



CIEEM

# inpractice

Issue 112 | June 2021

Bulletin of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management

Biosecurity Good Practice

Marine INNS in the UK:  
the Scale of the Problem

Threat of Invasive  
Common Green Iguanas  
to Caribbean Fauna

'Phase 1 for Bugs': Rapid  
Assessments of Potential  
Value of Invertebrate Habitats



## Biosecurity and Invasive Species



# Get Professional on Social Media

Every bit of experience counts and every contact you make may one day be useful. Professional social media is a great way to make links especially while we can't meet in person. Following organisations and people on LinkedIn and Twitter is a great way to learn about companies, business sectors, places you want to work and the people who work there.

## LinkedIn

LinkedIn is the social networking site for professionals. In a recent survey, over 72% of the students and graduates surveyed were using LinkedIn for careers purposes.

### Write an effective profile

You can write a profile covering your education, voluntary and work experience and skills. Think carefully about your headline – in a sentence or two get across what you are studying, what you are interested in and what you want to do.

Recruiters will find and view candidates using LinkedIn. An up-to-date profile and being active on LinkedIn will show recruiters that you have a genuine interest in their sector.

Find out further tips about creating a LinkedIn Profile at: <https://targetjobs.co.uk/careers-advice/networking/449493-the-graduates-guide-to-creating-the-perfect-linkedin-profile>

### Endorsements

You can get endorsements on your skills which can help add validity to your online resumé by backing up your work experience. So be sure to ask mentors, supervisors or line managers to add these.

### Making links

When sending a connection request, it is a good idea to add a note to it; that way the person knows why you want to connect. As you make connections, more potential connections will be suggested. Follow these up. Conferences and Member Network events are a great way to start the process of connecting with relevant contacts; follow-up with a connection request saying how you enjoyed their talk or presentation.

### Visit employer pages

What organisations do you want to work for? Check out their LinkedIn pages and view what they post and what current issues and topics they are working on. This can be great background information before you even get to interview stage. Employers will also advertise their job vacancies on LinkedIn.

### Join groups

You can join groups related to the sector, employer or job role you're interested in. It's a great way to start building your network and a way for like-minded professionals to share knowledge, opportunities and link up. You will be able to view the full profile of, and send connection requests to, people who are members of the same groups as you.

## Twitter

Twitter is a great platform for keeping up with what is happening in the sector and is a great networking tool. Start following people in the area you are interested in and comment on their posts. It's a great way of getting your name out there and potentially standing out from the crowd.

Once you are more confident, get tweeting yourself. Tweet interesting and relevant content and re-tweet posts made by others. Also consider using hashtags which are an effective way of finding relevant content and if used

effectively can help you to expand your Twitter audience.

Twitter can also be a medium for spotting job opportunities, posted either by organisations you want to work for or by organisations posting about opportunities in the sector.

### Be professional

Choose your e-mail and profile wisely. StanTheMan@hotmail.com may be an amusing e-mail address but think about what you are portraying if that is the e-mail you use when you are applying for jobs.

Think about what you comment on before you post it. It will reflect on you.

Keep your personal and professional lives separate. You could set up two different accounts – personal and professional – on a platform. Or you could use LinkedIn for job hunting and professional purposes and other platforms for your private life.

Review your profile visibility and privacy settings for your different social media accounts. Try searching for yourself (use an 'incognito' window so you don't influence the search results). See what comes up. Are you happy with the online snapshot of yourself?

### Make an impact

The old adage "*a picture [or video] tells a thousand words*" really does apply on social media. It helps posts to stand out and allows you to tag organisations and people on Twitter without using up your 280 character limit (you can tag 10).

### Be proactive

Once you have joined, jump in with networking, make the links and slowly but surely get yourself known. Show an active interest by liking or commenting on posts and re-share posts.

Once you have your first position don't stop there! Keep growing your network – it can be a strong source of advice and guidance, both while initially looking for a job and throughout your career.

The ecology and environmental management sector is a small world. Getting involved in social media is a great way to network, get yourself known and hear about opportunities.

If you don't already, follow and join CIEEM online:

Twitter	<a href="https://twitter.com/CIEEMnet">https://twitter.com/CIEEMnet</a>
LinkedIn Page	<a href="http://www.linkedin.com/company/chartered-institute-of-ecology-and-environmental-management-cieem-/">www.linkedin.com/company/chartered-institute-of-ecology-and-environmental-management-cieem-/</a>
LinkedIn Group	<a href="http://www.linkedin.com/groups/4306428/">www.linkedin.com/groups/4306428/</a>
Facebook	<a href="http://www.facebook.com/cieem91">www.facebook.com/cieem91</a>

## Career Profile

Interview by Ella Glover,  
member of CIEEM's Student &  
Early Careers Focus Group



**Name:** Laura Palmer MCIEEM

**Organisation:** Neath Port Talbot Council / Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot

**Job title:** Biodiversity Officer / Swyddog Bioamrywiaeth

**Years in the sector:** 16

**How long have you been working in your current role? And has it changed in that time?**

Eight years—and loads, absolutely loads. In Wales we've had a flurry of new legislation and planning policy. We have to have a plan on how we're going

to conserve and enhance biodiversity in all our functions, and I wrote the Biodiversity Duty Plan [for Neath Port Talbot] under the Environment Act Wales. We had to change my job description to actually fit it in!

**Since the environment is a devolved issue, does Wales come up with its own legislation?**

Yes, and it's very different and a lot stronger in Wales. The Biodiversity Duty pertains to all public bodies, such as Welsh Water and the Police. As a Planning Authority when we give planning permission the applicant has to prove they've enhanced biodiversity. All authorities in Wales have actually got a letter from the Chief Planning Officer saying that you can refuse a planning application on biodiversity grounds—so it's a really strong backing.

**Do you experience much opposition to your work?**

We actually have a lot of support and since we sit in the planning team, the planners take it seriously when we ask for something. We've had a much better dialogue in recent years, for example with the people that do the grass cutting. We have some beautiful verges in Neath Port Talbot covered in rare invertebrates and last year it kicked off massively when some were cut. It's difficult because we can't just turn up and say "stop doing what you're

doing: do it differently" and for years it was just "no no no". But these days we communicate better and work with them, for example, I've written a briefing note saying how we could change the regime and help them to buy better machinery. We've got a lot of support in the community and some great botanists who are happy to show up on our behalf and if something goes wrong they'll ask "Why didn't you listen to the biodiversity people?"

**What does a typical work week look like for you (pre-pandemic of course)?**

I'm in the office a lot because most of what I do is comment on planning applications. Things like wind farms or household applications where, for example, they might have bats present. In Wales we have Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) and they're protected under planning policy. We get out to survey about 20 of these sites a year, to make sure each site is surveyed at least every 10 years. We also advise different departments; yesterday I was out on a flooding site where some vegetation needed cutting back and I advised them on when to cut back to avoid bird nesting season. We've also been looking at a lot of coal tips recently and colliery spoil sites are some of our best habitat—in the last few years we found a millipede new to science (which has been dubbed the 'Maerdy Monster')!