

Role Head Gardener	Region / Department: South & West
Reports to: Operations Manager - Hill House Cluster	Pay Band/Starting Salary: Grade 4 Upper, £36,469 - £40,342 pro-rata, per annum
Location: Crarae Garden	Type of Contract: Permanent / full-time (40 Hours per week)
Cost Centre: 3CRE	Activity Code: GAZ
Terms and conditions <i>The post is subject to the standard terms and conditions provided with the application pack and the following special terms also apply: hours of work = 40 per week on 5 days out of 7 and at times to suit the needs of the job (this will include regular weekend duties on a rota basis).</i>	

KEY PURPOSE

Crarae is looking for a capable, motivated, and knowledgeable Head Gardener to lead its small, dedicated team of gardeners and volunteers in an exciting period of redevelopment and restoration for this garden and important plant collection.

This is a particularly important and exciting period for the property as we look to both conserve and develop the garden and its plant collection further over the coming years, with a key aim being to make the garden and infrastructure more resilient to a changing climate. The team are seeking a suitably skilled and motivated individual to join them on that journey. Working closely with the Operations Manager and Gardens and Design Landscape Manager for the South & West region, the post holder will play a key role in moving the gardens forward.

CONTEXT

The whole of the landscape is loosely divided into the garden, forest garden & waterfall. Lady Campbell, aunt of the famous plant hunter Reginald Farrer, began the development of the garden from woodland in 1912. The plant collection was developed greatly during the subsequent years before Sir Islay Campbell inherited the garden and in 1978 gave the garden to the Crarae Garden Charitable Trust. The NTS took over ownership of the garden in 2002.

Crarae Garden is a hillside, gorge and burn surrounded by woodlands comprising of tree and shrub collections which are rich and diverse, primarily planted to create a naturalistic and artistic effect. The plantings, generally, are in blocks which gives the garden its linkage to nature and provides a sense of drama. The lower garden, a formal component, continues with trees, shrubs and herbaceous plantings however this area is more notable for its significant aspect of archaeology seen in a Neolithic burial chamber and cairn. The trees within the plant collection mainly comprise of excellent examples of the genera Rhododendron, Eucalyptus, Nothofagus, Acer and Eucryphia.

The surrounding views are perfectly borrowed from the adjacent & marine protected Loch Fyne and the importance and variety of the woody plant collection offers the unique selling point for the visitor.

The biggest challenge to the long-term sustainability for this collection is that many of the plants are overgrown and

in some places over mature, there is a need to conserve the plantings through a careful mixture of propagation and renovation pruning to bring the landscape and features back into the garden. Following on from several recent storm surges, there is significant erosion throughout the landscape and burn edges, this will create challenges in managing Crarae in the future but also provide new opportunities to move the visitor journey away from the burn itself to safeguard the garden for future generations to enjoy.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Key Purposes of the job will be met by:

1. Ensuring the conservation and practical maintenance of the garden and policies – whether through delegation to other staff/volunteers, or personal participation - in terms of:
 - a. Practical horticulture (e.g. including managing trees and shrubs, herbaceous and bog plants, half-hardies, annuals and bulbs; turf care; pest/disease/weed control; composting and soil improvement; hard-landscaping and path care; glasshouse care and plant propagation; plant sales management);
 - b. Plantsmanship (e.g. the identification, knowledge and understanding of this high calibre plant collection, including recording [using IrisGB database], and labelling of individual plants and recognized collections);
 - c. Research and development (e.g. research into historical precedents and practical contemporary solutions to inform proposed activities and projects; support to the planning, design and implementation of restoration and/or development projects);
 - d. Interpretation (e.g. through the development and delivery of events such as introductory talks, presentations, guided tours or practical demonstrations and workshops, garden trails, digital media and contribution to guide-books or leaflets) to include the impact of *Phytophthora* at the property. In particular, the Head Gardener will take an active role in promoting the garden and property through digital media.
2. Ensuring appropriate management of the garden and policies that includes the management of:
 - a. staff and volunteers (e.g. recruitment, induction, direction, development, performance management) such that they are fully equipped, organised and motivated to undertake their duties to the required Trust standards;
 - b. budgets (e.g. helping set future budgets, phasing, monitoring, pro-active and re-active adjustments to current budgets, managing project finance) such that the gardens' finances are in line with budget within the context of the wider property and project budgets;
 - c. health, safety and the environment in line with stated Trust policies and approaches to ensure the health and welfare of staff/volunteers;
 - d. machinery and equipment (e.g. ensuring timely and appropriate repairs, purchases and servicing) and its use (e.g. training, risk assessments and HAVS logs);
 - e. recognition of the Trust's Environmental Policy with respect to sustainable gardening activities, including energy, water, peat & pesticide-use;
 - f. daily, weekly, yearly and longer-term management and operational workplans and reporting in the context of the property's statements of significance, action plans and heritage garden management objectives (and contribution to preparing these plans) to ensure that activities are prioritised and planned to optimise the use of resources;
 - g. customer service and care from garden staff/volunteers, and in the broader sense of facilities and "visiting experience", to ensure that the properties' reputation for excellence is maintained and enhanced;
 - h. administration to enable gardening activities to be undertaken and recorded efficiently;
3. Participating fully in the property's wider "management team", supporting the Operations Manager & Visitor Services Manager strategically and practically with the operation of the property.

Your role is one for which the duties/responsibilities/accountabilities require you to become a member of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme, which replaces the 'Enhanced Disclosure' check and is administered by Disclosure Scotland.

SCOPE OF JOB

People Management

- Is a direct Line Manager of a team of gardeners including: an Assistant Head Gardener, Gardener and Seasonal Gardener.
- Garden volunteers and working closely with the Friends of Crarae group.
- Will work closely with other property colleagues and will have some interaction with other technical/specialist advisory colleagues based in other locations and departments.
- Will be supported, guided, and developed by the regional Gardens and Designed Landscapes Manager for South and West.
- Will assume supervision of (and responsibility for) all other on-site staff/volunteers (all departments) when designated "Duty Manager" by the relevant Operations Manager or Regional Director.
- Will have daily interaction with members of the public of all ages and abilities.
- Will have frequent interaction with suppliers and contractors.

Finance Management

- Is a budget-holder
- Will regularly use computerized finance system for the raising of purchase orders for the supply of goods and service, monitoring and setting of revenue budgets and managing capital project work relating to garden activity at both properties.

Tools/equipment

- Will be a frequent user of driven vehicles such as tractors (including trailers and other attachments)
- Will be a frequent user of powered tools such as mowers, strimmers, hedge-cutters, etc.,
- Will be a frequent user of hand-tools such as spades, forks, trowels, rakes, hoes, shears, and secateurs;
- Will be a frequent user of IT equipment and relevant NTS systems to ensure compliance such as Tree surveys system etc.

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS, SKILLS, EXPERIENCE & KNOWLEDGE

The above outlines the key skills the post-holder will need to possess and exercise. In addition, either knowledge of or experience in the following is required:

Essential

- An HND/HNC level qualification in amenity horticulture or related subjects (equivalent to NVQ/SVQ level 3), supported by qualifications and experience demonstrating practical horticultural knowledge (eg & Guilds Level 2/SVQ Level 1&2). Or demonstrably significant and high quality directly relevant experience.
- Substantial relevant practical experience in general amenity and heritage gardening;
- Demonstrable experience of managing a team of staff and/or volunteers;
- Good organisational and time-management skills – including the ability to prioritise work where necessary;
- Sound demonstrable plantsmanship, including propagation skills and experience;
- Sound knowledge of basic tool and machinery use and maintenance;

- Sound practical knowledge of Health and Safety processes and procedures and the ability to work effectively within these processes;
- Demonstrable experience of being a budget-holder;
- Driving License, valid for driving within the UK;
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills; confident in interacting and dealing with a wide range of people; and able to represent the Trust;
- Competency and self-sufficiency in use of IT (email, internet, word-processing, spreadsheets, databases).
- Eye for detail and finish, quality standard and best practice.
- An understanding and commitment to the aims and objectives of the National Trust for Scotland.
- Living the values of the National Trust for Scotland and encourage colleagues to do the same
- The ability and willingness to understand others' perspectives and to consider the impact of your actions on them and to adapt your actions as necessary.
- The ability and willingness to learn and try new things, to be flexible and step outside of your comfort zone.
- An open and honest way of communicating, ready to ask others for their ideas and to be open to hear and consider different points of view.
- A pro-active approach to taking initiative and to driving forward ideas and projects designed to improve daily operations and deliver an exceptional visitor experience.

Desirable

- Experience of working in a that includes short-term/seasonal staff and/or volunteers.
- An appreciation of Scottish garden history in a general context;
- Experience of tree inspections and advanced CS units;
- Current First Aid certification (or willingness to train and use);
- Tractor driving training and certification – including use of trailers (or willingness to train and use);
- PA1 and PA6a spraying certificates;
- Skills in arboricultural techniques, as a minimum basic chain-saw certificates (or willingness to train and use);

The Key Responsibilities, Scope of Job, and Required Qualifications, Skills, Experience & Knowledge reflect the requirements of the job at the time of issue. The Trust reserves the right to amend these with appropriate consultation and/or request the post-holder to undertake any activities that it believes to be reasonable within the broad scope of the job or his/her general abilities.

Applications

Interested applicants should forward their Curriculum Vitae (CV) or an Application Form to the People Services Department (Applications) by email via workforus@nts.org.uk, by Sunday 13th October 2024

Please ensure your CV includes your full name and contact details, the CV file sent to us should be titled your first initial and surname. When submitting your CV please state the position and job location of the vacancy you are applying for in the subject title or body of your email: For example "Gardener - Culzean"