

Job description

Job title:	Finance Assistant
Salary:	£28,000 - £30,000 per annum
Location:	Main place of work Westonbirt Arboretum (min 60% of working week onsite)
Working hours:	Full-time – up to 35 hours p/w. Flexible working considered.
Benefits:	Generous benefits package including 10% employer's pension contribution; and complimentary joint membership.
Reporting to:	Finance Manager

Westonbirt Arboretum and the Friends of Westonbirt Arboretum

Westonbirt, The National Arboretum, is one of Britain's finest tree collections, with the vision to be a world leader in trees, inspiring people through conservation, education, and participation. With over 600 acres homing 15,000 specimens and 2,500 species of tree from all over the world, the arboretum plays a vital part in research and conservation, and is a significant visitor attraction, drawing over 500,000 visitors each year.

Westonbirt Arboretum's story began in the 1850s with the wealthy Victorian landowner, Robert Holford's passion for a natural world. Owner of the large estate centred around Westonbirt House, on a quest to discover rare and extraordinary plants, he used his family fortune to finance and plant collecting expeditions all over the world. These species were brought back to the arboretum and have resulted in the site not only being a breathtaking, diverse landscape but also a world-renowned botanical collection.

From the early 1880s Robert's son, Sir George Holford expanded the arboretum into Silk Wood creating vast drives with wide verges and bays of ornamental trees. With no heir, his nephew sold the estate; and the land was divided with the mansion becoming a girls' school. In 1956, the entire 600 acres was handed over to the Forestry Commission (now Forestry England) who has continued to improve and expand on the work of the family. The arboretum and Downs landscape is designated a Grade I Registered Park and Garden by English Heritage.

In 1985, a small group of enthusiasts who saw the need to work with the Forestry Commission to preserve, enhance and enlarge this unique landscape, met for the first time. This group became the Friends of Westonbirt Arboretum (The Friends), a registered charity. Today the charity employs a small number of staff who manage a supporter base of approximately 40,000 members, some of whom volunteer at the arboretum. In addition, in 2020 the charity formed an Enterprise trading subsidiary, which is now responsible for managing and running the Westonbirt Shop.

Working for the Friends of Westonbirt Arboretum

As an employee of The Friends, you will be part of a team that is passionate about trees and dedicated to inspiring people through education, participation, and conservation. We work closely with Forestry England to support and develop Westonbirt Arboretum as both organisations work towards accomplishing our joint 10-Year Vision for Westonbirt to be a world leader in trees.

Your role with The Friends will contribute to our efforts to nurture and grow our community of approximately 40,000 supporters and to further public enjoyment and knowledge of Westonbirt. We are a registered charity that supports the arboretum, and our mission is to inspire people to connect with trees, improving quality of life and securing the arboretum's sustainable future.

Our culture is built on the values of **Integrity, Collaboration, Innovation** and **Clarity**. We are a team that respects and encourages diverse opinions and perspectives. We work collaboratively towards a shared purpose and actively seek to improve ourselves through self-reflection and continuous learning. We take pride in our ability to be agile and creative, which enables us to be forward-thinking and progressive. We are committed to ethical decision-making, holding ourselves accountable for our actions. We communicate skilfully, ensuring we inform and engage people effectively to showcase our impact.

Most importantly, we place the well-being of our colleagues, customers, volunteers, and partners at the heart of everything we do.

Role purpose

The Finance Assistant will play a vital role in supporting the Finance Manager and Finance Director in their roles. Accurately maintaining the financial records of The Friends and its trading subsidiary, Friends of Westonbirt Arboretum Enterprises Ltd (Enterprises), and, to a limited extent, will be involved in providing accurate financial information, back-up and support within the Finance Team.

Confidentiality across all areas of this role is required as the incumbent will have access to both personal and commercially sensitive information.

Key Responsibilities

Sales Ledger

- Accurately recording income transactions within Xero;
- Ensure cash handling within the business remains secure and follows the organisations' financial procedures;
- Take responsibility for regularly banking cash and cheques for both The Friends and Enterprises, ensuring that banking agrees to supporting documentation and are accurately accounted for within Xero;
- At month end, reconcile income control accounts to third party payment providers and ensure that balances struck are accurately reflected within the balance sheet;
- Manage credit control and bad debts.

Purchase Ledger

- Processing purchase ledger invoices accurately onto Xero, utilising Hubdoc;
- Ensure all invoices are processed with the appropriate approvals and are posted to the correct nominal ledger codes;
- Ensure all purchase ledger and other payments are paid on an accurate and timely basis, ensuring sufficient funds are held within the bank accounts to meet the payments;

- Reconcile supplier statements against the purchase ledger and follow up any differences or queries;
- Check staff and trustee expense claim forms are fully completed and accurate;

Accruals and Prepayments

- Adjust for prepayments and accruals for both entities on a monthly basis.

Fixed Assets

- Maintain the fixed asset registers, accounting for new capital additions and any disposals;
- Calculate and post the monthly depreciation.

Bank Reconciliations

- Reconcile the bank transaction imported to Xero on a regular basis for both entities;

Other duties & expectations

- Provide cover for absent colleagues where appropriate;
- Carry out other reasonable tasks as directed by The Friends' management;
- Carry out all tasks with reasonable consideration for the health and safety of colleagues and visitors;
- Carry out all tasks in a courteous and effective manner;
- At all times uphold the values of The Friends and behave in such a way as not to bring the organisation into disrepute.

Essential Skills & Experience

- A good understanding of accounting procedures - particularly control accounts, accruals and prepayments;
- Strong organisational and administrative skills, with the ability to manage multiple deadlines and priorities effectively;
- Confident in the use of Xero accounting systems, Excel, EPOS systems as well as proficient in other Microsoft Office applications;
- Ability to work collaboratively with colleagues across different teams and functions;
- A sound, basic knowledge of VAT legislation.

Desirable Skills

- 4 years plus bookkeeping experience;
- Full or part AAT qualified;
- Experience with Xero and Hubdoc, or similar;
- Previous charity accounts experience.

Personal Attributes

- Flexible, dynamic and open to change.
- Proactive but unassuming, comfortable working independently while contributing positively to a small, close-knit team;
- Confidentiality and discretion;
- Reliable and hardworking;
- Attention to detail;
- Organised and logical thinker;
- Good interpersonal and communication skills.

How to apply

Closing date: 4th January 2026 – early applications advised

1. Complete the Screening Questions

Fill out the screening questions form [Welcome to the Finance Administrator Application – Fill in form](#)

2. Wait for Our Response

After you submit your answers, our team will review them. We aim to get back to you within **5 working days**.

3. Next Steps

If you pass the initial screening, you'll be invited to complete a full application form and tell us more about why you're a great fit for the role.

Need Help?

If you need any support or adjustments to complete the form, please let us know – recruitment@fowa.org.uk



All applications and communication will be treated as confidential.

We reserve the right to close this vacancy early if we receive sufficient applications for the role.