



Senior Finance Manager
Candidate Information Pack
December 2024



Welcome

Dear Applicant,

I'm delighted that you are interested in the role of Senior Finance Manager with Fields In Trust.

You will see from this pack that we have a unique history of protecting parks and green spaces and that we will be celebrating our centenary in 2025. Our work involves lobbying policymakers at all levels, helping to provide legal protection against spaces and parks being sold (and lost) and partnering with landowners and communities to protect and enhance them for local people and the environment.

We have built an impressive and broad range of allies, supporters and loyal funders but, as all charities will know, there is always more to do than there are financial resources to deliver. Over the last year with the support of our committed Trustees and our partners at Eastside People we have reviewed our strategy, our fundraising/bid priorities, identified new opportunities to accelerate commercial income as well as streamlined our infrastructure and cost base and will end this financial year having made cost reductions to better align with our income streams. Our centenary celebrations will provide amazing opportunities to take our plans forward with existing and new supporters, partners and clients.

This role to which we are now recruiting will build on this firstly in terms of planning and managing our finances and also as an integral part of the senior management team bringing valued guidance and insight to our strategy, planning and delivery. As we are a small charity all senior roles demand the flexibility to master the detail and be creatively sighted on strategy, the future and what it takes for us to succeed to be a difference maker for our parks and green spaces.

I hope you find the enclosed information interesting and helpful to you in making an application.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Best regards,

Helen Griffiths

Chief Executive





About us

Our History

Fields in Trust is the charity that protects the future of our parks, playgrounds, sports fields and green spaces.

When we were founded in 1925 as the National Playing Fields Association people recognised that children did not have places to play and that this lack of access to safe, quality spaces was impacting those who were already most disadvantaged in our society. Our core purpose was to address that challenge and find ways to ensure everyone has access to green space close to home by partnering with local authorities, influencing policy makers, working with developers and responding to communities.

Today we legally protect almost 3,000 spaces across the country and have influenced the provision of thousands more. We continue to focus on equity, quality and the need to protect the future of our parks, playgrounds, sports fields and green spaces with the added recognition that these spaces are now also crucial to the climate and nature crises that are the challenge of our time.

Our first President was the then Duke of York, later King George VI, a royal connection which was maintained by Queen Elizabeth II as Patron and Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, as President. HRH The Prince of Wales succeeded as President until he became Patron in 2024.

Missions

'We champion and influence'

As champions of green spaces, Fields in Trust research and data analysis enables us to advocate and lobby government and other decision-makers with insights and evidence as to both how much these places matter and their need for funding and protection

Fields in Trust created the Six Acre Standard back in the 1930s pioneering the first benchmark for open space required to meet the needs of local communities. These standards are a crucial tool to help local authorities, developers, planners, urban designers and landscape architects across all stages of the planning, design and management of



multifunctional green spaces. Over time these standards have evolved to reflect the changing policy landscape but the need to deliver a quantum of space has been consistent with the most recent edition being published in December 2024.

Every year Fields in Trust **Green Space Index**® takes a close look at Britain's parks and green spaces to see where more or better access is needed, uncovering the barriers faced by different communities, and demonstrating how a lack of green space can exacerbate the effects of climate change. Groundbreaking studies revealed how frequent use of parks and green spaces contributes over £34 billion per year to the nation's collective health and wellbeing.

During 2024, Fields in Trust revealed the bleak picture of access to nature, with parks and green spaces suffering from cuts in funding or being lost to development. They found that 6.3m people in Great Britain do not have any access to a park or green space within a ten-minute walk from home, and that 4,000 new spaces need to be created by 2033 to maintain current levels of provision.

'We protect parks and green spaces forever'

Parks and green spaces in the UK are under consistent threat from development, even though they are proven to help people stay physically and mentally well and are places where everyone can exercise, relax and connect with neighbours.

Fields in Trust is only UK charity working that can secure legal protection for parks and green spaces. So that they can never be sold off for development and can be retained forever as a public park, playing field or recreation ground.

