

# Job Description

Job Description	Head of Collections & Interpretation
Organisation	Avoncroft Museum of Historic Buildings
Location	Avoncroft Museum, Stoke Heath, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, B60 4JR
Type	Permanent, full-time 35 hours per week
Rates of pay	£23,000 per annum
Reports to	Director
Responsible for	Historic Buildings Curator, Head Gardener, Volunteer Manager (Interpretation & Core Activity) and Volunteer Manager (Young People, Special Projects & Outreach) and their reporting staff
Job Ref	HoCI9

## Job Purpose

The Head of Collections & Interpretation will work closely with the Director and Deputy Director to lead the development of Avoncroft Museum as its senior management.

The role is to develop and grow the significance and relevance of the Museum's collections, raise the Museum's reputation within the heritage sector, to oversee the maintenance and interpretation of the historic buildings, gardens and grounds and the delivery of the volunteering programmes.

## Key Responsibilities

- Work closely with the Director and Deputy Director to develop and deliver integrated plans for the Museum's growth and development based on the Museum's 20-year Vision
- Undertake project management for the Museum including building acquisition, landscape development and conservation/maintenance projects
- Responsible for the care, security and management of the Museum's historic buildings and other collections
- Responsible for the Museum's landscape and gardens to ensure at all times they are presented to their best and in a historically appropriate way (where applicable)
- Manage a programme of research and project outreach across the Midlands, to identify and categorise buildings/buildings types which are important to Midlands' communities
- Manage the Museum's library and archive collections seeking new acquisitions and funding to enable these to grow into a major resource for the study of the Midlands built environment.
- Responsible for accurate accounting of the Museum's restricted project funds
- Manage health & safety for the Museum's historic buildings and all collections

- Manage all interpretation of the Museum's collections, through live interpretation and demonstrations, exhibitions and permanent displays
- Responsible for the development of volunteering programmes at the Museum and off-site, to ensure the Museum benefits from a wide range of volunteer contributions, both long-term and short-term and from a diverse range of volunteers
- Work with partnership projects and represent the Museum on outside bodies
- Act as Weekend Manager at the Museum one weekend day in eight and a Senior Manager on-call one weekend in four, as scheduled

## Key Duties

### Historic Buildings Collection

- Proposes new building acquisitions to the Director and Council of Management, of buildings under threat for addition to the Museum's primary collection
- Project manages all new historic building projects. Undertakes planning, appointment and management of outside contractors, ensures full recording of dismantling process, manages transport, plans and manages building re-erection.
- Supports fundraising for new projects and completes relevant parts of grant applications
- Working with the Historic Buildings Curator, undertakes regular building fabric inspections of the historic buildings collection, manages conservation/restoration projects of the buildings
- Manages the maintenance and conservation work (both day-to-day and larger projects) on the historic buildings collection and exhibits
- Ensures accurate records of all work undertaken on the historic buildings collection are kept for future transparency
- Manages a routine daily opening inspection of all historic buildings and exhibits (delivered through their team) to ensure that the Museum is well-presented and all displays and interpretation are in place, safe, working and clean

### Grounds and Gardens

- Proposes and agrees landscape and garden maintenance priorities with the Director
- Manages the Museum's grounds and maintenance staff to ensure the grounds and gardens are well presented and all areas are safe and tidy (including a routine daily opening inspection implemented by the gardening staff and volunteers)
- Plans new landscape and garden developments, within the overall agreed Museum masterplan, including appropriate domestic gardens, historic agricultural areas and natural and wildlife areas.

### Research

- Oversees research into the deeper understanding of the historic buildings at Avoncroft to produce interpretive exhibitions, publications and web content
- Develops expertise in Midlands vernacular and historic building types and techniques
- Manages programme of outreach – talking to communities of the Midlands to build understanding of their communities' relationship with the built environment

- Undertakes research into disappearing heritage across the Midlands, especially related to community, social and industrial usage of buildings and structures in the later 20<sup>th</sup> century
- Works with academic institutions to build relationships and develops a network of partners that investigates and shares knowledge of life in the Midlands and the relationship with the built environment

## Avoncroft's Non-Building Collections

- Ensures the management of the Museum's object collections, complies with collections management standards, manages accreditation submissions, develops storage improvements, access and use of the collections.
- Ensures audits of the collections are undertaken. Works with staff and volunteers to ensure building content inventories are up-to-date and checked regularly.
- Responsible for developing and implementing an active acquisitions and disposal process ensuring collections are reviewed to reflect the objectives of the 20-Year Vision. Responsible for identifying conservation needs, implementing preventative conservation methods, identifying and managing in-house conservation/restoration projects and outside conservators.
- Develops the Museum's collections' online access. Works with volunteers and staff to provide information and research about the Museum's buildings and other collections.
- Develops the reputation of the Museum's collections and their value to studying the built environment of the Midlands.
- Manages all enquiries relating to the collections and ensures timely responses.

## Visitor Interpretation

- Manages the delivery of all forms of site interpretation, including volunteer interpretation and demonstration teams, all temporary exhibitions, didactic panels, audio/visual interpretation or other interpretive materials to ensure a rewarding and memorable visit to the Museum
- Works with the Programmes Officers to advise on programmes of special events, learning programmes etc and their use of the historic collections and appropriateness.
- Further develops and manages appropriate calendar of live site interpretation, ensuring that training for volunteer demonstrators/interpreters, materials and all necessary resources are in place.

## Volunteering

- Through the management of the Volunteer Manager posts, is responsible for the development of all volunteering programmes at the Museum,
- Ensures growth in the number and type of opportunities for involvement by volunteers at the Museum, building capacity for young people's volunteering across the Museum
- Responsible for the welfare, work and safety of volunteer teams reporting directly to staff in the Collections and Interpretation team.
- Broadens the volunteering opportunities away from Avoncroft, either locally or worldwide, through the development of projects which encourage remote participation with the Museum's collections and the subjects Avoncroft covers

## Compliance with Health & Safety and other legislation

- Ensures good working practices and health & safety compliance for all staff and volunteer teams working on the historic buildings and other collections, grounds and gardens.
- Works with the Deputy Director to ensure that health & safety compliance for staff, volunteers, visitors, contractors etc is prioritised across the Museum, ensuring that works across all buildings and grounds are carried out while protecting the historic fabric and maintaining the visual presentation of the Museum.
- Ensures regular testing required for buildings/equipment is undertaken and up-to-date; carries out risk assessments of the historic buildings and other collections, and ensures documentation is regularly updated as risks change
- Ensures compliance of the Collections and Interpretation team with health & safety regulations and engenders active understanding of safe-working practices

## Finance

- Responsible for managing delegated Museum budgets and ensures value for money when commissioning suppliers and contractors and procuring goods.
- Works with the Deputy Director and Senior Finance Officer to ensure good financial procedures within the Collections and Interpretation team.
- In liaison with the Senior Finance Officer, to ensure that all grant/donation funded projects are properly accounted for and reports of project outcomes can be provided to funders.
- Works with the Director and Deputy Director to seek grants for Museum projects and ensures all grants are spent in accordance with conditions
- Leads income generation for the Collections and Interpretation team

## Personnel & staff management

- Plans work programmes and provides active and supportive management of line-managed postholders
- Carries out regular goal-setting and appraisals for their staff team according to Museum policy
- Fosters excellent co-operative working across the Museum staff and volunteer team on projects or initiatives, to bring together the right combination of skills and knowledge

## Other duties

- Reports on progress to Museum Council of Management
- Complies with all Avoncroft Museum Policies and Procedures
- Carries out any other duties which are reasonably required by the Director
- Works weekends, evenings and Bank Holidays when required

# Person Specification & Eligibility Criteria

## Education and Qualifications

### Essential

- Educated to degree level or equivalent in a relevant subject
- Current valid driving licence and reliable form of transport to the Museum at all hours

### Desirable

- Post-graduate qualification in Museum Studies, Heritage Management or similar
- Vocational qualifications in a relevant field
- Training in project management, staff management, heritage building skills, collections management

## Relevant Experience and Skills

### Essential

- At least 3 years working in a cultural/museum/heritage environment
- A high level of IT skills in a workplace context and recent use of Microsoft Office packages including Word, Outlook, Excel and regular Internet user
- Experience of managing conservation projects with complex conservation needs
- Experience prioritising and managing multiple tasks and projects simultaneously, ensuring projects are well managed from beginning to completion
- Experience working to tight deadlines under pressure, with accuracy and attention to detail
- Experience of budgeting, budget monitoring and management
- Excellent communication skills, both verbal and written, including speaking to public audiences
- Self-motivated, with a responsible attitude. Well organised with the ability to use own initiative
- Ability to motivate a team, manage individual staff and delegate effectively

### Desirable

- Experience of line-management of staff or volunteer teams
- Experience of commissioning and managing contractors to deliver desired outcomes
- Ability to negotiate good terms
- Ability to work in an adaptable, calm and co-operative manner
- Strong administration skills and able to both create and adapt systems and processes
- Able to perceive and maintain high standards of presentation
- Demonstrable good time-management skills and logical record keeping
- Experience of undertaking collections management projects or managing collections databases
- Experience of working with young people in a leadership role
- Able to present complex ideas to people in simple ways
- Able to seize opportunities, solve difficult problems and demonstrate confidence when undertaking new challenges, whether large or small scale

## Knowledge and Awareness

### Essential

- Awareness of Health & Safety regulations
- Understanding of risks and risk management
- Knowledge of British social, industrial, garden or architectural history

## Desirable

- Understanding of equality and diversity issues
- Understanding of safeguarding issues
- Knowledge of practical grounds maintenance or gardening
- A commitment to environmental sustainability
- Understanding of historic building construction methods
- Understanding of the purpose and benefits of volunteering to both the volunteer and organisation
- Knowledge of high-quality customer service standards

## Eligibility Requirements

Working at Avoncroft and this post are subject to some eligibility requirements. It is your responsibility to prove that you meet them:

- Age requirement
- Nationality requirement
- Charity Commission rules for disqualification
- Criminal record requirement
- Health requirement

### Age requirements

Applications for this post must be over the age of 18. There's no upper age limit for applying and there is no default retirement age.

### Nationality requirements

You must be a British citizen, an EEA national, Swiss national, or a Commonwealth citizen or foreign national with no restrictions on your stay in the United Kingdom or your right to seek paid employment. You must produce your passport if the Appointing Officer asks to see it.

### Charity Commission rules for disqualification

This role is regarded as a Senior Manager under the Charity Commission rules and therefore is subject to rules which automatically disqualifies certain individuals from holding this position, unless they have applied and been granted a waiver by the Charity Commission. As part of the application process, and annually thereafter, you will be required to sign a declaration that you are not disqualified or have a valid waiver. You will also be subject to record checks to verify your declaration and if you are found to be disqualified or become disqualified, it could result in disciplinary proceedings or dismissal.

### Criminal Record requirement

This post is 'exempt' from the *Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974* and therefore you are required to declare any convictions, cautions, reprimands and final warnings that are not "protected" (i.e. filtered out) as defined by the *Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (as amended in 2013)*.

You will be subject to a standard or enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and you will be asked to complete a DBS application if offered the post. All such offers are deemed conditional upon a satisfactory check.

Any declaration, form, and subsequent certificate from the DBS will be treated as strictly confidential. Failure to disclose all convictions, cautions, reprimands or final warnings that are not “protected” could result in disciplinary proceedings or dismissal.

## Health requirement

The successful application will be required to complete a health questionnaire and, if required, attend a physical examination by a doctor.

## Previous applications

Applicants who have previously applied to Avoncroft Museum for employment are eligible to re-apply. The successful candidate will be chosen based on performance at interview and best match for relevant experience and qualifications needed for this post.