



FT Community Gardener Vacancy

Application deadline – 5pm Monday 24th August 2026

About the role

We are looking for a full-time Community Gardener to work with volunteers. You will be responsible for running our plant nursery and strengthening our links within our immediate neighbourhood of Hillrise. This new role will play a key part in delivering our “Sunnyside is your garden” project part-funded by the National Lottery - Reaching Communities Fund for five years. You will enable us to work with more volunteers, engage more with our local community in Hillrise and support our gardens to flourish.

This is a role for someone who is highly organised, with great interpersonal skills. You will have both horticultural experience and experience in working with people with additional support needs. You will have a passion for producing plants and connecting with people.

About Sunnyside

Sunnyside Community Gardens (Charity #1092031) is in Hillrise, North Islington. It provides a large, back garden for our neighbours who have no or very small back gardens. Founded by volunteers from neighbouring estates, we opened in 1978, and registered as a charity in 1992. We continue to be a community led project, where our volunteers care for and maintain our gardens.

Sunnyside also has a long history of providing therapeutic horticulture for people with disabilities, and those recovering from illness. This means we are a truly diverse community with a real mix of local residents involved. As an organisation we are ambitious about

community building and gardening. We won best Community Garden 2025 in Islington in Bloom.

Sunnyside is a welcoming, sociable space in the middle of high density social housing. We provide a voluntary sphere of association like a pub or church for people who like gardening and connecting with nature and their neighbours. We build connections and we are one of the few places locally where people with different abilities, life experiences, social or economic background meet as equals.

You can find out more about us on our website; <https://sunnysidecommunitygardens.org/>

“Sunnyside is your garden” project

The primary purpose of this project is to enable the people of Hillrise to come together. We do this by creating a space where people with a range of skills and experiences, who lack access to green space, can work together to garden and build social connections.

This project will engage with local residents, creating more links between our garden and people’s homes. You will work with local residents to grow both house and balcony plants that grow well in Hillrise.

Sunnyside supports people to be healthier, by combating loneliness and providing open access to a garden. As well as building community, our inclusive approach allows a wide range of people to take part in meaningful physical activity that can be taken at their own pace.

This role will enable us to work with more volunteers and work more with our local community in Hillrise. The successful candidate will be joining a team of four staff which includes other part-time community gardeners who you will be working closely with.

Equal opportunities

Sunnyside is proud to be an equal opportunity employer and is committed to building a work environment that is both diverse and accessible. You will receive consideration for employment regardless of disability, race, religion, gender, gender identity and sexual orientation.

Please note: The requirements for outdoor work in areas with uneven ground should be borne in mind by applicants.

Job description

Community Gardener: Nursery

Volunteers:

1. Lead a team of volunteers to manage the nursery
2. Plan & develop a programme of activities for volunteers
3. Support volunteers (including those with additional needs) to learn and develop gardening & social skills
4. Work with the team to ensure a positive experience for our volunteers

Community:

5. Develop our relationship with and be a point of contact for our local community
6. Take a leading role at our plant sales
7. Identify keen gardeners in the local estates and work with them to propagate their successful plants to build a library of local plants that work in our local conditions
8. Engage professionally with Sunnyside Social Media and Whatsapp groups

Nursery & Operations:

9. Ensure effective management of the nursery area
10. Lead the production of plants from propagation for use in our gardens and for sale at our plant sales
11. Increase Sunnyside's income from plant sales year on year
12. Ensure tools, equipment and materials are in good working order and purchase and restock as required
13. Coordinate watering rotas and other organisational support

Other:

14. Work with the rest of the staff team to ensure that Sunnyside is set up at the beginning of each day and tidied and locked-up at the end
15. Ensure the provision of lunch for volunteers. Lunch is usually made by volunteers, occasionally you will need to step in and make it with or without volunteer support
16. Carry out simple administration tasks e.g. ensure volunteer forms are filled in
17. Please note that this job description is not exhaustive. The role will also evolve over time to meet the needs of our community

Person Specification

All applicants must have worked with community groups or volunteers before. You will have exceptional people skills and have experience of working with people with disabilities or poor mental health.

You will have a high level of gardening skills and experience. You will be expected to contribute towards plans to develop and maintain the gardens.

Essential

- Knowledge & competence in horticulture. We expect horticultural qualifications and/or more than two years professional experience
- Professional experience and/or qualifications supporting people with mental health difficulties, learning and/or physical disabilities
- Experience of working with community groups or volunteers before (in either a professional or voluntary capacity)
- Experience overseeing a team of people (either staff or volunteers)
- Exceptional communication skills
- Basic knowledge of cooking & healthy eating
- The ability to manage own time, workload and priorities
- Willing to have a full DBS check

Desirable

- Experience of working in a plant nursery
- Experience working with corporate volunteer groups
- Experienced and skilled in working with a range of people from a diverse range of backgrounds and a wide range of abilities
- To have connections with the local area and/or happy to become part of the wider community of Hillrise
- First Aid certificate (or willing to attend this training)
- Food Hygiene certificate (or willing to attend this training)

Contract details:

Job Title:	Community Gardener: Plant Nursery
Location:	Sunnyside Community Gardens, Hazelville Road, London, N19 3LX.
Type of Contract:	Full-time, permanent.
Pay:	£35,000
Reports to:	Sunnyside Manager
Working hours:	40 hours a week (including 5 hours of paid breaks) Your working week will be from Sunday till Thursday. Please note your regular days off will be Friday and Saturday.
Out of hours working:	You will be required to attend after hours Sunnyside events including the AGM, Summer Party and Winter Party. Other out of hours meetings and events may be required.
Annual Leave:	Holiday entitlement is 5.6 weeks, (28 days) plus bank holidays.
Pension:	3% Employer's Contribution.
Additional	Training opportunities are available.
Probationary period	Three months with the potential to extend to six months.
DBS Check	This post involves contact with vulnerable adults, a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service check will be required in the event of a successful application. A criminal record will not necessarily be a bar to obtaining the position.

How to apply

To apply, please email a CV and a covering letter explaining how your experience relates to the personal specification to Anna Portch at anna@sunnysidecommunitygardens.org . You will need to provide two recent professional referees before starting work.

Application deadline – 5pm Monday 24th August 2026

Interviews – The week beginning, Monday 7th September 2026

We expect you to be available to start work no later than Thursday 15th October 2026