

Community Officer

The Friends of Abingdon Abbey Buildings Trust

Abingdon-on-Thames, Oxfordshire

About the Project

The Friends of Abingdon Abbey Buildings Trust has secured funding from The National Lottery Heritage Fund, alongside additional support from trusts, foundations and local supporters, to deliver the 'Abingdon Abbey Buildings – a heritage asset at the heart of the community' project.

The project will conserve and enhance the historic Abbey Buildings in the centre of Abingdon-on-Thames, creating a welcoming, accessible and sustainable community and heritage space.

Alongside the conservation and enhancement work, the Trust is launching an ambitious 3-year Activity Plan which will provide opportunities for people to engage with the heritage of the Abbey Buildings through community, learning, creative and volunteer activity. A key aim is to develop meaningful relationships with new audiences, communities and groups that continue beyond the funded programme and support the longer-term community use of the Buildings.

We are now looking for a Community Officer to join our small team and help develop and deliver this programme.

The Opportunity

We are looking for an experienced, enthusiastic and outward-facing community practitioner who enjoys making things happen.

Working alongside the Programme Manager and wider Trust team, you will combine hands-on activity delivery with proactive community engagement: planning and delivering activities, working with local groups and schools, coordinating the practical arrangements that enable people to participate, and building and maintaining relationships within the community.

This is a collaborative role. We want you to bring your own ideas, experience and professional judgement to the programme and take genuine responsibility for agreed areas of work.

The Activity Plan will continue to develop as the project progresses and the Abbey Buildings move towards reopening and longer-term community use. We are therefore looking for someone who will enjoy working flexibly within a developing programme and small team.

The Role

This is a developing role and the balance of responsibilities will evolve as the project progresses.

Priorities and areas of responsibility will be agreed with the Programme Manager in response to programme needs and the skills and capacity of the team.

- plan, organise and deliver activities and sessions with a range of participants, including community groups and schools;
- coordinate the practical liaison, logistics and follow-up needed to make activities happen successfully;
- proactively engage with local groups, schools, organisations and networks, building and maintaining relationships and encouraging wider participation;
- actively promote the Abbey Buildings and opportunities to participate in activities and use the Buildings;
- take responsibility for agreed areas of work and see them through from planning to delivery and follow-up;
- support the development of volunteer involvement and, as this develops, contribute to the day-to-day coordination and support of volunteers, working with the Curator and others as appropriate;
- support students, trainees and others undertaking placements or learning opportunities in relevant areas of the programme;
- contribute to monitoring and evaluation, including capturing participation, feedback and evidence from activities;
- contribute content for the Trust's social media and other communications, helping to promote activities, opportunities and engagement with the Buildings;
- work collaboratively with freelance practitioners, partners, volunteers and other members of the project team; and
- help identify funding opportunities that can support affordable community use of the Buildings, activities and events.

The postholder will report to the Programme Manager, who retains overall responsibility for the Activity Plan. The postholder will also have regular contact with the Project Director who has overall responsibility for delivery of the project, representing the client body, monitoring the Activity Plan and Business Plan against the anticipated outcomes, and provides the main point of contact with the Heritage Fund.

Work may be led independently or developed and delivered collaboratively with colleagues and partners depending on programme needs and expertise.

Who We're Looking For

We are particularly interested in hearing from people who:

- have experience of community engagement, outreach and partnership working;
- have practical experience of planning and delivering activities or sessions directly with participants, and can adapt their approach for different groups and audiences;

- are confident, enthusiastic and genuinely outward-facing, comfortable making new connections and promoting opportunities;
- are skilled at building and sustaining positive relationships with a range of people and organisations;
- are organised, practical and able to follow work through from idea to delivery;
- can take ownership of agreed work, using their own initiative and professional judgement;
- enjoy working collaboratively within a small team and contributing their own ideas and expertise;
- understand inclusive practice and the importance of identifying and reducing barriers to participation;
- are comfortable using social media and other communication channels to promote activities and engagement; and
- are flexible and comfortable working within an evolving project environment.

Experience of working with children and young people, including in schools or other learning/community settings, would be welcome.

Experience of working with volunteers, students or trainees would also be useful.

Knowledge of Abingdon and the surrounding area and/or existing links with local community organisations, schools or networks would be particularly welcome.

Experience in heritage, arts, culture, education or the voluntary/community sector would be useful, but heritage experience is not essential.

Practical Information

Item	Detail
Job title	Community Officer
Reports to	Programme Manager
Salary	£32,000 FTE (£25,600 actual salary for 0.8 / 28 hours per week)
Hours	0.8 FTE (28 hours/week)
Contract	Three-year fixed-term contract
Location	Abingdon-on-Thames, Oxfordshire, with some flexible/home working by agreement
Annual leave	25 days holiday per annum, pro rata, plus Bank Holidays.
Pension	Workplace pension scheme with auto-enrolment after three months. Employee contribution 5%; Trust contribution 3%. Employees may opt out of the scheme.
Sick pay	Statutory Sick Pay (SSP); no enhanced occupational sick pay scheme.
Anticipated Start date	November/December 2026 – depending on required notice period

The role will involve regular work within the community and at the Abbey Buildings. Some evening and weekend work may be required to support activities and events.

Safeguarding

The Friends of Abingdon Abbey Buildings Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of everyone who engages with our activities, particularly children, young people and adults at risk.

We are committed to safer recruitment practices. Appointment to this role will be subject to satisfactory references, appropriate checks on employment history and eligibility to work in the UK, and a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check at the appropriate level for the role.

The successful candidate will be expected to work in accordance with the Trust's safeguarding policies and procedures and to undertake relevant safeguarding training.

How to Apply

Please send:

- Your CV; and
- a supporting statement of no more than two sides of A4, explaining your relevant experience, your approach to community engagement and activity delivery, and why you are interested in the role.
- a completed Candidate Information Form, providing the additional information required as part of our safer recruitment process.

If a written supporting statement is a barrier to applying, please contact us to discuss an alternative format, such as audio or video.

Applications should be sent to: programme.manager@abingdonabbeybuildings.co.uk

Deadline for applications: **Sunday 18th October, 23:59**

Interviews are expected to take place on **Thursday 29th October** in Abingdon-on-Thames.

Informal conversations about the role are welcomed.

About The Friends of Abingdon Abbey Buildings Trust

The Friends of Abingdon Abbey Buildings Trust is a charity dedicated to caring for and bringing new life to the historic Abbey Buildings in Abingdon-on-Thames.

The Abbey Buildings are an important part of the town's heritage and community identity. Through the *Abingdon Abbey Buildings – a heritage asset at the heart of the community* project, we aim not only to conserve and enhance the Buildings, but also to create new opportunities for people to engage with their history and heritage and ensure they remain a vibrant part of community life.

We are committed to creating an inclusive and welcoming project environment and strongly encourage applications from people from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences.