



James Operations Manager

Joined The Parks Trust: 2010

What do you do?

I have a very varied role where every day is different. I could be designing a landscape or editing a video one day, working out inflation increases the next or climbing into a ditch on the day after.

What did you do when you left school?

I started to study for a degree in IT but hated every minute. I'd been working for a garden centre while studying so decided to swap to a degree in landscape management. I did a work placement year which was probably more useful than the study, although it's the degree certificate that gets you into the job interview.

Why did you want to work for The Parks Trust?

I was happy at my old job and only applied for a job at The Parks Trust for interview practice. I wasn't interested in that job but was taken by surprise and offered a different job that was right up my street. The Parks Trust seemed a nice place to work so I went for it. My first ever job at a garden centre plant department came about after I applied for a job in the coffee shop, so my whole career has been the result of happy accidents.

Describe your career journey so far.

I was employed to manage contract procurement but I was able to make changes that released quite a lot of extra time to do more things. I had other skills and I've been able to mould my job to include these. The Parks Trust has always been very good at letting people do this and it's a good way to give people career progression and job satisfaction.

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

I need a strong plant knowledge and understanding of how parks and open spaces are used.

I also need good design and IT skills, plus delegation and strategy skills.

The role is very varied and suits me as I get bored easily. It would not suit someone who likes a very structured role where things are always the same.

My words of wisdom...

You don't need to
decide what you want
to do now - lots of
skills are transferable.

