



A place of rest with a heart for mission



APPLICATION PACK

Deputy Director

Closing date for applications: Sunday 11th May 2025

Registered Charity 1060817
The Manor House, Penhurst Lane, Penhurst, Nr. Battle, TN33 9QP

APPLICATION PACK

Deputy Director

Thank you for your interest in joining Penhurst Retreat Centre as Deputy Director. We hope the following information will give you a flavour of who we are, what we do and what we are looking for in this role.

If you have further questions after reading the information and would like to have an informal conversation, please contact Jason Cottingham, Centre Director on jason@penhurst.org.uk or 01424 892088.

Our vision, mission and purpose

Penhurst is a small, friendly Christian retreat centre, situated in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty just 8 miles from the coast in the Sussex High Weald, with comfortable accommodation for 16 guests in nine bedrooms. The aim is to provide a place of peace where retreatants from all walks of life can draw closer to God and experience His renewal.

The centre seeks to provide a place of welcome, comfort and sanctuary, where people can:

- Find an environment of prayer.
- Deepen their relationship with Christ and each other.
- Work through personal issues such as fear about the future and disillusionment.
- Begin to recover from trauma or loss.
- Seek guidance about the next step.
- Find assistance in preparing for or returning from their place of work and service.
- Resolve uncertainties about how to deal with a difficult situation or relationship.

We also specialise in support of mission partners, cross-cultural workers and full-time Christian workers from the UK and overseas, and offer a variety of opportunities. We are aware of the huge need for mission and ministry partners and cross-cultural workers (overseas and UK) to recharge their spiritual batteries in an environment conducive to physical rest and spiritual restoration and of the value of debriefing in a supportive, caring, neutral and unhurried setting. We offer retreats specifically designed for the needs of mission and ministry partners as well as individual retreats.

The Manor House was formerly the home of Paul and Rosalind Broomhall. Paul was a relation of James Hudson-Taylor, the 19th century pioneer missionary to China. Born in China and India respectively, Paul and Rosalind did much to support overseas mission, including travelling to India and Nepal five times on behalf of Interserve, riding and walking over the Himalayan mountains (often at great personal cost and danger) to visit and encourage isolated mission workers. Back home they welcomed workers on furlough/home assignment, the homeless, church members and casual visitors into their home for refreshment, and held monthly prayer meetings to support people who had gone overseas from the local parish. This foundation of prayer, hospitality, support and encouragement is what continues to be at the heart of the retreat centre today.

Recent and future developments

The centre has seen significant change and transition over the last few years, some of which is ongoing.

In early 2019, the main house underwent a major refurbishment with new plumbing, heating and bedrooms reconfigured so that all but two are now ensuite.

The centre is currently in another period of transition and change, with recent changes on our board of trustees, including a new Chairperson in autumn 2023, some staff changes, and a number of infrastructure projects have been completed to help move the centre into a fruitful new season.

As we look to the future, we are passionate about welcoming more people to find rest and refreshment in body, mind and spirit here at Penhurst and are seeking to connect with new church networks, younger adults and those in training for ministry and mission, as well as continuing to support those already in ministry. The patrons, trustees, staff and supporters of Penhurst love this place and its vision, and are enthusiastic about its future.

The Penhurst team

The team structure is currently as follows: a Centre Director with eight other staff, mostly part-time. Together with several volunteers, they oversee the welfare of the guests, the retreat programme and the running of the beautiful listed Jacobean manor house and its grounds. The trustees meet four times a year and in between as needed. Most trustees have an area of experience and expertise, such as finance, buildings, overseas mission, debriefing and management.

The role

We are looking for a Deputy Director to work alongside the Centre Director to drive forward the centre's vision and enhance the prayerful environment and 'home from home' welcome offered by the Penhurst team. The Deputy Director will provide hospitality to guests, support and line manage team members and assist in the maintaining and improving of Penhurst's operations. There will be a need to build on Penhurst's reputation to generate increased bookings and income and widen the range of guests that come to Penhurst.

Candidates should have previous experience of working in a hospitality setting, a warm personality, excellent interpersonal skills and be organised. The post is for 24 hours per week to be worked over 3 days. Reflecting the flexibility required with hospitality it will involve some weekend and evening work.

