

Ellie Beach

Having grown up in the Norfolk Broads, I have always had a love for wildlife and nature conservation especially wetlands. This has followed me throughout my land management career of over 19 years.

I eventually left Norfolk to go to university in Hertfordshire where I gained a BSc Hons 2:1 degree in Ecology and Agricultural Biology. My third year was an unsalaried placement working for English Nature (now Natural England) in the Norfolk Broads, where I learnt lots of practical management skills. My final year project was on overwintering behaviour of water voles.

After leaving university in 2000, I embarked on a short-term contract for English Nature in North Norfolk, before joining the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority as a Seasonal Ranger. This led onto an 18-month contract with the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust as Bittern Projects Officer, which turned into a permanent post as a Reserves Officer managing their three premier wetland nature reserves in Hertfordshire.

After being with the wildlife trust for over seven years I decided a new challenge was in order and joined Hertfordshire County Council's Countryside Management Service (CMS) as Land Management Projects Officer. I gained invaluable experience and knowledge working across a wide range of habitat types and with a variety of species, helping to improve sites for both wildlife and people. During this time, I also undertook an MSc part time in Water and Environmental Management, again at the University of Hertfordshire where I was awarded a distinction. My water related research project looked at citizen science projects to see if they could be used to determine where river restoration work should be undertaken.

Over the years I have gained a range of land management skills, have experience applying for, securing and implementing project funding; worked with contractors and volunteers; undertaken species and habitat surveys and monitoring; have worked with landowners to implement stewardship schemes; have a knowledge of grazing and most importantly have a passion for nature conservation and wildlife.

An opportunity to relocate back to Norfolk came about in 2019 when I became Conservation Manager for the Little Ouse Headwaters Project where I hope to be able to put all my knowledge, skills and experience to good use. I am looking forward to embarking on this new adventure.