

THERAPEUTIC HORTICULTURIST & VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

Part time (22.5 hours): (Days and times to be discussed)

Salary: £23,400 (£14,040 Pro rata)

Responsible to: Trustee Board

This is currently a fixed term contract, which, pending funding and the right candidate, is intended to become permanent, with prospects of promotion.

Responsibilities:

- To facilitate project participants and the community to engage in gardening activities which improve their health and wellbeing, encouraging a sense of achievement and social interaction.
- To lead on the development and delivery of therapeutic horticulture and related activities, including the design of appropriate training for a number of stakeholders.
- To develop and coordinate the Comfrey Project's volunteer engagement strategy and practice.

Main Duties:

(Approach & Development Duties)

1. To successfully engage, support and supervise service users, volunteers and various community groups we work with to take part in activity sessions maintaining a person-centered approach.
2. To work with Trustees, colleagues, service users, volunteers and local community stakeholders to develop a sustainable programme of engaging therapeutic gardening activities.
3. Develop and maintain monitoring and evaluation systems, produce statistics, case studies and reports as required by funders and Trustees. Use the evaluation findings to develop and improve services, ensuring they always correspond to identified needs.
4. Develop and maintain links and good working relationships with stakeholders from different sectors and donors, to promote the interests and raise the profile of the Comfrey Project.

(Volunteer Coordination)

5. Supporting the update and development of the Volunteer Engagement strategy and the relevant policies, procedures and databases.
6. Development of meaningful volunteering opportunities within the Comfrey Project's activities and managing volunteer participation, with appropriate levels of instruction and support.
7. Lead on the recruitment of suitable volunteers, including advertising, interviewing, checking references and DBS.

(Gardening Duties)

8. To lead on the design and maintenance of the seasonal growing spaces within the Comfrey Project grounds; to prepare a seasonal horticulture management plan, consulting with volunteers, participants, staff and trustees, regularly reviewing this against funding requirements and feedback.
9. Ensure the site, including all plants, structures, equipment, tools and materials is properly maintained, regularly audited and stored in accordance with the project's Health & Safety policy, reporting any hazardous situation or defective equipment without delay.

10. To maintain, and where necessary purchase, sufficient stocks of materials, tools and equipment, required in order for activities to take place, both horticultural and otherwise in line with the set budget for each activity.

(General & Admin)

11. Ensure your own safety, and the safety of others, adhering to Health and Safety legislation and the Comfrey Project's Health & Safety policy to enable the project to meet its legal responsibilities; update and create risk assessments where necessary.
12. Ensure safeguarding procedures are adhered to in line with the project's safeguarding policy, reporting any concerns to trustees without delay.
13. Liaise effectively with colleagues to exchange information and promote good practice to benefit service users and the Comfrey Project. This will include attending relevant team meetings, events and training and providing occasional support to colleagues, as required.
14. Be administratively self-supporting, and maintain effective electronic and paper-based office information systems.
15. Develop a range of creative presentations and other appropriate materials to support the engagement of partners and to promote our work to funders.
16. In fostering a safe and friendly environment, the postholder will ensure that users, staff, volunteers and visitors are made to feel welcome and supported, listened to and respected in a non-judgmental manner, always working in line with the Comfrey Projects core principles.

This job description is not exhaustive, and is provided to assist the postholder to understand her/his duties. It may be amended from time to time, without change to the levels of responsibility appropriate to the grade of the post and will be undertaken in discussion with the postholder.

Organisational Summary

The Comfrey Project is a small charitable incorporated organisation providing asylum seekers and refugees across Tyneside with a safe, welcoming environment which promotes personal wellbeing through facilities for recreation or other leisure-time occupation and through creating a sense of place and belonging. We deliver our aims primarily, though not exclusively, through the provision of horticultural activities. Participants also engage in cooking and art/craft activities and developing into-work skills.

Our Vision is to enable people who are refugees or seeking asylum to be included and respected as equals in society. As such we seek to involve the local community so they also benefit from the Project.

This group is vulnerable to the effects of poor housing, lack of resources, discrimination, hate crime, and poor health (both physical and mental). Participants of the Comfrey Project are referred by GPs, health visitors and various health, community, asylum seeker and refugee organisations.

From having a few participants at one allotment in Newcastle in 2002, the Comfrey Project has grown to working together with over 80 participants a year. We currently occupy two allotments in Newcastle and since 2015 we have taken over management of a previously disused centre and its surrounding land in Windmill Hills in Gateshead.

Further details regarding the Project and its work can be found in the evaluation report *The Comfrey Project – A review of the first eight years* and in the current annual report, both of which can be viewed on the website www.thecomfreyproject.org.uk.

Position Summary

Comfrey Project is seeking an empathetic, dedicated, highly motivated and exceptionally organised individual for the post of Therapeutic Horticulturist & Volunteer Coordinator, to join us at an exciting phase of our development.

The postholder will be reporting to and working closely with participants and the Trustee Board, s/he will be in a position with significant opportunities across a wide range of project development and delivery, participant and volunteer support management and networking duties.

There is an exciting opportunity to grow and shape this role going forward through consolidation of existing networks along with strategic development of new funding opportunities. It is hoped that the Therapeutic Horticulturist & Volunteer Coordinator role will become permanent and full-time.

The postholder will be joining a vibrant and thriving community at the project. S/he will be well supported by a hard working and experienced Trustee Board, both in terms of regular formal supervision sessions and opportunities for ongoing discussion.