Working closely together Fields in Trust sign a unique and binding legal commitment (a Deed of Dedication or Minute of Agreement in Scotland) that means green spaces will be protected in perpetuity, for the benefit of local communities.

'We steward their future'

A protected park or green space will need to evolve over time and Fields in Trust dedicated teamwork in partnership with landowners to help manage their protected status and make changes that will benefit the local community and the natural environment.





Going forward

Fields in Trust has had a long and impressive history of support from philanthropists, Trusts and Foundations who share their passion for the protection of green spaces and parks from the impact of climate change and from development. Allied to fundraising/donations and commercialising their data and insights for commercial clients Fields in Trust has maintained substantial reserves for many years. These reserves have been regularly used to maintain their lobbying impact and portfolio of services.

In April 2024, with external support from Eastside People the charity initiated a full review of its strategy and preparedness for the future to shift this reliance on its reserves. This review has focused on additional sources of income, eliminating activities and processes that don't add value and reducing the cost base through savings and process improvement/automation.

The centenary year celebration and continued Royal patronage provides a great opportunity to develop an already impressive base of philanthropists, Trusts and Foundation still further, to target funding available for climate action, health and wellbeing from the Lottery as well as other agencies and capitalise on the commercial potential of their data and insights with planners, developers, housing associations etc.

In addition, much has already been done to target and improve cost performance, to streamline processes including automating many manual transactions within the back office. Xero has been introduced to improve single point of entry, to reduce manual intervention and to reduce the need for multiple Excel spreadsheet monitoring. Traction with both these new approaches and the closer emphasis on cost performance needs to be maintained and embedded.

The new Senior Finance Manager will play a crucial role across both these dimensions of business improvement. They will support the Chief Executive and Senior Team on a day-to-day basis and in attending quarterly Trustee Board Meetings as a key advisor to unpick performance indicators, trends, opportunities, risks etc for discussion and decision making.





Role description

Key information

Salary	£55,000 pa dependent on experience
Contract	Permanent, Full time (37 hours) with potential for part-time hours (min 4 days)
Location	Hybrid working combination of West London (Shepherds Bush) office/home working to be agreed
Reports to	Chief Executive
Benefits	25 days of annual leave plus an additional day's leave for each year up to 5 years of service and discretionary days between Christmas and New Year, 2 Employee Volunteering Days per year, 5% employer pension contribution, interest free season ticket loan
Notice Period	2 months from both sides after 6 months probationary period when notice will be one month

Job summary

Reporting to the Chief Executive provide leadership and management of Fields in Trust's resources, supporting the Board of Trustees.

Member of a Leadership team which works together to build and deliver the charity's strategy, business plans and operational delivery, leads on Finance, ICT and Facilities.

Key tasks and responsibilities

Strategy and leadership

- Support the Chief Executive in the development of robust plans for financial sustainability through clear financial appraisal, analysis and reports
- Contribute to the strategic direction and management of the charity as a member of the Senior Management Team



- Oversee the finance function, responsible for all financial recording and for reporting to Management, Trustees, other staff members and beneficiaries

Budgeting and forecasting

- Produce and maintain annual budgets aligned with Fields in Trust strategy and senior management team structure
- Together with the CEO and Senior Management Team secure budgetary approval from Trustees

Management reporting

- Produce timely monthly management reports of up to date information highlighting performance (actuals v budget / forecast) together with trends/anomalies/areas requiring further challenge/ investigation
- Produce agreed key metrics that support visibility of Fields in Trust delivering its charity and strategic objectives
- Support Trustee quarterly meetings with submissions of financials, scenarios etc

Accounting and financial assurance

- Ensure all financial control transactions are recorded accurately and on time, seeking out all opportunities for single data entry and automation.
- Personally record key sales, debtor, purchase order, VAT and payroll transactions using Xero accounting
- Maintain bank accounts and reconcile Xero/bank statements on a regular basis
- Ensure the Asset Register is up to date and accurate

