



Ulster Wildlife

Chief Executive Officer Information Pack

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Introduction

Dear Candidate

Thank you very much for your interest in the role of Chief Executive Officer at Ulster Wildlife.

For over 45 years (est. 1978) we have been protecting wildlife and wild places, both on land and at sea and have grown to be an organisation with 14,000 members supported by our 51-strong team of highly committed staff managing a turnover of £3.24m (year to March 2023).

The mission of our organisation has never been more critical to the wellbeing of the environment and the community in Northern Ireland. We are two years into our bold 2030 strategy to tackle the nature and climate crises, working relentlessly toward its local, regional and international targets.

We educate, advocate and influence a wide range of stakeholders with a focus on scaling up our work collaboratively in the cause of nature's recovery. We build on our successes, well-represented by our high profile initiatives around improving our populations of barn owls, red squirrels and native oysters or the passing of the NI Climate Change Act. A key to that success is mobilising Northern Ireland's communities in common cause to have a meaningful impact on nature and climate.

We are looking for an individual with an evidenced track record of excellence in strategic leadership, able to marshal the resources of the organisation effectively to deliver on our strategy. A persuasive and influential advocate, comfortable in front of a range of audiences, you will equally be a motivating leader of people. Critically, you will share the passion of the organisation's Board, staff team, volunteers and members in 'bringing nature back' to the hearts and minds of the people in Northern Ireland.

We are being assisted by our senior recruitment partners, Engage, in this search and selection, and they will be delighted to field any questions you may have about the role in the first instance.

You can read more about the role in this pack, and find much more information available on our website at ulsterwildlife.org. If you think you have the experience and motivation to deliver a positive and lasting impact on our environment, our wildlife and our climate, we look forward to hearing from you.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Witchell".

John Witchell
Chair

Who we are

We are Northern Ireland's largest local nature conservation charity. Supported by our members and funders, we are working to bring nature back across Northern Ireland, building a wilder future where people and nature are thriving together.

We do this by restoring nature on land and at sea, inspiring local people to take action and demonstrating how nature can help address the climate emergency.

Our three strategic outcomes are:

NATURE: Nature is in recovery and wildlife is thriving across NI

PEOPLE: More people are taking positive action for nature and climate and are benefiting from time spent in nature.

CLIMATE: Nature-based solutions are playing a central role in addressing climate change

From the acquisition of our first nature reserve in 1979, we now manage 850 hectares of land for wildlife, support 500 farmers with advice on environmental protection and influence the management of 50,000 hectares of farmland. We can do all this thanks to the support of 14,000 passionate members, over 100 active volunteers, our 51 staff members, a number of placement students and our dedicated Board of Trustees.

We are proud to be one of 46 independent Wildlife Trusts working across the UK. Together we are the largest grassroots movement standing up for wildlife.



Umbra Nature Reserve © Ronald Surgenor

What we do

Highlighted below are some of the things we do to help bring nature back. You can get an even better idea of the reach and range of our activities from our [website](#).

Save Wildlife

Red Squirrels

We are working with landowners, local communities and local red squirrel groups across Northern Ireland to help red squirrels thrive by managing red squirrel habitat, undertaking education and awareness activities, monitoring squirrel populations, and carrying out targeted control of grey squirrels.



© Ronald Surgenor

Barn Owls



We have been working for over 10 years to help barn owls thrive in Northern Ireland, with help from passionate volunteers and landowners who are at the forefront of efforts to save this species. We monitor barn owl populations and distribution through an annual survey, supply nest boxes for barn owls to roost and breed in suitable areas, provide advice to landowners on managing land for barn owls, and record and map public sightings and signs of barn owl occupation, so we can target our conservation efforts.

Hedgehogs

One of the issues we face in Northern Ireland is a lack of data and information on the status of hedgehogs. Since 2021 we have been working on increasing baseline data alongside NUI Galway through the Irish Hedgehog Survey. In addition to this, we provide the public with information, support and advice on helping hedgehogs in their gardens and neighbourhoods.

Native Oysters

The native oyster is a priority species in the UK and Northern Ireland. The discovery of live native oysters in Belfast Lough for the first time in 100 years indicated that the environmental conditions for supporting their recovery were right. We have since established native oyster nurseries in Bangor and Glenarm marinas and Belfast Harbour.

Stocked with mature native oysters, from Scotland, these will reproduce and release the next generation of oyster larvae, boosting biodiversity and improving water quality. More nurseries are planned over the coming years.



