Sharpham Retreat Venue Manager

Contract: 37.5 hours per week, permanent,
5 days out of 7, including a minimum of one weekend day per week

About the role
We are looking for a well-organised, experienced, calm and flexible person to join our team. We are a registered charity caring for the historic Grade 1 listed Sharpham House and Estate on the banks of the River Dart near to Totnes. At the heart of the Sharpham Trust ethos is our desire to build a more mindful, compassionate and environmentally sustainable world. We connect people with nature and foster mindfulness and well-being through our programme of retreats, mindfulness courses, public events, outdoor learning and the arts.

The Trust operates five retreat venues across its beautiful 550-acre Estate and is seeking an experienced and proactive Retreat Venue Manager to take responsibility for the day-to-day operation of three of our venues: Sharpham House, The Coach House and our seasonal Woodland Campsite. The role will also include managing the cleaning arrangements for our two holiday lets, The Bathing House and The Boat House. The Retreat Venue Manager will be supported by two part-time Assistant Venue Managers (3 days pw each) as various members of the Trust Staff team who are responsible for: programming, finance, marketing, bookings, health and safety, property management, gardening and catering.

You will focus on ensuring the effective and efficient running of the venues, with particular emphasis on mindful staff management, integrated operations, resource planning and financial cost control. You will lead and coordinate an established small team of contracted housekeepers and cooks, supported by casual staff as required, ensuring that staffing levels and resources are managed effectively to deliver a high-quality experience for all guests, whilst mindfully looking after the needs of your team. You will help ensure that all guests are well looked after and have a comfortable and rewarding experience during their stay at Sharpham. The role will include liaising with staff and leaders from Sharpham's own retreats, as well as those from external hire groups.

Further responsibilities will include staff rotas, record keeping, responding to enquiries, venue show rounds, overseeing catering staff, implementing Health & Safety, ordering provisions, monitoring costs and ensuring the smooth turnover of the venues on changeover days. The role will also be involved in the delivery of the limited number of weddings we host annually. The retreats and hires are planned and delivered by other members of the team and our freelance leaders.

The overall Trust is governed by a board of volunteer Trustees who set the overall direction and strategy. This is a varied role, within a small team, in an organisation that has seen significant growth in the last few years.

About you
This is a role for someone with relevant hospitality experience, strong people management skills, who is well organised, has excellent communication skills and has the ability to work on their own initiative, as part of a small team.
We are looking for someone who understands that being the Retreat Venue Manager at Sharpham is about creating a welcoming, caring and grounded environment in which people can rest, connect and participate in our programmes. You will need to demonstrate compassion and calmness along with a passion for getting things done. You will have previous experience in a management role and be able to manage multiple priorities and always achieve high standards. Alignment with the Trusts values and an interest our

charitable work and mindfulness would also be an advantage. For this role you will need to be able to travel to Sharpham House which is not served by public transport.

Apply

To apply, please complete our application form attached and return to admin@sharphamtrust.org
CVs or incomplete application forms will not be accepted.

Closing Date: 9am, Monday 4th January 2027

Interviews will be held at Sharpham on: Monday 11th January 2027

Further Information

Please see our website for further information.

Sharpham House

The Main House is a Georgian mansion dating from 1765 which now operates as a mindfulness retreat centre. There are 24 bedrooms of various sizes and 10 bathrooms. A team of housekeepers look after the cleaning, support at mealtimes and clean during changeover days between groups. Our own retreats or external hire groups run every week of the year with varying lengths between 3 and 6 nights. The 2 part time cooks produce vegetarian food, which is served buffet style and guests help with veg prep and washing up. The Retreat Venue Manager and Assistant Managers help welcome guests and groups at the beginning of their stay and deal with any issues day to day. There is a Caretaker who deals with simple maintenance.

The Coach House

The listed stable yard behind Sharpham House was converted five years ago and has 18 bedrooms, 12 of which are en-suite. It operates both as a separate centre and sometimes in tandem with Sharpham House. It has its own kitchen to provide meals staffed by two part-time cooks. The Housekeeping team support at mealtimes and carry out cleaning and changeovers.

Woodland Campsite

The Woodland Campsite operates seasonally from June to September with guests staying in individual bell tents. There is a seasonal campsite manager whom the Retreat Venue Manager line manages and housekeeping team support. Catering is done by the Sharpham House kitchen with food transported up to the campsite. There are plans to replace the tents with timber pods in the future.

Holiday Lets

Currently the Trust operates two popular holiday lets: The Bathing House and the Boathouse which are adjacent to each other on the riverbank below Sharpham House. The housekeeping team clean the properties on changeover days. Bookings are handled by an external website provider.

Weddings

Up to half a dozen weddings can take place at weekends in Sharpham House annually although this has recently reduced as external hire groups have increased. The Retreat Venue Manager will liaise with the wedding couple and oversee the wedding but the Trust does not provide the catering.

