

The Wildlife Trusts

Chair Recruitment Pack 2022



The Wildlife Trusts

Who we are

The Wildlife Trusts are a grassroots movement of people from a wide range of backgrounds and all walks of life, who believe that we need nature and nature needs us. We have more than 870,000 members, over 35,000 volunteers, 2,000 staff and 600 trustees.

There are 46 individual Wildlife Trusts, each of which is a place-based independent charity with its own legal identity, formed by groups of people getting together and working with others to make a positive difference to wildlife and future generations, starting where they live and work.

Every Wildlife Trust is a corporate member of the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts (RSWT), a registered charity in its own right founded in 1912 and one of the founding members of IUCN – the International Union for the Conservation of Nature.

Taken together this federation of 47 charities is known as The Wildlife Trusts.

The recently launched Strategy 2030 sets out the impact we hope to have by working together collectively in the crucial decade ahead.

We are now looking to recruit a vibrant new Chair for RSWT and The Wildlife Trusts, to support both the work of the central charity and that of the federation.

Where we operate

The Wildlife Trusts are the only charity for nature established across the UK and Crown Dependencies. The dual challenges of declining biodiversity and a warming climate will require us to work collaboratively across the political, administrative, and organisational boundaries that exist within and between the nations of the UK and Crown Dependencies.

There are 37 Wildlife Trusts in England and five Wildlife Trusts in Wales, as well as the Scottish Wildlife Trust in Scotland, Ulster Wildlife in Northern Ireland, Alderney Wildlife Trust in the Channel Islands and Manx Wildlife Trust in the Isle of Man. While each Wildlife Trust is independent, we are united in our common purpose to bring wildlife back, to empower people to take action for nature, and to create a society where nature matters.

We celebrate the sovereignty of individual Wildlife Trusts and empower each other to make decisions within each Wildlife Trust's jurisdiction, respecting Trusts' independence and right to establish their own policies and approaches in line with The Wildlife Trusts' Strategy.

We recognise and respect that differences between individual Wildlife Trusts may arise as a result of regional, national, and operational differences. While this may sometimes result in challenging situations for our movement, our differences are our strength, creating space for innovation and experimentation.

Our CEO

Craig Bennett started as Chief Executive of The Wildlife Trusts in April 2020, with the ambition of putting a third of the UK's land and sea into nature recovery by 2030.

He has been described as "one of the country's top environmental campaigners", by The Guardian as "the very model of a modern eco-general" and has been listed as one of the UK's top "social media CEOs".

Craig was previously CEO of Friends of the Earth where he refocused the organisation on its unique role of empowering communities to take action to tackle the climate and ecological crisis. He regularly appears in the print and broadcast media.



ANDY BARTLETT

Our Impact

Our land

We manage **104,000** hectares of land

Over **2,300** nature reserves

120 visitor and education centres

Our people

Over **32,500** volunteers

Over **870,000** members

590,000 hours dedicated by our volunteers despite the pandemic

2,500 staff

c. **600** trustees

Our reach

Over **14 million** visits to our nature reserves

Nearly **1,000** businesses took part in 2020's 30 Days Wild.

Over **100,000** people joined our call on the government to ban the use of a harmful bee-killing pesticide

2,200 hours of corporate volunteering time despite the pandemic

8,000 people gained new skills by taking part in training programmes run by The Wildlife Trusts

Our impact

198,000 planning applications responded to...

..of which **3,078** applications were refused or improved for wildlife

4,600km of rivers and streams improved for wildlife after receiving advice from The Wildlife Trusts

11 Wildlife Trusts have released Beavers

43,169 hectares of peatland restored



To find out more, take a look at
The Wildlife Trusts
Impact Report for 2020-21

Our 2030 Strategic Goals

The UK is one of the most nature depleted countries in the world, with increasingly fragmented remnants of habitat isolated across our land and seas. We know that 41% of our species have declined in abundance since the early 1970s, and 15% of our species are threatened with extinction

Given these historic and more recent losses, it is no longer enough just to protect the wildlife that remains. The Wildlife Trusts will be at the forefront of efforts to reverse the declines in nature, on land and at sea.

