



Gardening Lead - Job Pack

Thank you for your interest in working with The Comfrey Project in the role of Gardening Lead.

The closing date for applications is **Monday 12th January 2026 at 12pm noon.**

In this Job Pack you will find:

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- Purpose of the Role
- Main Responsibilities
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Overview

Job Title:	Gardening Lead		
Pay:	FTE £28,296.84 pro rata (actual: £12,073.32)	Location:	Windmill Hills Centre, Gateshead NE8 1QB
Hours:	16 hours/week - we can consider job share for this role (two staff, one day each)	Annual Leave:	32 days/240 hours per year, pro rata. This includes the usual bank/public holidays (8 days)
Contract type:	Fixed term for 2 years.	Reporting to:	Director
Start Date:	As soon as possible		
Equality & Diversity: The Comfrey Project strives to be an equal opportunities employer and welcomes applications from all sectors of society.			
Flexible Working: The role is primarily site-based with occasional work-from-home, over fixed hours to suit the needs of the organisation and agreed with the successful candidate. Occasional out-of-hours and lone working may be required.			
Appointment to this role is subject to full references and clear Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks.			
The successful candidate will be subject to a 6-month probationary period.			

About The Comfrey Project

The Comfrey Project is a charitable organisation which promotes personal wellbeing and community integration for refugees and people seeking asylum, through predominantly nature-based activities. Participants take part in regular learning and volunteering group activities. Sessions take place in our community centre and garden in Bensham, Gateshead, as well as in the local community. Main activities include gardening, beekeeping, construction, cooking, conversation classes, arts & crafts and more.

Our aim is to nurture a safe and welcoming environment that provides a sense of belonging and empowers people to build resilience, confidence, support networks and skills.

Purpose of the Role

In this role you will facilitate positive and meaningful engagement with nature-focused activities, helping participants and volunteers to improve their wellbeing, skills and confidence. With your horticultural expertise you will ensure our gardens look pleasant and welcoming, are accessible and safe, and have thriving crops.

You will develop and deliver two weekly gardening sessions:

‘Community Gardening’ - which takes place on Fridays - encouraging and empowering participants to be involved in maintaining and developing our community garden, with support from the Gardening Volunteers;

‘Advanced Gardening’ - day/time to be decided with the successful candidate - providing advanced gardening training to the Gardening Volunteers, working together to develop and deliver seasonal and strategic gardening plans, and acting as an empowering and supportive mentor so they can work safely independently.

This is a particularly exciting time to join our organisation in this role, as we are in the process of completing a long-term community asset transfer of our site, which will enable ambitious redevelopments to make the most of the land we occupy and create a hallmark community garden in the heart of Gateshead.

In close collaboration with staff and volunteers you will help develop ambitious and achievable strategic gardening plans that are both operational and seasonal, with a strong focus on environmental sustainability.

Lifting and transporting of materials/equipment will be required from time to time.

The post is currently advertised as a 2 year fixed contract, with the possibility of becoming permanent depending on funding.

Main Responsibilities

- Help with the planning and delivery of two weekly group gardening sessions to take place from the charity’s community garden;
- Coordinate occasional outreach gardening activities, e.g., at schools, care homes, charitable organisations, etc.;
- Prepare a seasonal horticulture management plan for our garden, consulting with participants;
- Coordinate the development and implementation of a long-term garden development plan;
- Work closely with a group of Gardening Volunteers, ensuring they are supported to use and develop their skills and knowledge independently and safely;

- Develop and maintain relevant partnerships which enhance our gardening programme and increase the opportunities available to our volunteers;
- Assist with setting budgets for the maintenance and development of the garden and the delivery of our community gardening programme;
- Ensure your own safety, and that of others, adhering to Health and Safety legislation and The Comfrey Project's Health & Safety policies, including creating risk assessments;
- Ensure plants, structures, equipment, tools and materials are properly maintained, audited and stored, in accordance with The Comfrey Project's Health & Safety policy;
- Oversee stocks of materials, tools and equipment and manage the relevant budget;
- Maintain accurate timely records of activities and impact achieved, providing reports as required;
- Ensure safeguarding procedures are adhered to in line with The Comfrey Project's Safeguarding Policies, reporting any concerns without delay;
- Help showcase our work through social media, our website and newsletters;

This list is not exhaustive and is provided to assist candidates understand the duties within the role. Duties may be amended from time to time, without change to the level of responsibility, appropriate to the grade of the post, and in prior discussion with the post holder.

