



Programme Manager

Thames Rivers Trust, Water Company Partnership

Organisation: Thames Rivers Trust (TRT), coordinating the Water Company Partnership on behalf of TRT, The Rivers Trust (RT), Thames Water (TW) and the Zoological Society of London (ZSL)

Contract: Full-time (37.5 hours per week), funded through the TRT/Thames Water Utilities (TWU) Memorandum of Understanding

Salary: £40,000 to £42,000 per annum, dependent on experience

Location: Thames Basin, home-based with regular travel across catchments and to partner offices in London

Role purpose

The Programme Manager is responsible for the Water Company Partnership: working closely with Thames Water, The Rivers Trust, ZSL and Catchment Partnership hosts, overseeing delivery across all five workstreams, and accountable to the Partnership Board for progress. The Partnership is a developing arrangement between TRT, The Rivers Trust, Thames Water and the Zoological Society of London. It works alongside and helps coordinate support for the 27 Catchment Partnerships of the Thames Basin.

The Partnership's purpose has four parts: delivering catchment resilience and healthy rivers at scale and pace; developing innovation and reforming regulation to achieve that; supporting the development of Rivers Trust members; and strengthening governance, funding and the partners' ability to influence one another's business plans.

In practical terms, this role exists to help integrate Catchment Partnership hosts and partnership members with Thames Water's delivery programme, and to upskill those partnerships so they are equipped to plan, fund and deliver more on the ground. This work starts with Thames Water, including supporting Catchment Partnerships to develop evidence for Thames Water's PR29 submission and to deliver applicable AMP8 projects, but the ambition is broader: to build Catchment Partnerships' and hosts' capability and confidence so they can build the same kind of productive relationships with other funders and partners, not just Thames Water.

This is a senior coordination and delivery role, combining day-to-day management of the programme with support for the Board's strategic oversight. Outcomes are achieved through influence, facilitation and partnership working rather than direct line management.

It is also a genuine opportunity to shape how a major water company and its environmental partners work together on the ground, and to help translate that partnership into real, measurable improvements for rivers and the wider environment across the Thames Basin.

Programme context

The Partnership grew out of an AMP7 arrangement in which TRT and The Rivers Trust worked with Thames Water to fund catchment hosts (a £15,000 annual contribution per host) and a TRT partnership manager. Working with the project partners, we have begun developing a more structured support programme organised into five workstreams.

The Partnership is overseen by a Board, whose agreed functions include setting strategic direction, overseeing progress, resolving priority resource conflicts across the five workstreams (Governance,

Monitoring and Evaluation, Capability and Capacity, Catchment and Nature-based Solutions, and Blended Finance), and helping to unblock internal barriers within Thames Water.

Key duties

Programme and governance coordination

- Coordinate day-to-day delivery of the Water Company Partnership on behalf of TRT.
- Support and service the Partnership Board and any steering or advisory groups by acting as secretariat: supporting (co-)chairs, preparing agendas and papers, and tracking actions, decisions and progress.
- Maintain alignment with Thames Water business plan priorities, WINEP delivery, and PR29 readiness.

Governance

- Lead coordination of the Governance workstream (co-led with Thames Water), covering Catchment Partnership maturity and tiering, the network structure for the 27 Catchment Partnerships (including the relationship between the Thames Catchment Forum and London's Ripple group), and governance models for individual Catchment Partnerships.

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E)

- Support delivery of the M&E workstream, co-led by ZSL and The Rivers Trust, covering river health scorecards, nature-based solution monitoring standards, and evidence integration for investment decisions and for Thames Water's PR29 submission.
- Support the proposed Regional Data Hub, which brings together citizen science and NGO monitoring data with Thames Water's own evidence base.

Capability and capacity, including CaPS

- Coordinate the Capability and Capacity workstream, led by Thames Water and TRT with input from Rivers Trust, covering a learning and development programme for Catchment Partnerships, a knowledge portal, and catchment-level briefing material.
- Run TRT's own Catchment Partnerships Support Programme (CaPS): coordinate quarterly reviews with individual catchment hosts and track delivery against funding commitments.
- Work with Catchment Partnerships, Rivers Trusts and other key partners to build skills and capacity, helping local Trusts and Catchment Partnerships turn plans into action.
- Help identify skills gaps and support the development of guidance, communities of practice and shared learning across the region.
- Responsible for organising and running the Thames Catchment Forum, held three to four times a year.

Catchment and nature-based solutions (C&NbS)

- Support the C&NbS workstream. This is the workstream with the most live delivery already underway (including wetland and river restoration schemes and the AMP8 storm overflows programme), but it is currently the workstream where NGO partner integration is weakest. There is real scope for this role to strengthen the link between Catchment Partnership priorities and Thames Water's delivery planning.
- Work with Catchment Partnership hosts to support project development, readiness and delivery, and to identify opportunities for shared learning across catchments.

Blended finance

- Support the development of the Blended Finance workstream, intended to be led by The Rivers Trust. Contribute to defining its scope, brief and delivery approach.
- Develop environmental market case studies for Catchment Partnerships to learn from, an ecosystem services metrics framework, a basic environmental market financial model, and support Catchment Partnerships to learn about these approaches through a community of practice.

- Support Catchment Partnerships to develop funding proposals, business cases and partnership discussions, and support the alignment of strategic funders at a basin level to access emerging strategic funding opportunities.

Partnership working and regional engagement

- Act as a key liaison between TRT, Thames Water, Catchment Partnerships and national partners, including representing TRT at meetings and events.
- Create proposals and presentations to open up and enable partnership opportunities.
- Support The Rivers Trust in developing strategic partnerships at a regional level, and assist TRT with ongoing collaborative programmes and projects.
- Support the development of clear communications about the Partnership's purpose, progress and impact.

Skills and experience

Essential

- Experience delivering environmental, catchment or nature-recovery programmes.
- Partnership working and facilitation skills, with a proven track record of building productive relationships across multiple organisations.
- Understanding of catchment-based working and proven experience of working successfully in partnership with a range of organisations to achieve common goals.
- Experience coordinating complex programmes or workstreams across multiple organisations, delivering outcomes through influence rather than through line management.
- Excellent communication, facilitation and organisational skills, with a proven ability to manage a varied workload with minimal supervision.
- Confidence in collating data and summarising and communicating it effectively for external audiences.

Desirable

- Knowledge of water sector regulation, WINEP or AMP planning.
- Experience with nature-based solutions and project development.
- Familiarity with environmental funding or blended finance approaches, or a track record of successful fundraising.
- Project or programme management qualification.

Organisational context

The role is hosted by Thames Rivers Trust, in close partnership with Thames Water, The Rivers Trust and ZSL. The postholder will report to the Chief Executive and work closely with, and take guidance from, the Partnership Board and workstream leads. The role does not include formal line management responsibility but requires strong leadership across the five workstreams, the CaPS programme, and the wider network of Catchment Partnerships across the Thames Basin.

Terms and additional information

- Full-time role, initially funded for one year with planned funding for a further two years, with regular travel across the Thames catchment and to partner offices in London.
- Flexible and home-based working supported.
- Travel expenses reimbursed in line with organisational policy.

- Appointment and continuation subject to funding under the TRT/Thames Water MoU and a satisfactory probationary period.
- 25 days holiday per year plus public holidays
- TRT operates a contributory pension scheme