© Paul Faith

We protect wildlife havens

Our nature reserves cover nearly 850 hectares of land spread across 19 sites that include some of Northern Ireland's most important habitats and species. From a small field in the Glens of Antrim safeguarding a rare plant to a vast expanse of wilderness in the Belfast Hills, our nature reserves are equally important in their conservation efforts.



Sievenacloy Nature Reserve © Ronald Surgenor

We facilitate farming for nature



500 farms across Northern Ireland are signed up to Ulster Wildlife's Environmental Farming Scheme (EFS) Group Programme helping to deliver nature conservation at scale across Northern Ireland. This sees us influence the management of up to 50,000 hectares of farmed land, with 14,000 hectares under the EFS agreement. Farmers who sign up can

avail themselves of group and individual mentoring on a range of topics related to farming and wildlife. Our facilitators help farmers understand the application process, the implications for their farm management, and how to maximise wildlife benefits from the scheme – this greatly increases uptake and farmer satisfaction.

We bring people closer to nature

We are passionate about getting people outdoors, connecting with the natural world and inspiring them to act on its behalf. We were founded with a strong focus on education and people are still at the heart of our work today.

From outdoor learning programmes and wildlife clubs for kids to training schemes and youth-led environmental projects to wildlife events and hands-on volunteering, we engage thousands of people of all age and backgrounds with nature every year.



