WEALD & DOWNLAND OPEN AIR MUSEUM

Director

Appointment Brief

January 2016

REF: ChairSG150116
The Museum

The Museum's vision is to be:

“A centre of excellence for the enjoyment, learning and understanding of the built environment, landscape, rural life and communities of South East England and the South Downs”

We are seeking a new Director to make this vision a reality. We are at an exciting crossroads as an organisation – where we want to build on the many successes of the past, but also want to create a step change in how we operate and are positioned in the wider community and sector, to ensure that we are a successful and resilient museum in the 21st century.

Founded in 1970, the award-winning Weald & Downland Open Air Museum is now the leading museum of historic buildings in England, covering 50 acres (20 hectares) on the South Downs of Sussex and at the heart of England’s newest National Park. It includes some 50 historic buildings dating from the 13th to 19th centuries, re-erected from their original sites in South East England together with woodlands, gardens, farm animals, walks and a millpond.

The Museum was the vision of its founder Roy Armstrong who, inspired by the work at Skansen in Sweden, and appalled at the immense loss of vernacular architecture in the 1950s onwards because of New Towns, road schemes and other developments set out to find a site to which buildings of historic significance could be moved to avoid destruction. In so doing he created a centre for understanding the cultural heritage of South East England and preserving ancient crafts and skills.

Hence the Museum’s long term aims are to:

1. Run an open-air Museum that inspires and delights its users
2. Provide lifelong learning based on the Museum's collections and other resources
3. Ensure high standards of collections care
4. Pursue research and scholarship
The exhibit buildings range from a recently constructed Saxon house to working buildings of the late 19th/early 20th century and include the award winning 21st century Downland Gridshell building. The buildings are complemented by a collection of building fixtures and fittings such as hinges, latches and doors, as well as larger structural elements and materials used in building construction and conservation.

The Museum also holds a collection of 15,000 artefacts relating to rural life, including agriculture, domestic life, trades and industries and transport. A library of printed books, maps and other published materials relevant to the collections is held by the Museum for study purposes. The collections are designated by the Arts Council as being of pre-eminence in England.

As well as bringing to life the homes, farmsteads and rural industries represented by its collections and exhibits, other themes are strongly represented at the Museum, including landscape, agriculture, animal husbandry, science and sustainability. Interpretation is achieved mainly through people, together with modest panel displays and publications.

The Museum runs a handful of large events each year which account for about 30% of business. The role of these in the Museum’s current operating model is therefore significant in what is a competitive market. The Trustees are looking for innovation in the way that visitor income, including from Friends and special activities, can be grown.
As a knowledge-based institution the Museum has an extremely strong commitment to lifelong learning. In addition to 12,000 children visiting in school parties every year, the Museum operates as a private sector training provider, selling over 3,500 students days of adult teaching and training every year, with a broad spectrum of provision from workshop-based skills training to two Master of Science (MSc) courses run in association with York University.
The Museum makes a major contribution to tourism in the Chichester area, and will be a key attraction in the South Downs National Park. It attracts between 115,000 and 125,000 visitors each year, mainly schools and families and with significant specialist interest as well.

During its 45-year life the Museum has become acknowledged as one of the UK’s leading museums of historic buildings. It receives no revenue subsidy from central or local government, hence synergy between Museum objectives and commercial realism is one of its most important features.
The Future

The Museum has reached an important stage in its development. It has for some years been developing, designing and fundraising for a major new visitor centre and related facilities which will transform the attractiveness and sustainability of this already popular and important museum.

Known as the Gateway project, with £4m of Heritage Lottery Funding and some £1.5m of additional funds and a full planning permission in place, this project has reached the final phase. Work has commenced on site, with the major construction expected to get underway in January 2016 and completion set for early 2017.

Full details of the project are available on the Museum’s website, but in brief it comprises an Orientation and Interpretation Gallery which will transform visitors' understanding of the site, collections and the landscape from which our buildings have originated. There will be new ticketing, retail and catering facilities, including a community space for use as a classroom, a venue for functions and as additional cafe space on high days. Updated interpretation will be installed throughout the site. Delivery of an HLF-funded Activity Plan is already under way. Finally, there will be safer and improved car parking.
The overriding objectives for the next 12-24 months are to:

1) Deliver a successful Gateway project
2) Introduce a new management/staffing structure and adapt to a new culture and business pattern
3) Maintain or boost income and business as usual as much as is practically possible during the construction period

These priorities are intended to provide a strong foundation for the Museum’s development over the next decade. This will provide a new Director with the opportunity to build on its past success and take the vision forward in exciting and innovative ways.
The Role

The Museum’s Trustees are looking for a new Director who is comfortable with change management and transformational situations and who will be excited by the chance to bring their own ideas into shaping the future of this wonderful Museum.

The Director will work with Trustees to ensure that the Museum develops its role as a leader in its field and raises its national and international profile, maintains collections that continue to be nationally designated, and continues to engage with new audiences through learning, social and tourism programmes.

The Director will need to be an inspiring leader with the confidence and experience to deal with people at all levels, have an appreciation of the role and needs of both the heritage and charities sectors, combined with a strong sense of financial and commercial acumen. A willingness to play a key role in future fund raising is important.

Previous experience in the museums or heritage sectors, while an advantage, is not essential but applicants will be expected to demonstrate the necessary qualities to quickly establish their credentials in the sector.

A full list of the key roles and duties of the Director is set out at Annex A and a more detailed Person Specification is at Annex B.

Current Director’s retirement

Richard Pailthorpe, the current Museum Director, will retire at the beginning of November 2017, after the Gateway project is completed. From the appointment date of his successor (late Spring 2016) through to retirement he will, on his own recommendation, relinquish his chief executive duties in order to focus on project managing the Gateway development and related projects.

This decision has been reached to enable a new Director to be involved and play a deciding role at this key moment in the Museum’s history.

Such is the nature and character of Richard Pailthorpe that the Trustees are satisfied that there will be no conflict with the ability of the new Director in his/her role as the chief executive of the Museum, nor confusion in the minds of staff. Richard is clear that he will be directly accountable to the new Director. The key roles and duties of the Gateway Project Manager are set out at Annex C.

Further Background Information for Candidates

Governance

The Weald & Downland Open Air Museum Limited is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity. Singleton Museum Services Limited is a wholly-owned trading subsidiary formed to undertake trading activities that are not charitable. While there is financial separation between the funds of the two companies, they are managed on a day-to-day basis as a single entity. The
Weald & Downland Open Air Museum Endowment Trust is another independent charity that holds funds for longer-term investment in the Museum.

The Museum is governed by its Board of Trustees (currently sixteen members) which meets three times a year. In company law terms, the trustees are directors of the company.

One of the duties of the trustees is to appoint the Executive Board. This is made up of trustees and consists of the Chairman, the Treasurer, the Secretary, and up to five further trustees. It is responsible for matters delegated to it by the body of trustees as a whole, but in particular supervising the Director, dealing with day-to-day management issues referred to it by the Director, preparing business plans and budgets for approval by the trustees and approving the monthly management accounts. The Executive Board is chaired by the Chairman and meets every two months and at such other times as the Chairman may determine.

There are currently three Vice-Presidents. These appointments are purely honorific to benefit the Museum by association. Vice-Presidents are kept generally informed by the Chairman of the affairs of the Museum and any major issues it may be facing and may be asked to intervene on behalf of the Museum in forums to which they may have access.

The Board is currently reviewing the governance framework, particularly in relation to terms of office and rotation.

Management and staffing

The Director is the Museum’s chief executive, reporting to the Executive Board and to the Board of Trustees. There are around 29 full-time-equivalent (fte) paid staff and the Museum is reliant on over 500 volunteers, who give an estimated 35-40,000 hours a year working in almost every department of the Museum and are line managed by staff members.

The Director has recently led a comprehensive review of the Museum’s staffing structure, aided by a consultant with expertise in the sector. This review took into account:

- The impact that the HLF-funded Gateway project will have on the business of the Museum and the opportunities provided by it
- The future business needs of the organisation in a modern and changing climate
- The need to streamline reporting relationships, strengthen management and move away from the present flat structure

The Trustees have approved the Director’s recommendations as follows:

1. The present Director is to step aside and become Gateway Project Manager (client side) through to his retirement
2. A new structural vision has been accepted as the preferred way forward subject to the views of the new Director, once appointed
3. It is important that the new Director (a) shapes and establishes the structure he or she wishes to work with and that (b) he or she is involved in the selection of staff to key posts.

**Strategy, Performance & Achievements**

The documents listed below have been made available to candidates via the following link to the Museum’s Google Drive:

Click here to access supporting documents

- Annual Report 2014 (the most recent)
- Forward Plan 2012-2016
- Business Priorities 2015-2017
- Master Plan 2014-2025

In addition, the Museum’s 2016 budget is available on request.

