

Job description - Head of Future Development - Westonbirt (PB3)

Job summary

We're recruiting a Head of Future Development to lead on the development of a masterplan to help build on our current success and realise Westonbirt, the National Arboretum's [Vision](#) to be a world leader in trees, inspiring people through conservation, education and participation. You will develop an implementation plan to deliver the masterplan, which will include capital development but also where relevant weaving in related activity programmes that help support the Vision and secure funding.

You will be a member of the arboretum's senior leadership team reporting directly to the Director. You will be a key member of the established Westonbirt Future Development Steering Group which is chaired by Forestry England's Director of Operations Commercial Visitor Development and includes representatives from the Friends Charity.

The work recognises the opportunity to improve facilities at the arboretum for visitors, staff and volunteers to enable us to deliver greater benefits for conservation, education and participation and to optimise the financial sustainability of the arboretum. Significant background research and identification of candidate projects has been undertaken. Under the title of Future-Ready Westonbirt the Steering Group have endorsed a development concept of 'three strategic hubs':

- The Welcome Hub; delivering a world-class welcome and a lasting impression.
- Central Hub delivering great visitor experience; a heart of the site that consistently exceeds expectations.
- Silk Wood Hub delivering science, discovery and engagement; a place to engage people in the wonders of tree science.

You will develop a masterplan to the next stage including an overarching spatial plan for whole site building on our three-hub concept and a first phase at full business case stage. You will convene a project team with representatives from the arboretum operational teams. Outputs will include project briefs capable of gaining planning permission, funding and being delivered. It is envisaged you will pass approved capital projects to the Capital Development team in readiness for delivery phase using project management skills and appropriate procurement routes to ensure projects are delivered to an agreed time, cost, quality and scope.

You will engage and enthuse a wide network of stakeholders including staff, working collaboratively with the Friends, planning and regulatory authorities (e.g. Historic England and Natural England) and supporters to ensure that plans deliver on relevant needs and objectives. With colleagues you will help identify and secure funding and you will obtain necessary approvals for the programme of works. The value estimate is £15-20m and implementation timescale multi-year.

In conjunction with our Friends Charity, we envisage developing a portfolio of programmes and projects that will help us to deliver this ambitious vision. These are a mix of infrastructure and activity programmes aimed at delivering both public benefit and commercial outcomes. We will need you to use your experience and skills to fine tune these ideas and develop a credible plan for implementation. You will develop a delivery plan which will be a programme of projects that support delivery of the masterplan that are costed and flexible in response to resources available.

The range of projects identified includes improvements to our car parking, visitor welcome and catering; redevelopment of our learning facilities; development of facilities to support and showcase our research work; improved volunteer and staff welfare and collaboration facilities; sustainability projects to help deliver carbon zero and waste reduction; improvements to supporting services such as utilities; toilets and storage; potential development of an onsite accommodation offer. Supporting conservation and engagement programmes include global and local tree conservation, biodiversity improvements, community engagement, a refreshed learning offer, volunteering development, onsite interpretation and development of our digital offer.

Key responsibilities & accountabilities

1. Leadership:

- Lead and inspire the project team and stakeholders.
- Core contributor to Westonbirt Future Development Steering Group and lead project team delivery.
- Contribute to the Westonbirt senior leadership team promoting cross team working and strong partnership working and collaboration with the Friends of Westonbirt Arboretum Charity.

2. Strategic planning:

- Develop the Westonbirt Masterplan to support realisation of the arboretum's ambitious 10-year vision and Forestry England's strategic priorities.
- Develop a portfolio of phased programmes and projects that support delivery of the masterplan and are flexible in response to resources available.
- Undertake relevant market research and gain insight from other national, regional, and local attractions. Ensure active monitoring and evaluation of activities and foster a culture of continuous improvement.
- Describe benefits and impact that the proposals will be able to deliver and foster a culture of continuous improvement.

3. Stakeholder engagement:

- Build networks both internally and with external agencies and partners to foster enthusiasm and support, support and investment for the portfolio of work.
- Working with the Friends of Westonbirt Arboretum and Forestry England colleagues to help identify and secure funding from multiple sources.

4. Operational delivery:

- Secure any required approvals for works through internal processes, the planning authority and other regulatory agencies.
- Establish viable means of procurement for services that will be required to support development.

And any other tasks, reasonably requested by your line manager.

Skills, knowledge & experience

Essential professional and technical experience

- Experience of developing programme plans and business cases for capital works and activities to meet organisational and funders' objectives.
- Cross functional collaboration and track record of building networks, partnerships and engaging stakeholders.
- Experience of developing and managing a variety of construction projects with multiple stakeholders and objectives.
- Proven experience and knowledge of planning approval processes; procurement and engagement of construction design professionals, in support of major capital projects and work programmes.

Desirable professional and technical experience

- Experience of leading and delivering transformational change and impact through strategic development projects.
- Experience of working in a heritage and/or visitor attraction environment.
- Experience of developing funding applications or working alongside fundraisers.
- Knowledge of biodiversity net gain.

Qualifications

Essential

- Degree in a relevant subject or ability to demonstrate substantive experience at a senior level (e.g. Project Management, Architecture, Landscape Architecture, heritage conservation management).

Desirable

- Qualification in Project Management (APM, MSP, MoP etc) or membership of a relevant professional body (e.g. RIBA, or similar)