SHARPHAM RETREAT VENUE MANAGER - JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title	**Retreat Venue Manager**
Salary	**£35,000 plus employers' pension + holidays**
Working Hours	**37.5 hours per week**
Working Pattern	**5 days out of 7, including a minimum of one weekend day per week**
Report to	**Director**
Supervision of	**Assistant Managers, House Assistants, Cooks**

Main Purpose of the Role

To lead the effective and smooth running of Sharpham's residential venues, ensuring excellent guest experiences, well-supported teams and safe, efficient delivery across retreats, external hires and other events.

Key Objectives and Responsibilities

1. Manage the visitor experience across venues ensuring that users have a positive and safe experience

- Coordinate the arrival of groups including the giving of orientation and H&S talk by staff
- Respond to any practical issues or complaints in a timely manner
- Liaise with Trust staff and partners to ensure smooth running of retreats and events
- Liaise with the Caretaker on the preparation of the venues before a retreat and report required repairs and maintenance in the relevant way.
- Maintain Security & Fire alarm of the venues with the caretaker.
- Keep a check of repairs and renewals with a maintenance programme.
- Coordinate with contract companies for repairs and arrange visits
- To create a good rapport with retreat leaders and external suppliers/caterers

2. Manage staff of Assistant Managers, house assistants and cooks

- Creating a positive team culture, including effective delegation, regular 1:1s, supporting staff wellbeing and building flexibility and resilience across the team
- Manage Assistant Managers, delegating tasks to them and integrating the management of the venues in terms of staffing and costs
- Ensure staff rota and staff holidays are planned well in advance
- Make sure all venue staff training is up to date
- Line management, recruitment and employment of house assistants and cooks
- Supervise and help with room changeovers, cleaning and mealtimes
- Cover for staff sickness or absence
- Manage the kitchens to ensure food hygiene and safety procedures are followed at all times and help out in the kitchen when necessary
- Organise catering and staffing for our Woodland Campsite during the summer season
- Liaise with cooks about food ordering and supplies
- Liaise with Gardener on produce for the kitchen and ensure cooks are utilising this produce
- Prepare house staff monthly wage tracker and timesheets for accounts

3. Help oversee weddings in the main house

- Meet prospective wedding couples and liaise with them, show rounds and more finite details

- Liaise with Programme Manager over dates for weddings
- Liaise with the Caretaker on the preparation of the House before a wedding
- Manage house assistants preparing house before a wedding
- Oversee facilities aspect of weddings on the day
- Arrange security cover for overnights
- Hold a personal license
- Checking Sharpham House following weddings

4. Manage Bathing House and Boat House holiday lets

- Ensure properties are cleaned and prepped to Trust standards by house assistants and caretaker
- Make sure garden and outside is maintained by Caretaker/Garden staff
- Replace any worn or broken equipment
- Respond to any issues raised by guests
- Contact guests before arrival with necessary information

5. Supervise Health and Safety procedures across venues

- Work with HR and Admin Manager to update risk assessments and ensure staff follow agreed procedures at all times
- Full knowledge of the fire alarm systems and the procedures to follow in an emergency
- Ensure all venue staff and teaching staff are trained and knowledgeable about the fire alarm
- Make sure food hygiene standards and safety procedures are always followed and recorded
- Control of recycling and food waste removal

6. Other

- Follow relevant Trust Health and Safety procedures at work
- Be one of the trained staff first aiders
- Work flexibly and support other areas within the Trust as required
- Attend bi-weekly management team meetings & booking meetings

Person Specification		
	Essential	Desirable
QUALIFICATIONS	• Food Hygiene • First Aid • Full driving Licence • Personal Licence (training can be provided)	• Health & Safety • Hospitality Management • Manual Handling
EXPERIENCE	• Managing in a residential or hospitality setting • Operating a catering provision • General administration • Operating to a budget	• Event organisation • Mindfulness • Mindful team management
SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE	• Customer Service skills • Staff line management • IT skills	• Catering skills

OTHER	• Ability to use own initiative • understanding the need for clear verbal and written communication and co-ordination between departments • maintaining confidentiality where appropriate • Must be willing to be hands on.	

Hours/Shift Pattern:

This is a fulltime role, working 37.5 hours a week, 5 days out of 7. A minimum of one weekend day will be worked weekly. Weekend cover will be shared with the two Assistant Managers according to the business schedule.

The normal hours are 9am-5pm with half hour unpaid lunchbreak. However, there will be occasional need to work flexibly.

33 days holiday per annum

AGREEMENT:

Job Holder's signature: _____

Date: _____

Director's signature: _____

Date: _____

OBLIGATIONS:

This job description is subject to the Policies and Procedures of the Sharpham Trust and all staff are required to acquaint themselves with those applicable to this post. This job description will be subject to review and amended to meet the changing needs of the Charitable Trust.

Under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974, the Company has a duty to ensure as far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all its employees. There is also a duty of care on all employees under the same legislation. There is a written statement on general policy regarding Health & Safety at work. Your attention is particularly drawn to this policy and you must make yourself aware of its contents.

This job description is subject to the Terms and Conditions of service of the Charitable Trust.

Equal Opportunities
The Sharpham Trust is an equal opportunities employer. We recognise that celebrating diversity and difference is at the core of creating healthy workplaces and we are committed to building a team that represents a variety of backgrounds and perspectives.