



Role Description – Castle Room Steward

Overview

Grimsthorpe Castle is a Grade I-listed historic house, home to the Willoughby de Eresby family since 1516. Its collection, which includes paintings, furniture, sculptures, tapestries and ceramics, is housed in the beautifully conserved rooms, many of which are open to the public each year. The role of the Castle Room Steward is an essential one, bringing the Castle to life and ensuring that we can open the Castle to visitors safely and securely.

What will I be doing?

As a Castle Room Steward, you will be expected to:

- Learn about the history of the Castle, estate and country houses in general
- Provide a warm and friendly welcome to all visitors to the Castle
- Tell visitors about the history of the Castle, and particularly about the room you are on duty in that day
- Answer any questions visitors may have
- Use radios to communicate with other staff and volunteers
- Maintain a level of visitor supervision whilst assisting with the security and safety of the Castle and visitors, including evacuation

Covid-19 considerations

- You will ensure that visitors stick to our one-way system around the house and keep to the social distancing guidelines
- Keep visitors moving to keep them safe on the route and manage overall visitor flow
- Remind visitors to keep to the current government guidelines in controlling Covid-19, e.g. wearing masks

How much time will I be expected to give to this role?

We need Castle Room Stewards between 11.45am and 4pm on Sundays in April and September, and on Sundays – Thursdays between May and August inclusive.

We would hope that volunteers could work at least one day per month in April and September, and two or three days per month between May and August. Ultimately, the more time you can offer the better! However we are very flexible, so please do get in touch no matter what time you could give.

What skills, qualities and training do I need?

We are looking for people who have an interest in history, country houses, and/or art who are friendly, approachable and communicative to share the history of Grimsthorpe to our visitors. You will learn new skills throughout your time volunteering with us. Any formal training that might be needed for this role will be offered and delivered by Grimsthorpe.

What support and training is offered for this role?

You will have a designated supervisor for your role who will support you during your training and learning of the Castle's history, and will have regular but informal progress check-ins with them. You will have a progress sheet to help you and your supervisor track your volunteering journey. You will also have informal one-to-one meetings with the Visitor Experience Lead to see how you are getting on, and a chance to provide feedback and make suggestions.

We will ask you on application if you have any support needs, and will discuss this with you before you start so that we can make sure your volunteering experience with us is a positive and rewarding one. Please see our FAQs for more information on support.

You will be required to learn the history of Grimsthorpe and will be given all materials and training to help you with this. We will never ask you to do anything that you feel you are not ready to take on, and you will not be left alone in a room until you are ready.

You will receive training in:

- Health and safety
- Fire evacuation procedure
- Using the radios
- Covid-19 procedure
- Role-specific training with relevant staff

What are the benefits of volunteering for this particular role?

Being a Castle Room Steward can help you gain skills such as public speaking, team working, customer service and interpersonal skills as you connect with visitors and fellow volunteers. You will be able to learn some fascinating local history, as well as how country estates connected with the rest of Britain as well as the wider world. Additionally, you will learn more about the collection and the intricacies of historical furniture, ceramics, paintings and sculpture work.

You will soon make friends with other staff members and volunteers, and connect with the local community by talking to visitors both regular and from further afield. Ultimately, the heritage world relies on the passion and dedication of special people who understand its importance in order to ensure its longevity for future generations – giving something back will hopefully cultivate a sense of belonging, personal achievement and satisfaction.

For more information about how volunteering can benefit you, please see our FAQs.

Grimsthorpe & Drummond Castle Trust Ltd.
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