



Community Engagement Officer

Location: Paper Mill Lock, Little Baddow, Chelmsford

Help Connect People with One of Essex's Best-Kept Treasures

Are you passionate about education, communities, the environment, and helping people make the most of the outdoors?

Essex Waterways Navigation Trust is looking for an enthusiastic and proactive Community Engagement Officer to develop and deliver an exciting programme of community events, educational activities, volunteer projects and public engagement initiatives along the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation.

This unique role focuses on education with community outreach and volunteer coordination. You'll work with schools, families, community groups, local authorities, emergency services and waterway users to increase awareness and enjoyment of the Navigation while promoting safe, respectful and sustainable use of this important Essex asset.

The Organisation

Essex Waterways Navigation Trust and its subsidiary Essex Waterways Ltd operate and manage the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation. This historically important and picturesque waterway connects the city of Chelmsford with the Blackwater estuary at Heybridge Basin and winds its way through 14 miles of Essex's most unspoilt countryside. A small team of staff are supported by volunteers to manage leisure and residential boating, angling, paddlesports, waterway maintenance, access and much more besides.

The Role

This is a permanent role, working 35 hours per week based at Paper Mill Lock and including significant outreach. You will design and deliver a programme of engagement activities that encourages people to discover, enjoy and help protect the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation. You will work closely with schools, volunteers, community organisations and public sector partners to increase participation and strengthen community connections.

Alongside community engagement responsibilities, you will support visitor services by handling enquiries, processing bookings and assisting customers using the Navigation.

Key Responsibilities

Community Engagement and Education

- Build strong links with schools across Chelmsford, Maldon and surrounding areas.
- Design and refine educational visits incorporating boat, land-based and walking activities.
- Organise and manage school bookings and educational programmes.
- Lead educational visits and activities on the Navigation.
- Deliver water safety, environmental awareness and wildlife conservation presentations in schools and community settings.
- Develop relationships with community groups, charities and local organisations.

Volunteer and Community Projects

- Recruit, support and develop a team of regular volunteers.
- Organise litter picks, conservation projects and community events.
- Promote understanding of the importance of wildlife habitats and environmental stewardship.

Partnership Development

- Develop relationships with local authorities, community safety teams and partner organisations.
- Liaise with angling clubs, boaters, paddle sport groups and walkers to promote shared use of the Navigation.
- Help develop a code of conduct that supports respectful use of the waterway by all user groups.
- Coordinate joint safety and awareness campaigns with the Fire Service, Police, Environment Agency and local councils.
- Raise the profile of the Trust amongst community and statutory partners.

What We're Looking For

Essential

- Excellent communication and presentation skills.
- Strong organisational and planning abilities.
- Ability to build productive partnerships and relationships.
- Good IT skills, including Microsoft 365 and email systems.
- Self-motivated, enthusiastic and able to work independently.
- Excellent customer service skills and a welcoming manner.
- Enhanced DBS check.
- Full UK driving licence.



Desirable

- Experience delivering educational activities or public engagement programmes.
- Experience working with communities, schools, visitors, volunteers or customer-facing services.
- Experience coordinating volunteers.
- Knowledge of waterways, conservation, outdoor recreation or heritage attractions.
- Understanding of environmental education and water safety.

Why Join Us?

This is a rare opportunity to play a leading role in connecting local schools and communities with one of Essex's most important heritage and environmental assets. You'll help inspire young people, support volunteers, promote water safety and contribute to the long-term future of the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation.

Salary - £26,500 plus 8% employer pension contribution

To apply, please send your CV and a covering letter to essex@essexwaterways.com outlining why this is the role for you.

Closing Date: 7th November 2026

Interview Date: to be confirmed

Location: Paper Mill Lock, Chelmsford, Essex, CM3 4BS.