

The Folkestone Leas Lift Company CIO

Chief Executive Officer

LOCATION: Leas Lift, Folkestone / Homeworking
ACCOUNTABLE TO: Chair & Trustees, Leas Lift Charitable Incorporated Organisation
DURATION: Permanent

INTRODUCTION & CONTEXT

Folkestone Leas Lift is a Grade II* (Historic England No. 1061185) cliff funicular railway situated in the Leas & Bayle Conservation Area in Folkestone. Part of the fabric of Folkestone, it is well loved by the people of Folkestone, many of whom have precious memories of visiting as a child and adult. This was brought home during public consultation in 2020 when 2,500 people responded to a survey about the future of Leas Lift. Their affection for Leas Lift, and memories were deep and moving when we asked them what they valued about it. Comments include:

“Very happy memories stretching over nearly 70 years”

“It is part of the story of Folkestone and makes Folkestone what it is”

“It has always been part of my life when I have been in Folkestone”

“It's the town's heritage, it's a beautiful construction, plus being disabled means I can get up to the town quickly and enjoy the views in style!”

In 2023 the Trustees of The Folkestone Leas Lift CIO secured £6.6 million including a £4.3 million grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to restore and re-open the Leas Lift and deliver a 3-year programme of heritage activities. The project will:

- Restore the lift cars, upper and lower stations, machinery, and track
- Re-open Leas Lift to the public, providing an authentic experience with accessible upper and lower lift stations, toilets, new café, and retail area
- Install interpretation telling the story of Leas Lift, and its significance within Folkestone
- Deliver a programme of heritage tours and talks, community outreach, school visits and training opportunities
- Themed events and private hires will help ensure the Lift's long-term sustainability.

The Trustees of the CIO are now seeking an outstanding leader who is a strategic thinker, creative, and business-minded who is committed to restoring this unique piece of industrial heritage for Folkestone. You will engage your outstanding leadership skills and adopt a culture of openness, trust, and delegation. You will utilise your strong business and financial skills to establish firm foundational footings as the Trust moves from the restoration of the Leas Lift to the operational phase. You will be the main driver in developing the business model into a sustainable, business-focused, and cost-centred operation whilst being mindful of the impact on the fabric of the Lift. You will also steward our donors and funders. An understanding of, and commitment to audience development and inclusion is essential.

This is an exciting opportunity for a proven, highly skilled, and effective leader to take forward the delivery of this project, put in place and motivate a high performing team, building upon the success of the Trust to secure a major grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Reporting to the Board of Trustees, the CEO is responsible for overseeing the delivery of the capital project, opening, and running of the Leas Lift. Initially this will involve working closely with the Chair and Trustees who have been managing the project via committees to facilitate a handover and agree reporting lines for each workstream.

Essential criteria

- Experience in leading a multi-disciplinary team including volunteers
- An understanding of sustainable business operations
- Understanding the challenges of balancing visitors with conservation whilst delivering a high-level visitor experience
- Understanding and track record of leading audience development, engagement activities and ensuring inclusivity
- Experience of stewarding donors, and Trustees of charitable foundations
- Experience of raising funds from a range of sources – events, filming, corporates, public grants and from trust making bodies
- You will be a confident communicator, a great listener, an accomplished decision-maker, and a natural collaborator
- You will be great at building relationships across a broad spectrum both internally and externally with community and commercial partners, and stakeholders
- You will balance delegation vs taking ownership whilst having a strong focus on the organisation's values and objectives
- You will be resilient, reflective, with a positive and calm manner, with excellent organisational and IT skills
- You will utilise your strong business and financial skills to test and refine the Trust's model to ensure long term sustainability
- Resilience and an ability to thrive under pressure

Desirable

- Knowledge and experience of delivering a National Lottery Heritage Fund or Big Lottery Fund project
- Experience of heritage operations e.g. ticketing, queue management, H&S

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Period of employment:	Permanent Role
Salary:	£60,000
Working hours:	37 hours per week with some flexibility for evening/ weekend working
Holidays:	The fulltime holiday entitlement is 25 days paid holiday per year excluding public holidays
Pension:	Employer contribution equivalent to 3% of the gross salary paid monthly into the auto-enrolment pension scheme.
Sickness/Absence:	You will, if eligible, be paid Statutory Sick Pay in accordance with the legislation applying at the time.
Location:	The post holder will be expected to work at Leas Lift, with some flexibility for home working.
Expenses:	All reasonable working expenses will be met at an agreed rate with Leas Lift. You will not be reimbursed for travel from your home to your agreed workplace.
Termination	The appointment is subject to a three month probationary period and may be extended if necessary.

FOR ALL APPLICANTS:

Safeguarding Regulations: Leas Lift is committed to the safeguarding and protection of all young people and adults and we and other schools and partners will need to undertake an enhanced DBS checks on you. A condition of your employment will be that you complete such applications whenever requested to do so and that the checks confirm that there are no reasons why you should not work with children or vulnerable adults.

Appraisal: There will be an appraisal after three months, to confirm the probationary period, and each year thereafter.

Review of roles: The role will be reviewed at the annual appraisal. Leas Lift CIO have the right to alter duties in accordance with the needs of the project.