



COGGES



DIRECTOR
Recruitment Information

Introduction



Firstly, thank you for finding out more about Cogges and the Director role we are hoping to fill. I hope you will find the information interesting and it will help you decide whether you would like to join us.

Cogges has a strong sense of survival. Since before the Domesday Book it has adapted to changing times, as a settlement, a farm, and latterly as a rural farm museum under Oxfordshire County Council's ownership. It has had ups and downs. One of those downs was when it closed to the public in 2009 due to annual deficits of over £250k.

But Cogges was not to be beaten (and sold to a private buyer). The uniqueness of the place and the strength of affection for it amongst the local community persuaded the Council that an alternative use should be found, and the Cogges Heritage Trust was created. In July we celebrated the 10th anniversary of the Trust reopening the gates to Cogges.

Over the last 10 years we have focused on 3 areas essential to a successful business model: attracting visitors (especially families), hosting wedding receptions in the barns, and becoming a respected and popular place for volunteering. We started returning small annual profits after 3 years of trading and were able to build up appropriate reserves whilst also investing in staff and new facilities. Over the last 2-3 years income has slid a little whilst we've focussed on planning for significant capital investment, but any decline is being arrested by that investment, improved marketing and better customer service.

Cogges ends its first decade in good shape and with a sense of renewal with new arrival facilities, new interpretation in the house and grounds and a wide range of new activities for adults, children and audiences who might not otherwise think of Cogges as a place in which to participate. This means that we must now focus on how to build on this investment, the Trust's good reputation and the many opportunities to engage more with our communities.

We are looking for a Director who is eager to be part of this next phase, who will be excited by the opportunities and keen to see Cogges thrive. To succeed you will bring experience of heritage attractions, business acumen and strong leadership skills.

Thank you again for your interest in Cogges. We hope you find this document useful and look forward to considering your application.

With best wishes

Paul Evans

Chair of Trustees (designate)

Information

Cogges Heritage Trust is the charity which cares for and runs Cogges Manor Farm, a unique historic site in Witney, West Oxfordshire. It was set up in 2011 to take over the site from Oxfordshire County Council and in the last 10 years has completely rejuvenated Cogges from a tired, loss-making venture with dwindling visitor numbers to a thriving local destination of international interest.

Cogges Manor Farm aims to:

- be a place whose past is recorded, understood, valued and enjoyed by everyone who visits
- make a positive contribution to all its communities
- protect and enhance our natural environment and buildings
- be a place where people can relax, participate, learn new things and have fun

Our charitable objects, as defined in the Trust's Memorandum and Articles are:

To preserve, protect, develop and improve the archaeological, historical, architectural and environmental heritage of the site of Cogges Manor Farm and associated land for the benefit of the people of the county of Oxfordshire and the wider members of the public;

To advance the education of the public in an understanding of rural heritage and contemporary and future farming and food production including but not exclusively by; (a) the establishment and operation of a facility to be open to members of the

public; (b) interpreting the rural history of the site;

Such other charitable purposes beneficial to the public consistent with the objects above as the trustees shall in their absolute discretion determine.

Cogges Manor Farm is a fascinating place to be involved in. Local people enjoy the calendar of events and the lively café, schools revel in the hands-on approach to learning, and tourists from the UK and further afield come to step into the farm they've seen featured in TV programmes and films, including as Yew Tree Farm in Downton Abbey. Cogges is also a popular venue for weddings and parties.

This is a historical gem with a very bright future. With the help of around £1.2m from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and other generous grant-makers and donors, Cogges has embarked on a suite of capital improvements, learning programmes and community activities to bring alive 1,000 years of the Farm's history. With funding from Oxfordshire County Council we are also reroofing the 2 big barns. Much of the capital work is now complete.

Added to the challenge of capital and programme development, we are also seeing our costs increase now that we have secured the freehold of the site which was previously leased from OCC. These, and the cost of retaining staff in new roles currently funded by the NLHF, need to be covered through increased income generation. We are working to develop existing revenue streams and introduce new business activities to ensure a significant increase in revenue.

More about Cogges

- Cogges Heritage Trust is a registered charity governed by a Board of Trustees. The Director reports to the Board through the Chair of Trustees.

- Cogges is run by a small staff team of about 6 Full Time Equivalent posts. They are supported by over 200 active volunteers, divided into teams to focus on the house, reception, the garden, maintenance, craft and animal care. The team is led by the Director.

- We welcome between 40,000-50,000 visitors a year, with over 2,000 holding season tickets giving them 12 months unlimited admission. With our new facilities we expect visitor numbers will grow to over 60,000.

- Around 1,000 schoolchildren participate in Cogges' programmes each year. We're aiming to increase this number to 5,000 over the next 3 years.

- Cogges has a wholly owned subsidiary, Cogges Heritage Enterprises Ltd. The café, weddings and retail are run through Enterprises which has its own board of directors.

- Our average turnover (Trust and Enterprises combined) over the last (pre-Covid) 3 years was c£388k resulting in small operational profits before exceptional costs.

- We have fared well through Covid as a result of the Job Retention Scheme, local authority grants, NLHF and trust and foundation support, and our ability as a

largely outdoor attraction to open and attract visitors last summer. Our reserves are intact.

- Cogges is not an accredited museum and does not hold collections. It is a heritage site with a Grade II listed manor house and farm buildings and much of its land is designated a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

Working at Cogges

Cogges is special place to work, with a unique and positive relationship between our staff, volunteers and local community. Our working ethos at Cogges is based on respect, communication and organisation. Our staff team have agreed on the following list of values and behaviors, which we will uphold in our working relationships at Cogges.

