



## **Project Coordinator (Leicester)**

**Katie France**

**Living Streets – the UK Charity for everyday walking**

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*I run activities and events with schools, workplaces and communities to encourage people to walk more of their everyday journeys (instead of automatically taking the car). Walking benefits the environment, improves health and wellbeing, reduces congestion on the roads, and creates opportunities for social interaction.*

*I also support schools and communities to identify things in their streets that make walking unsafe or difficult for them – such as having no place to cross, speeding traffic, pavement parking or personal safety concerns. We then suggest recommendations for improvements to be made – such as installing a new crossing point, a 20mph zone, a dropped kerb for easier wheelchair access, a street clean up, or planting flowers and trees to improve the area's appearance.*

### **Why I chose my job**

I love my job as it involves encouraging people to do something that will benefit the environment, even if that's not their reason for doing it! People may choose to walk to get fitter, to save money, to be social, or because it's quicker than sitting in traffic – but whatever their reasons for walking, doing so will ultimately help the environment by reducing pollution and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. And because this job involves working directly with people – I get to see the difference my activities and interactions are making!

### **The day-to-day**

Some days I'm in the office lots and on other days I'm out in schools, workplaces or community centres (like libraries) delivering events.

I support schools to run walk to school schemes so my day may include giving an assembly, creating parent letters, newsletter items, certificates or posters, ordering resources, organising special events, planning for or delivering a classroom session, giving support and advice over email, phone or face to face, and occasionally dressing up as a big orange foot - our Walk to School mascot!

When I support workplaces and communities you can find me giving out information and free pedometers, asking people to make a walking pledge or take part in a walking challenge, giving travel planning advice, planning and leading group walks, or creating email communications, posters and leaflets to promote the benefits of walking (although some are sent to me from our central Comms & Marketing team).

### **Key skills**

- **Good communication skills** - including an ability to engage with and influence diverse audiences, and acting as a spokesperson for the project.

- **Investigative/understanding** – taking time to find out why people find it difficult to walk more will influence how you communicate and work with them.
- **IT Skills** – Microsoft Word, PowerPoint and Publisher to create resources, presentations and reports, Microsoft Excel to keep records and data, social media to promote your project and engage with people.
- **Good organisational and time management skills** – to keep track of lots of projects at once
- **Walk the talk** – behave in the way that you're asking others to do. People will want to see and hear how you fit walking into your day.

### **Qualifications**

Good grades in GCSE English, Maths and Science.

A degree in a related field would be advantageous – e.g. environment, sustainability, health, transport, geography, psychology, humanities or teaching – Or experience of working on projects that deliver health/environmental/transport outcomes.

Volunteering in a related job or field can also go a long way to give you experience and knowledge of how a project or organisation works, as well as foot in the door for any opportunities that arise.

### **My journey was this**

I did a BSc Psychology – which included a placement year. My placement year was as a Human Resources Assistant at an Insurance company. Although it wasn't an environmental job or field, the position allowed me to develop my organisational, communication, IT and project management skills.

The placement year was so valuable (do one if you can!) as when I graduated I had both my degree and a years experience to offer employers. After uni I secured a job as an HR Assistant at the Environment Agency – so my HR experience in a non-environmental sector enabled me to make my move into an environment organisation.

During my time at the Environment Agency, I saw many people apply for and get jobs in other departments, which shows how opportunities may become available if you find yourself in the right company but not the desired job!

After a year at the Environment Agency I went travelling and then returned to university to do a masters in Environmental Psychology. This course focused on the interaction between people and places – and I learnt about the effectiveness of behaviour change strategies to encourage sustainable lifestyles; as well as how the design of places we are in can change our perception, attitudes and actions when in them.

On completion of the Masters I got a job at charity Keep Britain Tidy, working as a Project Coordinator on their Eco-Schools programme. I was responsible for developing campaigns and resources, the monthly e-news to 17,000 schools, and managing the content of the Eco-Schools website and social media accounts.

I really enjoyed this role but decided I wanted to be more on the “front line” – which is why the job I'm now in at Living Streets appealed so much – as it allows me to work directly with the people I'm trying change!

### **Salary & Progression**

Starting salaries range typically from £15,000 to £19,000.

Typical salaries with 1 to 5 years' experience fall between £20,000 and £25,000.

Typical salaries at senior level/with experience (i.e. after 10 to 15 years in the role) range from £22,000 to £30,000.

For management positions in an organisation where the post-holder has responsibility for policy development or the management of a multidisciplinary team, salaries can reach up to £50,000.

A typical entry level salary for a graduate can be between £15-25,000, rising to around £25-35,000 for an experienced Project Coordinator/Project Manager and ranging from £30-50,000 for Project Managers and Project Directors that have responsibility for policy development, people management, programme strategy or income generation.

### **Where to find out more**

<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/environmental-education-officer>

<https://www.livingstreets.org.uk/who-we-are/careers>

<http://www.sustrans.org.uk/about-us/vacancies>