Gardening group at Bog Meadows Nature Reserve

We tackle the climate emergency



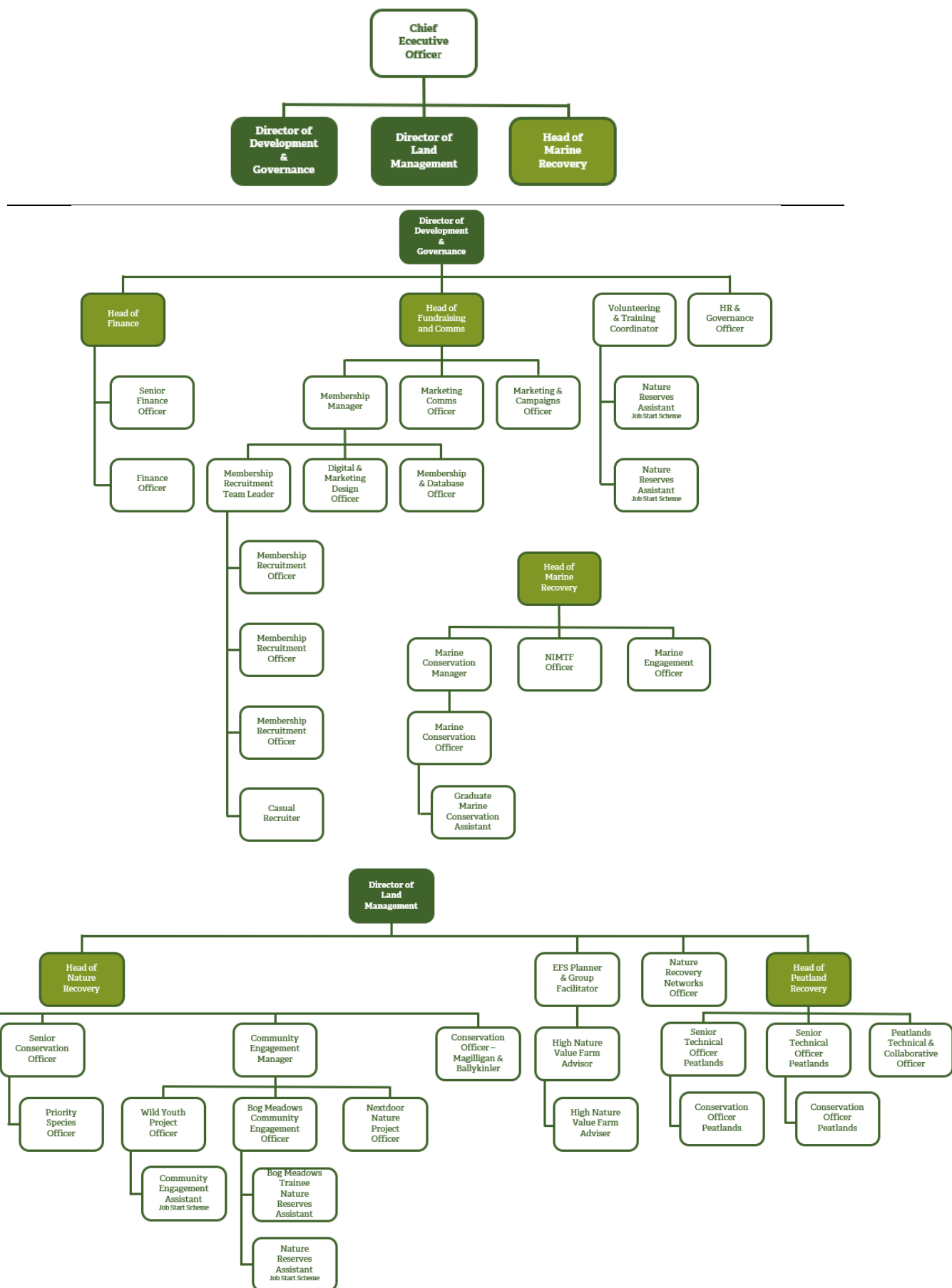
Peatland restoration in action

For decades, Ulster Wildlife has been working on the ground, across Northern Ireland, to restore nature. We protect and restore important habitats that lock carbon safely away and limit the effects of climate change, including peatland, fens, wetland, grassland and woodland. We are also exploring the role of marine habitat restoration, such as shellfish reefs, saltmarsh and seagrass, which could have great potential to store carbon and help make coasts more resilient to sea level change, erosion and flooding. We've also long called for changes in laws and practice that properly protect and restore nature, including a Nature Recovery Network to map, join-up and restore habitats.

Landfill Communities Fund

The Landfill Communities Fund (LCF) is an innovative tax credit scheme that enables operators of landfill sites to contribute a portion of the monies they pay as landfill tax directly to approved organisations, called Environmental Bodies (EB's), to fund community and environmental projects in the vicinity of landfill sites. Ulster Wildlife is a registered Environmental Body (EB) that distributes monies on a Landfill Operator's behalf. Since 1997, Ulster Wildlife has helped distribute over £10 million to more than 500 community and environmental projects across Northern Ireland.

How we're organised



Strategy

Ulster Wildlife launched its 2030 strategy to bring nature back on World Earth Day in 2022. Its vision remains to protect, connect and manage at least 30% of land and sea in Northern Ireland for both nature and people, by building partnerships with individuals, local communities, landowners, farmers and businesses.

If you're reading this online, you can access the [full strategy here](#). Below are some of the key points.

Nature

Outcome 1 Nature is in recovery and wildlife is thriving across Northern Ireland.

Outcome 2: More people are taking positive action for nature and climate and are benefitting from time spent in nature.

Outcome 3: Nature-based solutions are playing a central role in addressing the impacts of climate change in Northern Ireland.

Internal Transformations

Transformation 1: Financing the future

Transformation 2: Building organisational capacity and capability for the future

Transformation 3: Reframing our policy, influencing and advocacy work

Financials

As at July 2024, Ulster Wildlife's Annual Report and Accounts for 2023/2024 are currently being prepared for ratification by the Board of Trustees. If you are reading online, the full financial statement for 2022/2023 and the previous two years can be accessed from the links below.

As an independent charity, our members and donors make our work for nature possible providing financial support to enable us to look after wildlife and wild places and bring people closer to nature in Northern Ireland.

To help us make an even bigger impact, we also receive funding from a wide range of funding streams including statutory (government) funding and charitable trust funding as well as philanthropic lenders to help support some of our larger projects and areas of work.

[Annual Report to March 2023](#)

[Annual Report to March 2022](#)

[Annual Report to March 2021](#)



