



## Job Description

### Head Gardener

Permanent full time role.

Borde Hill, Haywards Heath, West Sussex. RH16 1XP

#### About Borde Hill

Borde Hill (BH) is a magnificent Grade II\* English Heritage listed Garden set within 383 acres of Parkland and Woodland.

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 Estate contains over 70 champion trees and 8,000 trees and shrubs listed by the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew. In addition to the living collection, Borde Hill also has an extensive plant archive which allows us to better understand the plant collection and social history to engage our visitors about 'the world in one garden'.

The Stephenson Clarke family have been custodians of Borde Hill for five generations, and are at a stage of generational change that is seeing new energy, opportunities and ideas aimed at broadening our visitor demographic and ensuring Borde Hill is sustainable for future generations. This includes new business initiatives of field to fork dining and the restoration of our walled kitchen garden, a biodynamic market garden and a rejuvenated family parkland offering with improved infrastructure, better horticultural interpretation and plant management, with a focus on climate change.

We are looking for a new Head Gardener who has horticultural expertise coupled with the ability to lead our Garden team, inspiring visitors through talks and tours, and engaging new audiences with content across our social media channels.

#### You and Your Role

You will play a key role in conserving and realizing the full horticultural potential of Borde Hill. We are looking for an individual who can support our journey to establish Borde Hill as one of the most distinctive visitor destinations in the country, with a coherent, inspiring brand, within which you will play a key role.

You will primarily be responsible for the day-to-day management and development of the Garden, whilst overseeing the wider team who work across our biodynamic Market Garden, Kitchen Garden, Parkland and woodland. We require a hands-on individual to inspire and lead the garden team from the front, showcasing best practice, motivation and a passion for plants. Over the next 12-18 months you will oversee, alongside project leads, two exciting projects; our reimagined Victorian Walled Kitchen Garden and our National Heritage Lottery Fund Project, 'Reinventing Borde Hill' in the South Park.

A key part of the role will be to curate and propagate our heritage plant collection, including our National Collection of *Rhododendron*, 70 TROBI Champion Trees and those historic living collections which directly relate to our rich horticultural archive. It is therefore important that you are not only passionate and knowledgeable regarding woody temperate plants, but also understand the heritage importance of these valuable collections and of safeguarding them for the future.

#### Salary:

£43-45,000

Dependent on experience

#### Accommodation:

Discounted accommodation available on site.

#### Hours:

37.5 hrs per week

#### Holiday entitlement:

32 days pro rata (including Bank Holidays)

#### To apply:

Send your CV, covering letter and short video clip (max 3 mins explaining why you are the best candidate for this role) via WeTransfer to:

[manager@bordehill.co.uk](mailto:manager@bordehill.co.uk)

If you are in employment, please include your current notice period.

Borde Hill  
Haywards Heath  
West Sussex  
RH16 1XP

01444 450326

[www.bordehill.co.uk](http://www.bordehill.co.uk)

You will have financial responsibility for managing horticultural budgets, propagating plants for sale, and contributing to grant applications and fundraising initiatives as required. You will also be responsible for ensuring the safety of all your team and maintaining health and safety records for a public Garden.

The Head Gardener will report to the General Manager and Managing Director with oversight from the Garden Directors and the Family.

You will have the following responsibilities:

- Line manage a team of 4+ Gardeners, 2 Growers, 2 Kitchen Gardeners / apprentices and further develop the valuable support we receive from volunteers.
- Performance-manage all team members on an ongoing basis to develop a high-performing collaborative culture
- Coordinate and supervise training for all staff on the safe use of equipment and machinery and report any potential hazards to the General Manager.
- The variable and dynamic nature of this role requires a flexible approach to working to include out of hours working as required for watering etc.
- 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 General Manager, Family, Directors, etc.
- Build and maintain productive relationships with external stakeholders whilst representing Borde Hill in a professional capacity.

### **Essential selection criteria**

We are looking for someone who will passionately share our vision to move our horticultural heritage forward. We want to reset our visitor offering and it is important that you play an active role in our journey. Skills required:

- Extensive plant knowledge, cultivation, propagation and curation.
- Able to lead by example with demonstratable people management skills
- Have experience of working in a collections based Garden
- Have a qualification such as Botanic Garden Diploma, ND, HND, B.Sc. in horticulture, or a subject relevant to plant collections and garden management.
- Be energetic, proactive, inclusive, enthusiastic and organised.
- Have the confidence to participate in social media content
- Excellent communication skills to work collaboratively with the Executive Manager, Garden Directors, Family, and all members of the Borde Hill team.
- Knowledge and experience of Health and Safety protocols.
- Experience of managing budgets.
- Computer literate with experience of Microsoft Office and Excel
- Experience and knowledge of garden machinery and equipment
- A full, clean driving license

### **Desirable selection criteria**

- A horticultural or botanical specialism would be an advantage.
- Experience of delivering horticultural or botanical tours/courses for adults and children, including disadvantaged groups.
- Understanding and experience of organic and /or biodynamic principles.

Borde Hill has a Family-led small, dedicated, professional and friendly team who embody a 'one team' culture. We want everyone to feel valued and fairly rewarded for the work they do and your package includes:

- A Borde Hill annual family membership allowing free entry to the Garden and Parkland
- Discount in the Borde Hill shop and catering outlets
- Free tickets for selected events throughout the open season
- Free access at selected times to our Partner Gardens (Chelsea Physic Garden, The Newt, Lost Gardens of Heligan and Sculpture by the Lakes)
- Free entry to selected RHS events
- Free access to our wellbeing programme
- A flexible working pattern where possible

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