



SAFFRON WALDEN TOWN COUNCIL

Application Pack

Gardening Operative at Bridge End Garden

October 2024



Saffron Walden Town Hall



Turf Maze at The Common



Bridge End Garden

Images: Saffron Walden Tourist Information Centre (2018)

Appointment of Gardening Operative at Bridge End Garden

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The Town Hall
Market Street
Saffron Walden
CB10 1HR
T: (01799) 516501

SECTION 1 – Letter to applicants

Dear Sir/Madam

Gardening Operative at Bridge End Garden

Thank you for your interest in the above vacancy, SWTC is looking to appoint a Gardening Operative to support the role of the Town Council.

I am pleased to enclose the following documents for your information:

- Job Description
- Person Specification
- Broad Outline of Conditions of Service
- Overview of Saffron Walden and the Town Council
- Application form

Further information about Saffron Walden and the Town Council is available on our websites – www.saffronwalden.gov.uk or www.visitsaffronwalden.gov.uk

If you wish to apply for this position, please complete an application form and return by 09:00 hours on Monday 4th November 2024 with interviews anticipated shortly afterwards. If you are unavailable in November for an interview, please include details of this in your application form.

If you have any queries or require assistance with completion of the application form please contact the Deputy Town Clerk, Georgia Arnold on 01799 516501 or email georgia@saffronwalden.gov.uk. Please note that CVs will not be accepted.

Once again thank you for the interest you have shown in working for Saffron Walden Town Council and we look forward to receiving your completed application.

Yours faithfully

Lisa Courtney
Town Clerk

SECTION 2: Job Description



Saffron Walden Town Council

Job Description

Job Title: Gardening Operative

Reporting to: Senior Gardener at Bridge End Garden

Salary: £24,658 to £26,817 being SCP 7-12 dependent on experience

Salary review for 2024/25 pending

The working week is 37 hours per week over Mon- Friday between 8am and 4.30pm.

Job Purpose:

Working primarily at Bridge End Garden, the successful applicant will provide gardening, plant husbandry and horticultural services in this prestigious Victorian garden.

To be proactive in learning and owning the role of gardening operative and to work with others or independently, applying lone working principles when appropriate.

To work as part of a wider team of Operatives, working flexibly across the Town Council's service areas. Whilst this post will be primarily based at Bridge End Garden, you will be expected to provide an efficient hands-on gardening and grounds maintenance service at all the Town Council's Open Spaces.

The work requires individuals to work in all weathers as directed and at other locations within Saffron Walden to the required standards by carrying out a range of gardening and grounds maintenance tasks.

Specific responsibilities – Gardening and Grounds Maintenance

- weeding and pruning
- grass cutting and lawn maintenance, strimming, hedge cutting and leaf blowing
- Specialist chemical application of pesticides (minimal)
- be confident in dealing with members of the public, volunteers and Councillors
- to cover the duties of other staff as directed
- planting and maintaining floral displays including the identification of plants with the ability to work from detailed drawings.
- planting and maintaining shrubbery, rose and herbaceous borders including the identification of plants with the ability to work from detailed drawings and specifications
- Care and maintenance of a Victorian style garden

- A current clean manual driving licence is required as you will be required to operate and use various items of horticultural equipment as well as driving of ride on mowers and vehicles up to 3.5 tonne (transit tipper) (essential, preferably with experience driving in these type of vehicles).
- To undertake daily routine safety and maintenance checks and routine maintenance on equipment and vehicles such as oil change, spark plugs changes, blade sharpening etc ensuring that vehicles, machinery and equipment used is well maintained, kept clean and not exposed to the risk of damage or loss/theft.
- The successful applicant should be conscientious, flexible, trustworthy, and have eloquent communication skills. The post will involve communicating with visitors to the garden and applicants are therefore required to have a sound knowledge of plant husbandry and the ability to share this information with visitors as required.
- Be physically fit and enjoy working outdoors and must be able to undertake a significant amount of walking and physical work during the day in all weathers
- To always work safely, adhering to the SWTC Health and Safety policy, following equipment operating procedures and manufacturers recommended guidelines and application rates for pesticides
- To comply with Health & Safety practices in accordance with HSE guidance and legislation and to take reasonable care for own Health and Safety and for those of colleagues and members of the public
- To ensure all equipment, machinery and buildings are secure including setting building alarms and lock up duties
- To keep the tool shed/mess room clean and tidy
- To attain a First Aid at Work Certificate

Generic Responsibilities of the Operative Role

To work flexibly across the Town Council's service areas as and when required such as:

- Basic general maintenance of buildings – painting and decorating
- Snow clearance, gritting paths and car parks etc
- Cleaning duties
- Litter picking and bin emptying
- Any other duties which are appropriate within the generic Operative post responsibilities and duties

Whilst every effort has been made to explain the main duties and responsibilities of the post, each individual task undertaken may not be identified. Therefore, there is the expectation that you will carry out any other reasonable duties or requests from your line manager, that are in keeping with this post or as may be determined from time to time by the Town Council.

