



PENSHURST PLACE
ESTATE

JOB TITLE: HEAD OF HOSPITALITY

REPORTING TO: GENERAL MANAGER

SALARY: Dependent on experience, + benefits

HOURS: As necessary, on 5 days out of 7 basis, including weekend working

STATUS: Permanent full time

Job Summary:

Penshurst Place is one of the oldest family owned estates in the country, set in 2,500 acres of rural Kent countryside. It is a family home, and also a top visitor attraction, wedding and events venue, and working country estate.

Penshurst Place has gained a reputation as one of the premier hospitality venues in the south east of England. It offers a range of banqueting facilities to cater for wedding ceremonies and receptions, conferences, meetings, product launches and many other functions within its three function rooms: the Baron's Hall; the Sunderland Room, and the Buttery. In addition, the Inner Courtyard and South Lawn can both be made available for drinks receptions and marquee events. In recent years, the historic parkland has seen greater use as the venue for fairs, festivals, concerts, car shows and corporate activity days. Hospitality has significantly increased in importance and now ranks among the highest revenue-generating enterprises on the Estate.

Retail catering is provided through the Garden Room, the Porcupine Pantry and a refreshment kiosk. Operated under licence by contract caterers for many years, the retail catering was brought in-house in February 2021.

The Head of Hospitality will be responsible for all aspects of function and retail catering, leading and directing a committed team, and reporting directly to the Estate General Manager.

Main tasks:

- To be responsible for all aspects of running function and retail hospitality at Penshurst Place, motivating, leading and directing a team of permanent and casual staff,
- To deal with enquiries, show prospective customers the facilities and to organise and co-ordinate the hospitality department, ensuring the development and continuous improvement of the service
- Manage all aspects of service planning and execution for weddings and functions, delivering a high-quality customer experience
- Manage all aspects of Food Safety, Health and Safety and implement robust systems to ensure accountability at all levels. Maintaining all necessary records both paper and digital
- To work closely with contract caterers, and all other contractors and service providers, to ensure that their contribution meets the quality standards expected and conforms to Penshurst Place expectations
- With support from the Marketing department, to be responsible for all aspects of the marketing of Penshurst Place and Gardens as a hospitality venue including, but not restricted to, internal and external publications, advertising, websites and trade shows
- Reporting to the Estate General Manager, to be responsible for setting and adhering to annual performance targets, budgets, management accounts and stock control, delivering an agreed budget surplus
- Managing and motivating the hospitality team to increase sales conversion, reach and exceed sales targets and maximise profitability
- Employing, on a casual basis, part time labour as required
- Ensuring that all weddings, functions and events are planned and supervised to prevent any damage to the structure or decoration of Penshurst Place, the gardens or parkland
- Participate in strategic decision making and planning, and acting both internally and externally as the voice of hospitality
- To produce daily, weekly, yearly and longer term operational workplans and reporting mechanisms to ensure that activities are prioritised and planned to optimise the use of resources
- To participate in the wider management team, supporting the General Manager strategically and practically with the operation of the House and Gardens, assuming the role of weekend 'Duty Manager' as required

Common Rules and Responsibilities:

- To maintain good relations with colleagues at all times; including temporary and part time staff, contractors, estate tenants, visitors and members of the public, remaining courteous and polite at all times
- To assist other departments when requested
- To keep the physical assets of Penshurst Place Estate free from damage and/or misuse
- To undertake and provide training as required to fulfil the needs of the position
- To observe all fire regulations, Health and Safety and security regulations and in particular to take reasonable care both for your own safety and that of others that could be affected by your actions
- To undertake any other responsibilities associated with the operation of Penshurst Place Estate as may be required from time to time
- To observe the terms and conditions set out in the contract of employment and all Penshurst Place Estate policies and procedures set out in the employee handbook, which may be subject to change from time to time

Personal qualities:

- Enthusiasm and capacity for hard work. Conscientious and self-motivated.
- Honesty and with a high level of integrity
- Attention to detail
- A collaborative and inclusive team player, with a cheerful approach and a 'can do' attitude
- Excellent organisational and time management skills
- Driving licence, valid for driving within the UK. Own transport is required, as the venue is not served by public transport at all times.
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills, confident in interacting with a wide range of stakeholders. Outstanding leadership and people management skills
- Proven qualification, experience and training in catering and high-end hospitality management
- Industry acumen and knowledge of external catering developments & innovations
- Strong strategic and financial understanding in understanding budgets
- Exemplary customer service skills
- Strong PC skills and experience of general office/administration work, with ability to use Microsoft Word, Excel and Outlook programmes

How to apply:

For an opportunity to work in this lovely setting with an enthusiastic team, please send a cover email explaining your suitability for the role, along with your CV, by 31st January 2022 to benthomas@penshurstplace.com or by post to: Ben Thomas, General Manager, Penshurst Place Estate, Penshurst, Tonbridge, Kent TN11 8DG