

Role: Ranger Apprentice	Region: South & West
Reports to: Head Ranger – Culzean	Pay Grade: Grade 1 (Apprentice) - £27,976 per annum
Location: Culzean Castle & Country Park, Maybole, South Ayrshire, KA19 8LE.	Type of Contract: Fixed-Term, 18-Month Contract. Full-Time, 40 Hours Per Week. (Will include weekend and occasional evening working).
COST CENTRE: 3CUZ	ACTIVITY CODE: CYZ

JOB PURPOSE

The Ranger Apprentice position offers a valuable opportunity for a person to gain hands-on experience, training and professional development in a dynamic conservation and visitor services environment.

The National Trust for Scotland cares for Culzean Castle & Country Park. Formerly the home of the Marquess of Ailsa and the Kennedy family and with a history dating back to the sixteenth century, Culzean Castle and its landscaped grounds was acquired by the Trust in 1945 and is generally considered one of the flagship Trust properties. The Country Park extending to about 260 hectares, is visited by around 300,000 visitors each year, who come to enjoy the wildlife and scenery, of which the gardens, woodland and coastline are an integral part.

The Ranger team plays a vital role in delivering the National Trust for Scotland's mission by contributing to nature conservation, visitor experience, outdoor learning and community engagement. Working alongside experienced colleagues, the apprentice will develop the skills required to engage with visitors, care for our livestock and monitor, maintain & conserve our habitats and the designed landscape across the estate.

The Apprentice will also study for a Modern Apprenticeship (SVQ in Rural Skills at SCQF Level 6) with our training provider; Rural Skills Scotland.

MORE ABOUT THE APPRENTICESHIP

You will take direction from the Head Ranger, with two Rangers and a Seasonal Ranger providing day-to-day supervision. You will also work alongside other property staff.

The apprenticeship will be run in partnership with Rural Skills Scotland, who will support the successful candidate through their SVQ undertaking regular observations to allow the apprentice to meet the necessary evidence requirements.

The apprenticeship is for a fixed period of 18 months during which the successful candidate will be mentored and undertake relevant vocational training.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITIES

- Support the Rangers with the delivery of habitat restoration works within the Country Park including the management of woodland, grassland, heathland and freshwater habitats.

- Contribute to biological survey & monitoring programmes, helping to evaluate and inform conservation management decisions.
- Help with practical countryside management including litter picks, emptying bins, maintenance of countryside estate infrastructure (e.g. paths, gates, signs, vegetation management), safety checks of visitor & access infrastructure.
- Will support the team with feeding and care of the property's livestock; deer and llama.
- Contribute to the development and delivery of educational and outreach activities that bring alive our stories, including formal education sessions to schools, social media content, on-site displays, self-guided trails, guided walks, talks, events or other hands-on activities.
- Welcoming and engaging visitors, enhancing their experience by providing information about Culzean, its geology, natural and cultural heritage, including strong messages around safety and respect for wildlife.
- Participate in estate patrols at busy times including weekends to engage with tourists, outdoor activity enthusiasts and campers, championing a "leave no trace" culture and providing practical advice based on the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.
- Assist with events such as public gatherings, NTS events and weddings.
- Promote the National Trust for Scotland and the benefits of Trust membership or donations.
- Always maintain excellent standards of site and personal presentation, ensuring work is undertaken in a safe and appropriate manner, wearing correct uniform, name badges, or PPE as required.
- Assist with the supervision of volunteers and Project Search interns.

SCOPE OF JOB

Conservation

- Supporting the Ranger team in delivery of priority conservation actions including survey & monitoring and habitat management.

Estate Management & Maintenance

- Working with colleagues, volunteers and contractors to ensure all aspects of the property are properly maintained and projects are delivered on time and within budget.

Public Engagement

- Regular interaction with members of the public to promote the work of the NTS.

Teamwork

- Regular interaction with other team members of the Culzean workforce, including other employees, volunteers and Project Search interns to share daily tasks and support efficient operations.

Operational & Administrative Processes

- Conform to standard NTS policies and administrative & operational procedures.

Health, Safety & Environment

- Expected to become familiar with and comply with the property's Health & Safety policies and procedures.
- Operation and maintenance of tools & equipment (formal training will be provided as required).

The current duties of this job **do** require a criminal records (Disclosure Scotland) check to be carried out.

REQUIRED SKILLS, EXPERIENCE & KNOWLEDGE

Essential

- This is a development role so there are no set qualifications for this post.
- Ability to work within a team to a high and safe standard.
- Ability to be flexible and adapt working patterns and tasks to meet day-to-day variations in property needs.
- Excellent communication skills and the ability to interact positively with a wide range of people in person and through other written or visual forms.
- Ability and willingness to undertake strenuous physical outdoor work in all weather conditions.
- The ability and willingness to learn and try new things, to be flexible and step outside of your comfort zone.

- A passion for conserving Scotland's natural heritage and working for the National Trust for Scotland.
- Ability to be proactive and to take the initiative.
- Ability to balance training and expectations of the course curriculum alongside work duties.
- A full, clean driving licence valid for driving in the UK is essential for this post.
- Criminal records (Disclosure Scotland) checking and clearance will be essential for safeguarding of children. The role is one for which the duties/responsibilities/accountabilities of the role will require staff to become a member of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme.

Desirable

- Experience of working or volunteering in an outdoors environment.
- Knowledge of natural history and conservation issues in Scotland.
- Experience of working or volunteering in a public facing context.

The Key Responsibilities, Scope of Job, and Required Qualifications, Skills, Experience & Knowledge reflect the requirements of the job at the time of issue. The Trust reserves the right to amend these with appropriate consultation and/or request the post-holder to undertake any activities that it believes to be reasonable within the broad scope of the job or his/her general abilities.

HOW TO APPLY

Interested applicants should forward their Curriculum Vitae (CV) or an Application Form to the People Services Department (Applications) by email via workforus@nts.org.uk by 5pm on Tuesday 4th August 2026.

Please ensure your CV includes a cover letter & your full name and contact details, the CV file sent to us should be titled with your first initial and surname. When submitting your CV please state the position and job location of the vacancy you are applying for in the subject title or body of your email: For example, "Ranger Apprentice - Culzean"

Interviews are expected to be held the week commencing the 17th August at Culzean Castle & Country Park, Maybole, KA19 8LE. The interview process may involve a short practical skills test, and shortlisted candidates will be expected to make a short verbal presentation.

Please note – Apprenticeships will begin in Late-August/September 2026, subject to successful interview and selection.

All candidates will need to meet Skills Development Scotland's funding criteria to be eligible for this Modern Apprenticeship.