

www.awsexecutive.com



Appointment of CEO

www.crichton.co.uk





Contents

Welcome from the Chair	Page 3
Background to The Crichton Trust	Page 4
Our Purpose, Mission, and Vision	Page 5
Job Description.....	Page 6
Person Specification	Page 8
Senior Leadership Team	Page 9
How to Apply.....	Page 10

Welcome from the Chair



After nearly eight years of outstanding leadership, our Chief Executive, Gwilym Gibbons, will step down in May 2026 to embark on a new venture. This marks an exciting and pivotal moment for The Crichton Trust, creating a rare opportunity to lead one of Scotland’s most distinctive charitable organisations into its next chapter.

The Crichton is a remarkable place: a historic estate with a powerful sense of heritage, landscape and community. Established in 1996 as a charity and company limited by guarantee, the Trust exists to promote, regenerate and care for The Crichton and other buildings of historic interest across Dumfries and Galloway, while ensuring the estate continues to thrive as a centre of educational, commercial, recreational, cultural and artistic excellence.

Today, our purpose is clear: **to connect people, place and the past to shape the future**—inspiring learning, innovation and sustainable community growth. Our ambition is to be custodians of world-leading places that inspire, innovate and drive enterprise, combining heritage, culture and sustainability to create new futures and address the grand challenges of our time.

We are now seeking an ambitious, values-driven CEO with the vision and leadership to set our strategic direction for the years ahead—working with the Board,

our talented team, and a wide range of partners and stakeholders to secure long-term sustainability and impact. The next phase of our journey will be shaped around four pillars—**Education, Heritage, Social-Cultural, and Enviro-Economic**—as we grow The Crichton as a hub for learning and research, steward and enhance the estate’s assets, strengthen cultural and community life, and drive innovation that supports a greener, more resilient regional economy.

If this role aligns with your experience, ambitions and values, I encourage you to explore the attached information pack and get in touch with our search partner, **AWS Executive**, who are managing the recruitment process and can arrange a confidential discussion.

With best wishes,

Dr David Hall

Background to the Crichton Trust

The Crichton Trust is a company limited by guarantee with charitable status, established in 1996 to promote, regenerate and care for The Crichton and other buildings of historic interest throughout Dumfries and Galloway.

The Trust has the overall strategic responsibility of ensuring that the site is managed and developed to an appropriate standard. Our mission is to preserve, enhance and interpret the historic character of The Crichton and develop it with a clear identity as a place of educational, commercial, recreational, cultural and artistic excellence taking account of accessibility and stakeholder and community needs for the benefit of Dumfries and Galloway.



Our Purpose, Mission, and Vision

Purpose:

To connect people, place, and the past to shape the future, inspire learning, innovation, and sustainable community growth, creating lasting positive impact for people, place, and planet.

Mission:

We provide spaces and opportunities that foster connections, collaboration, and creativity, harnessing our heritage and unique environment to shape solutions for today and the future.

Vision:

We are custodians of world-leading places that inspire, innovate, and drive enterprise. By combining heritage, culture, and sustainability, we create new futures, strengthen communities, and address the grand challenges of our time.

We are committed to preserving, enhancing and interpreting the historic character of The Crichton Estate, and we want to develop it with a clear identity as a place of educational, commercial, recreational, cultural and artistic excellence, taking account of accessibility and stakeholder and community needs for the benefit of Dumfries and Galloway.

Our goals look to address the challenges of our time, so by using our unique rural location as the test bed for ideas and solutions, we're working towards achieving Net Zero and addressing the underpinning issues of an ageing population and technological advancement.

The next four years will move the Trust towards a resilient and entrepreneurial future. Our work will be focused on four pillars:

Education

Growing The Crichton Campus as a centre of learning and research.

Heritage

Preserving, consolidating and developing the Estate's historic, cultural, and natural assets.

Social-Cultural

Establishing The Crichton as the leading regional venue for cultural and community life.

Enviro-Economic

Driving innovation, green-tech and creative industries to support the future economy.



Job Description

Job Title:

Chief Executive

Location:

Grierson House, The Crichton, Dumfries

Responsible to:

The Chair and Board of the Trust

Salary:

circa £90K (based on 35 hours per week) 31 days annual leave (incl. public holidays), life assurance, health insurance, and admittance to the Dumfries and Galloway Pension Scheme.

Key Responsibilities and Objectives

Provide strategic leadership and direction for the Trust, accountable to the Board of Trustees for its people and resources, ensuring effective delivery of operational, financial, legal and regulatory responsibilities, and inspiring the management team to embrace the challenges faced. Work with the Board to shape, grow, and deliver an innovative, sustainable strategy that secures long-term success—acting as custodian of The Crichton's place and story; protecting the charity's ongoing wellbeing; safeguarding the site's environmental, cultural, and heritage value; and driving The Crichton's evolution into a thriving hub for economic activity that supports the region's economic development.

