

Somerset Wildlife Trust Recruitment Pack

Trustee



Somerset
Wildlife Trust



Message from the Chair of Trustees

We are excited to be recruiting for two new Trustees to join our experienced, knowledgeable, committed, and passionate Board.

There has never been a more crucial time for nature globally and locally as we experience biodiversity declines and begin to feel the effects of climate change.

In 1964, 15 people showed their passion and commitment by creating a trust for nature, paying in £1 each. These amazing pioneers could see that nature was in decline and took visible action to turn that around. They are the original Team Wilder. We have grown to being an organisation that has over 23,000 members, more than 350 volunteers supporting us in a range of different ways, and are approaching 100 staff, delivering a huge array of projects across the county – all focused on achieving nature's recovery. With our Wilder Somerset 2030 we have a clear plan for how we will seek to deliver, creating a movement for nature through Team Wilder, investing in data and evidence to target delivery, and working with partners and landowners to deliver projects on the ground. Our mission is to champion the changes needed to rebalance our relationship with wildlife and the natural world.

As part of a federation of 46 independent Wildlife Trusts we have a national strategy for Bringing Nature Back in the UK.

Our Trustees, all volunteers, provide the strategic leadership to achieve our goals. We are now looking for a dynamic, passionate individual to join Trust Council. We are looking for someone who has relevant strategic knowledge gained from life, or from your work in the land management or nature friendly farming sector. You will need to bring a high level of personal integrity, have the time to commit, and heaps of energy and enthusiasm for the work of Somerset Wildlife Trust and a passion for wildlife. We are an inclusive and diverse organisation

If this is you and you fit the role description, then we want to hear from you. You could be part of the team that steers our charity and its governance at a critical time.

You can read more about our work on our website somersetwildlife.org and more about our governance [here](#).

I do hope you will consider getting involved and look forward to hearing from you.

Rupert Taylor

Can you help lead nature's recovery in Somerset?

Council of Trustees

The Trust's Council of Trustees has oversight of the charity and make key decisions to help steer strategic direction.

The Council meets five times a year either at the Trust's main office in Taunton or at other locations in Somerset, or via zoom. Trustees are expected to be available for regular consultation and input on a range of issues between meetings, usually via email. Trustees are also expected to attend our Annual General Meeting and participate in Council subcommittees as required and according to their skill set. These subcommittees usually meet digitally four times per year.

Trustees operate in a voluntary capacity, but the Trust will cover all reasonable expenses incurred while exercising your responsibilities. Details of Trustee responsibilities can be found on the Charity Commission website [here](#).

It is our policy to work towards an inclusive and diverse Council, with the right blend of strategic insight, personal skills and relevant professional and/or relevant experience.

We hope that Council members will gain valuable experience through their role with the Trust, as well as the satisfaction of contributing to an effective, ambitious local charity which is leading nature's recovery in Somerset.

'The Essential Trustee' from the Charity Commission explains the full role and responsibilities of a Trustee and can be read here: [The essential trustee: what you need to know, what you need to do \(CC3\) - GOV.UK](#)



Who are we looking for?

We are currently seeking new Trustees and would welcome expressions of interest if you feel you would be able to contribute to the strategic development of the charity.

We are an inclusive, diverse organisation and encourage applications from people from diverse backgrounds with relevant skills and experience. We welcome the opportunity to discuss any access needs to ensure an equitable and supportive Trustee experience.

We are particularly interested in talking to people with specific expertise and skills in any of the following areas:

- Nature-friendly / regenerative farming practices as a land or estates manager
- Land agent
- Experience or knowledge of managing land for nature and working with other land managers

All Trustees are expected to demonstrate the seven [Nolan Principles of public office](#): selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, and leadership plus limitless enthusiasm for the work of Somerset Wildlife Trust.

Ideal person specification

- Committed to the mission and values of the Trust – potential Trustees must be members of the Trust at the time of seeking election at the AGM and throughout their term of office.
- Willingness to devote the necessary time and effort to be an effective Trustee.
- Ability to think logically and objectively in order to identify key issues, with the confidence to make balanced and independent judgements, which support robust decision-making.
- Up-to-date IT and digital skills to facilitate collaborative and remote working.
- Willing to voice your opinion in a board setting, to listen to others' views and be flexible, constructive and open to challenge.
- Understanding and accepting of the legal duties and responsibilities of being a charity Trustee.



Commitment

- A term of three years, with potential to renew.
- Attendance at five Council meetings, which includes two annual development days. These are held at various locations in Somerset and are held during the week in daytime. Dates are issued at the start of the year.
- Board papers are issued seven days in advance of meetings and Trustees need to ensure they have read and understood all information in advance of the meetings to fully participate and execute their duties.
- Attendance at the Annual General Meeting in November.
- Play a full part in the work of subcommittees of Council or working groups, according to expertise and skills – current subcommittees are Finance and Resources, Health and Safety, Risk and Governance.

- Being in email/telephone communications with the staff team and other Council members about any urgent matters arising between meetings.
- We are committed to have a trustee board with a wide range of skills and experiences united in our commitment to restoring nature in Somerset. Previous trustee experience is not a requirement provided you can demonstrate your ability to operate at a strategic level. Therefore, if support is required with any of these duties, we would be happy to discuss how we could assist you in your role and what support would be available.

Qualifying criteria

All Trustees must be aged 18 or over upon appointment. Potential Trustees must confirm that they are not disqualified under the automatic disqualification rules which are detailed here.

Role description: Trustee

The duties of a Trustee are as follows

- Ensuring that the organisation pursues its stated objects (purposes), as defined in its governing document, by developing and agreeing a long-term strategy
- Ensuring that the organisation complies with its governing document (i.e. its trust deed, constitution or memorandum and articles of association), charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations
- Ensuring that the organisation applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its charitable objects (i.e. the charity must not spend money on activities that are not included in its own objects, however worthwhile or charitable those activities are) for the benefit of the public
- Ensuring that the organisation defines its goals and evaluates performance against agreed targets
- Safeguarding the good name and values of the organisation
- Ensuring the effective and efficient administration of the organisation, including having appropriate policies and procedures in place
- Ensuring the financial stability of the organisation
- Protecting and managing the property of the charity and ensuring the proper investment of the charity's funds
- Following proper and formal arrangements for the appointment, supervision, support, appraisal and remuneration of the Chief Executive

This role description is not exhaustive, and you may be asked to deliver additional duties that are reasonably commensurate with the role.

In addition to the above statutory duties, each Trustee should use any specific skills, knowledge or experience they must help the Council reach sound decisions. This may involve scrutinising board papers, leading discussions, focusing on key issues, providing advice and guidance on new initiatives, or other issues in which the Trustee has special expertise.

Person specification

- A commitment to the organisation
- A willingness to devote the necessary time and effort
- Strategic vision
- Good, independent judgement
- An ability to think creatively
- A willingness to speak their mind
- An understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of Trusteeship
- An ability to work effectively as a member of a team
- A commitment to Nolan's seven principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

How to apply

If you are interested in becoming a Trustee and feel you have the skills required, we would welcome your application.

Applications can be sent in any format providing they include information found in a CV, and with a covering statement setting out your skills and experience relevant to the role description and skills we are seeking. Your application should be sent by email to governance@somersetwildlife.org by 27th January 2025.

If you wish to have an informal discussion with an existing Trustee before applying, please contact governance@somersetwildlife.org.

Interviews will be held with shortlisted candidates in February to discuss your relevant skills and experience, and how you would complement the existing board of Trustees.



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