

Job Description

Job Title:	Visitor Services Manager
Location:	Abbotsford, Melrose
Reporting to:	Chief Executive of Abbotsford
Staff reporting:	Visitor Centre Assistants, Asst House Manager and team
Status:	Open Ended, Full Time at 35hrs per Week - 5 days over 7 including weekends
Salary:	Grade 5, £29,391 - £31,799 per annum

Employee Benefits

- Pension contributions matched up to 4% of salary
- Staff discounts for the shop, café, public events and self-catering bookings
- Work from home policy: 1 to 2 days a week for full-time employees
- 33 days annual leave for full-time employees
- Free parking – enjoy free walks any time at Abbotsford

Context

Abbotsford was designed and built by Sir Walter Scott as both his home and the location for his extensive collection of books and historical memorabilia, and was first opened to the public in 1833, five months after his death. After the death of his last descendent in residence, Dame Jean Maxwell-Scott, in 2004, The Abbotsford Trust was created to preserve, protect and promote not only the house, but also the life and works of Sir Walter. Abbotsford is considered to be one of the most important heritage sites in Scotland.

The Visitor Services Manager contributes to achieving the objectives of Abbotsford's Commercial Development Strategy, taking responsibility for Abbotsford's retail and lettings business, and the visitor admissions service experience. Working in partnership with colleagues across the organisation you will direct the strategy in these business areas, looking at new opportunities whilst ensuring high standards of business are maintained. To make this happen you will have a genuine passion for leading and developing people.

Job Purpose

- To manage the Trust's principal trading activities, providing leadership to staff and volunteers, achieving profit and customer satisfaction targets in all areas of responsibility
- To foster productive teams, motivated and skilled individuals through excellent staff and volunteer management
- To lead on the development of the arrival and admissions experience, maximising revenue and contributing to marketing objectives
- To drive retail growth through ongoing improvements to the retail environment and offer, ensuring costs are controlled

- To maximise accommodation revenue and profitability, while achieving consistently high levels of customer satisfaction
- To manage the Visitor Centre and accommodation wing, ensuring the provision of a high quality environment throughout, including facilities management and Health & Safety

Scope and Accountability

The Visitor Services Manager reports directly to the Chief Executive, and is responsible for development of and day to day operational management of visitor services. They will work closely with colleagues in all teams to ensure congruence between their own area of management and other parts of the charity. They are responsible for the following resources:

- Budgetary management for Visitor Services, including admissions, retail, lettings and housekeeping, minibus and customer parking
- Management of the volunteer team within Visitor Services, including the minibus service
- Health and Safety within the Visitor Centre, Hope Scott Wing, and minibus service
- Contracts management as required (e.g. site contractors)

Key Responsibilities

Staff & Volunteer Management

- Manage and support staff to deliver their responsibilities to the best of their ability, displaying a positive and constructive approach to all areas of their work and towards colleagues
- Ensure learning and development initiatives and training plans are actively implemented and motivating staff members to consistently deliver sales and service
- Ensure all Trust policies and procedures are adhered to, including undertaking staff appraisals and regular staff meetings
- Support volunteers and integrate them into staff teams, liaising closely with the Volunteer Coordinator
- Assign responsibilities across the team, encouraging team members to proactively identify and resolve issues and opportunities
- Ensure an efficient working rota for staff and volunteers with cover at levels required to provide a high quality customer experience and safe environment at all times
- Liaise with colleagues in other teams to ensure that staff and volunteers are fully informed of plans, initiatives, events and exhibitions

Visitor Admissions

- Provide an excellent, friendly and professional customer service to all visitors and handle any complaints sensitively and efficiently, ensuring that a written record is kept
- Ensure systems are in place for planned and managed booking levels that fit with visitor flow projections and management strategies
- Manage Visitor Services Assistants and volunteers, ensuring that admissions revenue, Gift Aid and Friends Membership is maximised, repeat visits and recommendations encouraged, marketing data collected
- Support the management and development of ticketing and admission systems to enhance the customer experience, maximise revenue and return visits
- Oversee the operation and development of a customer minibus service in line with legislation
- Oversee the operation and maintenance of paid public parking