Section 3: Person Specification - Knowledge, Skills and Experience

	Essential	Desirable	Method of Assessment
Education and Qualifications	<p>Good standard of general education</p> <p>Good knowledge of and an understanding of seasonal plants and flowers</p> <p>Good level of interpersonal and communication skills</p> <p>Health and Safety knowledge</p> <p>First Aid Certificate or willingness to obtain.</p>	<p>Horticultural qualification NVQ 3 or similar or be willing to undertake any training offered.</p> <p>Pesticide application Licence (PA1 and PA6a) or willingness to learn and obtain certificate.</p>	Application and interview
Work Experience	<p>Demonstrable experience of undertaking gardening and grounds maintenance duties including grass cutting within a professional environment</p> <p>Demonstrable experience of grass cutting using a ride on mower within a professional environment</p>	<p>Certificate of competence in driving, ride on mowers, pedestrian mowers, using brush cutters and hedge cutters</p>	Application form, interview references
Skills and aptitude	<p>Able to participate in grass cutting, hedge trimming, maintaining grounds, cemeteries, pitches and gardens to the highest standards</p> <p>Basic working knowledge of plant diseases and pests and how to treat them</p> <p>Able to work well as a member of a team</p>		

	Essential	Desirable	Method of Assessment
	<p>Able to use own initiative in organising and undertaking tasks</p> <p>An understanding of mowing equipment and associated plant and their maintenance requirements</p> <p>Able to use grounds management equipment safely according to the Operating Procedures and guidelines</p>	<p>Good understanding of plant and pest disease and how to treat them</p>	
Motivation	<p>Flexible attitude to working and willingness to support the wider Town Council services</p> <p>Ability to manage seasonal pressures</p> <p>Keen to deliver services to the required high standards</p> <p>Current clean driving licence</p> <p>To take part in any training courses as prescribed by the Council</p>		

SECTION 4 - Outline Conditions of Service

The following is an outline of the main terms and conditions of service attached to the post and simply seeks to provide an overview of terms and conditions for Council employees. The terms and conditions of service are those determined by the NJC for Local Government Services with some local variations.

PLACE OF WORK: The normal place of work shall be in Saffron Walden, Essex. Attendance at other locations both within and outside the town will be expected to complete the required role.

HEALTH: The successful applicant will be asked to complete a Medical Questionnaire, upon receipt of which the Council may refer matters to an Occupational Health Provider. The candidate may be required to undergo a medical examination if the Town Council considers this necessary. Any offer of employment may be conditional to a Medical Assessment.

HOURS: This is a full time annualised hours post as directed by the Operations Manager. You will be required to work some evenings and weekends to support the work of the Town Council and specifically, to help with market and event duties. Hours will average 37 hours per week.

SICKNESS: If you are absent from work we shall pay you:

- (a) Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) provided that you satisfy the relevant requirements; and
- (b) Council sick pay in accordance with the provisions of your employment contract provided that you comply with our procedures regarding sick leave and the Council's sick pay policy.

PENSION: You will be auto-enrolled into the Local Government Pension Scheme with the opportunity to "opt-out" should you wish to do so.

NOTICE: You will be required to give one month's written notice should you wish to terminate your employment. You will be entitled to receive one month's notice of termination of employment or your statutory entitlement, whichever is the greater.

PROBATIONARY PERIOD: The appointment is subject to a three months probationary period, during which will be expected to establish your suitability for the post. Your employment is subject to termination at any stage during the probationary period on you giving or receiving the appropriate notice under your terms of employment.

SECTION 5: Overview of Saffron Walden and the Town Council

Saffron Walden:

Saffron Walden is a beautiful, quintessentially English Market Town in a large, rural part of Essex. It is just 15 miles from Cambridge and has excellent road links to the M11, rail links to the London-Cambridge line and is just 30 minutes' drive from Stansted airport.

The town has held a Market Charter granted in 1141; markets are held every Tuesday and Saturday with a fine range and examples of local produce and gifts. The market boasts a wide variety of stalls selling goods ranging from fruit and veg, to clothing, to antiques and a very famous and popular fish bar (frequented by Jamie Oliver)! Saffron Walden Market was awarded the very prestigious "Best Small Outdoor Market" award in 2018 by the National Association of British Market Authorities.

Saffron Walden is a very attractive town with the centre being within a Conservation area. It boasts one of the largest and most beautiful churches in England, St Mary's being a fine example of medieval architect and splendour. There are many examples of Medieval and Jacobean buildings with architecture ranging from the 12th to the 21st Century.

The Town Council:

Saffron Walden Town Council was formed in 1974 following a national reform of local government systems and councils. The Municipal Borough of Saffron Walden was dissolved in 1974 and many assets and services previously delivered by them came into the ownership and responsibility of the Town Council.

