

Job Description

Senior Gardener

Full Time, Permanent



About Borde Hill Garden

Borde Hill (BH) is a registered charity and a Grade II* listed English Heritage Garden set within 200 acres of Parkland and Woodland in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Created in the early 1900's with plants gathered by the great plant hunters from their travels to the Himalayas, China, Burma, Tasmania, the Andes and North America, the Garden contains 78 champion trees and over 8,000 trees and shrubs listed by the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew. Borde Hill features one of the best private collections of champion trees in Britain and one of the most comprehensive collections of trees and shrubs in the world.

In addition to the living collection, the Garden also has a rare surviving written archive which allows us to better understand the plant collection and social history to engage our visitors about 'the world in one garden'.

Our charitable aims include *'the preservation and restoration of the Borde Hill Plant Collection, through the provision of education and training in horticulture, with a focus on all ages'*. The Garden Council are a valuable resource for horticultural advice, bringing knowledge and expertise from RBG Kew, RBG Edinburgh, Cambridge Botanical Garden, RHS Wisley and Exbury Gardens amongst others. The Garden welcomes over 70,000 visitors each season (February-November) and offers an extensive and varied event programme.

The Stephenson Clarke family have been custodians of Borde Hill for five generations, and are at a stage of generational change that will see investment, new energy, opportunities and ideas aimed at broadening our visitor demographic and ensuring Borde Hill is sustainable for future generations. This will include new business initiatives of field to fork eating, a biodynamic growers project and a rejuvenated family parkland offering with improved infrastructure, better horticultural interpretation and plant management.

What we are looking for

Borde Hill is an evolving Garden and there is opportunity for creativity and dynamic gardening, whilst ensuring the aesthetics are compatible with the historic nature of the Garden. We are therefore looking for a knowledgeable and skilled horticulturist that can lead from the front, has a great eye for detail and is able to deliver creative, excellent horticulture to the highest standards.

As a key member of the team, you will be responsible for the effective day to day horticultural operation of the Garden and Woodland. This will include work planning, ensuring all work is adhered to health and safety legislation, managing a team of garden staff and volunteers, conducting tours and talks to the public.

We would like you to have RHS level 3 or equivalent supported by significant practical experience in Horticulture within a supervisory or leadership role. You should have a keen interest in plants and a strong willingness to learn more about our historic collection to support its development in the future.

Salary: £26,850

Hours:

*Winter 35 hours per week;
Summer 40 hours per week
(with some weekend working)*

Holiday entitlement:

32 days inclusive of Bank Holidays

Closing date:

Monday 13th June

To apply:

Please email your covering letter and curriculum vitae to headofhorticulture@bordehill.co.uk

If you are short listed you will be contacted shortly after the closing date and invited to interview. We will advise you if a presentation or test will be part of the interview process.

Our location:

Borde Hill Garden
Borde Hill Lane
Haywards Heath
West Sussex
RH16 1XP

01444 450326
www.bordehill.co.uk

Registered Charity No:
246589

Scope of the Role

The Senior Gardener will report to the Head of Horticulture.

You will have the following responsibilities:

- Line manage a team of 3 full-time and 1 part-time Gardeners as well as volunteers and students.
- Engaging with visitors on both horticultural practice and garden interpretation,
- Undertake practical horticultural management, overseeing high standards of horticulture and presentation across our formal Garden and wider Woodlands and Parkland, as well as the propagation of plants both for planting out in the Garden and for sale in our shop.
- Coordinate and supervise training for Garden staff on the safe use of equipment and machinery and report any potential hazards to the Head of Horticulture.
- Assist with managing budgets and staff performance reviews.
- Contribute to Borde Hill's wider work as a member of the management team, actively participating in scheduled and ad hoc departmental meetings with the Head of Horticulture, Executive Manager and the Family.
- The variable and dynamic nature of this role requires a flexible working approach, including out of hours working as required.

Essential Selection Criteria

Skills required:

- A passion for working in a historic Garden open as a visitor attraction, bringing the story of Borde Hill to life for our visitors.
- Experience of managing teams and able to lead by example with demonstratable people management skills.
- Excellent communication skills to work collaboratively with the Head of Horticulture, Family, and all members of the Borde Hill team; with the ability to explain horticultural procedures to students and volunteers.
- Energetic, proactive, inclusive, enthusiastic and organised.
- Excellent knowledge of herbaceous and woody plants, propagation, cultivation and familiar with plant collection management.
- Significant practical experience, supported by appropriate qualifications to RHS level 3 (or equivalent) or qualifications such as Botanic Garden Diploma, ND, HND, B.Sc. in Horticulture.
- Understanding and experience of health and safety aspects of gardens as visitor attractions including COSHH and risk assessment procedures.
- Proven experience in the use of a wide range of specialist equipment and machinery.
- Computer literate with experience of MS Office software, and able to use databases accurately.

Desirable Selection Criteria

- A horticultural or botanical specialism would be an advantage.
- Experience of delivering horticultural or botanical courses for adults and children and widening diversity and inclusion.
- NPTC spraying qualifications PA1, PA6.
- A full, clean driving license.

NB. The role and responsibilities are likely to further develop as the Garden and Estate continues its transition to the next generation of the Family and the detail of the emerging strategy and vision are refined.

We are an equal opportunities employer and welcome applications from all suitably qualified persons regardless of their race, sex, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation or age.