

Job Title	Assistant Gardener
Responsible to	Head Gardener
Responsible for	Volunteers, work placements
Pay Scale	Grade B, £25,500
Benefits	Pension Scheme, Employee Assistance Programme, Training
Hours	35 hours per week, 8am-4pm, Monday-Friday
Location	Powell-Cotton Museum, Quex House and Gardens, Quex Park, Birchington, Kent, CT7 0BH
Contract	Full time, Permanent (A probationary 6-month review period applies for all new staff)

About Us

The Powell-Cotton Trust is an independent charitable trust (reg no 1167318) which runs the Powell-Cotton Museum, Quex House and Gardens in Birchington, Kent.

The Powell-Cotton Trust has a broad and diverse collection, built up by the Powell-Cotton family and their associates, largely between 1890-1940. Today the collection includes 6,000 mammal specimens, 20,000 ethnographic objects, 8,000 archaeological objects, firearms, fine art and furniture and an extensive library and archive including documents, photographs and film. The Trust also has responsibility for the care of Quex House, the Powell-Cotton family home, a Georgian manor with extensive Edwardian alterations.

Quex Gardens have a long history and provide a good range of horticultural interest including specimen parkland trees, a woodland walk, herbaceous and rose borders, shrub beds and a sunken pond area with formal bedding. The Gardens are undergoing an ongoing restoration programme and the focus is a large scale refurbishment of a Victorian walled garden with its associated glasshouses and kitchen garden planting.

The Gardens have been at the forefront of our 'Sunshine Project' working with community groups to provide volunteer opportunities that are as accessible as possible, regardless of age, ability or skill. All our volunteers work together forming new friendships and gaining confidence within a positive environment of social and therapeutic horticulture.

You can find more about the Gardens and our Sunshine Project here <https://powell-cottonmuseum.org/discover/quex-gardens/>.

Values

Social Responsibility: we strive to operate the organisation with integrity, caring not just for the building and collection ethically, but ensure we facilitate meaningful emotional connections that have a positive impact on our society, environment and community.

Equity: we recognise that everyone's lived experience should be valued, both past voices and present, empowering individuals and communities through our positive and pro-active actions.

Courage: our ambition is to take bold, innovative and imaginative approaches to our work, enabling open and honest conversations about the collection and connected people.

Vision

We will be an **inclusive**, engaging and collaborative **centre of excellence** enabling exploration of our **world class collections** and garden to deliver **lifelong learning**, research and **social impact**, locally, nationally and internationally.

Job Purpose

The Assistant Gardener leads on a range of practical horticultural tasks to develop, enhance and conserve the garden, contributing to the long-term garden development plan including design, restoration and promotion. You will assist in making sure that Quex Gardens are maintained to a high standard.

Collaborating with colleagues you will lead on the development and delivery of training and volunteer activities in the garden providing a diverse group of people with opportunities to learn new skills and take part in garden activities.

Role Specific Activities

Horticulture & Garden Buildings

- Be responsible for the maintenance, presentation and development of our gardens by implementing specific work programmes in agreement with the Head Gardener. Including but not limited to: design, landscaping, propagation, glasshouse management, lawn care and maintenance, planting, irrigation, weeding, grass cutting, strimming, pond management, pest control, woodland management and general garden and facilities maintenance.
- Lead on a range of practical horticultural tasks to develop, enhance and conserve the garden and contribute to the delivery the long-term garden development plan including design, restoration and promotion.
- Contribute to the long-term restoration work both in the Walled Garden and the surrounding garden areas.

- Contribute to the overall function of the gardens including but not limited to painting and decoration of garden furniture, cleaning of pathways and other basic DIY tasks.

Public Engagement & Volunteers

- Lead and assist with practical and meaningful volunteering activities for community groups, promoting, organising and delivering these to ensure that volunteers are motivated and gain new skills, with a particular focus on the garden environment and horticulture.
- Deliver high quality volunteer opportunities that increase skills and empower volunteer groups to organise and deliver future projects themselves with minimal support.
- Actively engage in the development and management of relationships with key partners, and community groups acting as liaison, attending and facilitating meetings where appropriate.

