



Carla Biodiversity Officer

Joined The Parks Trust: 2015

What do you do?

I manage the volunteers who are surveying different species such as butterflies, bumblebees and reptiles in the parks, ensuring they have the right equipment to carry out their counts. I collate and analyse the data and use this to organise and deliver habitat creation tasks for volunteers and youth groups to improve biodiversity across MK. I visit the sites involved and respond to public requests and queries on wildlife in the parks.

What did you do when you left school?

I studied Environmental Science at university on a 4 year course, with a year out in Fiji! I thought I'd end up in research lab or go down the more analytical route after my final dissertation project looking at river water quality and a stint with the Fijian Ministry for Agriculture, Fishery and Food on a self-sufficient fish farming project. I had no idea what to do when I left University as environmental science is such a broad subject but it gave me the foundations in how the world of ecology works.

Why did you want to work for The Parks Trust?

I have always liked volunteering and understand the benefits it brings. I also have a bat licence and love bats, so now I get paid to survey bat boxes and great crested newts! I hold 2 protected species licenses and hope to gain another this year. I've always wanted to do a job I was passionate about and not stuck behind a screen every day.

Describe your career journey so far.

I was the Volunteer Co-ordinator from 2015-2020. My role has developed since joining The Trust. As the organisation has grown, so has the volunteering team. This led to my role being split so I could carry on delivering conservation tasks but remove the administration that goes with managing volunteers and people.

I've always worked in local authority and charity roles related to countryside management and community. When I first moved to Milton Keynes 20 years ago I started volunteering for The Trust in the team I now lead, so I guess I'm pretty lucky to land a job in an organisation I wanted to work for all those years ago!

What skills or qualities do you need to be successful in your role?

I need to be organised and self-motivated with the ability to motivate others. I need to be good at problem solving, communicating and presenting as well as team and partnership working. I am always be willing to learn and I guess it always helps to be friendly and approachable in any job!

My words of wisdom...

All jobs have some admin attached to them. I've learnt that writing things takes me a lot longer than I expected!