Saffron Walden Town Council is the tier of local government closest to the community and people of Saffron Walden. It has offices in the heart of the Town Centre and delivers a wide range of services and facilities to the local people. The second tier of local government is Uttlesford District Council (<https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/home>) and the third tier is Essex County Council, Chelmsford (<https://www.essex.gov.uk/Pages/Default.aspx>)

Services offered and delivered by the Town Council include:

- The twice weekly, award winning market
- Victorian, award winning gardens – Bridge End Garden
- Award winning Tourist Information centre in the heart of the town providing information and support to tourists and local residents alike
- Public open spaces and parks
- The Common public open space
- Play areas and provision
- Youth clubs delivered in partnership with local youth organisations
- Cemetery

- Allotments
- Community centres
- Town Hall which hosts regular comedy nights and entertainment
- Wedding venues and opportunities at both Bridge End Garden and the Town Hall
- Public conveniences
- Being the lead body on delivery of the Neighbourhood Plan

The stunning Bridge End Garden is located to the north of the town, just a short stroll from the main hub of market life. Bridge End Garden is an excellent example of a Victorian Garden, providing a tranquil and pleasant walk through the Kitchen Garden, Dutch Garden, the Maze and Poet's Corner.

For more information on Bridge End Garden go to www.bridgeendgarden.org

In 2016 the Town Council undertook a major refurbishment programme of the Town Hall, repairing and refurbishing struts, roofs and walls. This refurbishment programme was the catalyst of several other repair and refurbishment programmes in the town with the Town Council leading the way in protecting and enriching this stunning heritage.

The Town Council's priorities are: (<http://saffronwalden.gov.uk/mission-statement/>, 2018)

“• To be an efficient and effective Council;

- *To improve the physical environment;*
- *To raise the standards of recreational facilities;*
- *To help represent the needs of the community;*
- *To encourage good governance;*
- *To promote the cultural and economic well-being of Saffron Walden”*

The Town Council currently has 18 elected members with the next election due in May 2027. Council meets monthly (excluding August) and delegates considerable business to its committees which also meet on a monthly basis.

SECTION 6 – Application Form

SAFFRON WALDEN TOWN COUNCIL APPLICATION FORM



STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

This application form is an integral part of our selection procedure. It has been designed to enable you to give us a meaningful written representation of yourself and your career interests. Please complete the form accurately in black type, but if sections do not apply, leave them blank. If you have insufficient room to provide the relevant information in any section, please continue on a separate sheet.

PART A: JOB DETAILS

Post applied for

PART B: PERSONAL DETAILS

Preferred title (Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss/Dr etc)

Surname

Forenames

Address

 Work

 Home

 Mobile

 Email

Car Owner YES/NO

Current driving licence YES/NO

Detail of endorsements

The Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 makes it a criminal offence for us to employ those who do not live or work in the United Kingdom, therefore we will require evidence of legality prior to appointment. Documents which can support this include your passport or national identity card.

Do you require a work permit to work in this country YES/NO

National Insurance Number

Detail anything in your medical history or state of health relevant to this application

No. of days sick in the last 2 yrs

No. of spells of sickness in the last 2 yrs

Types of sickness in each spell in the last 2 yrs

PART D: PRESENT OR MOST RECENT EMPLOYMENT

Name and address of employer

Position held

Dates employed

Salary

£.....per annum

Key roles/achievements

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Reason for leaving

Date that you could take up new appointment

PART E: EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Name and address of employer

Position held

Dates employed

Salary

£.....per annum

Key roles/achievements

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Reason for leaving



Name and address of employer

Position held

Dates employed

Salary
£.....per annum

Key roles/achievements

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Reason for leaving



Name and address of employer

Position held

Dates employed

Salary
£.....per annum

Key roles/achievements

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Reason for leaving

PROVIDE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON A SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

PART F: MEMBERSHIP OF PROFESSIONAL INSTITUTES

Give details of the membership body, type of membership and dates during which membership applied

PART G: PRESENT/MOST RECENT UNPAID ACTIVITY

Name and address of organisation

Position held

Dates involved

Key roles/achievements

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Reason for leaving (if relevant)

PART H: REFEREES

Do you wish to be approached before referees are contacted **YES/NO**

Please give details of **two** referees (one of which must be your present or last employer)

Name

Name

Address

Address



Position

Position

PART I: SUPPORTING STATEMENT

PART J: DECLARATIONS

To the best of my knowledge the information I have given is correct. I understand that giving false information or omitting to give relevant information could disqualify my application and, if I am appointed, could lead to my instant dismissal

.....
(Signature) (Date)

I understand that direct or indirect canvassing of councillors for any appointment shall disqualify me from appointment. I have not canvassed in connection with this application

.....
(Signature) (Date)

I have the following relationships and financial interests which are relevant to/conflict with this post

.....
(Signature) (Date)

If appointed, I consent to my personal information being held for the purpose of administration of my employment

.....
(Signature) (Date)

PART K: GUIDANCE NOTES FOR JOB APPLICATION

Please make sure your application is received by 12.00 Noon on the closing date.

PART J: Declaration of business or other interests will not necessarily disqualify you from consideration but potential conflict interests must be declared. To avoid allegations of bias any relevant relationships must be disclosed. If undisclosed then the candidate will be liable to disqualification from further consideration or to being summarily dismissed from their appointment.