Health & Safety & Administration

- Manage the use and maintenance of all electrical and mechanical equipment and be responsible for timely servicing of equipment as agreed with the Head Gardener.
- Be responsible for personal Health & Safety always and ensure good practice is followed by Volunteers.
- To undertake the administrative activities required of the role.

General Responsibilities

- Actively participate in the wider life of the Powell-Cotton Museum, Quex House and Gardens contributing to inter-disciplinary teamwork, projects and good internal communication.
- Develop and promote equal opportunities in service delivery as well as employment and procurement practices, ensuring the service reflects and provides for the community.
- Promote the Powell-Cotton Museum, Quex House and Gardens, its values and its services.
- Ensure compliance with all Powell-Cotton Museum, Quex House and Gardens policies.
- Undertake appropriate training as available and determined with your Line Manager.
- Work flexible and variable hours including some weekends and evenings to support the delivery of your role.
- Undertake other duties as requested by your Line Manager.

How to Apply

We recommend interested candidates contact the Head Garden (sue.harris@powell-cottonmuseum.org) to arrange an informal conversation about the role before submitting an application.

To apply, please send a CV and covering letter to Sarah Corn at sarah.corn@powell-cottonmuseum.org by midnight, Sunday 1st June 2025.

Short-listing and selection will be based on the criteria set out in the Person Specification (next page). Make sure that your covering letter and CV fully demonstrates how you satisfy the points listed, indicating any relevant horticultural experience, qualifications and current/most recent employment, as well as drawing on personal experiences and skills from other areas of your life that may be transferable and relevant.

Application Deadline:	Sunday 1st June, 23:59
Interview Date:	Tuesday 10th June
Interview Location:	Powell-Cotton Museum, Quex House and Gardens

The Powell-Cotton Museum, Quex House and Gardens is an Equal Opportunity Employer. We are committed to treating all applicants and employees fairly and equally regardless of race or colour, nationality or national or ethnic origin, religion or religious belief, political belief, parental or marital status, class or social background, sex or sexual orientation, disability, or age.

We would like to encourage you to suggest ways we can make this role more accessible to you through the application and interview process.

We are an Accredited Living Wage Employer.



Person Specification

Qualities	Essential (E) Desirable (D)
Knowledge	
Knowledge of horticulture and arboriculture principles and practices.	E
Must have a good understanding and commitment to Health and Safety standards and requirements	E
Abilities and Skills	
Ability to communicate effectively and enthusiastically to a wide range of community groups and individuals including children and young people, people with learning disabilities and those for whom English is a second language	E
Competent with machinery/equipment use and maintenance; including tractors, chainsaws, and pedestrian mowers with accreditation as required for Health and Safety compliance	E
Ability to work on own initiative within stated guidelines, manage own workload and prioritise effectively in order to meet deadlines	E
Ability to undertake maintenance of equipment and machinery, liaising with contractors as required	E
Exceptional planning and organisational skills, with the ability to juggle competing priorities in a fast-paced environment	D
Experience	
Trained as a professional gardener/horticulturalist with a good level of practical experience	E
Demonstratable experience of using a wide range of horticultural equipment and machinery	E
Experience of working with and supporting community groups and volunteers	D
Experience of working with diverse and underrepresented communities, special education needs groups and those with disabilities	D
Qualifications	
Educated to RHS level 2 or equivalent	E
PA1 and 6 Pesticide Qualification	D
NPTC Mowing / Tractor driving	D
Other	
Current valid driving licence	E
Must be physically fit to undertake all garden related activities	E
A demonstratable commitment to Equal Opportunities	E
A commitment to personal development and undertaking required training for the post	E

Demonstrates an open attitude and excellent work ethic	E
Ability to work flexible and variable hours including some weekends and evenings as part of a rota	E