



Job Description

Grounds Manager

Grade: 9

Directorate: Operations

Location: Slimbridge Wetland Centre

Reporting to: Operations & Facilities Manager

Main function of post: To lead and deliver the management of the grounds and horticulture at WWT Slimbridge, ensuring excellent standards of presentation, safety, and sustainability.

The role directly contributes to WWT's mission to restore wetlands, help wildlife thrive and inspire people, ensuring the site delivers both outstanding visitor experience and high-quality habitats.

Management responsibilities: Line manage the Assistant Grounds Manager and grounds team, with overall responsibility for up to 13 staff, volunteers, placement students and contractors
Build a positive team culture, develop staff through coaching, feedback and performance management, supporting continuous improvement and growth

Responsibilities of the post

- Develop, deliver and continually review Grounds Maintenance Plans aligned to centre and organisational objectives
- Plan and manage annual work programmes, ensuring high-quality delivery
- Lead initiatives that enhance both habitat quality and visitor experience
- Develop and deliver landscaping and improvement schemes, including costings and business cases
- Ensure excellent maintenance standards across all ground's infrastructure.
- Work collaboratively across departments, supporting a "one team" approach. Building relationships with colleagues, volunteers and partners to inspire connection and shared outcomes
- Contribute to centre-wide planning, design and decision-making
- Manage contractors, ensuring work meets agreed standards
- Oversee maintenance and repair of vehicles and equipment
- Control biosecurity measures as required and maintain the standards set by the Trust
- To ensure the team uses all machinery and tools with proper regard to safety regulations, appropriate training and maintenance schedules

- Carry out security duties as required, to be a member of the Centre management team acting as Duty Manager on a rota basis
- Support the Operations & Facilities Manager with wider operational delivery

In addition to the duties and responsibilities listed, the post holder is required to perform any other reasonable duties that may be assigned by the manager shown above.

Date raised: October 2018

Amended: June 2026

Person Specification

1. Qualifications

Essential:

- Educated to A level standard or equivalent
- Full current driving licence
- Qualification in horticulture or landscaping

Desirable:

- IOSH Health & Safety qualification
- First Aid certificate
- Management training
- Chainsaw Certificate
- Tree/arboricultural certificate
- Spraying Certificate
- Telehandler driving certificate
- Architectural or surveying qualification

2. Experience

Essential:

- Practical experience at management level
- Experience in grounds management possibly within a large estate, zoo or other visitor based attraction
- Experienced in the use of plant and machinery
- Competent in contract negotiation and supervision
- Experience of cultivation of plants for use in public display or exhibit
- Experience of budget management
- IT skills, especially MS Excel, Outlook & Word

Desirable:

- Significant and relevant project management experience
- Development of new landscape schemes or attractions
- Technical or engineering knowledge
- A keen interest and knowledge of wildlife and nature conservation
- Experience of customer relations and creative work

3. Managerial & Supervisory

Essential:

- Experience in managing the life cycle of a team member to include recruitment, appraisals and performance management including holding difficult conversations
- An ability to train, motivate and manage a team of staff, volunteers and contractors in accordance with WWT policies, procedures and standards

Type of staff	Number managed	Number supervised
Employed Staff	13	0
Volunteers / Casual Workers	0	1 student placement and up to 4 volunteers a day
Contractors	As projects dictate	As projects dictate

4. Responsibility

Essential:

- Responsible for the presentation and maintenance of all centre grounds
- Responsible for developing guidelines for the standards of presentation of general areas and specific areas identified (hot spots)
- Ensuring that daily and periodic checks are carried out and recorded. This includes quality checks of the grounds and inspections of vehicles and equipment
- An ability to act as a senior team member and carry out duty manager shifts for the site as part of the centre management team
- Responsible for budget setting, control and forecasting
- An ability to work flexibly and on occasions to tight timescales

Levels of Responsibility:

Type of Responsibility	Level (£'s)
Expenditure (exc. payroll)	£60k
Cash Handling	N/A
Assets (required for job, exc. buildings)	Machinery in excess of £60k
Visitors (per annum)	Through well-presented grounds, contributing to maintaining / increasing our 260,000 annual visitor target

5. Creative Ability

Essential:

- An ability to be innovative, originate ideas and bring creative thought to bear
- Development of a maintenance plan to enhance the grounds
- Creative input into the design and delivery of events and public engagement activities
- The ability to translate concept ideas into working plans and execution
- Required to make decisions about changing maintenance regimes and methods ensuring quality and best value
- An ability to organise own work, resolving obstacles that arise and have a flexible approach to new challenges
- Practical ability to find solutions to problems including mechanical maintenance issues

6. Contact

Essential:

- An ability to build excellent working relationships with WWT Heads of Department, the Centre Developments team, contractors and suppliers
- Core visitor engagement with the general public on a daily basis through duty manager duties and GUEST customer service program
- Support other departments (e.g. education, marketing, facilities, administration & volunteers) as required
- Manage contractors working in the grounds
- Take a proactive approach to your role as part of the centre management team

General Notes

This position is full time covering 5 out of 7 days and will require work during some evenings, weekends and public holidays to meet the needs of the post. Your actual times of work will vary according to the needs of the business.

Whilst this post is based at WWT Slimbridge, some travel may be necessary therefore a current driving licence is essential as is willingness to travel to other WWT Wetland Centres.