**Corporate Culture**

The Museum team is small in relation to what needs to be achieved. All are expected to contribute to achieving its objectives. We try to be exemplary and provide a quality service in everything we do. Working under pressure to meet tight deadlines is not unusual. In consequence, we have to be flexible and creative as well as business-like and efficient.

Trustees and staff have recently developed and signed up to a new set of Guiding Principles (corporate values) and these are attached at Annex D.

**Working Environment**

The Museum is situated at Singleton, 7 miles (11 kilometres) north of Chichester, on the A286, and within the South Downs National Park, designated in 2010. The Museum’s main offices, which are in the same historic building as visitor reception, house the management and administrative team, with other work bases located elsewhere on site.

‘Walking the job’ is seen as a vital element of the Director’s work, and it is also important to be present at weekend and out of hours events from time to time. All senior managers in the Museum are administratively self-sufficient, so the Director does not currently have a personal assistant; such administrative support as is required comes from the small administrative team.

Chichester – a cathedral city and administrative centre – has all the facilities one would expect of a regional centre, and is especially well-known for its cultural facilities, which include the Festival Theatre and the Pallant House Gallery. Chichester Harbour, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and one of the premier sailing centres on the south coast is nearby. A variety of housing is available for purchase or rent, with prices which vary for the usual reasons, but are somewhat higher than those found in other areas of England & Wales.
**Terms of Appointment**

The terms and conditions associated with the post follow the General Terms and Conditions adopted by the Museum and have been adapted to reflect the seniority of this post.

This is the most senior appointment for the Museum. The contract of employment and a remuneration package will to be negotiated with the successful candidate, to include any employer’s pension contribution.

The Museum is committed to equal opportunities and appoints on merit. It guarantees that no job applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, religion, disability, marital status or sexual orientation, or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements that cannot be shown to be justifiable.

**Selection Process and how to apply**

Selection will be by open competition which, in its final stage, will include a presentation and interview. Candidates may also be asked to provide a written paper.

Applications (there is no standard application form) should include full personal and career information, including details of current reward package, together with evidence of how you meet both the job requirements and personal attributes set out above and in the appendices.

Applications should be submitted by E-Mail only to the Chairman of Trustees at: paulrigg@wealddown.co.uk

Applications should arrive no later than noon on: **Wednesday, 17th February 2016**

Please include the names and contact details of at least two referees with an indication of when they may be contacted.

It would also be helpful if you could indicate by which means you became aware of this opportunity.

It is planned to hold interviews in the week beginning **29th February 2016**. These may extend over two days. The Appointments Panel will include three or four Museum Trustees plus one external adviser.

We will acknowledge receipt of applications and advise all applicants of the result of their application.

The reasonable expenses of candidates invited for interview will be met.
If an offer of employment is made, it will be subject to:

- The receipt of satisfactory references
- Satisfactory completion of a Criminal Records Bureau (Disclosure and Barring Service) check
- A health check report from the Museum’s Doctor that is satisfactory to the Museum. Consent may be sought to give the Museum’s Doctor access to your GP records, and under Data Protection legislation for the Doctor to report to the Appointments Board

**Further Information**

If you wish to discuss aspects of the job requirements or the appointment process, you are welcome to telephone Paul Rigg, Chairman of Trustees, on 01243 787770.

**Please Note:**

The information in these job details is not contractual and intended only as a guide to the terms and conditions which may accompany this role. All terms and conditions of employment will be confirmed prior to appointment.

DPR/WDOAM/04/01/16
ANNEX A

Key Roles and Duties of the Director

The Director is the chief executive of the Museum organisation with the following key roles:

1. Providing leadership for all aspects of the Museum, working with Trustees to set the future strategic vision and with staff to deliver the Museum’s objectives
2. Responsibility for the operational management and direction of the Museum, and all the resources – staff, finance, site and collections
3. Responsibility for the Museum’s financial success, including maximising income and controlling expenditure, and securing support from outside the Museum (fundraising) for investment in sustainable projects, and managing their successful completion
4. Maintaining current and developing new partnerships and collaborations with public authorities and other organisations, local, national and international, that connect with the Museum’s objectives

To achieve the above, the Director will:

1. Advise the Board on its strategic plans, make proposals for the future development of the Museum, oversee their implementation in the forms agreed, and provide timely reports to the Board on progress
2. Prepare an annual business plan for the Board’s approval, specifying budgets, key performance indicators and financial targets for the period, and reporting to the Board on their achievement
3. Manage the Museum’s budget, ensuring that the Museum’s financial systems and procedures are secure and effective, and that appropriate, timely financial management information is distributed internally and to external partners
4. Inspire, lead and motivate staff and volunteers at all levels, managing performance and development including setting and reviewing work priorities
5. Ensure the Museum complies with all relevant legal, safety and planning regulations and other statutory requirements
6. Ensure that the Museum’s collections assets are maintained and programmes delivered to the high standards associated with a museum of its reputation
7. Maintain close links with key Friends/Members of the Museum and other supporters, and foster and develop effective working relationships with local stakeholders including the local authorities, the South Downs National Park Authority, and the Edward James Foundation
8. Inspire confidence in funders and generate ideas and the intellectual energy necessary to attract financial support
9. Act as advocate for the Museum – locally, regionally, nationally and internationally – representing the Museum, promoting its work and raising its profile

10. Represent the Museum on relevant external bodies, as agreed by the Trustees
ANNEX B

Person Specification for Director (Competence, Knowledge, Skills required)

The successful candidate will be educated to graduate level, and preferably (though not necessarily) possess a relevant post-graduate or professional qualification. However, formal education is less important than the ability to do the job.

He or she should possess:

1. An awareness of and interest in the issues – both academic and business – faced by the Museum, and the ability to identify those that are significant, while understanding the Museum’s unique role and place in a complex market
2. The confidence and maturity to deal with people at all levels, whether colleagues or from outside the Museum
3. Excellent written and verbal communication skills, and organisational ability of a high order
4. Excellent leadership and people management skills

And be able to demonstrate:

5. Strategic vision and the ability to convey it to staff
6. The ability to reconcile business requirements with other needs (e.g. academic, environmental, ethical, community, stakeholder)
7. Sound budgetary management
8. A track record of delivering performance targets across a broad range of functions to demanding deadlines
9. Commercial acumen and a sound knowledge of business practices
10. The ability to identify the need for and implement change
11. Networking and stakeholder management skills
12. Problem solving and innovation
13. Energy and a passion for the mission, purpose and success of the Museum
14. An understanding of the issues facing a relatively small organisation heavily dependent on volunteers

The following attributes would be of interest:

- An understanding of the issues associated with any of the following: charities, heritage, museums, building history, conservation and land management/rural life
- Experience of managing multi-disciplinary teams, large groups of volunteers and external advisers/consultants

It is essential that the successful candidate holds a current driving license and is IT literate.
Key Roles and Duties of the (client side) Gateway Project Manager

Accountable to the Museum Director for the following:

1. Providing co-ordination and daily supervision of the Gateway Project, working with the Museum Director, Trustees, staff, contractors, consultants and the HLF, and other external stakeholders to deliver the project successfully

2. Responsibility for ensuring the re-erection and successful completion of the Sole Street, Pallingham Quay and May Day Farm exhibit buildings, and restoration of the millpond

3. Responsibility for the Museum’s fundraising and securing support from outside the Museum for investment in the above projects

He will:

- Advise the Museum Director and Trustees on progress with the Gateway project, associated exhibit building projects and any issues
- Work with the consultant Project Manager and Museum Accountant to ensure the proper financial management of the Gateway project
ANNEX D

Corporate Guiding Principles (Values)

The Museum is a unique and outstanding place with a special character and atmosphere that can be enjoyed by everyone. We put our visitors at the heart of everything we do and we seek to provide a quality experience that informs, excites, educates and involves, as well as meets the diverse needs and expectations of all our stakeholders. The Museum aims to be:

Open for all – we will…
- Appeal to a wide range of audiences looking for academic, cultural, professional, recreational and leisure pursuits
- Welcome diversity, be inclusive and accessible, and reach out to people and communities who may not regularly visit the Museum
- Promote a culture of dignity and respect where the contribution of each and every person involved with the Museum is valued

Forward looking – we will…
- Create an environment in which innovation and creativity can thrive, enabling the Museum to adapt, develop and change
- Ensure that the Museum succeeds as an independent, entrepreneurial and sustainable business
- Plan for the Museum’s long-term future, while retaining the characteristics that make it distinctive for our visitors

Ambitious – we will…
- Invest in the skills, knowledge and expertise needed to conserve and stimulate interest in our shared heritage for future generations
- Look outward and learn from elsewhere to enhance the Museum’s reputation and status in the sector
- Explore opportunities to collaborate with others and work in partnership to achieve things that the Museum cannot do on its own