

The Sussex Archaeological Society

## **DIRECTOR OF LEWES PROPERTIES**

### **JOB DESCRIPTION**

<b>Job Title:</b>	Director of Lewes Properties
<b>Location:</b>	Barbican House (Lewes) with occasional travel to Shoreham and West Hoathly
<b>Responsible to:</b>	Chair of the Board of Lewes Properties
<b>Responsible for:</b>	Lewes (and associated properties) Senior Management Team
<b>Hours of Work:</b>	Full time, including some weekends, evenings, Bank Holidays and early mornings so a flexible approach is necessary.
<b>Salary:</b>	£45 - £50k

### **Introduction & Summary**

The Sussex Archaeological Society (trading as Sussex Past) was founded in 1846 and is one of the oldest heritage organisations in the country. The Society has developed into a complex organisation which operates a number of historically significant visitor attractions and museums across Sussex (including; Lewes Castle, Barbican House Museum, Anne of Cleves House, Fishbourne Roman Palace and Michelham Priory). It operates an extensive research library and produces a respected academic journal. It also delivers and supports research and provides learning opportunities for thousands of schoolchildren and students.

The Society is at an exciting stage of its development. Having worked hard to stabilise and recover from the impact of the Covid pandemic and recent political and economic challenges, it is now looking to the future with much optimism and energy.

The Society is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. Its charitable objects for the public benefit are to:

- *promote, encourage and foster study and research primarily related to the archaeology and history of East and West Sussex.*

- *manage and maintain or take-on museums and historic sites, monuments and properties.*
- *provide and advance suitable educational opportunities for children and adults in archaeology and history, both at the Society's properties and elsewhere.*

## **The post**

Trustees wish to appoint an experienced leader who has a proven track record of managing within a varied and fast-moving environment. The successful candidate will bring a passion for UK heritage, and specifically for the history and archaeology of Sussex. They will be able to lead a team of passionate and knowledgeable individuals, developing strong internal and external relationships and helping develop and implement a strategic vision for the Lewes properties which ensures their future.

We are seeking an experienced and visionary leader to take on the strategic oversight and cultural transformation of our heritage properties in Lewes and the surrounding areas. This is a pivotal role for a seasoned professional with a passion for heritage, strong operational acumen, and a proven track record of driving organisational change through inspiring leadership.

## **Key Responsibilities:**

### **1. Strategic Leadership and Organisational Alignment**

- Provide strategic leadership for the operational management of Lewes Castle, Barbican House Museum, and Anne of Cleves House, while maintaining high-level oversight of Marlipins Museum (Shoreham) and The Priest House (West Hoathly).
- Shape and deliver a long-term strategic vision for the properties, aligning operations with the wider aims of the Society and positioning the sites as thriving cultural destinations.
- Develop and implement business planning, budget management and operational strategies, underpinned by robust KPIs and performance metrics, with regular reporting to the Board and Trustees.
- Collaborate closely with Society colleagues to ensure joined up thinking and shared delivery of goals across all areas of the organisation.

### **2. Team Leadership and Cultural Development**

- Lead, develop and inspire a cross-functional team, embedding a high-performance culture rooted in accountability, collaboration, innovation and trust.
- Drive cultural change across teams and stakeholders, fostering an inclusive, forward-thinking environment that embraces continuous improvement.

- Build and strengthen a sustainable volunteer workforce, integrating them into the core operational model and enhancing community engagement.

### **3. Operations, Risk and Resource Management**

- Ensure the responsible and strategic management of resources, including financial oversight, staff development, infrastructure, and conservation priorities.
- Lead on risk management strategy across all sites, ensuring business continuity, compliance, and effective mitigation planning.
- Hold responsibility for the highest standards in facilities management, health and safety, safeguarding, and emergency response planning.

### **4. Academic Excellence, Visitor Experience and Commercial Innovation**

- Provide strategic oversight of the Society's research activities (excluding Fishbourne) and the production of its academic journal, ensuring high editorial standards. Champion the Society's reputation as a leading authority on the archaeology and history of Sussex, fostering academic partnerships and promoting original research.
- Lead the strategic growth and development of the education programme, and develop innovative, inclusive, and engaging approaches to bring the stories of our properties to life through dynamic programming and exhibitions.
- Champion excellence in visitor experience, ensuring all properties are accessible, engaging and welcoming to diverse audiences.
- Lead on the delivery of an innovative commercial strategy, developing new income streams and a profitable retail offer. Identify opportunities for commercial growth, process improvement, and innovation to increase efficiency, resilience and visitor satisfaction.

### **5. External Relations and Advocacy**

- Forge and nurture strategic partnerships with local authorities, cultural institutions, community organisations, and educational bodies to enhance the profile, reach, and impact of the Society's heritage properties, ensuring they remain deeply connected to and reflective of the communities they serve.
- Develop and support inclusive programming initiatives that improve wellbeing and foster community transformation.
- Represent the Society externally at a strategic level, cultivating partnerships and advocating for our mission and values with stakeholders, funders, and the wider heritage sector.

## **Person Specification**

### **Job Title: Director of Lewes Properties**

#### **Essential Experience and Knowledge**

- Proven senior-level leadership experience in a heritage, cultural, or visitor attraction environment.
- A strong track record of strategic planning and delivering long-term organisational goals.
- Experience leading cultural or organisational change, with a focus on inclusion, innovation, and high performance.
- Demonstrable experience in managing complex, multi-site operations and teams.
- Strong commercial awareness, with experience identifying and delivering growth, service improvements, and operational efficiencies.
- Experience developing and managing partnerships across sectors including local authorities, community organisations, and cultural bodies.
- Proven ability to manage financial resources effectively, including budgeting, reporting, and income generation.
- Knowledge of best practices in risk management, facilities compliance, safeguarding, health and safety, and visitor experience standards.
- Familiarity with volunteer management and community engagement in a heritage or charitable context.
- Understanding of heritage conservation principles and the operational requirements of managing historic properties.

#### **Essential Skills and Abilities**

- Exceptional leadership and people management skills with the ability to inspire, develop and lead diverse teams and volunteers.
- Strategic thinker with the ability to translate vision into operational delivery.
- Excellent communication, influencing and stakeholder engagement skills.
- Strong analytical and problem-solving abilities, including the use of performance metrics and KPIs to drive decision-making.
- Ability to work collaboratively across departments and disciplines, fostering a culture of shared goals.

- Commitment to accessibility, equity, diversity, and inclusion in all aspects of operations and programming.

### **Desirable Experience and Qualifications**

- Degree or equivalent professional qualification in heritage management, business, cultural leadership, or a related field.
- Experience working with Boards or Trustees and reporting at a senior governance level.
- Experience in public programming or initiatives that promote wellbeing, rehabilitation, or social inclusion.
- Knowledge of the regional cultural and heritage landscape in Sussex and the surrounding areas.
- Experience of capital projects, site development or heritage-led regeneration would be an advantage.

### **Personal Attributes**

- A visionary and values-led leader with integrity, resilience, and emotional intelligence.
- Passionate about heritage, community, and the transformative power of culture.
- Adaptable, forward-thinking, and solution-oriented.
- Committed to the mission of the Society and to making heritage accessible and relevant to all.