



Fairfax House

YORK

The finest Georgian town house in England

JOB DESCRIPTION

HOUSEKEEPER

SALARY:	£7.70 per hour
CONTRACT TYPE:	Permanent
CONTRACT HOURS:	Part time, 10 hours per week

ROLE SUMMARY

As the Housekeeper at Fairfax House, it will be your responsibility to make sure that this outstanding Georgian townhouse is beautifully cared for and well-presented. Aiming for the highest standards, you'll clean and look after its interiors (both its period rooms and behind-the-scene areas) and its collection - from carpets and furniture to historic vases and irreplaceable paintings - carrying out general housekeeping and regular cleaning, dusting and polishing.

This is a hands-on role that offers a very varied and interesting day-to-day work routine and will appeal to someone who enjoys history and heritage, and relishes the opportunity to work within a beautiful historic environment. We welcome applications from organised, enthusiastic individuals, who may not have previously had experience within a historic house or museum but are willing to learn and who are skilled quality cleaner, experienced in general housekeeping activities. Above all, they will have respect for the necessity of using great care, co-ordination and sensitivity in carrying through their job.

So that high standards of cleaning and presentation are delivered consistently we are seeking a post holder who is ideally able to work a number of hours each day to give regularity and consistency to the job but can also be thoroughly adaptable. Although there will be designated working hours, some additional hours may be required as and when need/or emergencies arise and a flexible approach is essential.

ABOUT YOU: What you will bring to the role

As a 'house-proud' and fastidious person by nature, you will have a keen eye for detail (in fact no detail will go unnoticed). You take pride in your work and will clean Fairfax House as if it were your own, gaining tremendous satisfaction from bringing all your skills to making sure that the House always looks its very best. You will be practical, self-motivated and hold yourself to the highest standards.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. GENERAL HOUSEKEEPING AND CLEANING OF PUBLIC AREAS

- Regular routine cleaning and housekeeping of the Period Rooms and display areas of the property, including (but not limited to):
 - Vacuuming, sweeping, polishing of floors as appropriate
 - Dusting/polishing of fittings such as panelling, stairs, and doors
 - Dusting/wiping of sills, skirting boards, door-frames, and window frames
 - Daily cleaning of public facilities: lavatories, sinks, etc
- General cleaning of office spaces including the conference room and staff kitchen.
- Ensuring areas open to the public and especially welcome areas, reception and shop, are maintained and meet the standards expected of a public attraction.
- Being responsible for monitoring supplies of cleaning materials and advise when these need to be ordered. You will strive to use resources efficiently and ensure cost effectiveness in all the work you do. You will minimise waste and ensure equipment, tools and materials are properly maintained, utilised and stored.
- Assisting other staff in maintaining various storage areas around the property.

2. CONSERVATION & COLLECTIONS CLEANING

Ensuring that the utmost care is given to the conservation of this truly unique townhouse, you will:

- Be responsible for the care and protection of the historic interiors and delicate collections - furniture, silver, ceramics, glass, works of art, books and other artefacts – at Fairfax House to:
 - prevent the build-up of dust – particularly in crevices or folds – which can lead to dust cementation, pests and deterioration
 - enhance their beauty without causing harm
 - preserve historical integrity, which in turn enhances value
- Employ only approved/recommended conservation cleaning methods, materials and equipment to gently remove dust and dirt so as prevent damage caused by inappropriate domestic handling or cleaning techniques. *Ordinary domestic cleaning products and methods are unsuitable for historic or delicate objects and interiors as they can cause serious and irreversible damage.*
- Be vigilant and take an active role with monitoring the condition of the collections and the property, both through routine and informal checking. Any concerns of damage or loss should be reported immediately.
- Ensure that the Conservation Cleaning Schedule is achieved and best practices strictly adhered to.
- Participate in the annual Winter Cleaning Programme at Fairfax House in January / February and be willing to change routine to meet the needs of the property.

3. OTHER DUTIES AND REQUIREMENTS

- Develop a detailed knowledge and genuine interest in the property and its collections.

- Work within the terms of the contract of employment and adhere to Fairfax House policies, Health & Safety regulations and the Required Ways of Working.
- Undertake any other duties that may be reasonably requested by the Director.
- Attend staff meetings and any training courses as required to meet the requirements of the post.
- Be aware of, and constantly vigilant to, the risk of fire, theft and other disasters, and observe at all times the procedures set out in the Emergency Plan.
- The post-holder will play a role in the emergency response team. This may involve being asked to respond to alarm calls out of hours in the event of an emergency.

SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

What we are looking for in a Housekeeper:

Skills & Abilities

- Attentive to detail with a keen eye for presentation and finish.
- Personal commitment to high standards of cleaning.
- Self-motivated with the ability to plan your time effectively and efficiently in an environment of changing priorities.
- A methodical approach to work yet adaptable and able to multi-task.
- Practical and hands-on with good manual dexterity and excellent hand-eye coordination, you are happy to work from ladders and tower scaffold.
- Willingness to learn and add to personal skills base.
- Able to use your initiative and be capable of dealing with day-to-day problems but will know when to seek guidance and support.
- Willing to show commitment and flexibility your approach to work.
- A keen interest in history, historic properties and their collections.

This is a physical job, which will include manual handling tasks, lifting and carrying cleaning equipment and materials as well as furniture and collection objects. The period rooms and offices at Fairfax House are spread over a number of floors, and due to the restraints of working in a Grade I listed building, some storage areas are not easily accessed.

Work Experience and Knowledge

Minimum: Able to demonstrate some practical experience and knowledge of housekeeping or another appropriate field involving cleaning and physical, practical tasks.

Desirable: A working knowledge of housekeeping in an historic building environment including the cleaning and presentation of areas open to the public, cleaning of domestic/staff areas, stocking/ordering housekeeping/janitorial supplies, organising housekeeping routines, and recording work undertaken.

Previous experience as a Housekeeping Assistant/Collections Care Assistant (or similar) with a basic understanding of the approach required when working with fragile historic collections would be a significant advantage.

Please note that the applicant will be required to complete an Enhanced DBS check.