

Lothlorien Community (Rokpa Trust)

Corsock, Castle Douglas, Kirkcudbrightshire DG7 3DR

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Job Description

- Job Title:** Therapeutic Gardening Co-ordinator (Male) (Exempt under the Equality Act 2010 Schedule 9, Part 1)
- Responsible to:** The Manager, and Trustees of Lothlorien (Rokpa Trust). Direct supervision for day to day work will be carried out by the Manager and Deputy Manager.
- Working Hours:** 37.5 hours per week over 5 days. This is a live-in position. The Therapeutic Gardening Co-ordinator will also be required to be on call, on a rota with other members of staff.
- Holidays:** 28 days plus any public holidays which fall within the working week.
- Salary:** Full time salary for this post for an applicant with relevant qualifications and experience is £23,000 paid monthly in arrears.

Main Tasks

- Attending the daily community meeting and facilitating the community members in planning their activities in the garden and grounds on a day to day basis
- Educating and inspiring individuals to connect with the garden landscape as a therapeutic medium, and supporting them to develop confidence, self-esteem and ownership in their work
- Supporting the Lothlorien Therapeutic Community ethos, which has a *recovery* orientation, focusing on the whole person and their capacity for healthy relationships with themselves, with nature and with others
- Encouraging community members to participate and express their needs within the garden and community context, and helping them to make the links with gardening and recovery/ wellbeing
- Sharing skills and knowledge related to organic horticultural production such as sowing seeds, setting out plants, planting out, lawn mowing, soil preparation and pruning

- Working creatively and imaginatively to devise and coordinate regular themed workshops and experiential processes for encouraging residents to engage with the garden environment and their own process
- To be responsible for planning the garden from year to year in consultation with the community members. This includes overseeing crop rotation, choosing varieties of vegetables & flowers, ordering seeds etc
- Managing the growing of the vegetables, dealing with pests & diseases and overseeing the harvest
- Managing the soil inputs – organic fertilisers, lime etc.
- Communicating with the Manager regarding required budget for garden related materials
- Selecting and purchasing the necessary tools, raw materials and equipment, as well as educating community members in how to use tools and materials safely
- To be aware of and responsible for health and safety issues, to read the current Risk Assessment and to complete and review the Risk Assessment for the project as required
- Developing the long term potential of the community's 17 acres as a resource to Lothlorien community
- Making links with organisations which could contribute to the development of Lothlorien's resources
- Attending relevant training sessions, seminars and conferences and to communicate the ethos of Lothlorien to outside agencies
- Participating in feedback gathering as well as evaluative processes of the horticultural and environmental activities by facilitating regular garden meetings with community members
- Participating as a member of the Core Group and helping to foster the development of open, teamwork approach within that group

Background Information

Lothlorien is a Therapeutic Community for people with mental health difficulties situated in a quiet rural setting in South West Scotland. We are looking to recruit a full-time male Therapeutic Gardening Co-ordinator for a one year fixed-term contract. (This post is exempt under the Equality Act 2010 Schedule 9, Part 1). This is a dynamic and exciting opportunity to work within a Therapeutic Community environment. We are looking for a creative individual who can inspire our residents to connect with gardening as a route to recovery and wellbeing.

The garden plays a central part in helping people connect with a sense of meaning and purpose in their recovery at Lothlorien Community. The person appointed will be coming into an organic vegetable garden with scope for innovation. We provide a structured gardening programme pitched at an appropriate level for people in recovery from mental health problems. This can have a very positive effect on mental wellbeing by having a grounding and healing effect, as well as providing people with the opportunity to develop their self-esteem, confidence and skills when working towards recovery. The therapeutic and relational aspects of the work are far more important than being goal or achievement orientated. Working with residents to foster a sense of participation, belonging, inclusion, mutual respect, and working at a pace and level with which they are comfortable is key.

Person specification

- Experience of working in organic horticulture and therapeutic environments
- Experience of working in a supportive role with people with mental health problems
- Willingness to value all community members regardless of how unwell they may seem
- Ability to inspire and motivate individuals to develop a positive connection with being active in the garden
- Having a good theoretical knowledge of organic horticulture and mental health. A formal qualification, such as a HNC in horticulture/ therapy or equivalent, is preferable. We would also welcome applicants from other therapeutic modalities with knowledge and experience of gardening
- Supportive of the recovery model and the philosophical basis of Lothlorien
- Good interpersonal skills, and experience of group working
- Commitment to person-centred values
- Ability to work well as part of a team
- Self-reflective, self-aware and able to accept feedback
- Driving licence essential
- Commitment to the process of personal development in oneself and others. It is helpful to have an interest in meditation, relaxation techniques or other processes of self-awareness.
- An interest in the practice of Nonviolent Communication (and a willingness to undertake NVC training)
- Ability to work in a patient, flexible and non-judgmental manner
- Emotional resilience and the ability to manage one's own anxiety
- Prepared to uphold Lothlorien Community's equal opportunity and anti-discriminatory policies
- Assist with office administration where relevant to your job role.

Interview process

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to visit Lothlorien individually for a 5-day residential trial visit to meet the community (Monday – Friday). During the visit, you will be invited

to facilitate a one hour workshop for the community on the theme of 'Benefits of gardening for mental health and wellbeing'. At the end of the week visit there will be an interview.

This post is subject to an enhanced Disclosure check which the Trust will fund for the successful applicant.