Our Three Strategic Goals set out what we believe needs to happen by 2030 in pursuit of our longer term vision. Whilst set out as distinct, these Goals are interdependent and highly connected, and achieving nature's recovery will require all of them together.

GOAL 1 Nature is in recovery, with abundant, diverse wildlife and natural processes creating wilder land and seascapes where people and nature thrive

GOAL 2 People are taking action for nature and the climate, resulting in better decision making for the environment at both the local level and across the four nations of the UK

GOAL 3 Nature is playing a central and valued role in helping to address local and global problems

Our Shared Values & Beliefs

Passion

Everything we do is driven by our desire to make the World a better place. Our passion for nature is the prime motivator for our skilled, motivated and dedicated team. We focus our energy on where we are uniquely placed to deliver the most impact for wildlife, enabling us to work with purpose and focus.

Respect

We act with respect for nature, respect for people, and respect for diversity. We work collaboratively and champion inclusion and diversity within our communities, being locally sensitive whilst ensuring that we have impact beyond our borders.

Trust

We seek first to find the common ground, and always start with the presumption that each other's intentions are good. We accept that difference, competition and conflict exist, but we work openly, collaboratively and with tolerance to resolve them.

Integrity

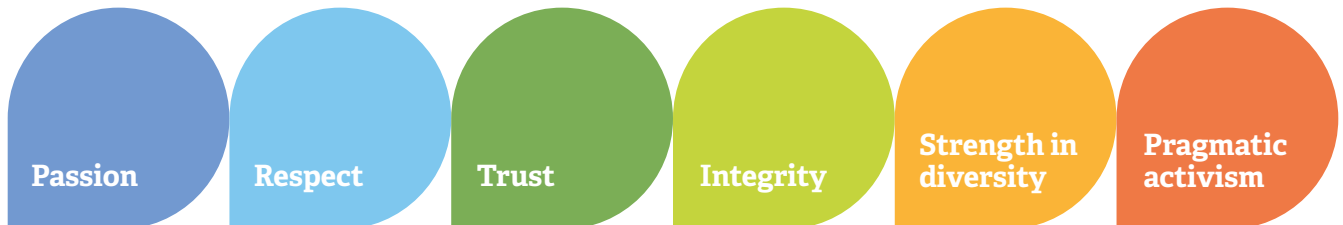
We are committed to transparency and inclusivity within our actions and projects, co-designing to deliver the greatest impact for nature. We will always uphold our values and beliefs and speak truth to power.

Strength in diversity

We are comprised of 47 independent organisations, that work as one movement, who hold unparalleled knowledge of the wildlife and natural systems within their communities across England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Isle of Man and Alderney. We celebrate our differences and work to our common strengths.

Pragmatic activism

We seek radical change and bold thinking, but we are evidence-led and solution-focused and are convinced that working with partners and communities is the way to maximise our impact for nature.



TOM MARSHALL

Our Governance

Structure & Framework

The Wildlife Trusts greatest strength is that we are a knowledgeable, evidence-based, and independent network, with each Wildlife Trust firmly rooted within their local communities, supported by RSWT to ensure a strong collective voice, coordination and development of the federation and the wider movement. We have put in place structures and frameworks to support this.

We celebrate the autonomy of individual Wildlife Trusts and empower them to make decisions within their local area/jurisdiction, recognising that each Trust has a right to establish its own policies and approaches in line with The Wildlife Trusts' Strategy. However, we also recognise that there are situations where a collective approach is required.

This collective approach starts with the communication and governance structures that we have in place, together with the Memorandum of Cooperation that all Trusts sign up to and the terms of membership of RSWT.

Collective decision making at The Wildlife Trusts makes use of the range of expertise and knowledge in our movement, embracing a "Team of Teams" approach to enable decisions to be made at the appropriate strategic, delivery, and technical levels. Where responsibility is delegated, we will put structures in place to ensure accountability and transparency.