We are:

Consistent, considerate, clear, collaborative, communicative, open, observant, organised, encouraging, empowering, equitable, sympathetic, supportive.

We act with:

Confidence, care, cohesion, optimism, generosity, empathy, enthusiasm, sustainability.



Public engagement ambitions

Our National Lottery Heritage Fund Activity Plan will establish Cogges as a site of regional excellence in public access and inclusion, broadening and diversifying our audience to reflect the population of our local community and Oxfordshire as a whole.

Cogges is for people to enjoy and we wish to share the interest, enrichment and joy this special place can bring with as many people as possible. The historical essence of Cogges is bound together tightly with the needs of our local community, as a place that has provided for many people in a multitude of different ways over the centuries.

We will use this unique heritage, and our ongoing proximity to local stakeholders, to breathe life into our plans for public engagement, at the heart of the future of Cogges.

Our Activity Plan will:

- Re-define the role of Cogges in the 21st century as a productive, nurturing and educational hub for our local community.
- Enshrine the values of access and inclusion in every piece of our work.
- Openly present Cogges as a test bed for new ideas, seeking guidance from our local community through consultation, and connecting with a much broader audience than ever before.
- Explore the real meaning of partnerships, sharing control and stewardship of our activities and plans with local people.
- Develop Cogges as a meaningful resource for everyone we engage with, taking relationships with our supporters beyond the purely transactional aspects of day and season-ticket entry.
- Enable excellent learning experiences at Cogges, with a focus on connecting our local community to our land, nature and farming heritage.

Job description

Job title:

Director

Hours of work:

Averaging c37.5 per week

Salary:

From £45,000

Reports to:

The Board of Cogges Heritage Trust, through the Chair of Trustees

Directly manages:

Sales & Events Manager, Marketing & Communications Manager, Community & Learning Manager, Farm Manager, Office Manager

Job purpose:

To deliver the Trust’s mission, vision and strategy by directing the overall operation and resources of the Trust, acting as the main point of communication between Trustees, staff and volunteers and being the public face of the Trust

The Director will:

- Direct both Cogges Heritage Trust and Cogges Heritage Enterprises Ltd
- Work with trustees, supporters, staff, volunteers and other stakeholders to lead the development and implementation of a new 5 year strategy and business plan which delivers a significant increase in net income within 3 years
- Be responsible for the financial planning and management of both CHT and CHE
- Develop Cogges into a leading regional heritage visitor attraction and centre for volunteering and community engagement
- Increase visitor numbers, develop new audiences and raise the profile of Cogges in the region
- Ensure that the Cogges offer responds to visitors needs
- Act as an advocate and ambassador for the organisation, developing partnerships and relationships in order to further our mission and business plan
- Be responsible for the care, maintenance and improvement of the buildings and land at Cogges Manor Farm
- Provide leadership and coordination to the Cogges team, including staff, volunteers and contractors
- Develop all existing sources of income such as admissions, retail, catering and venue hire, and research and implement new business opportunities in order to increase the Trust’s net income
- Direct all capital expenditure projects, working with consultants and contractors as required

- Lead and coordinate fundraising efforts to raise public and charitable funds, particularly for project work, and oversee the stewardship of all funder relationships
- Report regularly to Trustees and support the Trustee board in its relations with staff, volunteers, stakeholders, partners, visitors etc.
- Act as Duty Manager when appropriate and undertake any other tasks as reasonably expected by Trustees including reacting to out-of-hours call-outs
- Ensure that health & safety policy is implemented throughout the site, and take reasonable care of the health, safety and welfare of self, other people, animals and resources.

The role will require you to:

- Adhere to the highest standards as defined by the HM Treasury publication “Managing Public Money”. Those standards are honesty, impartiality, accountability, openness, accuracy, reliability, transparency, objectivity, integrity and fairness.
- Be responsible for developing and implementing our commitment to Equality, Diversity & Inclusion and promote non-discriminatory practices in all aspects of work undertaken.
- Continue to grow your knowledge and skills through undertaking professional development, which is established with the Chair of Trustees through an annual performance development review.
- Have a full understanding of all policies and procedures required for the operation of the organisation

and site, and ensure they are in place and properly implemented at all times (including Security, Health & Safety, Equality & Diversity and Safeguarding)

You will need proven, successful experience of:

- Working in a heritage setting
- Providing strategic direction to an organisation or department
- Managing a team and providing leadership to others
- Working with volunteers
- Initiating, developing and delivering income-generating activities
- Managing the finances of an organisation or department including drawing up budgets and forecasts, and reporting in detail on performance and its impact on financial position
- Working with partners, funders and a range of other stakeholders
- Dealing with complex problems requiring analysis and challenging solutions

You will also need knowledge of:

- Developing and delivering of narratives/stories/content for heritage projects and exhibitions, including digitally
- Creating audience-focused community engagement and public programmes
- The particular health and safety, security and maintenance requirements of running a site such as Cogges Manor Farm

Application

To apply, please send a CV and a covering letter of not more than 2 sides of A4 explaining how you meet the criteria required for the role to:

office@cogges.org.uk

Applications must be received by **17:00 on Monday 6th December 2021.**

Initial interviews will be held by Zoom week beginning **13th December 2021.**

Final interviews will be held at Cogges on **Tuesday 21st December 2021.**

Cogges Heritage Trust is an equal opportunity employer, supports a diverse workplace and offers the following benefits:

4% contribution to the NEST pension scheme

28 days leave per annum

Professional & personal development opportunities



