

Head of Collections & Keeper of Social History

– Bucks County Museum Trust

Salary: £40,000 - £42,000 DOE

Reporting to: Chief Executive

**Direct Reports: Keeper of Natural History / Archaeology / Art & Ceramics, PAS Finds
Liaison Officer, Curatorial Assistant, Volunteers**

Start date: ASAP

Contract: Full-time 37.5 hours per week

Place/s of Work:

Museum Resource Centre, Rowborough Road, Halton Aylesbury HP22 5PL (primary)
Discover Bucks Museum, Church Street, Aylesbury, Bucks HP20 2QP,
Museum Store, London Road, Great Missenden, Bucks HP16 0BN

Background to the Role:

The museum's 200,000+ collections, cover the cultural and natural history of the county from 200 million years ago to today. Our Keepers (Curators) are custodians of these collections and maintain and develop these to accredited standards and we require a Collections Manager & Keeper of Social History to oversee these operations. Managing the 3 Keepers and our Social History collections, the keepers' roles are to curate and conserve their specialist areas of the collection and also to bring these unique objects and ephemera to life, using them to tell the stories of Bucks. Developing exhibitions, delivering talks & events and engaging with other experts, researchers and the general public is the public-facing aspect of the role, with collections care, documentation, security and volunteer management making up part of the hard work behind the scenes.

We have six specialist areas covered by our 4 Keeper roles: Geology & Natural History, Archaeology, Art & Ceramics and Social History & Costume, each playing their part in telling the story of Bucks over the millennia.

The Bucks County Museum Trust is an independent charity, formed in 2014 and looks after a number of collections, including those of Buckinghamshire Council and Bucks Archaeological Society, alongside others. The museum is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation which supports and works alongside other organisations in the county to better further our understanding of collections and museum operations.

Job Description

Public Engagement

- Deliver talks, tours and events across both the museum and resource centre sites and externally for groups and special events
- Answering public enquiries with specialist knowledge and being able to refer to others where required
- Dealing with public research requests- assisting where appropriate and using these projects to advance the knowledge of our collections
- Volunteer recruitment/training/management
- Adding to the museum's digital programme through developing and delivering content

Collections Care

- Actively participate in the ongoing integrated pest management programme for the collection areas
- Environmental management, monitoring & reporting
- Identify and implement programmes to improve physical storage of the collection
- Performing conservation audits
- Providing preventative & remedial conservation care or engaging specialists where required

Collections Management

- Ensuring that the documentation of the museum's collection is maintained and improved, including the use of the museum's Collection Management System (MODES)
- Ensuring that security measures are in place and adhered to with regards the security of our collections
- Management of SLAs (service level agreements) relevant to the Keeper's specialism, including: accessioning, recording and giving curatorial advice
- Actively seeking new acquisitions and processing offers to help improve our collections in line with our collections development policy.
- Writing, reviewing, developing and implementing policies and procedures relating to the collections to maintain the museum's accreditation status
- Actively researching areas of the collections and disseminating findings through a variety of mediums

Staff/Management Responsibilities

- Line management of 3 Keepers of the collections
- Overall responsibility of accreditation documents/procedures relating to collections
- Performing appraisals and promoting CPD of the collections staff
- Delivering reports to the Chief Executive to assist in reporting and grant applications.
- Being an active member of the museum's Senior Management Team

Exhibitions / Display

- Developing new and revitalising old displays at the museum and collections store
- Creating temporary and permanent exhibitions in available display spaces, with regular reinterpretation
- Writing context panels and working with the museum education team to develop resources for learning
- Managing and monitoring loans in/out processes
- Developing and displaying pop-up exhibitions at external events

Other

- Working with and supporting community groups in the development of displays and in researching their areas of interest
- Undertaking training where required and continuing professional development (CPD)
- Participating in the museum's ongoing appraisal and task management programme
- Liaising and working with museum professional specialist bodies & networks
- Working with appropriate subject relevant external groups and organisations, (eg. Commercial archaeological units, Muir Trust, and local specialist groups)
- Performing any other ad-hoc tasks appropriate to the role and as reasonably requested

Person Specification

Essential

- Educated to degree standard in a subject related to the Social History Keeper specialism within the collections
- A post-graduate museum qualification and/or Associate of the Museums Association
- Extensive experience of managing specialist staff, in a curatorial setting
- Experience of performance managing staff and dealing with appraisals / HR / disciplinary matters
- Experience of managing, maintaining and working with an accredited collection and overseeing the re/accreditation in a similarly sized organisation
- Demonstrable experience of managing a Collections Management System
- Knowledge of and experience in creating and installing displays/exhibitions and their interpretation and overseeing others in this task
- Impeccable standards of collections care and previous overall responsibility of collection security requirements
- Excellent curatorial procedural practice and the willingness to train (and train others) in areas where further skills are required
- Confident in engaging with the public, both in-person and through digital means
- Desire and enthusiasm to continually develop knowledge in area of specialism and deliver this to public audiences

- Excellent standards of written and verbal communication
- A creative flair which enables exciting, educational and thought-provoking displays to be developed and installed
- Ability to work in a flexible way and quickly to meet deadlines as needed
- Ability to work well independently and in a diverse team
- An individual who demonstrates and embraces our core organisational values:
People, by being open, inclusive and community minded.
Exploring, by being adventurous and taking pleasure in learning and sharing knowledge.
Curiosity, by being naturally inquisitive about the world around them.
- A “Can do” approach and positive attitude
- Good problem-solving skills

Desirable

- Expert knowledge in conservation/storage/management of textiles and costume
- Experience of working with Modes CMS
- Previous experience of managing SLAs
- Experience of developing and delivering events related to your area of specialism
- Volunteer and/or staff management experience
- Close proximity to the museum’s resource centre and able to respond to emergency call-outs on occasion
- Knowledge & passion for the museums and heritage sector and the specialist subject within the museum’s collections

Deadline for Applications: Monday 11th December 2023

Interviews: w/c Monday 18th December

APPLICATION PROCESS:

Please email CV and covering letter, outlining your relevant experience and how you are suitable for the role, to:

Sam Mason- Chief Executive

smason@discoverbucksmuseum.org

ALL APPLICATIONS BY EMAIL ONLY. NO POSTAL APPLICATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED.