



Garden Workshop Mentor Job Pack

Blackthorn Trust is a mental health charity in Maidstone, we are seeking a Garden Workshop Mentor with horticulture and teaching experience to support our mental health service users to develop horticulture skills in our biodynamic garden and small plant nursery.

Blackthorn Garden is located on the outskirts of Maidstone Kent. The garden is a therapeutic workshop for our beneficiaries who are living with mental health conditions. The role would comprise of working our large allotment garden, growing a variety of vegetables and plants in our greenhouses that provide food for our café and a small number of plants to sell.

We are looking for a person who is a passionate and experienced gardener and has experience working therapeutically.

Who you are:

You must have a passion for making a difference and have the skills to work in a team supported by volunteers to use gardening as a vehicle to help others feel well, gain confidence, work as a team, and gain skills that will help in life or the workplace in the future.

The role specifics:

- **Job Type:** Fixed term contract, initially for 1 year.
- **Hours:** Full Time 35 hours per week Monday to Friday, 9am – 4pm.
- **Salary:** £14.34 per hour.

How to apply:

We are very interested in hearing from anyone who feels they have the qualities to make a difference.

To apply for the role of Garden workshop Mentor, please send your completed application form to sue.shaw@blackthorn.org.uk

**The deadline for receipt of completed application forms is Friday 20th March.
Interviews will be held on Wednesday 1st April.**

We aspire to remove barriers and be open to all. We fully support access to work applications. To submit applications in an alternative format, or to request information in an alternative format please email: sue.shaw@blackthorn.org.uk

To apply for this role, you must be eligible to work in the UK – Blackthorn Trust is not a Sponsoring Organisation.

Job Description: Garden Workshop Mentor

Responsible to: Finance Officer / Horticulture Lead

Hours: 35 hours per week - Monday to Friday, 9am-4pm

Job Purpose

- To manage the biodynamic allotment garden as a workshop for Blackthorn service users (known as co-workers)
- To manage the plant nursery as a workshop for co-workers
- To manage a weekly programme of horticultural learning appropriate for level one learners

Key Responsibilities and Tasks

Working with Co-Workers

Facilitate Blackthorn Garden as a Workshop with support from volunteers, providing therapeutic learning opportunities for co-workers to:

- develop confidence and self-esteem and improve mental health and wellbeing
- develop knowledge, experience and new skills in horticulture to use at home or in a work capacity
- take appropriate levels of responsibility and initiative
- experience teamwork and interaction with the public/customers

Provide mentoring for allocated Co-Workers, offering support, arranging regular reviews, gathering evaluation data, keeping records, and giving feedback in Team meetings relating to reviews and progress.

Management of the Plant Nursery / Greenhouses

- Supervising a team of volunteers to maintain a seasonal supply of plants for sale
- Order seeds and supplies for use in the nursery and garden as required
- Coordinate the provision of seasonal planters for the site
- Identify and manage pests and diseases using organic or biodynamic methods.
- Coordinate with colleagues to arrange cover for co-workers, irrigation and maintenance of the nursery and healing garden during holidays and weekends.
- Oversee maintenance and hygiene of greenhouse, tools and equipment as part of the workshop

Maintenance & Development of Blackthorn Allotment Garden

- Oversee the development and maintenance of all growing areas within Blackthorn Garden biodynamically, in collaboration with other members of the Garden team, including:
- All vegetable and herb beds, including sowing, planting, weeding, and harvesting of vegetables and herbs for use within Blackthorn Café
- Removal and recycling of garden waste through the most environmentally friendly means including composting, bonfires and green waste collections.
- Collaborate with the other gardener to ensure that cover arrangements are in place during holidays for maintenance and to ensure support for Co-Workers
- Oversee maintenance and hygiene of all garden equipment
- Ensure health and health & safety standards are maintained at all times

Mentor Responsibilities

- Attend regular Staff meetings
- Attend regular meetings with Line Manager and attend occasional training days
- Work within Trust policies, undertake induction and ensure all Trust policies are clearly explained to all individuals (co-workers, volunteers and other visitors) working within the Garden.
- Participate, with agreement, in Trust activities including fairs, seasonal open days, festivals and workshops for the public.

General Duties

- Any other duties which may be required from time to time as agreed with the Chief Executive.

Person specification

- Level 3 Qualification in Horticulture
- Level 3 Award in Education and Training (AET)
- Experience of supporting others in a teaching or mentoring capacity
- Knowledge of Biodynamics or a willingness to learn
- Organised, reliable and motivated
- Strong communication skills
- Good team working

Studies indicate that women and people from ethnically diverse heritage are less likely to apply to jobs unless they meet every single criteria. If you're excited about this role but your past experience doesn't perfectly fit our core criteria, please do not be discouraged from applying. We are keen to recruit the right person for the role and welcome applications from those who may be open to learning new skills.

Benefits:

We offer a number of benefits including:

- **Pay:** We offer competitive salaries with annual reviews.
- **Pension:** We offer employer contributions of 3% and employee contributions of 5%.
- **Holiday:** Our staff enjoy 25 days of annual leave plus bank holidays.
- **Sick pay:** We offer a generous sick pay scheme which grows as you remain with the team. After 3 years we offer 3 months full pay + 3 months half pay in any 12-month rolling period.
- **Flexible working:** We offer flexible working hours and will discuss what works for you and the organisation.