

# LEEDS CASTLE

## DESIGNED TO ENTERTAIN & AMAZE

### GARDENS MANAGER

#### **Role Profile & Job Description**



## LEEDS CASTLE

### JOB DESCRIPTION

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<b>JOB TITLE:</b>	Gardens Manager
<b>REPORTS TO:</b>	Estates Director
<b>RESPONSIBLE FOR:</b>	Gardens Supervisor(s) and reports
<b>DEPARTMENT:</b>	Gardens

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**LOCATION** Leeds Castle is a stunning, 900-year-old moated castle, set in 500 acres of Grade II listed parkland, situated in the beautiful Kent countryside. The Castle has been open to the public through the Leeds Castle Foundation since 1974 and continues her story as a glamorous retreat and popular visitor attraction.

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**PURPOSE** To lead Gardens Team, with responsibility for Grade II\* listed parkland focussing on the existing 4 formal and woodland gardens and development of new garden spaces.

Ensuring work carried out in line with historical precedent & that grounds & gardens are maintained & developed to high presentation standards.

Research, plan & work collaboratively with colleagues to develop existing gardens & plan/deliver new kitchen garden project, encompassing planting, operational approach and audience outreach/volunteering.

Lead on volunteering & community engagement in the Gardens Team.

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### KEY TASKS

- Provide professional Gardens support to the Foundation, including Health and Safety, training, projects, programme of planned and reactive maintenance and legal compliance related to all buildings, gardens and equipment under area of control.
- Manage resource effectively to ensure high standards of presentation & refreshment of planting where needed, controlling labour and materials costs carefully & managing to budget. Ensure that contractors are utilised in a cost-effective manner and that equipment is well cared for, to extend useful life.
- Undertake research into history of Gardens to inform work, building on our Landscape Conservation Plan & working with Curatorial colleagues. Ensure all work carried out improves conservation, environmental, ecological and public access value of the estate.



- Work closely with the Estates Director & other internal stakeholders to develop, plan and deliver the new Kitchen Garden. Work with Audience Development Manager to map out and deliver an ambitious programme of learning, community engagement & volunteering activity, to maximise public benefit, community outreach & skills training.
- Ensure excellent Kitchen Garden & Gardens visitor experience every day through a programme of tours/talks.
- Ensure that climate resilience & sustainability underpins all decisions.
- Build on Gardens Volunteering cohort, ensuring clear workplan for gardening & public facing roles, excellent communications/management of volunteers.
- Identify & manage risks in the outdoors including, plant health, biosecurity & environmental risks. Address potential hazards, incidents or near misses to employees, volunteers, contractors or visitors, including breaches of safe working practice, to ensure that all contractors work in a manner compatible with public safety, to clear RAMS.
- Lead and manage Gardens team, ensuring clear objectives, ongoing two-way feedback and annual performance reviews. Identify and facilitate training needs and ensure positive, open communications at all times.
- To be fully conversant with Leeds Castle Policies, Employee Handbook, Health and Safety at Work, Fire and Emergency Procedures.

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## **CORE ACCOUNTABILITIES**

- Creating and maintaining a garden that inspires and delights and is safe for visitors.
- Support a programme of large site events and deliver a programme of horticultural events.
- Work with Marketing to ensure the garden is promoted and opportunities are realised to use the garden to attract visitors to Leeds Castle.
- Building, leading & inspiring team in an engaging & professional manner.
- Excellent organisation, communication and team building skills.
- To be able to follow Company regulations in Health & Safety and maintain a safe working environment.
- To ensure personal standards of presentation, performance and attendance beyond reproach at all times.

## **SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE, EXPERIENCE REQUIRED**

### **Knowledge - Essential**

- Minimum Level 3 Horticultural Qualification or relevant degree.
- Excellent plant and gardens history knowledge.
- Understanding of requirements and complexities of working in heritage environment/listed landscapes with extensive public usage.
- Sound Knowledge of Health and Safety and legal compliance requirements.

### **Experience - Essential**

- 3-5 years' experience of managing significant garden(s), ideally in heritage environment.
- Experience of planning & managing new Gardens projects, including planting, budget management, operational set up & cost-effective ways of operating.
- Experience of propagation & growing fruit & vegetables.
- Experience of managing a Gardens Team to the highest standards.
- Experience of & enjoyment of working with volunteers and community groups.
- Providing an excellent visitor experience in outdoors spaces.
- Balancing conservation requirements with requirement for excellent public access.

### **Skills - Essential**

- Pragmatic, commercially aware, committed to keep business running during projects.
- Able to juggle multiple priorities & deadlines.
- Keen attention to detail with high standards for estate presentation.
- Good planner, with strong attention to detail, able to deal with unplanned issues.
- Strong customer service and public benefit/access ethos.
- Self-motivated and self-organising.
- Good verbal and written communications skills, excellent public engagement skills.
- Effective performance manager, able to coach line reports.
- Excellent relationship building and negotiation.

The Leeds Castle business runs 24/7 364 days a year, the postholder should therefore expect occasional weekend and Bank Holiday working when business requirements dictate.

In addition to your main areas of responsibility, the values and behaviours that are required from all our people for the successful delivery of our vision and strategy are summarised below:

VISION	To be the South's top heritage destination for relaxation, hospitality & experiences that surprise & delight
VALUES:	
	WELCOMING: Everyone is treated as a valued guest
	BEHAVIOUR: We welcome our guests with warmth & the personal touch, going the extra mile to make sure guests have a fabulous experience, while keeping them safe. We are inclusive, welcoming people of all races, genders, ages, sexualities & abilities. We build connections with communities & partner organisations to reach those who experience barriers to visiting.
	SURPRISING: We are a living, breathing heritage site, a place that uses its assets with joy. We look at life through a different lens, seeking surprising hidden stories & new approaches
	BEHAVIOUR: We are curious, think laterally & always look for the Leeds Castle 'twist' to make us stand out. We are agile, flexible & open to change.
	ENDURING: As estate custodians, we understand our assets, think long-term in caring for & improving them & leaving a healthy, positive legacy for future generations.
	BEHAVIOUR: We manage finances for the long-term, investing wisely & monitoring payback. Staff spend charitable funds prudently, always seeking best value. We minimise environmental footprint & work towards net zero carbon emissions. We plan regular maintenance & capital projects to protect our assets, doing the job properly & once. Our decision making is ethical, transparent & has integrity.
	NURTURING: We continue the estate tradition of looking after our people & communities.
	BEHAVIOUR: We respect different skills, experience & views. We work as one team, supporting & developing staff, recognising this is a lifestyle, not just a job. We take ownership of challenges & opportunities, successes & failures, always learning from experience. We are a good neighbour & partner, with a positive influence in Kent and beyond.

All candidates will be recruited against the above criteria regardless of their sex, racial, ethnic or national origin, disability, age, sexuality or responsibilities for dependents. We value a diverse workforce and celebrate our differences

This Job Description is not exhaustive. You should be aware that you may be required to perform other duties as required.

By signing this job description, you are confirming that you have read and understood all of the above and agree to adhere to this description whilst carrying out your role as Gardens and Grounds Manager.