Collective Decision Making

We recognise and respect that Wildlife Trusts are individual organisations, and differences between members may arise as a result of local, regional, and operational differences. Therefore, our approach to decision making as a collective will operate at a strategic level and incorporate the necessary flexibility which enables individual Wildlife Trusts to support and implement these decisions in alignment with their needs.

We understand that behind every decision there is a real person, and genuine desire to do the right thing for wildlife, so we will ensure that our collective decision making is conducted in safe and respectful spaces so that all Wildlife Trusts feel confident that they have the opportunity to be heard. This is also supported by a collective Disagreement Management and Dispute Resolution Framework

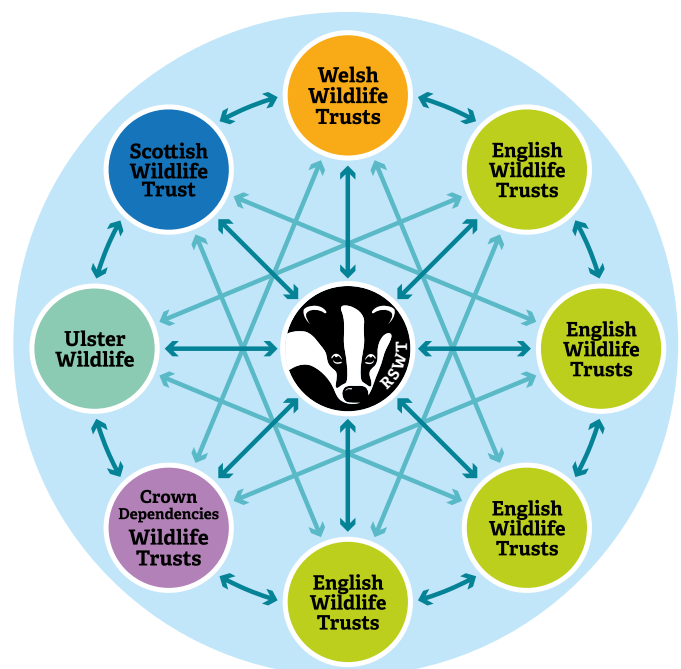
The Board of Trustees

Known as 'Council' this is the governing body of the Society and its members are the Trustees of the Society. It is ultimately responsible for ensuring the strategic direction of The Wildlife Trusts and safeguarding its brand and reputation. Governance arrangements are currently being reviewed so that we become more effective and responsive as a federation.

The Board is currently made up of:

- Three officers: Chair, Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer.
- Up to eight Trustees elected from leadership roles from Wildlife Trusts
- Up to two additional independent Trustees possessing specialist skills, knowledge or expertise.

You can meet our current Trustees [here](#)



Role Description - Chair

Background

We're at an exciting time in our organisation's development having recently launched a new strategy for 2030 for The Wildlife Trusts. We have agreed some challenging ambitions and set some incredible transformations to achieve this new strategy and secure nature's recovery.

This is not least around how we can become a more inclusive organisation and reach out and support more people from all backgrounds to experience nature but also how we can become an even stronger federation in the ways we work together and capitalise on our structures. We therefore need a forward thinking and inclusive Chair to help lead us on our journey.

This is a dual role – representing, supporting and enabling The Wildlife Trusts as a federation but also serving directly as Chair of the central charity. In the latter role, the chair will directly provide leadership to the trustee board of RSWT in ensuring it fulfils its duties and responsibilities for effective governance.

The chair will be able to combine personal humility with an urgency to achieve the mission of The Wildlife Trusts and the drive to invest in ongoing organisational development. They will be able to demonstrate servant leadership in relation to The Wildlife Trusts, being able to unite and inspire our movement behind our collective vision.

Embodying the culture of The Wildlife Trusts and building trust within the movement, the Chair will work with the CEO to advance and grow the reputation of The Wildlife Trusts as an organisation of excellence that can inspire collective leadership throughout its movement and beyond, in the wider world.

