Centre Manager - Reading

Information Pack

At Thrive, we are working towards creating a future where people with ill health, disability or disadvantage experience the life-changing benefits of gardening and nature.

We:

- Deliver life-changing Social and Therapeutic Horticulture programmes
- Train practitioners and advance professional standards in Social and Therapeutic Horticulture
- Provide gardening advice for people living with health conditions or disabilities
- Advocate to get Therapeutic Horticulture recognised and more widely utilised

About You

You will be an organised people person with strong people management skills. Someone who can manage competing demands and prioritise, a creative problem solver, and is comfortable with a varied workload.

A confident communicator with relationship and partnership development skills, able to work with a range of stakeholders, both internal and external e.g. Health and Local Authority Commissioners, charitable partners, trust and grant funders.

Our Values

We believe everyone can improve their health through gardening. Our core values are:

People-focused - We care about and respect people as individuals
Collaborative - We achieve greater things by working with others
Excellence - We hold high standards for ourselves and those we train
Ambitious - We grow, adapt and innovate

At Thrive, we care about employee wellbeing. We offer flexible working arrangements to accommodate a positive work life balance, competitive leave entitlement and pension, as well as a professional and inspiring working environment.

Job Description

Location:	Reading (Beech Hill)
Reports to:	Head of Client Services
Direct reports:	Senior STH Practitioner, Minibus Driver & Client Services Co-ordinator
Salary:	**£33,000**
Hours:	35 hours (full time)
Contract:	Permanent

Main purpose

To lead Thrive's Reading centre, ensuring the delivery of high-quality Social and Therapeutic Horticulture (STH) programmes that improve health, wellbeing and independence for client gardeners.

The Centre Manager is responsible for operational leadership, team management, partnership development and business growth, ensuring the centre delivers excellent services, achieves its objectives and remains financially sustainable.

Working closely with colleagues across Thrive, the postholder will strengthen local partnerships, increase referrals and funding opportunities, and help expand Thrive's impact across Reading and the surrounding area.

Key Responsibilities

Impact and delivery

- Lead the safe and effective delivery of Thrive's Reading-based and outreach services
- Ensure services are person-centred, high quality and aligned with organisational objectives and values
- Oversee operational planning, risk management, health and safety, safeguarding and data management processes
- Monitor performance, budgets and outcomes, taking action where improvements are needed

Leadership and People Management

- Lead, motivate and develop staff and volunteers, creating a positive and collaborative team culture
- Provide effective line management and support workforce planning across the centre
- Encourage high standards, continuous improvement and a strong commitment to Thrive's values

Partnerships and Business Development

- Build and maintain relationships with referrers, commissioners, funders, corporate partners and community network organisations
- Identify opportunities to grow services, increase referrals and develop local income streams

- Work with fundraising, business development and communications colleagues to support the centre's sustainability and growth

Safeguarding

- Act as the local safeguarding lead, ensuring concerns are managed appropriately and in line with Thrive policies
- Promote a culture of safeguarding, wellbeing and accountability across the centre

General Responsibilities

- Support organisational planning, development and improvement projects
- Collaborate with colleagues to share impact evidence and support fundraising, reporting and communications activities
- Build awareness and engagement through local communications, events and stakeholder relationships
- Act as an ambassador for Thrive, representing the charity within the local community

This list is not exhaustive. Amendments and additions may be required in the future, in line with policy and other changes.

Person Specification

Area	Essential	Desirable/Useful
Skills and Knowledge	• Strong leadership, people management and team development skills • Excellent relationship-building and partnership development skills • Ability to identify and develop opportunities that support organisational growth and sustainability • Strong organisational, planning, budgeting and prioritisation skills • Good digital skills, including MS365 and CRM systems. • Understanding of the needs of people living with ill health, disability or disadvantage	• Awareness of social prescribing, and health and social care commissioning • An understanding of the principles of Social and Therapeutic Horticulture or other therapeutic interventions • Ability to design service delivery to ensure the safeguarding of adults and children at risk
Experience	• Managing staff and building positive team cultures. • Delivering services and meeting operational objectives, targets and budgets. • Working with a range of stakeholders, partners or commissioners. • Managing risk, health and safety and operational processes. • Contributing to service development, business development or income generation	• Performance management process • Management and motivation of volunteers • Supporting teams in raising safeguarding incidents/allegations and reporting • Contributing to case for support and funding applications • Effective change and project management
Personal Attributes	• Excellent interpersonal and communication skills • A clear thinker with strong analytical skills, initiative and drive • Strong verbal and written communication • Solution focused problem solver who can adapt to team and business needs • Confident speaker with the ability to represent Thrive through media opportunities	
Other	• Committed to the aims of Thrive • Willingness to travel (Locally and to other regional centres – Birmingham and London)	• Driving licence and/or other transport

Overview of Terms of Employment & Benefits

Salary: **£33,000**

Contract: Permanent

Location: Based at our centre in Beech Hill, Reading. Option for a hybrid role with up to 2 days remote per week with prior approval (on completion of 6-months probation)
Owing to the rural setting and the limited availability of public transport, it is advisable that candidates have access to their own transport.

Working hours: a normal working week is 35hrs, Monday to Friday, between 8.30am-4.30pm (core hours 9am – 4pm) with flexibility of start and end times with prior agreement. Some flexibility of working hours may be required and given the nature of Thrive's services working on evenings or Saturdays and Sundays is occasionally undertaken, in which case days off in lieu may be granted.

Probationary period: there is a probationary period of 6 months for new employees, with reviews at 3 months and 6 months. Thrive may extend this period of probation if necessary.

Notice periods: during the probation period, the notice period will be **4** working weeks. After the probationary period, the notice period will be **8** working weeks.

Holidays: annual holiday entitlement is 25 days, rising to 27 days after 5 years. In addition to annual holiday entitlement, you are entitled to all statutory holidays and bank holidays, or if work is undertaken on those days you are entitled to straight days off in lieu.

Sickness absence: Full salary for the first 20 days; half salary for the next 20 days; subsequent absences at nil salary (apart from any SSP entitlement) until return to work.

Pension: you will be automatically enrolled into Thrive's contributory pension after 2 months employment. Thrive's contribution to the pension scheme is 4% of gross salary and you will be required to contribute a minimum of 4%.

Employee Assistance Programme: The EAP offers a range of services that are designed to offer you a happy and fulfilling life. This includes access to free counselling services and several information helplines.

Wisdom App: Offered as part of the EAP, this health and wellbeing app provides an enhanced set of proactive wellbeing tools and engaging features, designed to improve mental and physical health by using personal metrics to set goals and measure achievements. Other discounts and benefits are also available via bright exchange on the wisdom app.

To Apply:
To apply, please submit an up-to-date CV and a covering letter explaining why you are a good fit for the role and how you meet the criteria in the person specification. Please send your application to recruitment@thrive.org.uk by the closing date **Friday 25th September**. Please note **Applications without a covering letter will not be considered**

If you have any questions or would like an informal conversation about the role before applying, please email **recruitment@thrive.org.uk**.

First round interviews will be held **on Tuesday 6th October** Second Interviews will be scheduled for the following week.

To achieve our goal of engaging as many people as possible in 'gardening for health', we know that our employee team needs to better reflect and represent all our communities. Therefore, we particularly welcome applicants from a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic background, and disabled people, as these groups are currently under-represented among Thrive's employees.

Thrive are a Disability Confident Employer and as such we are committed to the employment and career development of disabled people and will offer an interview to give you the opportunity to demonstrate your abilities at an interview, if you declare that you have a disability and meet the minimum criteria for the job.

By 'minimum criteria' we mean that you must provide us with evidence in your application which demonstrates that you generally meet the level of competence required for each competency as well as meeting any of the qualifications, skills or experience defined as essential.

Successful appointment to this post will be subject to satisfactory references and Disclosure & Barring Service checks. Thrive complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice. Having a criminal record will not necessarily prevent an individual from working for Thrive.

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