

Royal Hospital Chelsea – Job Description

Job Title: Assistant Visitor Experience Manager

Job Description Date: 13th September 2025.

Department/Team: Public Engagement

Grade of Job:

Job Family:

Notice Period: 6 weeks

Context

The Royal Hospital Chelsea has launched an exciting new visitor experience at the refurbished Soane Stable Yard. Following a £3.2 million grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund in autumn 2022, the Grade II* Stable Yard—originally designed by Sir John Soane—has been beautifully restored and adapted. The SSY now offers an enhanced visitor welcome and houses all public-facing facilities at the Chelsea Gate entrance of the site.

Within the Centre, visitors can enjoy a café, a new shop, the RHC Post Office, and an outreach space. The SSY also features the brand new, state-of-the-art, interactive Chelsea Pensioner Museum, where guests explore the rich history of the Royal Hospital and the lives of the Chelsea Pensioners through the centuries.

We are currently seeking an Assistant Visitor Experience Manager to help deliver an outstanding customer experience to everyone visiting the Soane Stable Yard. This is a fantastic opportunity for someone passionate about working in a heritage and visitor experience setting. The role involves supporting our busy programme of Chelsea Pensioner-led tours, maintaining high standards across the site, and ensuring every visitor enjoys a memorable experience.

Role Purpose

The Assistant Visitor Experience Manager plays a vital role in the day-to-day duty management of the Soane Stable Yard, ensuring the smooth delivery of our tour operations programme and an exceptional experience for every visitor.

This role is focused on maintaining high standards of customer service and site presentation, contributing to the welcoming and engaging atmosphere of the SSY. The successful candidate will be passionate about heritage and visitor engagement, with the ability to work collaboratively with internal teams, volunteers, and the public.

Key responsibilities include:

- Overseeing daily operations and acting as Duty Manager when rostered
- Supporting Chelsea Pensioner-led tours and outreach activities
- Driving excellence in customer service and site presentation
- Collaborating with colleagues across departments including Retail, Audience Engagement, Post Office, Catering, and Events

We are looking for someone with proven Duty Management experience, a creative mindset, and a proactive approach to developing new visitor experiences while upholding the highest standards on site.

This is a permanent part-time position (32 hours per week including lunch breaks), requiring regular weekend and occasional evening work. The current rota operates on a one weekend on, one weekend off basis.

A Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check may be required for this role.

The Assistant Visitor Experience Manager reports to the Head of Visitor Experience and Public Programme and, when rostered as Duty Manager, oversees the volunteers supporting the SSY visitor experience. Please note that a Royal Hospital Chelsea Duty Officer will always be present on site and retain overall responsibility during these shifts.

Principle Accountabilities; Outcomes

- When rostered as Duty Manager, to be responsible for the delivery of a high quality and safe visitor experience within the SSY and for tour participants.
- When rostered as DM, ensure SSY operations are sufficiently staffed with support from In Pensioners and Volunteers. Personally, provide cover when required.
- Support and deputise for the Head of Visitor Experience and Public Programme as necessary.
- Create schedules for tour provision and ensure that availability is accurately loaded on to the ticketing platform.
- Be responsible for liaising with group tour bookers (military and civilian) and completing all necessary tour booking administration.
- Ensure the tours are sufficiently staffed with support from In Pensioners and Volunteers.
- Assist the Head of Visitor Experience and Public Programme, in the supervision and training of all staff, In Pensioners and volunteers to ensure consistency of approach in delivering high standards of tour delivery and customer service.
- Work with the Head of Visitor Experience and Public Programme to review tour provision and make recommendations on Tour scripts, new tour content and bespoke tour options.
- When rostered as Duty Manager, respond to visitor feedback effectively and ensure all visitor complaints are dealt with efficiently and effectively.
- Assist as required in the planning, operation and hosting of private events and evening hire.
- Contribute towards meetings and future development of the site.
- Work closely with the Head of Visitor Experience & Public Programme to develop and deliver new public programme offers and work on the delivery of events such as the Chelsea History Festival, Christmas Activities and yearly programming events.
- Liaise with visitors and staff to maintain high standards and respond to visitor feedback effectively. Ensure all visitor complaints are dealt with efficiently and effectively, escalating to the Head of Visitor Experience and Public Programme as necessary.
- To be responsible for the safe operation of the facility providing first hand control of situations as they arise.
- Respond effectively to any incident on site and report to correct stakeholders.
- Help maintain the condition of the site and its facilities, clearing up obvious litter and repairing/reporting any damage immediately.
- Provide cover in the absence of another member of the management team.
- Any other duties as may reasonably requested.

Leadership Expectations

The role holder is expected to:

- Demonstrate a strong commitment to the mission, aims, and values of the RHC.
- Maintain the highest standards of ethical and personal practice, ensuring that the wishes and rights of the Chelsea Pensioners are always fully understood and protected.
- Work to ensure that the Royal Hospital Chelsea becomes regarded as one of the nation's pre-eminent heritage sites and that public understanding of its important socio-military heritage is strengthened and widespread – without breaching its physical integrity, collections or reputation.
- Uphold and promote RHC's values (Enjoy Life; Nurture Belonging; Respect Individuals; Encourage Pride) and policies.
- Support RHC's audience development and visitor services strategies and volunteering policies.
- Develop, implement and operate consistent administrative processes that comply with RHC standards and processes.
- Support other members of the team during busy periods.

Skills, Knowledge and Experience

Essential Skills

- Duty Management experience.
- Teamworking skills.
- Ability to prioritise, multi-task and delegate.
- Excellent customer service skills.
- Project Management skills.
- Administration skills.
- Computer literate, with experience of the Office suite (Word, Excel, Outlook).
- Numerate.

Desirable Skills

- Experience managing a ticketing or working with a ticketing system.
- First Aid trained.

Knowledge and Experience

Essential

- At least 2 years working in a public facing visitor attraction, museum, hospitality or leisure venue.
- Experience supervising a team or volunteers.
- Duty Management experience.

Desirable

- Experience of working with volunteers.
- Passion for History.

Competencies

- Ability to exemplify exceptional customer service.
- Highly organised and able to work on own initiative.
- Excellent attention to detail.
- Ability to work calmly under pressure.
- Both self-motivated and a team player.

Please note this is an operational role which will require the successful candidate to work all of their shifts on site.

Qualifications

5 GCSE's or equivalent or

NVQ in hospitality, retail or catering operations.

Background Information

The RHC is a historic institution providing sheltered accommodation (Long Wards) and full nursing care where necessary (the Margaret Thatcher Infirmary) for some 300 retired soldiers, known as In-Pensioners. It ensures Army veterans are provided with the support and comradeship they need in recognition of their service to the Nation and safeguards their historic home for the veterans of tomorrow. All roles within the Royal Hospital have an integral part to play in contributing to the achievement of the Hospital's Strategy and Vision.

RHC is a listed heritage site that encapsulates magnificent buildings designed by Sir Christopher Wren and Sir John Soane as well as 66 acres of grounds. Home to the iconic veteran community known as the 'Chelsea Pensioners' since 1692, RHC is a unique working historic building with a wealth of socio-military, natural and architectural heritage.

The Audience Engagement team oversees RHC's public programmes, retail, community engagement, volunteering, visitor services and marketing, interpretation, formal learning and education work, as well as acts as the organisational lead for the Chelsea History Festival, which was established in 2019 in conjunction with the National Army Museum and Chelsea Physic Garden. Audience Engagement sits within the Public Engagement department, which also incorporates PR and communications, public affairs and fundraising.