



Job Profile

Post: Business Development and Retail Manager
Reporting to: Chief Operating Officer
Access to: Retail supervisor, wider Rum Story retail team, central office team, operations and parking management teams, finance support, specialist knowledge and support of retained consultants and contractors in areas such as facilities management and marketing/PR, as well as up to nine volunteer Commissioners

Purpose

Whitehaven Harbour Commissioners and The Rum Story are seeking a Business Development and Retail Manager to join our expanding team.

This new position is aimed at driving the development of our popular Rum Story Shop and Visitor Attraction, with a particular focus on our historic Jefferson's brand, which is much more than just rum – though the rum is, of course, a big part of what we're about!

Having opened as a tourist attraction in 2000, The Rum Story is an interactive experience that provides an authentic depiction of life in 18th century Whitehaven, with the attraction set in the original 1785 shop, cellars, bonded warehouse and courtyard.

The new role will offer opportunities to promote our brand and products to a range of existing and potential partners, raise awareness of our name among the visitor economy, hold a public-facing position that's recognised among community and commercial contacts, and play a major part in helping to deliver a variety of exciting events and projects alongside partners from the cultural sector.

WHC is a not-for-profit organisation, safely managing and maintaining Whitehaven Harbour and its environs for the benefit of all. We are committed to optimising our commercial revenues in order to continually improve by reinvesting in our assets, ensuring all of those assets are managed and proactively maintained to provide a safe, sustainable and enjoyable environment and experience for all users.

We are passionate about preserving our 400-year history to drive the future and protect the legacy of this unique local institution, while supporting local businesses and encouraging visitors to the town and wider West Cumbria.

We are proud of our core values, which state that we will:

- actively listen and put people at the heart of what we do
- treat people fairly and inclusively, embracing equality and diversity
- be honest, open and transparent in our dealings with customers, colleagues and partners
- stand up and take responsibility for our actions
- provide a safe and secure environment for all
- strive for continuous improvement and a better future

In addition, our team are helping to shape and deliver two important projects for our organisation this year.

The first is working with Anti Racist Cumbria on *The Rum Story Re-Imagined* project, supported by a grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. The aim is to retell the history of The Rum Story and Whitehaven's connection to the trading and trafficking of enslaved people from Africa, resulting in a world-class, relevant and attractive visitor experience.

We also look forward to the opening this summer of The Edge, Cumbria's new coastal activities centre on the harbourside. The Edge has a unique and exciting purpose, not just for watersports and other outdoor activities but a multitude of uses, from community workshops to cultural events, as well as offering overnight accommodation, café facilities, changing rooms and publicly accessible toilets. The property will be managed by a commercial operator who will liaise with the WHC team and other partners to help deliver a variety of outputs and outcomes for the benefit of the community.

Main duties and responsibilities

To include, but not limited to:

- Oversee the general operation and management of our visitor attraction and its shops, supported by the Retail Supervisor
- Ensure websites are up-to-date, the emphasis being on brand development, storytelling, income generation and raising awareness of current and future activities
- Produce a fit-for-purpose audience development and marketing strategy that aims to capitalise on our existing offer and target further revenue-driving opportunities
- Draw up social media, newsletter and blog schedules, and oversee production of a variety of content within the wider team, in line with the agreed schedules
- Provide support for general social media management and engagement, including enquiries, tags and comments, as required
- Work with the office team on promotional leaflets, maps, trail guides etc and ensure messaging is up-to-date and "on brand"
- Attend local business networking events and give presentations to community groups about The Rum Story and WHC
- Be the "voice" of The Rum Story for local press and other media enquiries
- Lead the team attending fetes, festivals and markets
- Use knowledge and experience to be a key player among a working party of staff and volunteer Commissioners focusing on re-branding and business development
- Identify new partnership opportunities within and outside of the cultural sector
- Target wholesale and trade opportunities, and develop complementary strategies to capitalise on café footfall
- Alongside the CEO, manage the organisation's tourism memberships and utilise them to best effect
- Work with the CEO, COO and other senior team members to analyse visitor numbers and sales then develop an informed business development strategy for the wider operation
- Support business development activities, including attendance at tourism groups/meetings, organising and attending trade fairs, and linking The Rum Story sales with the wider WHC brand
- Support the accounts department, COO and CEO in setting annual budgets and then work closely with the Retail Supervisor to monitor performance against projections throughout the year
- Authorise invoices and generate Purchase Orders where necessary
- Provide a bi-monthly report on business development activities to WHC's volunteer Board of Commissioners
- Work with The Rum Story Re-Imagined Project Manager to build further relationships with schools and community groups
- Liaise with the Office and Events Manager on effective promotion of private hires and functions
- Monitor the production of our rum and general stock, supported by the Retail Supervisor