Lead the development and delivery of The Crichton's strategic partnerships, maximising engagement with key partners and stakeholders to position The Crichton as a vital infrastructure asset for the South of Scotland and nationally, and to drive sustainable growth through collaborative, whole-system approaches that realise shared ambition and opportunities.

Scope of Responsibility

Responsible for taking all major executive decisions affecting the Trust, operating under the authority delegated by the Board through the Scheme of Delegation. With the support and oversight of the Board, the CEO will drive strategic direction and ensure effective operational delivery. The CEO must exercise delegated authority appropriately, be able to evidence and justify decisions taken, and remain accountable for outcomes. Ensure the effective management and continued development of The Crichton Estate:



- Development of new services or improvements to existing services as required, thereby generating additional resources for the enhancement and delivery of the Trust's overall aims.
- Direction and management of direct reports, delegating responsibility where appropriate, and ensuring efficient delivery of all services.
- Operational responsibility of all governance, legal, financial and general management matters consistent with the role of CEO in any commercial or third sector organisation, but also ensuring that all relevant information is made available to the Board in a timely manner to allow proper decision-making.

Principle Duties

Leadership

- Provide inspiration and create a supportive environment with exceptional communication skills and the ability to motivate and inspire others.
- Understand and effectively deal with the charitable concerns of the Trust to meet all the requirements of charity law and OSCR best practice.
- Assess major risks and opportunities, stimulating change to support and achieve the Trust's goals.
- Provide visibility and engagement with external stakeholders, working in a collaborative and open manner.
- Ensure the Senior Leadership Team perform to a high standard and are progressing the Trust's objectives as agreed by the Board.

General management

- Act decisively and ensure evidence-based management decisions across multiple income streams and organisational strands.
- Inspire confidence and belief in the vision and values of the Trust, acting as its principle ambassador.
- Nurture and lead high-performing teams with an entrepreneurial mindset, accountability and a culture of excellence.
- Secure and enhance the organisation's financial sustainability. Drive a culture of continuous improvement.

Strategy and business development

- Lead on the implementation of the strategy and agreed outcomes.
- Be visible and supportive in business development activities, with particular emphasis on developing the wide range of relationships that this role demands.
- Understand the big picture and develop innovative ideas to leverage external investment, both in response to bid calls and proactively to secure support from others.
- Attract and find the right people to lead any new developments/initiatives and innovate and grow existing services and activities.
- Demonstrate significant commercial acumen and judgement in securing effective delivery of projects and plans.
- Promote and nurture an entrepreneurial culture and practice within The Crichton.

External responsibilities

- Represent the organisation and its values and aims at all times. Articulate and communicate the story of The Crichton as well as the future plans of the organisation, making the most of The Crichton as an extraordinary destination and place of innovation, learning and heritage with a long view 100 years forward and back.
- Build on The Crichton's strong reputation as a high-quality environment and strategic hub for economic development, leveraging the Trust's role as an anchor organisation and trusted convenor to strengthen partnerships, attract further investment, and secure long-term support. Be politically aware in assessing the impact of development at The Crichton on the social and community affairs of Dumfries, Dumfries and Galloway, the South of Scotland and the wider Borderlands Region.

Person Specification

Essential Criteria

Relevant experience

Senior leadership experience in a complex large-scale circa £8m turnover charity/ social enterprise or at least five years Chief Executive experience in a forward-looking organisation where multi-faceted change has been a key feature.

Practical experience and knowledge

Functional: Finance (budget setting and control), income diversification, people and asset management, charitable governance, purpose-led business planning and development

Sectoral: Third sector and/or social enterprise; economic development and regeneration, property development and management, heritage attraction and venue leadership.

Leadership, management skills and qualities

Ability to effect and drive positive change with exceptional interpersonal skills with the ability to adapt to change and sector trends. Ability to get the best out of senior leadership teams. Business acumen and sound commercial judgement, with the focus on outcomes and key performance indicators (KPIs) to achieve short, medium and long-term (50-100 years) financial and non-financial ambitions and impact targets.

High resilience, with the ability to motivate and inspire others with strong convictions and the ability to make a stand for what you believe in.

Communication

Excellent oral, written and interpersonal communication skills and ability to develop individuals and groups at all levels.

Policy

Contribute to the development, planning and implementation of the organisation's strategies and policies along with regional and national policies that support the objectives of the Trust.

Analytical ability, problem-solving and strategic thinking

Ability to assimilate and analyse information quickly and accurately and to think strategically, formulate decisions and make recommendations.

