on.
- One day you could be trying to convince a small site owner / operator to comply with their permit and the conversation could be heated and difficult. The next day you could be representing the Environment Agency in the board room of a waste company negotiating with Directors.
- You will have to plan and prepare for site visits. This involves detailed research, looking at records and correspondence that could stretch back a decade, and could include complex documents.
- You will deal with operators of varying levels of technical proficiency. Some lack a knowledge of environmental issues and the skills necessary to run their sites in an environmentally responsible way. Others may be deliberately evasive and obtuse in their dealings with us, attempting to confuse and evade questions. You will need to be clear and direct in your communication style.
- You are struggling to get hold of an internal stakeholder. They have not returned your emails and calls, but you are unable to progress your existing work without their input.



- You will build knowledge of legislation and regulations. You will have to apply the correct guidance to make a decision, and you could even end up justifying your decision in Court!

One of the many great things about being an Environment Officer is that you will genuinely make a difference for people and the environment. Here's what else you can expect in the day in the life of an Environment Officer:

- The opportunity to work on significant environment incidents. You will be involved in working with Police or Fire Service colleagues at a major fire, for example, where you might be collecting samples and evidence.
- You will make visits to difficult sites. You'll have to assess what kind of risks are present (from a dangerous building to an abusive customer) while bearing in mind that your safety is of paramount importance.
- A continual and varied development programme to help you constantly grow your knowledge and skills – see the Training & Development section.
- Working with operators to make environmental improvements on site e.g. increasing stack height to reduce air emissions, cleaning up contaminated land, reducing use of raw materials or improving water quality through better treatment.

If you're still not sure, pick up the phone and get in touch, we'd be happy to discuss the role with you.



4. Further information

The role is office based, but will require frequent travel to sites, you will also be required to attend meetings and training.

The Environment Agency values a diverse workforce and welcomes applications from all sections of the community who wish to join a workforce which embraces difference and welcomes everyone.

We aim to create and maintain a diverse workforce (including our Board and Executives) that better reflects the UK's economically active population. Therefore, we particularly welcome applications from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME), disabled, female and LGBT+ candidates who are under-represented across our workforce.

We will consider flexible working patterns for all our vacancies, including job share. Please highlight any information regarding preferred flexible working arrangements on your application.

Eligibility to apply and continuity of employment

Employment agency workers and contractors are considered to be external candidates and should therefore only apply for positions that are being advertised externally. They are also not eligible to claim continuity of employment should they be successful in securing a position with the Environment Agency.

If you have been a member of a Regional Flood and Coastal Committee in the last 12 months we will not be able to continue with your application based on agreed appointment rules related to employing ex-RFCC members. We would welcome an application from you once the 12 month period have passed.

For applicants who currently work in local government or other bodies listed in the Redundancy Payments (Continuity of Employment in Local Government etc.) (Modification) Order 1999, you may be eligible for continuous service for the purpose of calculating any future redundancy payment. In addition, if you can demonstrate that you have worked at the Environment Agency immediately before joining the Civil Service and are now being re-employed by the Environment Agency within a period of three years of leaving, you may also count your Civil Service employment for the purpose of calculating your service related entitlements as outlined above. If you are unsure of your status then you should contact your own HR Team.



Pre-employment Checks

We apply the Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS) check when recruiting staff to our posts. This includes a basic criminal records check.

For the great majority of roles in the Environment Agency this will be sufficient and only certain roles will require a higher level of clearance. Should this be necessary, you will be advised of this during the recruitment process.

Want to find out more?

To find out more about what it's like to work at the Environment Agency, please visit:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency/about/recruitment>

You can also learn more about the work we do by looking at:

<https://twitter.com/DaveThroupEA>

<https://twitter.com/paulreevesea>

<https://twitter.com/EnvAgencyMids>



facebook

LinkedIn



YouTube



5. How to apply

We use an online recruitment system. To make the application process simple and straightforward, and so that you know how it works and what we need from you, we've put together a few hints and tips. Make sure you have all the information you need about the vacancy. For some jobs, you'll be asked to download a candidate pack, like this one, where you'll find specific application instructions.

The first thing you need to do is sign up to our recruitment system. You will need a valid e-mail address to log in and apply for opportunities, as all communication from us will be via e-mail. You can do this via the vacancy you are interested in by selecting '**Apply**' at the bottom of the advert.

Once you've clicked this link you'll then be asked:

- Do you have the right to live and work in the UK?
- Do you have the required qualifications or equivalent experience, which were stated in the job advert?
- Are you currently an employee of this organisation?

Simply answer yes or no and you can carry on with your application. You'll then see the '**Register**' page. Simply complete the details and select '**Submit Registration**' and register to the system. You only need to sign up to the system once; you'll just be able to login next time.

When it comes to the actual application, you need to fill out each section, please be aware that the system will automatically time out if you are inactive for more than 60 minutes. This will result in any unsaved information being lost so make sure you save what you are doing regularly. Once you've finished, your details and information will be saved on the system for any future applications – of course, you can edit your details at any point.

When you apply to the Environment Agency for a job we will ask you to provide your personal data on our application form. We need this information so that we can establish your identity and your right to work in the UK.

You can read our Data Protection Statement on the application process page of our recruitment system. It is also available for reference on each page of the actual application.

Competence Questions/Statement

We're keen to know what makes you right for the job you're applying for and why we should ask you in for an interview. The competence questions/statements are your chance to convince us!

You should demonstrate how your skills, qualities and experience meet the requirements of the job (as described in the job advert and candidate pack). And instead of simply telling us, show us: use real life examples of where you've used a certain skill or how you've practically applied your experience.

There's a 250 word limit per competence including spaces. It's a really important part of the selection process so make sure you keep your statement relevant and concise. Think about what we need to know about you and what you'd bring to the role and our organisation.

Application questions

For some roles, we'll ask you some specific questions, like if you have a preferred work location. If you're disabled and you'd like to be part of our Guaranteed Interview Scheme, you can add this information in here.

Equality and Diversity

We're committed to reflecting the communities we serve and we'd like you to tell us about yourself and your background.

Submitting your application

Once you've filled out and completed everything, you'll be prompted to submit your application. Simply click the button and you're done.

Please be aware that once you've submitted your application, with the exception of the 'Personal Details' section you will not be able to edit your application further. If you decide to withdraw your application, you will not be able to submit another application for the same vacancy.

If, at any stage, you have questions or problems, please contact the recruitment team on 0845 241 5350 or email ea_recruitment@sscl.gse.gov.uk

Setting up 'job alerts'

If you have been unsuccessful with your application you can set up email alerts for future vacancies. You will automatically receive an email when a job that matches your criteria becomes available. To do this simply click on **'create a new job alert'**, enter your job criteria and save.