Investments, Endowment and custodian funds

- Ensure investment records reflect periodic valuations, accounting for any unrealised gains/losses. Reconcile balances with statements from investment managers
- Fields in Trust have responsibility for multiple Custodian Funds held in cash and investments (maintained outside FIT's books of record, except for any cash held). Investments are held by Investment Managers (currently M&G and Schroders)
- Endowments: record income and expenditure against their respective account, produce annual /periodic statements (I&E / SOFA, B/S) for each fund, recommending opportunities to utilise funds in support of the charity's objects

Statutory reporting

- Co-ordinate the audit processes ensuring Fields in Trust comply and submit all statutory reports for the charity, its subsidiaries and other organisations where it is the main Trustee / responsible



- Prepare schedules of activities that support preparation, review and approval timelines in line with statutory obligations and work with Auditor / Independent Examiner to successfully guide Fields in Trust through its process
- Support the preparation of the Trustees Annual Report & Accounts and formal approval process

General

- Support the CEO with premises management (sale / rental) and leasing of the owned properties.
- Review all commercial arrangements (building, technology etc) to ensure “best value” principles are delivered
- Work with our Outsourced IT Director and support partners to seek service improvements and obtain the best value for money



“Few resources hold the potential to impact so positively on a wide range of social issues as parks and green spaces. By protecting these spaces in perpetuity Fields in Trust works to ensure that our children and grandchildren will have places to run, move, breathe and play.”

**HRH The Prince of Wales KG KT,
Patron, Fields in Trust**

Person Specification

- Professionally qualified (ACCA/CIMA) or, qualified by experience, with an in depth understanding of business/financial management and reporting in a not for profit setting.
- Knowledge of the financial requirements of Companies House, the Charity Commission, Inland Revenue and other key financial agencies.
- Solid experience with finance operations foundations; purchase ledger, payment processes VAT and bank reconciliations
- Experienced in preparing financial plans and budgets against which performance can be assessed and in supporting business development and growth with costed and financially sustainable modelling
- Self-starter, able to work under own initiative and organise own time to manage multiple priorities and meet deadlines.
- Flexible, able to operate independently while collaborating effectively with colleagues to support and influence them with financial insights and guidance.
- Highly numerate with advanced Excel skills. Experience with Xero an advantage
- Strong problem-solving and communication skills
- Commitment to maintaining confidentiality and integrity in financial matters





How to apply?

[Eastside People](#) is supporting [Fields in Trust](#) in this recruitment. Please click [here](#) to apply by submitting your CV and a cover letter. Please use the cover letter as an opportunity to add to the information you have shared in your CV, and ensure that you cover the following (max 2 pages):

- Why are you interested in the Senior Finance Manager role, and why Fields In Trust?
- How can you contribute to Fields in Trust in this role? Please highlight relevant experience and demonstrate how your skills match the specific requirements of the role as set out in the job description and person specification.
- How will you go about marrying the strategic elements of this role with the day to day requirements?

If you would like a call to discuss the role in more detail, please email Bryan McPaul at bryan@eastsidepeople.org to arrange a convenient time. A call of this kind will not influence the success or otherwise of your application.

The closing date for applications is Midday Thursday December 19. Shortlisting interviews will take place shortly after and shortlisted candidates will have an interview with Fields in Trust on January 7th or 9th 2025.

We want you to have every opportunity to demonstrate your skills, ability and potential; please contact us if you require any assistance or adjustment so that we can help with making the application process work for you.

Diversity and Inclusion

Fields in Trust is fully committed to equality of opportunity and diversity to ensure that we reflect the full breadth of the people and communities we support. It is important that the Fields in Trust team are representative of these communities and we warmly welcome applications from all suitably qualified candidates.





Eastside People

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Eastside People is the trading name for Eastside Consulting Ltd. Company number: 4958922.