# Job description

Post title: Archivist

Service area: Heritage

Grade: SO1

Reports to: Museum & Archive Manager

Your team: Heritage

Number of supervisees: Assistant Archivist and volunteers

## Our ambition

We're determined to make Islington fairer. To create a place where everyone, whatever their background, has the opportunity to reach their potential and enjoy a good quality of life.

We also have an ambitious goal – to be the best council in the country– with every employee clear about the part they play and inspired, focused and supported to give their very best.

We want to build an organisation where employees feel valued, inspired and empowered to help us achieve our goals and provide the best services possible to our residents.

## Our values and behaviours

‘Be Islington’ is about setting a clear challenge about what it means to be an Islington employee and sets the standard for every new recruit.

We ask our employees to ‘Be Islington’ – playing their part in working together for a fairer borough and to always be collaborative, be ambitious, be resourceful, and be empowering (‘CARE’).

## Our commitment to challenging inequality

We are committed to tackling inequality, racism and injustice and creating a fairer borough for all. In order to do this, we need to set the example by being a fair employer and creating a workplace environment, which is free from discrimination, racism and inequality. Our approach needs to be proactive, consistently learning to create a fairer workplace and foster a culture, which empowers all staff to challenge inequality.

Fairness is at the heart of what we do. We want to celebrate and embrace our differences by:

* Ensuring our workforce is representative of the people we work on behalf of, our residents
* Creating equitable working environments and diverse teams
* Understanding our residents in order to design and deliver services that help tackle inequality and improve life chances for our residents
* Getting to know people and their differences
* Interpreting issues and concerns from a cultural perspective and address situations or problems from the points-of-view of multiple cultures
* Supporting people with long-term health conditions and/or disabilities
* Recognising the value of flexible working to support staff where possible

## Key responsibilities

**Background**

Islington Local History Centre is based in the Finsbury Library complex in the south of Islington on St John Street. It sits within the Heritage Service which is responsible for Islington Museum, Cally Clock Tower Centre, archives and several historic sites including the Clerks’ Well.

As well as the historic Council archives and a large image collection, the Local History Centre has several special collections including: Joe Orton & Kenneth Halliwell collection, Walter Sicker archive, LGBTQ+ archive (a new collection of 4,000+ items collected as part of the NLHF-funded Islington’s Pride project) and the Sadler’s Wells Theatre archive. We also hold several personal collections from politicians connected with the borough.

Islington is well known for its radical social and political heritage, which includes the 1381 Peasants’ Revolt and the building of Finsbury Health Centre, a pioneering free, community health centre, created a decade before the NHS. We use this heritage to help improve residents’ lives and life choices. Every resident has a right to connect meaningfully with Islington’s story and to access the myriad tangible benefits granted by cultural enrichment. Heritage provides an extraordinary opportunity to build community wellbeing, create a shared but diverse local identity, and to promote lifelong learning for all.

Heritage Service Strategic Aims:

Aim 1**:** to promote a shared **sense of identity and belonging**. By celebrating and commemorating the borough’s diverse histories, heritage can support communities to understand differences and build strong commonalities.

Aim 2: to empower communities to understand their historic environment, engendering a sense of pride and ownership so that they can contribute to **placemaking** and re-making their local neighbourhood.

Aim 3:to harness the power of heritage in **education and lifelong learning** for all ages and demographics, working with families, children, young people, adults, residents and communities to enrich people’s lives, broaden cultural confidence and develop skills.

Aim 4: to utilise Islington’s heritage to enhance the **quality of life of residents**, contributing to improved mental and physical health and well-being.

Aim 5:to deliver an accessible, inclusive, and responsive service which centres **community voice** and local need in the development of all programmes, projects, and sites .

Key target audiences for the Local History Centre include:

* Young people
* Community groups
* Those who are traditionally underrepresented in heritage organisations.

Reporting to the Museum and Archive Manager, the post will provide ideal opportunities for an Archivist seeking new challenges in developing creative approaches to using archives to enrich residents’ lives, building community wellbeing, creating a shared inclusive local identity, and promoting lifelong learning for all.

**Archivist Role**

The main role of the Archivist is to maintain and develop the archive collections and to use them for the benefit of our residents. You will do this by:

* Managing the Local History Centre
* Rebrand the Local History Centre to Islington Archives
* Manage and improve the day-to-day visitor service and experience
* Care for and grow the collections via community-based projects
* Delivering the public engagement programme
* Work with the Learning and Engagement Managers to devise and deliver the learning programme
* Devise and develop special projects for target audiences
* Work with the Museum team on public exhibitions and associated programmes
* Developing the Local History Centre
* Investigate potential TNA Archive Service Accreditation
* Input into the care and development of the Clerks’ Well
* Collaborate with cultural organisations in Islington to deliver partnerships

Key working relationships will be with the Curator and the Learning and Engagement Managers. The post holder with work closely with other members of the Heritage Team, including the Heritage Project Managers.

