

Job Title – ESCAPE Discovery Garden Project Worker

Location – King’s Lynn Discovery Centre and ESCAPE Community Allotment in Project

Salary - £19,776 - £22,360 pro rata per annum

Hours - 22.5 hours per week

The ESCAPE Project has been working with the local community in Swaffham for eight years providing social and therapeutic horticulture as a mechanism for alleviating social isolation and improving the physical and mental wellbeing of participants. The project is now developing a community garden at the North Lynn Discovery Centre in order to provide similar support services to the local community.

The successful applicant will be working with the ESCAPE team to support members of the local community, particularly older people, to maintain and develop a new community garden which will provide opportunities to a variety of service users experiencing difficulties in their lives.

Working with Freebridge, and our partner Garden Organic who recruit and train Master Gardener Volunteers, our Discovery Garden will enlist local volunteers to develop, and then care for, the garden, and provide a community space offering training, workshops, activities, and open days. The Project Worker will work with local groups and volunteers to develop the garden and care for it by providing 5 targeted sessions a week. Involvement in the project will aim to address the needs of disadvantaged groups in the community, including older people, long-term unemployed, young people who are not in education, employment or training and adults with mental health problems or learning disabilities.

The project will demonstrate how social and therapeutic horticulture facilitates social and health benefits which make a real difference to the local community.

Social benefits:

- The garden will engage the whole community, crossing barriers including language and disability, and connecting generations.
- It will develop social skills, friendships and support networks.
- It will promote integration and inclusion by bringing people together from different backgrounds, strengthening the community.

Health benefits:

- The mental health benefits of gardening are many and diverse, including significant reductions in depression and anxiety, and improved social functioning (Buck, 2016).
- It will encourage people to be outdoors, providing exercise, including digging and preparing flower beds, thereby improving fitness, reducing obesity and conditions such as diabetes and heart disease.

- It will promote healthy eating by teaching people where their food comes from and how to cook using fresh produce.
- Engagement will increase self-esteem and confidence, improving mental health and wellbeing.

Our Values:

A people focus, Mutual Respect, Excellence in all we do and a Can Do attitude.

If you can relate to these and have the necessary skills and attitude we can offer you:-

- A competitive salary, leave entitlement and pension scheme
- Career development opportunities
- A full induction and ongoing quality training
- The opportunity to become part of FA initiatives
- Flexible working hours
- Managed workloads with regular supportive and reflective supervision

Personal skills and experience

We are looking to recruit someone with experience of working with a range of service user groups. Particularly, vulnerable adults with complex needs (which can include, mental health issues, homelessness, addiction, social exclusion, isolation, learning disabilities and physical ill health), children and families, older people, long term unemployed and young adults not in education, employment or training. You will have good knowledge of organic gardening practices and a reasonable level of horticultural knowledge and/or gardening experience together with an enthusiasm for working outdoors in all weathers and for growing your own food and cooking. You will need to be self-motivated, well organised as you will be leading this work yourself so you will also need to be enthusiastic and reliable with an ability to work within a wider team and alongside volunteers. You must be willing to be flexible in working across the projects in King's Lynn and Swaffham, in consultation with the Project coordinators, to respond effectively to participants' needs. You will of course also need excellent communication skills and an ability to work effectively and appropriately with service users, volunteers, staff and professionals from other organisations.

It is essential that you also have good I.T skills and understand the importance of recording monitoring data and capturing outcomes for participants. You will need to be able to write short, clear reports and provide regular updates for staff and funders.

Key responsibilities

You will be working with service users, volunteers, Freebridge and Garden Organic to develop a community garden at the Discovery Centre. The Project Worker will undertake the on-site operational aspects of the post required to develop the community garden at The Discovery Centre, King's Lynn in line with our funding application. You be engaging with, and supporting, a range of service user groups, particularly targeting older people, (over 55yrs) to promote the physical and mental health benefits of horticulture and spending time outdoors and encouraging them to share their knowledge and skills. You will support service users to access the garden, participate in the project and engage in opportunities that enhance their wellbeing, including training opportunities, workshops and cooking. The Project Worker will be expected to liaise with other voluntary and statutory partners to engage the local community in the development and use of the community garden, and coordinate and support a small group of volunteers to assist in the development of the project. As well as the practical aspects of the Project Worker role, you will be expected to collect monitoring and evaluation data to evidence the impact of the project and report to funders and to inform future funding applications.

We are forward looking, ambitious and with a commitment to continuous improvement. We are a people focused, can-do organisation that strives for excellence in all we do and operates with mutual respect. If you share these values and behaviours and have the necessary skills then we look forward to hearing from you.

Appointments are subject to Family Action receiving an enhanced disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service that we consider acceptable.

For an application pack and further information, please visit www.family-action.org.uk/workingwithus

Please email completed applications to: completed.application24@family-action.org.uk

Closing date: Monday, 04 March 2019, 9am

Interview date: Monday 11 March 2019

Family Action offers good working conditions, a comprehensive training programme and a Group Personal Pension Scheme (GPPS). We welcome applications from all sections of the community.