

# Assistant Accountant

We are looking for a qualified Assistant Accountant to join us at Essex Wildlife Trust.

## About Essex Wildlife Trust

We are the County's leading nature conservation charity, committed to protecting wildlife and inspiring a lifelong love of nature and one of the largest Wildlife Trusts in the UK.

This is the most important decade in the history of nature conservation and an exciting time to be joining us. If we are to tackle the climate crisis and the ecological crisis, we need the best people to rally around environmental protection.

Our values are Impactful, Collaborative, United and Proactive.



## The Role

The role will be key in supporting the Head of Finance in the implementation of finance processes to support the finance system (Xledger), alongside the requirements for reporting and finance partnering across the organisation and line managing a small team of transactional finance staff.

The main duties will include month and year-end processes, producing management accounts and quarterly VAT returns, reconciliation checks on the monthly payroll (including pension), maintaining Xledger, assisting with cash management, audits and the fixed asset register.

The position will work closely with the Head of Finance to maintain the Legacy Pipeline and forecasting the associated Income and Cash and producing Management Accounts for the Trust and its five subsidiaries, ensuring financial reports present accurate financial information to the Strategic Leadership Team, management committees and Board of Trustees.



It is essential that the successful person has experience of dealing with VAT, Income & Corporation Tax, Payrolls and Pensions administration, Statutory Financial Statements, budgeting and business planning and the financial aspects of charities including fund accounting and partial exemption VAT requirements.

To be considered for this role, applications are required to hold a full AAT qualification (or with the equivalent progress towards ACCA/CIMA, or qualified by experience) together with prior experience in leading and managing people, statutory financial statements using computer systems, VAT, Income and Corporation Tax, Payrolls and pensions administration, financial budgeting and business planning and understanding of the financial aspects of charities including fund accounting and partial exemption VAT requirements. Excellent IT skills in Microsoft Office particularly Word, Excel and Outlook are required. Experience using Xledger (cloud financial software) is desirable.

For more information and a full job description, please visit our website [essexwt.org.uk/what-we-do/about-us/jobs](https://essexwt.org.uk/what-we-do/about-us/jobs).



## Job Description

- Operational support of the Finance Department, through line managing staff that are responsible for processing the financial data and ensuring that systems, procedures, and controls are being followed, regularly reviewed and streamlined where possible to achieve a high performing, high impact Finance provision at the Trust.
- Line management of transactional finance roles, ensuring accurate processing of data supporting actual and budget information for all budget heads.
- Actively support all facets of transactional month-end processes and provide backup assistance to the transactional team whenever required.
- Manage a month-end schedule to ensure completion of deadlines, facilitating timely and accurate reporting.
- Support the Head of Finance in producing the regular Management Accounts for the Trust and all of its subsidiaries, identifying reasons for variances as appropriate, undertaking such analysis as is necessary. To ensure financial reporting takes account of movements of all funds of the Trust, being unrestricted, designated, restricted and endowed.
- To assist in producing first check reports for the Groups quarterly VAT returns, ensuring they are produced in line with HMRC rules.
- Conduct comprehensive reconciliation checks in the monthly payroll process to ensure completeness and accuracy, including journal posting, while maintaining precise records on accounting systems.
- Maintaining the finance accounting system (Xledger), addressing queries from both the finance team and the wider organisation, and conducting back-office maintenance tasks (i.e. setting up users, creating nominal accounts and editing workflows, raising support tickets).
- Assist in the cash management of the Group, maintaining up to date cash forecasts.
- Maintain the Group Fixed Asset register in line with the accounting policies, ensuring purchases and disposals are accurately reported.

- To assist the Head of Finance in maintaining the Legacy Pipeline and forecasting the associated Income and Cash.
- To assist in the preparation of each of the Group Companies year-end Financial Statements for audit – preparing and processing audit adjustments, schedules and reconciliations, planning for the audit assignments and then dealing with auditor queries and amendments required from the resulting management letters.
- To oversee the preparation and reconciling of the monthly balance sheet, providing evidence and explanations to back up balances to report back to the Head of Finance.
- To ensure monthly financial transactions are complete by the finance team to an accurate standard, including prepayments, accruals, accrued and deferred income.

### **People**

- To line manage a small transactional finance team.
- To promote a 'teamwork' and 'can do' culture within the team.
- Encourage members of the team to share, discuss and work together collaboratively when developing new initiatives, promoting open communications.
- Improve team members' performance through coaching, training, feedback, check ins and providing opportunities for development.

### **Problem Solving/Innovation**

- Support the team by answering queries and implementing new processes encouraging a strategic outlook on issues from a team, not individual, perspective and suggesting solutions to be implemented; deal proactively with both complex and simple problems to resolution.
- Oversee practical implementation of new initiatives, developed in conjunction with the finance team and monitor and report on progress.

- Regularly assist in reviewing and updating processes and procedures within the Finance Department to improve service delivery to both internal departments and external suppliers.

### **Planning/organising**

- To both reactively solve and proactively avoid process and resource issues within the team by regularly reviewing processes working collaboratively with the team to suggest, agree and implement changes to ensure the Trust is achieving best value and efficiencies.
- Work with the Head of Finance to undertake planning tasks as required (e.g. monthly and 3 yearly cash-flow forecasts, annual budgets, project business plans, information provision for funding bids etc.).

### **Communication**

- Hold regular team meetings to undertake work planning and ensure that all defined departmental service level agreements and operational plans are achieved and enable development of new ideas and innovations.
- Communicate with all Trust staff, both verbally and in writing to enable transparency of information, deadlines and expectations (e.g. use of share point of key deadlines for payment of suppliers and expenses).
- Train own team and other Trust staff on new finance processes where necessary and in line with the Trust wide training programme.
- To undertake, and provide training for the Finance team, the review of actual and budget data and explain variances in conjunction with the budget heads via regular meetings.

To undertake any other duties which are commensurate with the role



## Person Specification

- A full AAT qualification or with the equivalent progress towards ACCA/CIMA or qualified by experience.
- Proven ability to lead and manage a team of staff, developing a business partnering ethos.
- Experience of assisting in Management and Statutory Financial Statements using computer systems.
- Experience of assisting in financial budgeting and business planning.
- Experience of the financial aspects of charities including fund accounting and partial exemption VAT requirements.
- Experience of continuous improvements to processes to support the efficient running of finance systems.
- Ability to work to tight deadlines and produce timely information.
- Experience of dealing with VAT, Income & Corporation Tax, Payrolls and Pensions administration.
- Proven IT skills in Microsoft Office particularly Word, Excel and Outlook.
- Experience using Xledger (cloud financial software) is desirable.

## Additional Information

- A Standard Level DBS check is required.
- You will be based at Abbots Hall. Occasional travel will be required across the County to other Essex Wildlife Trust sites and other venues as necessary. Requirement to be able to drive and a current full UK driving licence with use of your own vehicle (Pool vehicles may also be available).
- Flexible homeworking arrangements.

As a Disability Confident employer, we are committed to offering an interview to anyone with a disability that meets all the essential criteria for the post. Please let us know if you require any adjustments to make our recruitment process more accessible.







## Terms

The position is a permanent full-time role working (Monday to Friday from 9:00am to 5:00pm) with a starting salary of £30,000 per annum. Essex Wildlife Trust offers flexible homeworking arrangements. Further details of the hybrid-working arrangements will be shared at interview. Please note, the successful candidate will be subject to a Standard DBS Check.

Annual leave entitlement starts at 26 days per annum increasing annually to 29 days plus Bank Holidays. We provide company sick pay increasing with length of service, an employee assistance programme, a combined 8% contribution pension scheme, staff social days, colleague nomination scheme and discounts in our Nature Discovery Centres.

## How to Apply

To apply, please complete an application form via our website by 9:00am on Monday 13 May 2024. The interviews are arranged for Tuesday 21 May 2024 at Abbots Hall, Great Wigborough, Colchester.

Thank you for your interest in this position. I look forward to receiving your application.

Scott Parkin  
**Head of Finance**