

Cotswolds National Landscape (CNL)

Farming in Protected Landscapes: Farming Engagement Officer

March 2026

Job Description

Job Title: Farming Engagement Officer

Salary: £32,727 per annum

Hours: Full time, 37 hours per week

This is a fixed-term role until 31 March 2029

Location: CNL Office, The Threshing Barn, Marsden Manor Farm, Rendcomb, Cirencester, GL7 7EU.
The CNL operates a hybrid working system with the general expectation for the post to be based in the office for a minimum of two days per week.
Flexible working arrangements will be considered.

Reporting to: Land Management Lead

Introduction to the Cotswolds National Landscape

The Cotswolds National Landscape is a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), managed and looked after by the Cotswolds National Landscape Conservation Board (CNL)

The CNL Board is an independent organisation comprising 37 Board members nominated by the local authorities, parish councils and the Secretary of State, Defra. A small team are employed and supported by an extensive voluntary warden network. Funding for the CNL's main budget is provided through contributions from local authorities and Defra.

The Cotswolds is the largest of 38 National Landscapes in England and Wales, covering 790 sq miles (2038 sq kms). It was originally designated in 1966 and then extended in area in 1990.

The organisation has two purposes:

- to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB
- to increase the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the AONB

In fulfilling these purposes, the CNL seeks to foster the social and economic well-being of people living in the AONB.

Farming in Protected Landscapes

The Farming in Protected Landscapes programme is a part of Defra's Agricultural Transition Plan. It offers funding to farmers and land managers in AONBs, National Parks and the Broads. It is not an agri-environment scheme. The programme funds one-off projects that:

- support nature recovery
- mitigate the impacts of climate change
- provide opportunities for people to discover, enjoy and understand the landscape and its cultural heritage
- protect or improve the quality and character of the landscape or place

The programme will pay for projects that provide value for money and result in at least one climate, nature, people or place outcome. Project must also support the priorities of the Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan.

The Farming in Protected Landscapes programme has been developed by Defra with the support of National Landscape and National Park staff from across England. The programme will run until March 2026 as a grant scheme and to March 2027 as an advisory scheme.

Role summary

To support the delivery of the Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) grants programme on behalf of the Cotswolds National landscape Board (CNL). Engaging and liaising with farmers, land managers and landowners within the Cotswolds National Landscape, supporting the development of good quality project proposals, administering grant applications and processing claims.

The role will also assist with the coordination of the Regenerative Agriculture Accelerator Programme (RAAP) funded by FiPL in the CNL for an average of 1 day a week.

Key tasks and responsibilities

1. To provide a first and consistent point of contact between the CNL and potential applicants to the FiPL programme.
2. To provide advice and guidance to potential grant applicants, including support with exploring opportunities and determining objectives, to enable high quality applications to the programme.
3. To offer - or endeavor to provide – applicants with any technical expertise or specialist advice across the themes of climate, nature, people and place that may be required to inform the development of good quality project proposals and delivery plans, supporting measurable outcomes.

4. To support applicants with the content of their applications, including costings (and where necessary help guide subsequent delivery), especially those applicants that are 'harder to reach', applying as a cluster/ group or have complex needs.
5. To support the work of the Farming Engagement Lead, Programme Administrator and the FiPL Local Assessment Panel, including the provision of summary reports and recommendations on applications that are presented to the panel
6. To support the preparation of agreements with successful applicants, the monitoring of progress towards the completion of funded projects assessment of claims and approved payment values and the collation of information and records for the Programme Administrator
7. To help to ensure that action undertaken through the programme is consistent with the established purposes and complementary to the statutory purposes of AONB designation.
8. To assist with the coordination of the Regenerative Agriculture Accelerator Programme, including organizing meetings and events, assisting with the annual RAAP Conference and monitoring progress.
9. To undertake other duties as required, consistent with the responsibility level of the post, as required by the Land Management Lead and Farming Engagement Lead.
10. Attend meetings and events outside normal office hours as necessary, i.e. evenings and weekends.

Conditions of Service

1. The Conditions of Service of the National Joint Council for Local Government Services.
2. The Local Conditions of Service are contained in an Employee Handbook.
3. Normal working week is Monday to Friday, but some evening and weekend work will be expected.
4. Casual car user allowance payable.
5. The post holder will be required to comply with the CNL's policies including Health and Safety.
6. The post is subject to a six-month probation period.
7. Employees are not permitted to smoke in office premises.

Person specification

Requirements	Essential/ Desirable	Method of assessment
Qualifications		
Degree level or equivalent experience	Essential	Application/Certificates
Experience		
Evidence of successfully working with a wide range of stakeholders (including farmers and land managers) to achieve conservation and access objectives	Essential	Application/Interview
Implementation and monitoring of programmes of work	Essential	Application/Interview
Managing contractors and project and budget management	Desirable	Application/Interview
The delivery of grant support for projects that deliver environmental, access and recreation enhancements	Desirable	Application/Interview
An understanding of protected landscapes and their management	Desirable	Application/Interview
Skills and knowledge		
Ability to negotiate and build positive working relationships with a wide range of external stakeholders – including farmers, land managers and landowners, and carefully manage expectations	Essential	Application/Interview
Ability to develop strong partnerships and co-operation between organisations	Essential	Application/Interview
Knowledge of protected landscape conservation, rural issues, farming, challenges affecting the Cotswolds – and protected area management	Desirable	Application/Interview
Knowledge of current agri-environment schemes and emerging opportunities for ELM	Desirable	Application/Interview
Knowledge of access, recreation and farm diversification	Desirable	Application/Interview

Ability to represent the CCB at public and other meetings	Essential	Application/Interview
Good level of written and oral communication skills, and ability to network	Essential	Application/Interview
Good level of IT skills, inc. Excel and Word	Essential	Application/Interview
Good organisational and time management skills	Essential	Application/Interview
High level of initiative, flexibility and adaptability	Essential	Application/Interview
Good levels of numeracy	Essential	Application/Interview
Knowledge of sustainable food and farming systems, regenerative agriculture, agroecology, etc.	Desirable	Application/Interview
Driving Licence and access to a vehicle	Essential	Application/Interview/ current driving licence

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