



Director of Policy and Public Affairs (maternity cover)

Role profile and job description

Directly employed: Full time, 12-month fixed-term contract (maternity cover).

Location: London, SW1W.

Reports to: The Director General.

Line management responsibilities: The Policy Officer and the Wales Policy Adviser.

Role profile

Historic Houses represents around 1,500 historic houses, castles and gardens in independent ownership across the UK. Our member places encompass the world-famous – such as Blenheim Palace, Chatsworth and Highclere Castle – alongside local landmarks such as Powderham Castle in Devon, Blair Castle in the Highlands and Picton Castle in Pembrokeshire.

In pre-pandemic times, our member houses and gardens welcomed nearly 27 million visits each year – generating £1 billion in visitor spend and supporting over 34,000 FTE jobs across the country. These historic places are often cultural lynchpins for their local communities, bringing together opportunities for access to great art, architecture and craft skills with the creative industries, health and wellbeing activities, community engagement and access to nature and open space.

Historic Houses was established as a membership association in 1973, with the aim of enabling independently owned historic houses and gardens to speak with one powerful voice through its policy and public affairs, advisory, marketing and technical work.

The Director of Policy & Public Affairs is a key member of our small London-based office team, and part of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). The postholder is responsible for: developing and implementing Historic Houses' public affairs strategy; representing the organisation at government level (in Westminster and Whitehall, and in the devolved administrations); influencing policymaking across key policy areas; developing and implementing Historic Houses' public affairs campaigns; managing relationships with stakeholder organisations; commissioning research to develop the organisation's evidence base; briefing the President, DG and Board and advising member houses on policy, public affairs and education-related matters; contributing to *Historic House* magazine and other communications channels; and overseeing the work of the Historic Houses Learning Advisory Service. The postholder works particularly closely and collaboratively with the Director General and the Policy Officer in delivering Historic Houses' policy and public affairs function.

The postholder is responsible for line managing a full-time Policy Officer and a part-time Policy Adviser for Wales (home-based). The postholder also manages the contractual and day-to-day relationship with the organisation's consultant public affairs advisers, and oversees the work of five voluntary Learning Advisers.

Job description

Policy and public affairs

1. Developing and leading the implementation of Historic Houses' strategy for influencing the public policy landscape in which our member properties operate.
2. Briefing and working with Ministers, civil servants, politicians and stakeholders, in Westminster and Whitehall as well as the devolved administrations.
3. Developing and implementing Historic Houses' public affairs campaigns.
4. Managing Historic Houses' consultation processes and drafting and editing policy submissions on a wide range of issues.
5. Managing the contractual and day-to-day relationship with the organisation's public affairs advisers.
6. Commissioning or undertaking research projects to develop Historic Houses' policy evidence base, including internal member surveys and external commissions.
7. Representing Historic Houses on external fora and maintaining strong links with partner organisations such as Historic England, the CLA, The Heritage Alliance, The Tourism Alliance and the National Lottery Heritage Fund.
8. Line Management of the Policy Officer and the Wales Policy Adviser.
9. Managing the policy and education budget lines.

Internal counsel and communications

10. Advising member houses on policy, public affairs or education enquiries, including through the Historic Houses website, magazine and digital communications.
11. Briefing the President, DG, Board, Committees and Regional Chairs on policy, public affairs or education matters.
12. Attending and contributing to Board meetings, Tax & Political Committee meetings and other internal committee meetings as required.
13. Attending and contributing to regular meetings of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and all-staff meetings.
14. Providing a monthly policy round-up for the Historic Houses website, and contributing engaging policy content to *Historic House* magazine, the Historic Houses blog and social media.
15. With the Director of Finance and Operations, the Policy Officer and the Finance Officer, managing the development of the annual member survey.
16. Contributing to the content and development of Historic Houses' events, such as member webinars, the Sustainability Conference 2021, the Annual General Meeting and the Annual Business Conference.

Education and engagement

17. Overseeing the work of the Historic Houses Learning Advisory Service to ensure that the service continues to provide the help and support member houses need. This includes overseeing the work of five voluntary Learning Advisers.
18. Organising and developing the annual Historic Houses Frances Garnham Award for Innovation in Heritage Education, and the annual Historic Houses Attingham Scholarship.
19. Representing Historic Houses on sector working groups centred on broadening opportunities for access and learning within the historic environment, and contributing to sector-wide projects, reports and events.
20. Developing and managing specific programmes or projects and advising on Historic Houses' approach, including academic partnership collaborations and projects with partners such as The Gardens Trust and Heritage Open Days.

Any other reasonable duty as required by the line manager commensurate with the post.

Responsible to: Director General

Location: Based at Warwick House, 25-27 Buckingham Palace Road, London, SW1W 0PP. The role also requires occasional travel to Historic Houses events outside London.

Hours: Full time (37.5 hours per week, Monday to Friday). Occasionally hours outside of these times may be necessary from time to time.

Salary: £52,000 per annum.

Person specification

Essential

- Educated to a degree standard, or able to demonstrate equivalent professional expertise or equivalent professional qualification.
- Substantial experience at a management/leadership level in a policy, public affairs, communications or similar role.
- A track record of sound political instincts, with the ability to provide insightful and impartial strategic counsel at Board level.
- Demonstrable success in influencing the policymaking process, and a good working knowledge of the political infrastructure in Westminster and the devolved administrations.
- Experience of developing and maintaining effective working relationships with politicians, senior officials and a wide range of stakeholders.
- Strong influencing, leadership and interpersonal skills, with an ability to remain calm under pressure.
- Intellectual rigour and attention to detail in dealing with complex issues across a wide range of policy areas.
- Ability to synthesise and communicate complex information to a variety of audiences across an array of media, including digital and editorial.
- Ability to devise implementation plans with key milestones and deliver projects effectively.
- Line management experience, or experience of motivating a small team.

- A team player, able to work as an integral member of a small and dedicated team and to help colleagues across the organisation as required.
- Motivated to support the heritage and tourism sectors.

Desirable

- Experience of the heritage or historic environment policy landscape.
- Experience of working in a membership service environment, such as a business association, a charity, not-for-profit or professional body.
- Experience of developing evidence bases, including commissioning research or developing member surveys.
- Experience of managing remote workers, consultants and/or volunteers.
- Experience of managing budgets.
- Strong all-round IT and digital skills.

Equal Opportunities

Historic Houses is fully committed to the provision of equal access and opportunity as an employer and to non-discrimination for all job applicants and employees. We seek to ensure we achieve diversity in our workforce regardless of gender, race, religious beliefs, nationality, ethnic/national origin, sexual orientation, age, marital status, or disability.

Further Information

For an informal discussion about the role, please contact Ben Cowell, Director General: ben.cowell@historichouses.org

Application Details

To apply, please email your CV and a covering letter (outlining your suitability for the role with reference to the person specification above) to Ben Cowell, Director General: ben.cowell@historichouses.org Please include contact information for two referees and details of your notice period (if applicable).

The closing date for applications is 31 May.

First round interviews will take place via Zoom on 15 June.