Compliance

An understanding of legislation and codes of practice pertaining to the delivery of charitable organisations in Scotland and UK company law.

Personal Values

In tune with the values of the organisation, namely:

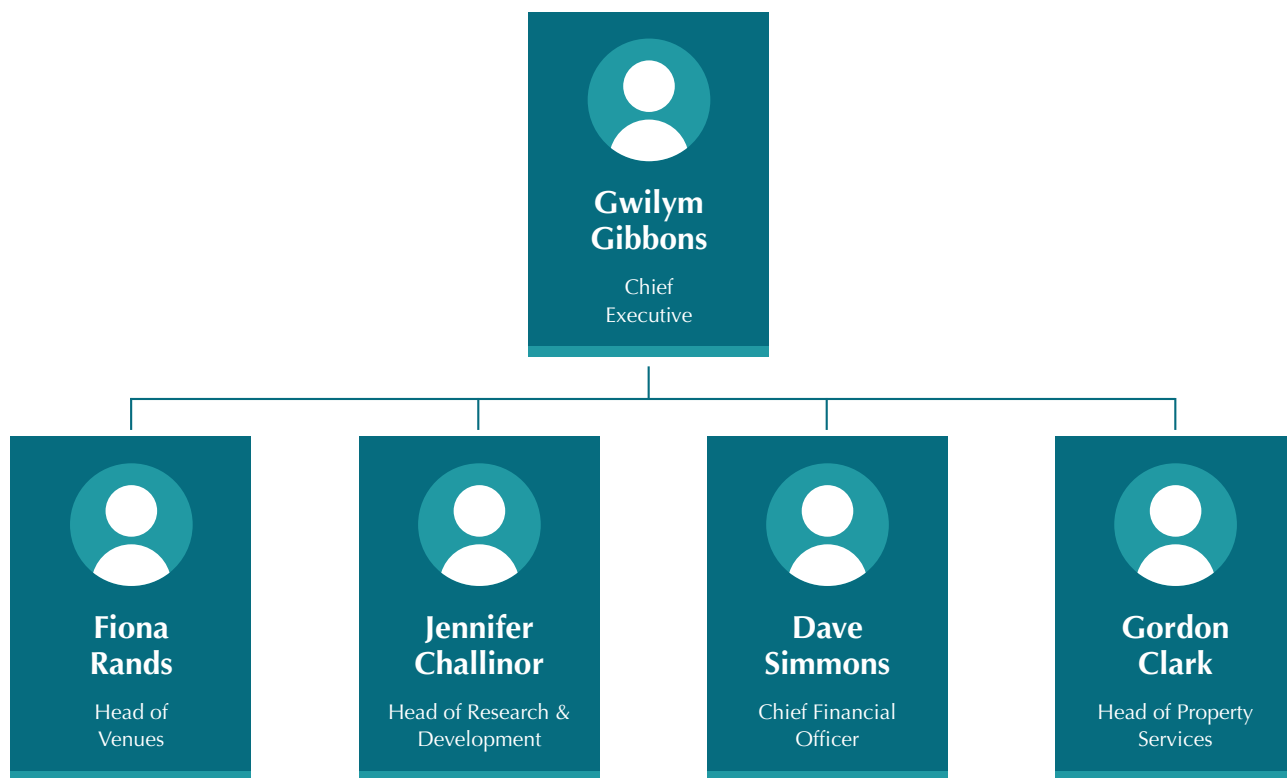
Brave: We innovate. We actively explore new ideas and ways of working. We learn through action (and sometimes fail, reflect, learn and try again). We recognise that we don't have enough time to waste in inaction. Our people, place and planet need solutions now. We work collaboratively and creatively with others in planning, shaping and delivering solutions.

Agile: We try new approaches, learn from them and others, and collaborate to improve existing ideas and seek better solutions. We recognise the value of exploring new opportunities and potential collaborations and respond quickly. We are focused on our long-term vision while recognising the dynamic and fast changing world we are in. We look for new opportunities and challenges and tackle them head-on.

Ambitious: We don't shy away from the hard questions and the need for whole system change.

Compassionate: We care about our people, place and planet. We are honest and open so our communities can be active participants in change and innovation. We are careful in how we procure our goods and services.

Senior Leadership Team





How to Apply

For further information or to arrange a confidential discussion about the vacancy, please contact Alan Surgeon or Donna McKay at AWS Executive.

Suitable candidates will be invited to apply with a CV and cover letter via the microsite link below:

<https://awsexecutive.com/ceo-the-crichton-trust/>

Alan Surgeon: alan@awsexecutive.com

Donna McKay: donna@awsexecutive.com



The Crichton | A place to breathe

Where heritage, people, and ideas come together to create lasting impact

