

Job description: Garden apprentice, Fulham Palace Trust (18 month contract)

Responsible to: Head gardener, Fulham Palace

Employees directly supervised: Volunteers

Hours: 37.5 hours per week, (normally worked between 8.00 to 16.30 Mon to Fri), on a rolling Mon to Sun basis attending a one day a week course in horticulture during term times.

Salary: Paid at National Living Wage rate which rises annually in April (26/27 salary is £24,785 pa based on £12.71 per hour for a 37.5 hour week).

Responsible to: Head gardener, Fulham Palace

Background

Fulham Palace is a truly remarkable place. For centuries, this Grade I Listed building situated in extensive grounds by the River Thames was the country residence of the Bishops of London. The Palace is now managed by the Fulham Palace Trust, which is inspired by a vision to restore our nationally significant historic buildings and garden to their original beauty and to provide outstanding facilities for the local community and visitors from farther afield. Fulham Palace has moved into an exciting phase; upholding our existing environmentally friendly practices, enhancing biodiversity on site even further whilst continuing our organic vegetable production and garden maintenance.

Job summary

The garden apprentice will be required to assist in the practical skilled care, maintenance and development of the horticultural features and garden at Fulham Palace, working under guidance and supervision.

This London based horticultural placement will provide a unique opportunity to be part of the Fulham Palace gardens team including permanent staff, other apprentices and garden volunteers.

The garden apprentice will be required to undertake and attend a relevant part-time course in horticulture, usually an RHS level 2 (course availability permitting).

Key result areas

Horticultural maintenance and development

- Garden maintenance to a high standard – including weeding, mulching, edging, raking, digging over, staking and tying in, pruning, dead heading, bed preparation, and
- Vegetable growing in the walled garden.
- Seasonal propagation and growing on.
- Composting and mulching.
- Maintaining areas to enhance biodiversity and wildlife including meadows, wooded areas, and grass areas.
- Lawn maintenance.
- The efficient and safe use, care and maintenance of machinery and equipment.
- To work with and sometimes lead a team of volunteers for designated horticultural tasks.
- Participation in training to develop a wide range of skills.
- Support all departments of the Fulham Palace Trust to improve the Palace and garden.
- The apprentice will work in accordance with the Scheduled Ancient Monument under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Area Act 1979, amended by the National Heritage Act 1983.

Health and safety

- Carry out all duties in accordance with any relevant Health and Safety legislation including the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, paying particular attention to the public's safety.
- Identify potential risks at work and write risk assessments under guidance from the head gardener for specific tasks and complete incident forms.
- Take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.
- Operate the machinery in a safe manner in accordance with the Fulham Palace Trust Health and Safety Policy, the Codes of Practice for safe handling and manufacturer guidelines. Machinery should not be operated unless apprentice is properly trained.

Learning and engagement programme

- To work with and sometimes guide the get into gardening trainees who are young people on short term, part-time contracts learning about gardening as a career.
- To write blogs for the website and contribute to the Fulham Palace social media content.

Public and visitor care

- Enhance visitors' enjoyment of the Palace garden being welcoming and friendly.
- Take part in the site supervision of visitors, lead garden tours for corporate volunteers and groups when needed
- Assist members of the public with general queries, problems and incidents.

Events

- The garden apprentice will be required to work the weekend days of the Fulham Palace events (at least 4 a year).
- Assist with the preparation for, supervision of and cleaning up after events at the Palace (includes lifting, carrying and requires a good level of mobility).
- Assist the wider team to ensure that contractor run events and projects are managed within the guidelines set by the Palace.

Environmental practices

- Contribute to the Palace's green practices in the garden, being efficient with resources, using organic growing techniques, disposing of materials and equipment responsibly.
- Work in accordance with the Palace's biodiversity and climate change policy and management plan.

Personal development

- The post holder must also be accountable for their own development through the appraisal process seeking out opportunities to learn new skills.
- The post holder will undertake a part-time horticultural course within London, usually an RHS level 2 (course availability permitting), and any other training courses identified throughout the placement.
- The post holder will be required to write a daily work diary.
- The post holder will participate in regular plant identification tests.

Other

- The post holder will actively follow FPT's policies including Equality and Diversity and Safeguarding.
- Occasionally situations may arise that require the post-holder to perform other duties or tasks as may be reasonably requested by Fulham Palace Trust.

Working pattern

The post-holder will be employed to work 37.5 hours per week, (normally worked between 8.00 to 16.30) on a rolling Mon to Sun basis. The role will include some Saturdays and Sundays on a rota basis with the other gardeners. The garden apprentice will also be required to work the weekend days of the Fulham Palace events (at least 4 a year). The position includes attending a one day a week course in horticulture during term times. There is a 1 hour unpaid lunch break.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

POST: Garden apprentice

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

Knowledge:

Essential:

- Basic computer skills.
- Avid interest in horticulture.

Desirable:

- Ability to distinguish between different plant species.

Skills:

Essential:

- Basic practical horticultural skills e.g. use of basic gardening tools.
- A supportive and effective team player. Must be friendly, polite, approachable and helpful to colleagues, managers and visitors.
- Effective communication skills, able to understand verbal and written instructions, and able to clarify uncertainty.
- Ability to grasp information and apply recently gained knowledge.
- Able to carry out tasks requiring high levels of manual dexterity, as well as physically demanding tasks, such as shovelling, digging, mulching, lifting and carrying.
- Adaptable and able to deal with changing priorities, willing to take on new work.
- Committed to personal development, a self-starter, resilient, with an enthusiastic attitude.
- Able to work in public areas of the gardens and be representative of the Fulham Palace Trust at all times. To consistently convey a professional image, maintaining suitable appearance, manner and social skills.
- Able to withstand extremes of weathers in all seasons including high working temperatures under glass as well as outside in summer and winter.
- Commitment to FPT's Equality and Diversity policy and the ability to work harmoniously with colleagues, suppliers and customers of all cultures and backgrounds.
- Commitment to FPT's policy and procedures on working with children and adults at risk.

Desirable:

- Clear written communication skills in order to complete work records: accuracy and neatness.
- Clear and logical thinking required to deal positively with problems occurring within normal work routine, supported by supervisor.
- Ability to plan and organise daily work routines, with guidance.

Experience:**Essential:**

- Some practical experience in horticulture or plant related discipline, amateur or professional.

Desirable:

- Some experience of working as a volunteer or working with volunteers.
- Some experience of working education groups such as schools.
- Have used horticultural machinery and equipment following Health and Safety guidelines.
- Team-working experience.