JOB DESCRIPTION

GENERAL INFORMATION

Job Title:	Venue Director
Place of work:	Ascot Racecourse
Department:	Directorate
Reporting to:	Chief Executive Officer
Contract:	Permanent
Direct Reports:	4 (Head of Operations, Head of Facilities, Estate Manager, EA & Estates Office Manager)

WHO WE ARE

Welcome to Ascot where tradition meets innovation and excitement is the heartbeat of our business.

We are a destination for over 500,000 guests each year where passion, elegance, and celebration converge, and it is our team of behind-the-scenes heroes that bring every intricate detail to life.

As one of the world's leading racecourses, Ascot is renowned for its rich heritage spanning over 300 years. But we are not bound by the past; we're driven by the pursuit of excellence in everything we do.

From hosting our flagship event, Royal Ascot, to pioneering sustainable practices, we are committed to building a Global lifestyle brand, wrapped around the world class horse racing we run.

At Ascot we believe in preserving the beauty of our surroundings and minimising our ecological footprint. From eco-friendly initiatives to community engagement programs, we strive to make a positive impact on both the environment and the lives of those around us.

THE ROLE

The Venue Director provides strategic leadership for the operation and long term management of Ascot Racecourse and its estate, ensuring that our iconic venue is safe, resilient, maintained to the highest standard and consistently ready to deliver.

With overall accountability for the Operations, Facilities and Property Management functions, the Venue Director brings together the teams, infrastructure and site delivery plans that underpin the successful operation of Ascot throughout the year.

Operational readiness sits at the heart of the role. The Venue Director provides the leadership, coordination and assurance required to ensure the Racecourse is prepared for every raceday and event, with a particular focus on Royal Ascot.

The Venue Director will balance the protection of Ascot's unique heritage and character with the investment and development required to support a complex but modern, world class sporting and events venue.

Working collaboratively across the business, this role is a key member of the Senior Leadership team, is a statutory Board director and must be a visible presence across the racecourse.

WHAT YOU'LL BE DOING

Operational Readiness

- Overall accountability for the operational readiness of Ascot Racecourse for Royal Ascot, Ascot racedays, and all other events.
- Lead on year-round readiness to ensure the venue, infrastructure, people, plans, contractors, suppliers and systems are all prepared to deliver safely and successfully.
- Act as the senior operational lead during Royal Ascot and racedays, ensuring effective decision making and coordination across the Racecourse.
- Ensure appropriate contingency, emergency and business continuity arrangements are in place, understood and tested.
- Ensure all permanent and temporary facilities are operationally ready, safe and presented to the high standard expected of Ascot.
- Provide Board level updates with clear assurance on readiness, highlighting significant risks and areas requiring intervention.

Estates and Property Management

- Provide strategic leadership and stewardship of Ascot's estate and property portfolio.
- Ensure Ascot's buildings, grounds, public spaces and critical infrastructure are maintained and presented to a consistently high standard expected of Ascot.
- Establish a robust approach to asset management, planned maintenance and investment.
- Develop long term capital plans balancing safety, asset condition, operational requirements, guest experience and value.
- Provide strategic oversight of Ascot's land and property interests, maintaining relationships with relevant external stakeholders and professional advisors.

  Identify opportunities to enhance Ascot's estate and property assets.

Safety and Security

- Champion a positive health and safety culture across Ascot.

- Ensure effective emergency, contingency and crisis management arrangements are maintained, communicated and tested.
- Ensure appropriate compliance arrangements are maintained across the venue.
- Build strong working relationships with the local authority, emergency services, our security partner and other key agencies.
- Provide calm and authoritative senior leadership during operational incidents.

Venue Development

- Ensure operational requirements inform capital and development projects.
- Provide strategic input to significant development programmes to ensure effective integration with the existing estate.
- Develop and prioritise ongoing capital replacement and improvement programmes.

Guest Experience

- Ensure the physical presentation and operation of the Racecourse consistently reflects Ascot's brand and standards.
- Work collaboratively with Commercial, Racing, Events at Ascot, and other Ascot teams to ensure operational decisions support an exceptional guest experience.
- Ensure the arrival, movement and experience of guests across the site is considered as part of venue planning.
- Maintain exceptionally high standards of venue presentation, cleanliness, maintenance and operational delivery.
- Champion continuous improvement in how guests experience and navigate Ascot.

Leadership

- Act as a trusted advisor to the CEO, Board and Senior Leadership team.
- Lead, inspire and develop a high performing, multi-disciplinary Venue team.
- Set clear standards, objectives and expectations across all functions in remit.
- Build strong relationships with key stakeholders, contractors and operational partners, ensuring they work as an extension of the Ascot team.

SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

Essential

- Significant senior leadership experience within a complex, high profile venue (sports, major events, leisure, hospitality or comparable operational environment)
- Demonstratable experience of leading large scale venue operations and operational readiness in a major live event environment.
- Demonstratable experience of operational risk, resilience, business continuity and emergency planning within a complex operating environment.
- Experience of leading multidisciplinary teams.
- Strong understanding of estate, facilities and asset management, including maintenance, lifecycle planning and capital investment.
- Strong working knowledge of health and safety, and regulatory compliance.
- Strong commercial and financial acumen, with experience of managing significant operational and capital budgets.
- Highly developed stakeholder management skills.
- Strong judgement and decision-making capability.
- Excellent communication and influencing skills, with the credibility to operate effectively at Executive and Board level.

Desirable

- Relevant professional qualification or membership in a related discipline (RICS, IWFM, IOSH, NEBOSH), or equivalent operational, property, engineering or facilities qualification.
- Experience of managing a large or complex property estate.
- Experience of operating within a heritage, premium or highly brand sensitive environment.
- Experience of significant venue transformation, redevelopment or master planning programmes.
- Experience of working closely with police, emergency services, local authorities and/or other statutory or event safety partners.
- Experience within racing or sport.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM US

Ascot Racecourse is a workplace like no other. You can expect to enjoy a standout welcome, tailored training and development, and wellbeing support for you and your family, including private medical insurance and 24/7 virtual GP access. We run an internal Staff Volunteering programme where you will be given time off to give back to the community. Additional perks include extra paid time off for our Christmas office closure, TOIL if working on a race day, clothing and hat allowances and hiring, complimentary guest tickets, and exclusive local and brand partner discounts. With socials, annual parties and special celebrations, there is always something to look forward to at Ascot!

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

We are committed to ensuring guests from all backgrounds and communities feel welcome at

the Racecourse and are working to ensure our internal teams are nurtured within a supportive and inclusive environment. Our mission is to eliminate discrimination and prejudice of any kind at our venue and throughout our business. By educating and implementing meaningful actions across all that we do, we can make certain that Ascot is a place for everyone to enjoy.

As an equal opportunities employer, Ascot Racecourse is committed to the equal treatment of all current and prospective employees and does not condone discrimination on the basis of age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, race or ethnicity, religion or belief, gender identity, or marriage and civil partnership. We aspire to have a diverse and inclusive workplace and strongly encourage suitably qualified applicants from a wide range of backgrounds to apply and join our company.