Common Guillemots © Ronald Surgenor

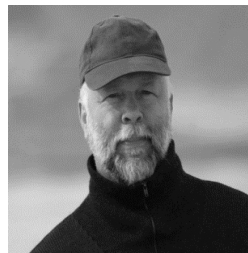
Meet the Board



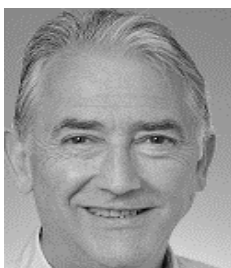
John Witchell
Chair



Sir David Sterling KCB
Vice Chair



Stephen Aston
Vice Chair



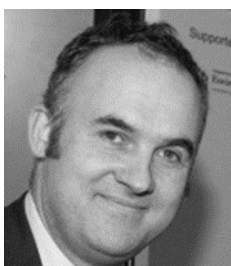
David Hendron
Treasurer



Kate Thompson
Company Secretary



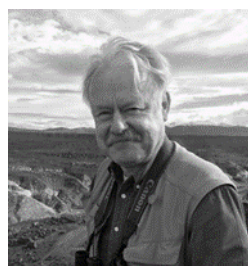
Fiona Davey



Edward Wright



Chloe Craig



Dr Bob Brown OBE



Ciarán Ferrin



Seamus McKee



Richard Buchanan

Job Description

Job Title:	Chief Executive Officer
Location:	Ulster Wildlife Offices, McClelland House, 10 Heron Road, Belfast BT3 9LE. The post will require travel around Northern Ireland and throughout the UK and Ireland. Ulster Wildlife operates a Hybrid Working Policy with a minimum of two days a week in the office required.
Hours:	37.5 hours per week. The nature of this post will require evening and weekend working, for which time off in lieu will be granted.
Contract:	Permanent. This post is subject to a 6-month probationary period.
Responsible to:	Board of Trustees
Responsible for:	Director of Development and Governance Director of Land Management Head of Marine Recovery
Salary/Benefits:	£66,092 to £79,950 Access to employer's contributory pension scheme - maximum 9% per annum. 24 days annual leave per annum plus 12 days statutory holidays, rising to 26 days following three years' service. Health cash-back plan, flexi-time system and onsite parking.

Overall Purpose of the Job

- To provide inspirational and visible leadership, playing a central role in the promotion and representation of Ulster Wildlife.
- To ensure that Ulster Wildlife is recognised as a high-profile champion, steward and leader for the natural environment in Northern Ireland.
- To uphold the core values of Ulster Wildlife. We act with passion, are hard-working, and with a love of nature. We operate with integrity and with a respectful and inclusive attitude to all our partners and supporters.

Main Responsibilities

Leadership

- Provide strong and visible strategic leadership for Ulster Wildlife as a whole, both internally and externally
- Lead the strategic planning and implementation processes with the collaboration and approval of the Board
- Monitor Ulster Wildlife's strategic environment for threats and opportunities and flex the strategy as appropriate
- Maintain and enhance relationships with key existing strategic stakeholders, and identify new ones as appropriate
- Direct, inspire and motivate staff and volunteers
- Work with the management team on the ongoing development and implementation of Ulster Wildlife's long-term strategy through the development and delivery of annual business plans, and associated budgets and performance measures
- Ensure that policies and decisions support the agreed vision, mission, values and strategy of Ulster Wildlife.

External Relations

- Be a persuasive and influential advocate, raising the profile of Ulster Wildlife and the importance of nature in solving society's challenges
- Motivate and inspire Ulster Wildlife's valued members and supporters, demonstrating the impact of member support on nature conservation in Northern Ireland
- Develop and enhance relationships with key Northern Ireland stakeholders in regional government, local government, farming, fisheries, academia, the youth sector and with other environmental groups
- Cooperate and collaborate with The Wildlife Trust central team and other wildlife trusts across the UK and equivalents in Ireland
- Enhance Ulster Wildlife's profile and influence and be proactive in contributing to the debate around nature, wildlife and climate change through effective use of print, broadcast and digital media, and public speaking.

Governance and People

- Develop open, trusting and respectful relationships between the CEO, senior staff and the Board
- Ensure high quality governance, compliance with statutory requirements, financial and risk management in line with the law and Charity Commission guidance
- Ensure timely financial and operational performance reporting to the Board

- Support learning and development, and career progression for all staff, and ensure annual appraisals are done in a meaningful way for all
- Monitor labour market trends to inform how Ulster Wildlife can position itself as an employer of choice
- Champion equality, diversity and inclusion across Ulster Wildlife.

Financial Sustainability

- Generate significant income for the organisation through grants, collaboration with the private sector and growth of membership and legacy donations, whilst ensuring relations with key funders are well managed and consistent with our values
- Lead the preparation and management of the annual budget as part of the strategic plan for approval by the Board of Trustees
- Ensure that financial reports and processes are in place and routinely monitored to ensure probity and accountability for all those charged with managing budgets in the organisation.