Applicants need to be committed Christians living in line with Penhurst's statement of faith and the Evangelical Alliance's affirmations on relationships. They need to be committed to the culture of the charity and charitable aims of the trust.



PENHURST RETREAT CENTRE STATEMENTS ON VISION AND PURPOSE

Strapline

A place of rest with a heart for mission

Overall vision, mission and purpose:

Penhurst Retreat Centre has been established as a place where small groups and individuals from all parts of the world can find rest and refreshment in body, mind and spirit whilst preparing for or returning from their place of work and service.

Strategic objectives

We seek to fulfil our mission through:

1. Ensuring the charity is governed effectively
2. Providing retreat and refreshment for mission partners, full-time Christian workers and others based on our ethos and values with guest fees providing a substantial proportion of income
3. Promoting, raising profile and becoming well known for quality service particularly within the mission community
4. Seeking sufficient donations to cover subsidies, special projects and capital developments
5. Maintaining and developing well maintained and appropriate buildings and facilities for all users
6. Ensuring appropriate levels and training of staff

Ethos statement

The ethos statement acts as the guiding principle for all of Penhurst Retreat Centre's activities. It covers areas such as the overseas and mission emphasis for guests, the centrality prayer, welcome and responsiveness, being a place of quiet and reflection, being open to all God's people and encouraging longer periods of stay.

In summary, the Centre seeks to provide a place where people can:

- Find an environment of prayer
- Help people deepen their relationship with Christ and each other
- Work through personal issues such as fear about the future and disillusionment
- Recover from trauma or loss
- Seek guidance about the next step
- Resolve uncertainties about how to deal with a difficult situation or relationship.

PENHURST RETREAT CENTRE DETAILED ETHOS STATEMENT

1. Overall vision and purpose: Penhurst Retreat Centre has been established as a place where small groups and individuals from all parts of the world can find rest and refreshment in body, mind and spirit whilst preparing for or returning from their place of work and service. The Centre seeks to provide a place where people can:

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2. Guests: The Centre was established with mission partners working overseas in mind. However while seeking to maintain this emphasis, the Centre welcomes guests from both near and far, those in full-time Christian work, those in secular employment and anyone in need of spiritual refreshment. All are welcome here, including those of other faiths or none, provided that they respect the Christian ethos of the Centre and do not cause distress, disturbance or discomfort to other guests or staff. All are welcome to take part in the prayers which are offered twice daily in the chapel.

3. Centrality of relationship and prayer: The trustees and staff seek to live out a gospel of peace and to demonstrate this through their daily activities within the Centre, and in their relationships both with guests and with one another. Everything that takes place within the Centre is under-girded by prayer. Prayer is therefore integral to the running of Penhurst and it is sought to foster prayer among trustees, staff, volunteers and supporters. The centre sets aside time each day in the morning and evening for prayer and reflection.

4. Welcome and responsiveness: The aim of the Centre is to be responsive and sensitive to guests and their individual needs. The warmth and quality of welcome given is much more important than items or practices which speak of one particular Christian tradition. In order to achieve this aim, active listening, prayer and debriefing is on offer to guests within the Centre; mentoring and spiritual direction can be provided on request if booked in advance.

5. Place of quiet and reflection: The Centre recognises that the ideal balance between quiet time and engagement, reflection and action, rest and activity, study and prayer, may be different for each individual. We advocate, therefore, a spirit of acceptance and tolerance to enable the needs of each guest to be met as fully as possible. Guests and staff will be encouraged not to make noise that disturbs others. Guests who come to retreat in personal silence are given every opportunity to do so including meals in their rooms if desired and others around them are asked to be sensitive to their needs. Silence is an important part of many retreats and the Centre seeks to provide opportunities for silence at the discretion of the retreat leader and/or hosts.

6. Open to all God's people: The Trustees and staff are committed to providing an ecumenical environment for guests respecting the diversity in understanding and practice of the Christian faith and enabling the full breadth of Christ's body to feel both accepted and welcomed. To help fulfil this aim the Centre accommodates a wide and varied range of liturgy, retreat support materials and Christian artwork. All traditions, insights and forms of worship that bring glory to God are valued and respected.

7. Length of stay: In order to enable people to listen to God as fully as possible, we endeavour to find ways of encouraging guests to spend 4-7 days at the Centre. Consequently discounts are offered for longer stays.