

case study

Interim Management In Action

National Trust calls in an Interim to manage £2m Heritage Lottery Project



The Challenge

Last year, The National Trust struggled to recruit a permanent General Manager to run Ickworth House near Bury St Edmunds. With the house in the middle of a £2m Heritage Lottery project called 'Real Lives', the Trust decided it needed to hire an Interim General Manager as it needed someone urgently to manage the project until a permanent Manager was hired.

Justin Scully, the National Trust's Assistant Director of Operations for East of England explains, "There were a number of changes taking place at Ickworth and within the National Trust - we couldn't afford not to have a General Manager running one of our largest properties. This was one of the rare occasions where the Trust felt it necessary to

use an Interim Manager as it was critical that the project ran smoothly. We needed an Interim with strong leadership skills and commercial ability, to manage different contractors, diverse stakeholders, and the permanent employees, including large number of volunteers - it was no small challenge."

The National Trust turned to Russam GMS for help. The firm had helped with the placement of an Interim General Manager at Hughendon Manor in 2009. A short list of suitable candidates was supplied within five days of taking the brief and Catharine Pusey, a Managing Director level Interim with strong entrepreneurial, commercial and financial experience in the private, not for profit and public sectors was appointed as a part time Interim General Manager.

totally on the priorities. Her experience in the not for profit sector and her empathy with the National Trust, combined with her excellent business skills ensured she got to grips with a very complex project in a difficult period of change very quickly. Our project is now firmly on track, employee morale is high and we have now recruited a permanent General Manager who can continue Catharine's excellent progress."

Catharine said, "This is one of the most interesting roles I've had both because of the complexity of the job and the fact that at running a National Trust property is a unique opportunity."

Russam GMS is on the preferred suppliers list for the National Trust and was recognised by the recruitment industry in 2010 as being the UK's 'Best Interim Recruitment Agency'".

The outcomes

Catharine made significant achievements at Ickworth in just five months. All the Real Lives project requirements were met and the property is on track for opening the project in Spring 2011 and a permanent General Manager has now been recruited.

Catharine helped to boost the morale of employees and volunteers by encouraging them to take greater responsibility of the 'Real Lives' project. Together, they have expanded the remit of the project to bring Ickworth's past and present to life. 'Real Lives' has evolved from one central project to become "Ickworth Lives" - 31 separate projects which are now being led by members of the team.

Justin Scully said, "Catharine was the perfect Interim Manager. She delivered over and above her brief; but she was realistic too; she focused

THE NATIONAL TRUST