This can be a demanding, yet rewarding role, suited to someone who is able to navigate through complex relationships and communicate well at all levels. Being able to motivate and bring people on a journey is a must.

Experience of conservation is not essential. More important is an understanding of governance and complex organisations, an ability to see the big strategic picture and the ability to harness the skills of talented board members.

The role requires a time commitment - approximately equating to 2-3 days per month on average for a five year term.. The role is a voluntary position; it is not remunerated although expenses are reimbursed.

The Role

The Chair of The Wildlife Trusts is a leader for both The Wildlife Trusts and for RSWT.

- To lead the trustee board in ensuring that it fulfils its responsibilities for the governance of the organisation by ensuring that the organisation acts in accordance with its constitution and by managing its activities.
- To work in partnership with the chief executive helping them to achieve the mission of The Wildlife Trusts, and with the trustee board ensure appropriate line management of the CEO
- To optimise the relationship between the board and staff/volunteers; and RSWT and the individual Wildlife Trusts.
- To attend all Board meetings plus RSWT events such as Open Days, conferences and Leaders Days where appropriate.

Key priorities for Chair during tenure

1. To drive forward becoming a truly inclusive and diverse organisation, supporting our internal development but also reaching out to new audiences
2. To increase our collective unity and internal development
3. Aid in implementation of 2030 Strategy



CHARLES THODY PHOTOGRAPHY

About you

Key Competencies

Contextual: A Trustee should have an ability to understand the charity, its values, culture and philosophy and a willingness to show commitment and devote necessary time and effort.

Strategic: A Trustee should have the ability to help to actively shape the charity's vision and future and be prepared to take responsibility for the charity's long-term success or failure.

Leadership: The Chair must provide leadership to the board with the prime responsibility for ensuring it has agreed priorities, appropriate structures, processes and a productive culture and has Trustees who are able to govern well and add value to the charity.

Interpersonal: A Trustee should put energy into acting as part of a team and helping to develop it and its shared sense of purpose and group decision-making.

Analytical: No matter how passionately committed a Trustee is, each trustee must have the capacity to look at situations dispassionately and analytically, drawing on multiple perspectives and to apply good, independent judgment.

Political: The Chair should have the ability to understand and navigate different interest groups and perspectives and have the confidence and gravitas to build consensus and take people with them.

Essential Skills

- Acting as a Chair within a Charity
- Leading, motivating, and empowering others
- Building trusting relationships – diplomatic, gutsy but caring
- Rational, clear thinker who forms judgements independently
- Developing strategy and effecting change
- Flexibility, sensitivity, and consensus building including conflict resolution
- Leading with a visionary and strategic perspective
- Some understanding of relevant legal duties, responsibilities, and liabilities (although training will be given)

Desirable Skills

- A current or previous executive role in a not-for-profit/public sector organisation
- Federated Charity / Complex Organisations Experience
- Experience of / strong commitment to The Wildlife Trusts/environment sector
- A natural team player and good listener
- Adept and persuasive communicator, confident on a stage
- Business acumen
- Performance management
- Financial management



PENNY DIXIE

How to apply

Application process

The application process is overseen by a Nominations Advisory Panel made up of The Hon Secretary, selected Trustees and senior Wildlife Trusts staff to ensure a fair and balanced process.

The process runs as follows:

1. Complete and return your application form, CV and brief cover letter (optional) to jbarnes@wildlifetrusts.org
2. Shortlisted candidates invited for interview
3. Election at AGM
4. Induction begins

If you require any special provision should you be called to interview, please do let us know.

Please inform us of any dates that you may not be available or might have difficulty with the indicated timetable.

If you would like to arrange an informal discussion ahead of submitting your application, with our Deputy CEO - Patience Thody, please email or call James Barnes on jbarnes@wildlifetrusts.org or 01636 670040

Recruitment timetable

Deadline for applications	Friday 24 June 2022
Interviews	Last two weeks of July 2022
Introduction to the Board of Trustees	Thursday 20 October 2022
Formal Election at AGM	Thursday 24 November 2022





The
Wildlife
Trusts

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