

Lothlorien Community (Rokpa Trust)

Corsock, Castle Douglas, Kirkcudbrightshire DG7 3DR

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Job Description

- Job Title:** Relief Therapeutic Gardener (Sessional)
- 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:** Sessional. The Therapeutic Gardener will also be required to be on call, along with other members of staff.
- Salary:** £8.50 per hour

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 relief Therapeutic Gardener. 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.