Operational Delivery

- Assure the development and implementation of service delivery and core processes to support the implementation of the organisation's strategy
- Ensure high levels of compliance are achieved against regulatory and statutory requirements and that quality and governance improvement is part of the culture of the organisation
- Ensure people-planning processes are aligned to the organisation's needs and a culture of investing in people is prevalent that enables all to reach their full potential in line with the organisation's values
- Support a culture of innovation while assuring statutory compliance and organisational sustainability
- Ensure that operational risks are effectively managed and mitigated
- Ensure the organisation deploys digital and ICT resources optimally to support efficient operations, enhance service delivery and supplier management, and facilitate effective communication

No job description can cover every issue which may arise and subsequently the post-holder may be expected to carry out other duties broadly consistent with those itemised above.



Ulster Wildlife staff team - October 2023

Person Specification

Experience

- Demonstrable experience of leading as a senior manager, working with a wide range of sectors and stakeholders
- Track record of engaging, supporting and motivating teams, communities and people
- Experience of advocacy to influence social change or public policy
- Knowledge of fundraising with a track record of leading income growth from a range of sources and developing relationships with funders
- Experience of strategic financial planning and management

Personal Qualities

- Inspirational and visible leadership style
- Flexible and collaborative with a genuine desire to help and support others
- Displays and actively encourages a 'can do' attitude and celebrates success
- Excellent and non-judgmental listener who is self-aware, reflective and responsive to constructive feedback
- Nurtures resilience in self and others, with a focus on wellbeing
- Values and beliefs aligned with the wider Wildlife Trusts movement
- Genuine interest in the wildlife, natural history, and climate change issues of Northern Ireland
- Evidence of continued personal development
- Evidence of good personal organisation and time management

Skills

- Excellent communications, presentation and interpersonal skills
- High level of external representation skills and ability to act as a media spokesperson
- Strong understanding of environmental issues and/or an enthusiasm for gaining this knowledge
- Sound understanding of political environments and the ability to build relationships with the civil service and elected representatives
- Ability to negotiate, influence and resolve conflict

How to apply

Please forward a **CV, maximum three A4 sides**, together with a completed **Supplementary Questions form** available from www.engageexec.co.uk, ensuring you have included mobile, work and home telephone numbers, as well as any dates when you will not be available or might have difficulty with from the recruitment timetable. You will also be asked to submit a separate fair employment monitoring **form** (see below).

The deadline is **Noon on Monday 2nd September 2024**. Applications should be made by email to: **apply@engageexec.co.uk**

Contact Patrick Minne on 07792 509003 if you have any queries about the role or the application process.

Equality Monitoring and Criminal Convictions Disclosure

Along with the CV and Form, you will be asked to complete and return the Equal Opportunities Monitoring and Criminal Convictions Disclosure Form in a separate document. Neither of these will be disclosed to anyone involved in shortlisting your application.

Disability

In accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act a person is disabled if they have, or have had, “a physical or mental impairment which has, or has had, a substantial and long term adverse effect on your ability to carry out normal day to day activities”.

If you consider yourself to have a disability relevant to the position for which you are applying, please contact Patrick Minne so that we can process your application fairly, make any specific arrangements for your interview, and make any necessary reasonable adjustments or adaptations, or provide any aids to assist you in completing the duties of the post if appointed.

Equal Opportunities

The Ulster Wildlife is an Equal Opportunities Employer and all applications for employment are considered strictly on the basis of merit.

Any offer of employment is conditional on the receipt of two satisfactory references, certificates to support stated qualifications, and proof of the right to work in the UK. Please note Ulster Wildlife does not hold a Sponsor License.

By submitting an application for this position, you are consenting for your personal information to be processed and used for the duration of this recruitment campaign.

Timeline

CV, Supplementary Questions and Equality Monitoring and Criminal Convictions forms to be submitted

Noon, Monday 2nd September 2024

First Interviews

Monday, 9th September 2024

Second Interviews (may include a seen or unseen task)

Tuesday, 24th September 2024 & Wednesday 25th September 2024

Final Interviews

Monday, 30th September 2024



Native oyster nursery in Belfast Harbour



Ulster Wildlife

Please address any enquiries relating to the advertised position, and your submission, to Ulster Wildlife's recruitment partners:

Patrick Minne



Tel: 07792 509003
Email: patrick@co3.org.uk

www.engageexec.co.uk

Enquiries unrelated to this recruitment can be addressed to:

Ulster Wildlife
McClelland House
10 Heron Road
Belfast BT3 9LE

Tel: 028 9045 4094
Email: info@ulsterwildlife.org

Ulster Wildlife is a recognised charity NIC101848 & company limited by guarantee NI 12711