- Be willing to provide occasional shop work to cover team breaks, unplanned absences and peak holiday times (additional hours may be required for this, for which TOIL will generally be given or, in exceptional circumstances, paid overtime may be agreed)
- Support the COO – and Retail Supervisor, where relevant – with recruitment, training & development, team briefings and reviews
- Work with the CEO, COO and wider team to manage and maintain compliance in a variety of areas, including but not limited to health & safety, hygiene, and the management of people and buildings

Person specification

Essential

- Strong communication and people skills
- Experience of brand awareness and marketing strategies
- Team leadership abilities
- Knowledge of e-commerce software and procedures
- Experience of working with complex budgets
- Comfortable with all main social media platforms and best practice
- Problem-solving and analytical skills
- Interest in local history and heritage
- Proficient in Microsoft Office applications
- Knowledge of stock control and retail management procedures
- Ability to develop and maintain relationships with customers and suppliers
- Experience of working with diverse groups and individuals
- Ability to effectively manage time and resources
- Comfortable with multi-tasking and prioritising
- Experience of writing reports and analysing data
- Good standard of written English
- Strong grasp of maths in a retail setting
- Driving licence and access to vehicle
- Ability to keep calm under pressure

Desirable

- Experience of change management
- An understanding of the opportunities and challenges currently faced throughout West Cumbria
- Knowledge of buildings regulations and compliance procedures
- Experience of organising and delivering community events
- Personal Alcohol Licence holder
- First Aid at Work training
- Fire Marshal training

Headline terms & conditions

Contract: Fixed term appointment for 12 months, following which the position will be reviewed and potentially extended, subject to available funds and the developing needs of our non-profit organisation

Hours: 21 hours per week (equivalent to three working days)

Salary: £15.50 - £17.00 per hour, depending on experience and level of available funding (equates to £16,926 - £18,018 pa; FTE equivalent salary £28,210 - £30,030 pa)

Annual leave: 25 days plus statutory bank holidays (pro rata for part-time positions)

Pension: WHC operates an auto-enrolment pension scheme through Nest

Notice period: One full calendar month

Probation period: Six months, during which the notice period on either side will be one week

Start date: This post is strictly dependent on funding, expected to be confirmed no later than the end of June 2025. Interviews will be held in advance in order to identify the right candidate with the view to them starting no later than the end of July 2025.

Working arrangements: WHC and The Rum Story are a seven-day operation and most full-time members of the core office team work five days a week with one hour unpaid lunch break per day. Occasional weekend and evening work may be required, with some weeks involving the post-holder working more than their contracted hours and therefore awarded time off in lieu (TOIL). In exceptional circumstances, paid overtime may be considered, for which arrangements will be agreed in advance.

WHC is responsive to flexible working requests and will take a collaborative approach to finding the right solution, both for the individual and the organisation.

Location: This position is based at The Rum Story on Lowther Street, in Whitehaven, with an expectation that parts of the work will also be conducted around the wider harbour estate, as well as further afield. It is likely that there will be opportunities to travel outside of the area, particularly attending the likes of trade fairs, fetes and festivals.

Additional employee benefits: Staff discount in The Rum Story shop; free parking on WHC car parks.

How to apply

Applications should be addressed to Deanne Shallcross, CEO.

Send a CV and cover letter to Lynn Denvir, Office Administrator, at lynn@whitehavenhc.org.uk or Whitehaven Harbour Commissioners, 27 Lowther Street, Whitehaven, CA28 7DN.

Video applications will also be considered. Please contact Lynn Denvir if you have any questions regarding how best to share files with us.

Deadline for applications: 10am Monday 9th June 2025

Interviews: w/c 16th June & 23rd June 2025

Further information: If you have any queries about this new role, or would like an informal discussion before applying, email Louise McKenna, Office and Events Manager, on louise@whitehavenhc.org.uk or call 01946 592933.

Equal opportunities statement: WHC/The Rum Story are committed to promoting equal opportunities in employment. All job applicants receive equal treatment regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation (protected characteristics).

We are required by law to ensure all employees are entitled to work in the UK. Prospective employees, regardless of nationality, must be able to produce original documents before employment starts, to satisfy current immigration legislation.