

MAKING PLACES GREENER

# Conservation officer



Conservation officers look after both urban and rural areas, working to maintain their historic or natural make up. So a historic building's conservation officer may advise property owners on alterations to the building, while an environmental conservation officer might get involved with managing natural habitats or recycling household waste. It's good to have a qualification of some sort, and useful courses include planning, civil engineering, surveying, architecture, history of art and archaeology. What's more important, though, is experience, as it shows you're willing to get your hands dirty. So contact The British Trust for Conservation Volunteers and roll up your sleeves!

## Degree needed

Entry is open to graduates from a range of academic backgrounds. There is no specific degree needed for a career as a conservation officer. Appropriate courses include planning, building and construction, civil or

structural engineering, surveying, architecture, landscape architecture or design, history of art, history with an architectural component and archaeology. BTEC or SQA qualifications or HNDs or foundation degrees in subjects such as countryside or environmental management, conservation and environment, environmental sciences, ecology and geography are useful. A postgraduate qualification is becoming increasingly common, though not necessary.

## Good courses

- BA History of Art (University of Manchester)
- BA (Hons) Town and Country Planning (University of the West of England, Bristol)
- BA (Hons) Landscape Architecture (Birmingham School of Architecture and Landscape)

## Facts and figures

### Starting salary

Between £17,000 and £26,000.

### Working hours

Generally 9am to 5pm.

### Days' holiday per year

On average 25 days per year.



Lisa Bailey at work  
Conservation officer, British Trust for Conservation Volunteers



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## Skills and experience

Officers need a wide range of skills, including an understanding of planning, historic buildings, relevant policies and law.

## Likely employer types

- Local authorities
- Private sector consultants
- Lottery funded schemes
- Regional or national bodies, such as English Heritage
- Environmental charities and civic trusts
- A wide range of specialist organisations employ natural environment conservation officers

## How many jobs available?

Most local authority planning departments employ historic buildings officers or conservation officers. Positions are regularly advertised in publications such as The Guardian and the weekly trade magazine, Planning. Career opportunities also exist with national and regional organisations such as The National Trust, English Heritage and Historic Scotland.

## Number of people employed in this field

The number of conservation officers employed in England and Wales is not known, but there is a shortage of staff within local authorities and high demand for those with skills and experience in this field, particularly in London and southeast England.

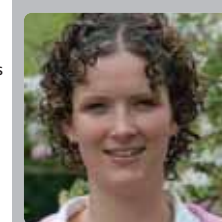
In 2001 there were 1,200 people working as conservation and environmental protection officers in Scotland.



## Meet the expert

Lisa Bailey,  
British Trust for  
Conservation Volunteers

Visit [AskWhatIf.co.uk](http://AskWhatIf.co.uk) to watch video diaries and get opinions from other real people doing real jobs.



## Did you know?

Buildings were first listed for conservation purposes in the UK in 1950. The French had been classifying historic buildings for the previous hundred years, while in Britain conservation had been the preserve of pressure groups such as the Georgian Group, which was established to protect the country's Georgian architectural heritage.

## More information

- Find out about careers in environmental conservation at Lantra, the sector skills council for the environmental and land-based sector [www.lantra.co.uk](http://www.lantra.co.uk)
- To find out about building conservation visit the Institute of Historic Building Conservation's website [www.ihbc.org.uk](http://www.ihbc.org.uk)
- The Conference on Training in Architectural Conservation (COTAC) has a list of relevant courses [www.cotac.org.uk](http://www.cotac.org.uk)
- The British Trust for Conservation Volunteers offers voluntary opportunities [www.btcv.org.uk](http://www.btcv.org.uk)

"The job's about having fun and getting down to earth with young people who wouldn't otherwise get out into the countryside, not even to see it."

Some careers are more than just a job... Find out more at [AskWhatIf.co.uk](http://AskWhatIf.co.uk)