



Ecologist

Frances Morris - Senior Ecologist

● How long have you worked in the industry?

8 years.

● Which career path did you follow to get to where you are today?

All of my A levels were in non-environmental subjects (sociology, psychology, health and social care and physical education). I studied Extended Science at the University of Plymouth which is an access course for people with little or no scientific background and that counted as year 0. The course was an intensive course covering chemistry, biology, physics, statistics, maths and geology to get me up to A level standard. I then progressed onto a degree in Conservation Biology (BSc Hons) for the next three years at the university of Plymouth.

● How would you explain your job to people? What does a typical week or project include?

I spend a lot of time working outdoors surveying sites for protected species. I also write reports and European Protected Species licences for our clients; helping them to minimise the impacts of their development on the natural world. I engage with our clients and help them to make the best decisions possible for their projects and the environment together. One element of my job that I really enjoy is the Conservation Detection Dog work which I have recently developed with the company.

● What role can your profession play in the fight against climate change?

We often recommend ecological enhancements within schemes which include planting native flowering species and including bat and bird boxes as well as reptile hibernacula (underground chambers where reptiles hibernate). Bug hotels also go down well with some of our clients and help the invertebrate populations increase.

● What's the biggest challenge for your profession in the fight against climate change?

The biggest challenge I would say in our profession is keeping up with the ever changing guidance, policies and legislation which underpin our decision-making and our clients' requirements.



I am working with RPS and a number of other organisations to develop the use of **conservation detection dogs in surveying for protected species**, specialising in hazel dormouse. This is a new and exciting technique which is being developed in the UK and we are thrilled to be involved with it. ”