**Duties & Responsibilities:**

* Work with colleagues to rebrand Islington Local History Centre to Islington Archives
* Manager and develop the enquiry service/search room in Islington Archives
* Manage volunteers, their development and input into the Archives
* Be responsible for the development of the archive and local history collections, including identifying gaps in the current collections and developing appropriate methods to fill these gaps
* Be responsible for the online Adlib collections management system, including prioritising collections to catalogue and the digitisation of specific collections
* Partner with colleagues on the transfer of Council material into the Archives
* Develop and maintain internal partnerships that will help to achieve the Archive’s vision and objectives, including colleagues in Planning, children’s services and Children’s Centres etc
* Work with appropriate colleagues to plan, promote and deliver a public programme with specific reference to demystifying archives aimed at our target audiences
* Collaborate with Council colleagues, external partners and community groups to co-produce community projects to reflect local needs and priorities
* Keep up to date with current archive sector priorities locally and nationally and take responsibility for own personal development and professional awareness
* Ensure the requirements of Health and Safety legislation and the Council’s relevant policies are carried out in relation to the responsibilities of the job
* At all times carry out responsibilities and duties with due regard to the Council’s Dignity for All Policy and the Data Protection Act and other legislation
* Ensure all services within the area(s) of responsibility are provided in accordance with the Council's commitment to high quality service provision to users
* Achieve agreed service outcomes and outputs, and personal appraisal targets, as agreed by the line manager
* Work in a corporate, co-operative and collaborative way with other Council officers

### Resources and Financial management

Ensure effective Financial Management, cost controls and income maximisation in an ever-changing environment, fluctuating demands and priorities. Ensure resources are well managed and effectively deployed to the best possible effects assuring value for money in all activities.

### Compliance

Ensure legal, regulatory and policy compliance under GDPR, Health and Safety and in area of your specialism identifying opportunities and risks and escalating where appropriate.

## Budget responsibilities

The post holder is responsible for any devolved budgets

## Work style

The post holder will be based at Islington Local History Centre, 245 St John Street, EC1V 4NB

## Person specification

You should demonstrate on your application form how you meet the essential criteria. Please ensure that you address each of the criteria as this will be assessed to determine your suitability for the post.

### Essential criteria

#### Qualifications

| Essential criteria | Criteria description | Assessed by |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | Recognised professional qualification in archives | Application |

#### Experience

| Essential criteria | Criteria description | Assessed by |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 2 | Experience of working in an archive or similar cultural environment | Application |
| 3 | Substantial experience of working with the public and researching information | Application/Interview |
| 4 | Experience of managing and developing staff and volunteers | Application/Interview |
| 5 | Knowledge of, and commitment to, the educational and wellbeing role of archives, and the awareness of current thinking around this | Application/Interview |
| 6 | Experience of using archives to design and deliver learning programmes that meet the identified needs of a target audience, such as families, schools, people facing discrimination or social exclusion | Application/Interview |
| 7 | Experience of collaborating and co-producing learning initiatives with partner organisations and targeted groups to produce new, innovative learning initiatives | Application/Interview |

#### Skills

| Essential criteria | Criteria description | Assessed by |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 8 | Creative flair in using archives to develop successful public engagement programmes and interpretation interventions, supported by robust monitoring and evaluation strands | Application/Interview |
| 9 | Extensive research skills with the ability to evaluate and disseminate primary resources through appropriate channels | Application/Interview |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 10 | Ability to manage effective partnerships with a range of partners and to communicate complex issues to a broad range of audiences | Application/Interview |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 11 | Self-motivation and ability to work independently in all aspects of the role and to develop practical and realistic responses to problem solving | Application/Interview |
| 12 | Social media skills to promote the service and engage new audiences | Application/Interview |
| 13 | Able to work one weekend a month and occasional evenings where necessary to meet the requirements of the service | Application |

## Special requirements of the post

| Essential criteria | Criteria description | Assessed by |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 14 | This role will require you to obtain an Standard satisfactory clearance from the Disclosure and Barring Service | Employment check |

## Our accreditations

Our accreditations include: the Healthy Workplace award, Timewise, London Living Wage Employer, Disability Confident Committed, The Mayor’s Good Work Standard, Stonewall Diversity Champion, and Time to Change.

