

Volunteer Curatorial Assistant



harewood.org



ABOUT HAREWOOD

Harewood House Trust is an educational charity which attracts around 250,000 visitors every year. It is one of England's finest 18th century country houses, set in over 100 acres of beautiful grounds and gardens. An accredited museum it is also the family seat of the Earl and Countess of Harewood.

Harewood House was built using profits made from the Transatlantic trade in enslaved people and its associated industries. Today, Harewood is a safe place in which we can have open conversations about our past and bring communities together, using our history as a means of working together for a better society.

Alongside the care, conservation and interpretation of its core collections, Harewood curates innovative and everchanging exhibitions, celebrating and collaborating with a diverse range of individuals and groups.

Through its trading operation the Trust manages and delivers major outdoor events, conferences, corporate functions, fine dining, cafés and other retail and food outlets throughout the site.

The Trust has great ambitions for Harewood's future, as well as celebrating its fascinating past. It has recently embarked on an exciting major project to reimagine its key historic landscape and gardens, build a new playground and create a new visitor welcome centre. All designed to grow our audiences, generate new income and provide an excellent visitor experience.

OUR VOLUNTEER PROGRAMME

At Harewood, our volunteering programme has been running for over twenty five years and we currently have around 200 volunteers. Our vision is to create a sector-leading, inclusive, and sustainable volunteering programme that meets the needs of the Trust and provides a positive volunteer experience for people of all ages, ethnicities, and abilities. Volunteers are pivotal to our aims and aspirations. We love involving volunteers in the work we do be that engaging with visitors, caring for our gardens and collections, running our Secondhand Bookshop, driving our electric shuttles, helping operate our ferry and assisting with delivering our learning programme.

Volunteers bring a wealth of experience and get involved for many varied reasons; including a love of heritage and gardens, to gain employability skills, and for social contact. At Harewood, we feel that we have created a safe welcoming space, where volunteers can flourish, contribute meaningfully and feel a sense of belonging. We want to give opportunities to as wide a range of people as possible and help volunteers in their aims as much as they support us in ours.



VOLUNTEER CURATORIAL ASSISTANT

WHAT DOES THE ROLE INVOLVE

This role will involve volunteering closely with our Curator & Archivist to help manage the Collections Team enquiries and research inbox.

It will include answering questions about the collection (this will involve using the Collections Management System and undertaking basic retrieval and research tasks), processing image license requests and helping to supervise researchers accessing the collection in person.

There is also the scope for helping with other curatorial activities as and when tasks arise.

WHO WILL THIS ROLE APPEAL TO?

Someone who has :-

- Or is wanting to acquire experience in the museum and heritage sector
- an interest in country house history and their collections
- experience of undertaking primary historical research and working with archival material
- excellent IT skills - ability to use Microsoft Office/Outlook efficiently and ability to learn to use a Collections database
- a friendly & polite manner and excellent written English
- an attention to detail
- the ability to use their initiative and learns quickly
- a flexible approach and is willing to adapt to a range of tasks
- is trustworthy and reliable.

WHAT WILL HAREWOOD EXPECT FROM ME?

To:-

- commit to the role, volunteering on the dates and times that have been mutually agreed
- treat staff, fellow volunteers and visitors with respect and understanding at all times
- observe Harewood's organisational policies and procedures and uphold Harewood's values
- safeguard confidential information about Harewood House Trust and its collection.

HOW WILL I BENEFIT?

- Gain a practical insight into the varied activities of a country house Collections Team, becoming part of a small, busy team
- Gain experience working in an Accredited Museum in a curatorial capacity, working closely with the Trust's Curator & Archivist
- Develop your knowledge of Harewood House Trust's nationally recognised collection
- Gain confidence in dealing with collection enquiries and accessing and maintaining Harewood House Trust's Collection database.

AS A VOLUNTEER WHAT CAN I EXPECT FROM HAREWOOD?

- A welcoming and inclusive volunteering environment
- To be treated fairly and with respect
- Recognition and appreciation for your contribution
- General induction, role specific training with on-going support
- Reimbursement of travel costs between home and Harewood House up to a maximum of £10 per day.
- Regular newsletters and volunteer meetings to provide an insight into all that is happening at Harewood
- Access to a web based volunteer system to manage your volunteering shifts and receive updates.

OUR VALUES

Caring – demonstrate quality in your own work, showing support for those around you, respecting audiences and colleagues, showing empathy

Together – showing a commitment to team work, collaboration, belief in an organisation's mission and vision, living brand values

Adventurous – demonstrate energy and zeal in your attitude to work, being proactive, having a curious mind, being confident in your decisions, embracing innovation

Challenging – showing a commitment to high standards with rigour in your own work, learning from every opportunity, proactively questioning to ensure best results



BENEFITS & DETAILS

Benefits

Discount in onsite cafés + retail outlets;
Unlimited free access to the site with up to three guests throughout the year (with the exception of Christmas and certain events);
Access to Northern Museum Volunteer pass;
Free parking.

Travel expenses

Travel expenses are reimbursed up to £ 10 per day.
Harewood is well served by the 36 Bus running from Leeds to Harrogate.

Training

General induction training including site orientation.
Role specific training will involve learning how to use the CMS (Collections Management System) and - over time - familiarisation with relevant curatorial files, archives and resources at their disposal. Object handling training will be given where relevant.
There will also be some basic training in the history of the House and collection, though self-guided reading is also recommended.

Support available

We believe Harewood is a welcoming and inclusive place to volunteer. You will be based in the Collections Team offices in Harewood House, volunteering semi-independently but under the supervision/guidance of the Curator & Archivist. All training will be given, with regular catch ups with the Curator & Archivist about inbox activity and current tasks.

Time commitment

We are looking for a minimum of 1 day a week (weekday) from 9:30 - 4:30, with breaks for morning coffee and lunch, ideally for a period of 6 months or more. The length of this commitment is requested in order to build knowledge and confidence in the collection/role and to facilitate semi-independent working over time. This longer period will also allow you to become fully embedded within the team and better understand the department's activities.

LOCATION

Harewood House Trust, Harewood, Leeds, LS17 9LG. Harewood is 7 miles outside of Leeds and is well served by public transport: goodjourney.org.uk/attraction/harewoodhouse

MORE INFORMATION

If you have any further questions about the role, please contact our Curator and Archivist Rebecca Burton rebecca.b@harewood.org

NEXT STEPS & HOW TO APPLY

Please submit an expression of interest and CV to rebecca.b@harewood.org by 16 January 2026.

The role will commence at the beginning of February 2026

Thank you for reading this pack. We look forward to hearing from you!

For more information please get in
touch with our Curator & Archivist
Rebecca Burton
rebecca.b@harewood.org