- Support colleagues in the planning and delivery of events, activities, marketing and exhibitions
- Ensure that visitor services reflect the Trust's commitment to equality and diversity (e.g. meeting disability needs, ensuring the team have a good understanding of cultural diversity)

Retail

- Achieve Key Performance Indicator targets as set by the Commercial Development Strategy (ATV, SPH, GP and Conversion Rate)
- Provide regular reports to monitor and manage sales, profit margins and stock analysis for category groups and departments, reporting to the Trading Board when requested
- Lead on retail purchasing, including sourcing new stock and suppliers, to create product ranges to entice Abbotsford's audiences
- Promote Abbotsford's brand values in store through product visual merchandising and storytelling
- Manage and develop the EPOS system to ensure data is always accurate and is consistently being updated
- Ensure retail management systems and procedures are fully maintained and stock control systems meet audit requirements
- Adhering to the sale of alcohol legislation, being a Premises Manager

Accommodation

- Achieve occupancy and revenue targets for the accommodation wing, whilst controlling costs
- Provide management support to the House Manager and their team in the provision of a high quality guest experience within the accommodation wing
- Work closely with the Chief Executive, House Manager and marketing colleagues to review and develop the accommodation offer, including pricing, identification of suitable markets and guest packages for promotion, developing strategies for achieving occupancy and profit targets

Operational Management, Health & Safety

- Work closely with the Finance Manager to ensure effective financial management of all functions including contributing to budgets and managing within these, ensuring that any problems are quickly identified and addressed
- Work closely with the Finance Manager to ensure that management information systems are meeting business needs, are being operated accurately, and reports are produced regularly
- Responsible for the provision of nominated facilities management across the Visitor Centre and accommodation wing, including identifying priorities and implementing solutions within available budgets.
- Lead on Health & Safety within the Visitor Centre and accommodation wing, including ensuring health & safety regulations are adhered to at all times, that all staff understand the requirements, and liaise as delegated with relevant authorities
- Act as Duty Manager on a rota basis including on weekends throughout the year

Communications and Relationships

- Develop and maintain collaborative and constructive working relationships with Abbotsford staff, volunteers, Trustees and representatives from the Faculty of Advocates

Person Specification

Knowledge and Experience

Essential

- Management experience within a customer service environment
- Experience of managing retail operations functions, including knowledge of how to increase retail profitability in line with brand values and customer service excellence.
- Experience of budgeting and financial management, including a good understanding of profit margins
- Excellent understanding of and commitment to high quality customer relations

Desirable

- Experience or knowledge of managing high quality guest accommodation and the mechanisms for improving business performance
- An understanding of people flow and customer experience, ideally gained within the tourism sector
- Some knowledge of health & safety requirements relating to public buildings (e.g. fire safety)
- Some experience or knowledge of facilities management (e.g. ensuring contractors service boilers, responding to emergency water leaks etc)

Skills and Abilities

Essential

- Ability to inspire a team by promoting customer service excellence combined with a sales driven mentality
- Excellent practical and hands on management skills and ability to problem solve on the spot
- Creative, analytical and evaluative skills, including an ability to contribute to the development and promotion of The Abbotsford Trust's visitor experience
- Strong planning skills, including ability to manage complex staffing and volunteer rotas and to deliver to multiple priorities whilst retaining a thorough attention to detail
- Flexible approach to work and willingness to multi-task within a small organisation
- Strong customer service skills and ability to deal with a wide range of people and stakeholders
- IT literate and able to develop and maintain high quality management information as a bedrock to informed management and decision making

Desirable

- Good written communications skills that demonstrate attention to detail, and clear and concise report writing coupled with promotional skills
- Excellent interpersonal skills, including ability to develop networks and partnerships, and to negotiate with suppliers

Personal Qualities

- Strong interest in and commitment to The Abbotsford Trust's mission, vision and values
- Commitment to Equality and Diversity policy and practice and understanding of how these translate into own field and area of management
- Ability to work weekends, bank holidays and occasional evenings as required
- Ideally live within a reasonable radius of Abbotsford to provide emergency response