Person Specification

The ideal candidate will be a skilled and experienced professional, possessing ambition and at the same time a pragmatic and methodical approach to their work.

You will be deeply committed to the ethos and benefits of community gardening, bringing flexibility, curiosity and patience to support some experimentation and learning through experience. You will also be open to non-traditional gardening techniques, enabling intercultural knowledge to inform our practice, planting choices and garden design.

You will have a friendly attitude, a positive and solution-focused approach. You will work very well under your own initiative as well as part of a small, dynamic team.

The ideal candidate will be an excellent administrator in relation to procedures relevant to their work and conscientious in implementing a safe and healthy working environment.

CRITERIA	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
Qualifications		
Practical Horticultural qualification Level 2 or higher	✓	
Full Clean UK Driving Licence and access to own vehicle		✓
Health and Safety in the Workplace		✓
Up-to-date First Aid Training		✓
Experience		
At least 2 years of experience in gardening and managing garden sites in a professional capacity	✓	
Technical knowledge in the care and cultivation of a wide variety of plants, including fruits and vegetable	✓	
In-depth knowledge of gardening techniques and motivation to keep up to date with current practice and processes	✓	
Managing budgets, payments and handling money	✓	
Experience of working in a community setting	✓	
Working with disadvantaged and vulnerable people	✓	
Experience working with and supporting volunteers	✓	
Experience working within a charity		✓
Working with refugees and people claiming asylum		✓
Working with people who have English as a second language		✓
Skills		
Good communication and interpersonal skills	✓	
Excellent organisational skills and attention to detail	✓	
Able to maintain safe working practices and creating risk assessments	✓	
Report writing	✓	
Able to handle a range of nursery machinery and powered hand-tools	✓	
Planning and managing a seasonal horticulture plan	✓	
Auditing equipment and materials	✓	
'Green' Crafts	✓	
Diverse knowledge of sustainable gardening/food growing practices	✓	
Developing and delivering training		✓
Good IT skills (Microsoft Office Word & Excel)		✓
Attributes		
Friendly, empathetic and patient	✓	
Creative, resourceful and proactive	✓	
A commitment to equal opportunities	✓	
Highly organised with great attention to detail	✓	
Leads through empowerment	✓	
Works well both as part of a team and under own initiative	✓	

The Comfrey Project's Valued Behaviours

<p>Organised, focused and clear</p> <p>This means...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We understand our roles, our organisation and how they fit together • Being really, really organised! • Taking pride in our work
<p>Flexible and adaptable</p> <p>This means...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We're willing to muck in! Good at juggling! (Multi-tasking) • We want to grow and develop our roles (working this out together)
<p>Motivated, positive and optimistic</p> <p>This means...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We're future focused - our glass is always 'half full'! • We're eager, enthusiastic, ambitious, curious – keen to explore and learn
<p>Collaborative and empowering</p> <p>This means...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We strive to help others work out what to do, rather than telling • We prefer nudging from behind rather than pulling from the front
<p>Empathetic, reflective and self-aware</p> <p>This means...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We empathise with people and care deeply for the cause • We know our own strengths and weaknesses and understand how these impact on others • We're able to reflect on activities and learn from them

Information and Guidance on How to Apply

- Applications close on **Monday 12th January 2026 at 12pm noon.**
- Interviews are expected to be held on the week beginning **Monday 19th January 2026.**

If you wish to apply for this position please complete an application form. This can be found on our website here:

thecomfreyproject.org.uk/get-involved/vacancies/

When completing your application please outline why you are interested in this position and ensure you provide evidence of your suitability by making reference to the Purpose and Responsibilities of the role, to the Person Specification and the Valued Behaviours in this Job Pack, paying particular focus to the essential criteria.

If you need help completing the application form, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Selection Process

Short-listed candidates will be invited to a formal interview. Interviews are expected to take place on the week beginning **Monday 19th January 2026.**

Getting in Touch

If you have any questions or wish to discuss this role, please let us know by email on info@thecomfreyproject.org.uk and we are more than happy to organise a telephone chat or a meeting with you (in person or on Zoom).