

CHISWICK HOUSE & GARDENS TRUST

CHGT Community Kitchen Gardener Job Reference KGS22

Responsible to: Head of Gardens

Responsible for: Kitchen Garden Apprentice and Volunteers

Contract: Permanent, 35 hours per week, FTE including Saturday working

Key relationships: CHGT staff and volunteers, Community groups, produce distribution partners, CHGT visitor experience, retail and events team.

Salary: £26,000 - £30,000 p/a

Role Summary

Chiswick House and Gardens Trust (CHGT) seeks a Kitchen Gardener to help us achieve our vision to be a place for everyone, every day. We have set out an ambitious 3-year plan for the Kitchen Garden, which has been part-funded by the Linbury Trust. We want to strike the right balance between drawing on our historic and horticultural heritage, best practice biodiversity and community participation principles. We have set out a clear vision: **to provide a safe space that brings diverse communities together, support healing and mental health through gardening, food, creativity and opportunities to increase employment skills.** We are looking for a Kitchen Gardener to take ownership of this plan and deliver it, working closely with our Community Participation Manager; to deliver horticultural excellence, volunteer and community programmes and outstanding visitor experiences. This role is a combination of strategy and planning, practical application, and people leadership working toward achieving the following goals to;

- Create a richer connection with our historic and natural heritage through our planting plans and presentation as well as use best practice biodiversity. We initiated a no-dig approach in 2017.
- Welcome over 2,700 people from our Hounslow and our West London community partners, to learn about nature, food growing and nutrition, and improve mental and physical wellbeing.
- Provide an engaging visitor experience where visitors can learn more about our no-dig approach, our community programme or simply to relax.
- Grow and increase the diversity of our volunteers to provide opportunities to develop skills and benefit from being outside and gardening.
- Have developed 1,000 hours of work experience placements in our first year, 1,500 in year 2 and 2,000 in year 3
- Manage and support the development of our Kitchen Garden apprentice.
Grow our income from produce sales which is reinvested into the Kitchen Garden.
- Continue to achieve our Gold London in Bloom walled garden award and contribute to Green Flat awards.

The Organisation

Chiswick House and Gardens (CHGT) is a 300-year-old historic house with 65 acres of Gardens in the heart of Hounslow, West London. It was established in 2005 jointly by the English Heritage Trust (EHT) and the London Borough of Hounslow, who previously managed the Gardens. It is the birthplace of the English Landscape Movement, with the largest collection of heritage camellias under glass in the world, 17th-century walled gardens and Kitchen Garden, and is internationally recognised for its architecture and garden history.

The Kitchen Garden at Chiswick House & Gardens has existed on this site since 1682. It changed ownership and went through various states of neglect and disrepair over the centuries. However, it wasn't until 2005 when it was restored and replanted by an enthusiastic group of local residents, determined to use this historic place as a community resource. This voluntary team of local gardeners launched the Chiswick House Kitchen Garden

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Community project. Their hard work and tenacity turned it into a community kitchen garden for teaching local residents, schools and community groups about horticulture and growing food.

Chiswick House & Gardens Trust took over all the walled gardens in December 2009 and embarked on a restoration project funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. The grant funded the conversion of the old stables in the Kitchen Garden into a Learning Centre and covered area providing additional covered and wet weather spaces to supplement learning activities in the Kitchen

What you will be doing

Kitchen Garden planning, cultivation, harvesting and maintenance

- Work with the Trust Director and Head of Gardens to deliver the three year Kitchen Garden Strategy for the community garden focusing on areas which have the greatest value to the community and positive impact on partner organisations, potential investors and donors
- Develop and lead the implementation of the horticultural programme to develop the Kitchen Garden into full productive use, including shared use of the glasshouse for propagation and production
- Develop the detailed planting plans to deliver this programme
- Manage and develop the Kitchen Garden apprentice
- Plan the staff and volunteer resources required to plant, cultivate and harvest produce for the bi-weekly cart and other events throughout the year
- Maintain existing produce partnerships e.g. Stir it up, Colicci café and develop new ones to maximise income and/or distribution of the produce cultivated
- Join weekly Gardening planning meetings to agree priorities for the week ahead
- Maintain weekly plant produce records, diary of activities and seed sowing/plant log
- Supporting Gardening team where required
- Achieve a gold in the Walled Garden category of London in Bloom and contribute to Green Flag awards.

Sustainability, biodiversity and wildlife

- Continue and develop our sustainability, biodiversity and wildlife habitat enhancement practices
- Support our volunteer beekeepers in caring for our bees
- Develop and deliver monitoring and evaluation model so we can apply our learnings

Kitchen Garden Community and Volunteer Management

- Working with the Community Participation Manager help develop and run the community programme in the Kitchen Garden to encourage a greater practical understanding of growing food and horticulture, wellbeing and artistic activities for our participants
- Supporting our committed Kitchen Garden volunteers to get the most out of their experience
- Design and plan volunteer gardening activities and equipment required to enable this plan

Health and Safety

- Collate H&S incidents and near misses, to be reported to the Head of Gardens.
- Ensure the fulfilment of all Health, Safety, CoSHH, pesticide and other regulations as affect the operations of the gardens
- Devise, implement, monitor and manage volunteer training in horticulture and associated Risk Management and Health and Safety

Other

- Occasionally assist the gardening team in horticulture duties around the estate

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- You will be required to act in accordance with the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 to take reasonable care for the health and safety of any person who may be affected by your acts or omissions in carrying out your duties.
- You may be asked to carry out other duties as may arise from time to time and which may be reasonably accommodated within the posts grading level.

Who We Are Looking For

We are looking for someone with:

- Strong experience of working with a range of community groups, in horticultural settings, with varying levels of need and confidence
- Experience of developing and leading volunteers, in horticultural settings, with varying levels of need and confidence
- Excellent practical horticultural skills and experienced with pest and disease management
- Excellent planning and people management skills
- Proven track record of managing budgets, finances, compliance and small projects
- Great communication skills
- Strong administrative and project management skills
- Experience of organising garden and outdoor activities
- Experience of writing horticultural and planting plans
- Experience working in a historic or heritage environment, and an understanding of the unique challenges this can present
- Ability to balance competing priorities and adaptable and self-motivated
- A good level of IT competency, confidence using Excel
- Working knowledge of Health and Safety legislation
- RHS Level 2 in Horticulture
- ND/HND in Horticultural
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How To Apply

Please, email your CV with expression of interest letter (no more than 1 side of A4) explaining why you are a good fit for the role to info@chgt.org.uk. Please use the reference KGS22 in the subject line.

Deadline for applications is Monday 24 January 2022 at midday.

Interviews will be held week commencing Monday 31 January 2022