

ROLE PROFILE · JOB DESCRIPTION AND PERSON SPECIFICATION

Transformation Manager

The Chester House Estate · Irchester

Build on five award-winning years at The Chester House Estate and lead its next chapter: a long-term Master Plan, a new governance model and the growth that will carry its success forward for generations.

CONTRACT
Fixed term for two years, full time (37 hours)

GRADE AND SALARY
£49,917 to £53,051

BASE
The Chester House Estate, Irchester, North Northamptonshire

REPORTING TO
Head of Culture, Tourism and Heritage

Made possible with Heritage Fund

The estate's independent **governance review** was made possible with The National Lottery Heritage Fund. Thanks to National Lottery players.

THE CHESTER HOUSE ESTATE

THE CHESTER HOUSE ESTATE

Five years of success

Since opening its doors in October 2021, The Chester House Estate has grown from a fire-damaged farmhouse and a half-finished restoration into a nationally award-winning heritage destination. Free to enter and open to everyone, it brings 10,000 years of history to life through heritage, learning, tourism and community, and its commercial model funds that work.

Its learning programme holds national quality accreditations and welcomes schools, families and community groups from across the county. The ARC has become one of the most engaged and respected public archaeological archives in the UK, working with researchers, students and volunteers from around the world. A busy calendar of weddings, conferences, events and festivals, together with the Farmhouse café and partnerships with businesses and charities, has made the estate a much-loved part of local life.

None of this would have happened without a dedicated team, a committed volunteer community and strong partners such as the University of Leicester and Creating Tomorrow College.

> "The ARC is an inspirational exemplar for all those working professionally or otherwise with archaeological archives."
>
> Gail Boyle, Chair of the Council for British Archaeology

> "This project has really stood out for the way it deepens public connection with place, making history and archaeology relevant for all sections of the community."
>
> MJ Awards 2025 judges

Read our Impact Report 2024–25

The full story of the estate's first years: heritage, learning, community and commercial success.

Read the report →



ABOUT THE PROJECT

Building on success: the next chapter

The Chester House Estate is one of North Northamptonshire's most significant heritage destinations. Set within a scheduled ancient monument, it brings together Roman, Saxon and medieval archaeology, historic listed buildings, the Northamptonshire Archaeological Resource Centre (ARC) and extensive grounds, with a broad offer spanning hospitality, events, weddings and venue hire, learning and outreach, and archaeological research.

With strong foundations in place, the Council is now planning for the estate's long-term future. Supported by The National Lottery Heritage Fund, an independent governance review has set out how Chester House can grow with greater flexibility and impact, and two strands of work sit at the heart of the next chapter.

A new governance model

A phased hybrid / parallel model: the Council keeps freehold ownership and oversight while an independent charitable Trust and a linked social enterprise are developed over time, opening up new funding and partnership opportunities.

The 5-Year Master Plan

A long-term vision for the estate, setting out capital investment priorities, income ambitions, heritage and community programming, and key milestones.

PURPOSE

The role in brief

You will harness what Chester House has achieved in its first five years and turn it into a long-term future. You will lead the Master Plan, take the governance review's recommendations into practical delivery, build on the estate's strong income growth and develop the partnerships and investment that will take it to the next level, all while protecting its heritage and public value. It is a strategic, hands-on role for a creative and commercially astute leader who wants to leave a lasting mark.



JOB DESCRIPTION

Your key responsibilities

This is a strategic, delivery-focused role. You will balance big-picture thinking with hands-on delivery, working across the estate's teams and with partners, consultants, funders and stakeholders, including elected members and The National Lottery Heritage Fund, to take Chester House into its next chapter.

Leading the next phase

- Lead delivery of the estate's development programme, maintaining a clear plan, milestones and risk management, and reporting progress to the project board and Head of Service.
- Drive the phased hybrid / parallel governance model through its defined decision gateways, making sure each decision is well evidenced and properly prepared.
- Progress the establishment of the charitable Trust and linked social enterprise, coordinating specialist legal and governance advice and the legal, governance, staffing and asset-ownership workstreams, with staff remaining employed by the Council.
- Provide Council-side project management of the commissioned consultancy work supporting the transition, setting clear briefs, managing timescales and making sure the work meets the estate's needs.
- Make sure all activity aligns with the Council's strategy, procurement, subsidy-control and governance requirements.

Business planning and finance

- Develop and maintain the estate's business plan and five-year financial model in partnership with Council finance colleagues.
- Test options and scenarios to inform decisions, including the financial implications of the new governance model.
- Monitor performance against the plan and build on the estate's strong income growth to secure its long-term financial sustainability.

Shaping the estate's future

- Lead the commissioning and delivery of the 5-Year Master Plan, setting out the strategic vision, capital investment priorities and phasing, income ambitions, heritage and community programming, audience development and key milestones for the next five years.
- Make sure the Master Plan is co-produced with partners and stakeholders and builds on the visioning work already completed.

Income, audiences and partnerships

- Develop and deliver an income-generation strategy covering fundraising, grants, sponsorship, membership and commercial partnerships, setting and achieving income targets.
- Drive audience development and build strategic partnerships across the heritage, education, commercial and community sectors that extend the estate's reach, capability and income.
- Build on the estate's existing partnerships, including the University of Leicester and Creating Tomorrow College, and develop new relationships with funders, sponsors and investors.

People, programme and reporting

- Manage The National Lottery Heritage Fund-funded programme and other grant-funded activity, including budgets, reporting, acknowledgement, evaluation and financial monitoring.
- Provide leadership and coordination across estate teams and with consultants, keeping focus on strategic priorities alongside day-to-day operations.
- Prepare high-quality papers, options and recommendations for the project board, Head of Service, senior officers and elected members.
- Act as an ambassador for The Chester House Estate and North Northamptonshire's heritage at local, regional and national level.
- Work within all Council policies, particularly strategy, procurement, subsidy control, financial and governance requirements, Health and Safety, Safeguarding and GDPR.





This job description reflects the major tasks of the post. It may be reviewed from time to time to reflect changing needs, in consultation with the postholder.

WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

Who you'll work with

LEADS AND COORDINATES

The estate's teams and the commissioned consultants supporting the next phase of the estate's development.

Inside the Council

- Head of Culture, Tourism and Heritage
- The Chester House Estate teams
- The project board
- Finance colleagues
- Senior officers and decision-makers
- Elected members

Beyond the Council

- The National Lottery Heritage Fund
- Consultants and specialist advisers
- Funders and sponsors
- Heritage and education partners
- Commercial partners
- Community partners

SPECIAL FEATURES OF THE POST

Good to know

Contract	A fixed-term, full-time post for two years, 37 hours per week.
Location	Based at The Chester House Estate, Irchester, North Northamptonshire.
Governance	The programme is overseen by a project board, with key decisions taken by the Council at defined gateways.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

What we're looking for

This section sets out the qualifications, experience and skills we need. We will shortlist against the essential criteria, so please use your application to show clearly how you meet each one. Desirable criteria help us choose between strong candidates.

Education and qualifications

ESSENTIAL	A relevant graduate qualification, or equivalent experience.
ESSENTIAL	Evidence of continuing professional development.
DESIRABLE	A postgraduate or professional qualification in a relevant field, such as management, project or change management, heritage, business or finance.
DESIRABLE	A project or programme management qualification, such as PRINCE2, APM or MSP.

Experience and knowledge

ESSENTIAL	Proven experience of leading organisational change or transformation, ideally in heritage, culture, tourism, charity or the public sector.
ESSENTIAL	Strong business-planning and financial acumen, with experience of building and interrogating financial models and budgets.
ESSENTIAL	A track record of income generation through fundraising, grants, sponsorship and/or commercial development.
ESSENTIAL	An understanding of charitable structures, trading subsidiaries / CICs and governance.
ESSENTIAL	Experience of building partnerships and engaging stakeholders, including senior leaders and funders.
DESIRABLE	Knowledge of the heritage and cultural sector and its funding landscape, including The National Lottery Heritage Fund.
DESIRABLE	Familiarity with local authority operating environments, procurement and subsidy control.
DESIRABLE	Experience of workforce and organisational planning.
DESIRABLE	Experience of establishing or developing a charitable trust or social enterprise.
DESIRABLE	Experience of developing master plans or strategic plans for heritage, cultural or visitor attraction sites.

Abilities and skills

ESSENTIAL	The ability to work independently and manage a complex, multi-strand programme to time and budget.
ESSENTIAL	Excellent communication, influencing and report-writing skills, able to instil confidence in teams, senior officers and stakeholders.
ESSENTIAL	Strong strategic thinking combined with practical delivery.
ESSENTIAL	Excellent planning, organisation and time-management skills.
ESSENTIAL	A sound understanding of business and financial procedures.
DESIRABLE	Monitoring, evaluation and analytical skills.
DESIRABLE	A confident, flexible leadership style, able to communicate effectively with everyone.

Values

ESSENTIAL	Awareness and understanding of equal opportunities and of other people's behaviour, physical, social and welfare needs.

Interested?

For an informal conversation about the role, or any questions, please contact Jack Pishhorn, Head of Culture, Tourism and Heritage.

jack.pishhorn@northnorthants.gov.uk

Find out more about the estate in our **Impact Report 2024–25**.





North Northamptonshire Council