



Avon
Wildlife Trust

CANDIDATE BRIEF

TRUSTEES



In this candidate information pack, you will find further information on our search for a new Trustees together with details on the application process.

WELCOME MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Trustee for Avon Wildlife Trust.

It's a critical time for the natural world – awareness is growing of the vital importance of wildlife and ecosystems in supporting life on earth. At the same time, wildlife loss is high and accelerating and ecosystems are under unprecedented pressure, globally, nationally and locally. As a Trust, we have led the way in raising awareness of the ecological emergency that we're facing, alongside the climate emergency. And we are at the forefront of work to restore and reconnect local wildlife habitats to bring wildlife back and achieve our vision of nature recovering on a grand scale, with everyone able to enjoy increasingly abundant wildlife.

We have an immensely ambitious strategy to see 30% of land in the West of England managed for the benefit of wildlife by 2030, with 1 in 4 people taking action for nature. We want to create 1,000 hectares of new habitats that provide “nature-based solutions” to environmental issues by absorbing carbon and reducing pollution and flooding.

To support this, we want to develop more hubs where we can engage, inspire and equip people to take action for nature, we want to develop our networks and partnerships, acquire more land, grow our membership and income, and invest in our staff and systems. Nature is for everyone, and we are actively working to break down the barriers that have prevented some communities from getting involved and enjoying the benefits of contact with nature.

We are now seeking two new Trustees to join our Board. To help us maintain a Board with a full range of relevant skills and expertise, we are particularly looking for candidates with expertise in either charity fundraising, charity governance or finance.

We want to build a diverse and inclusive Board that reflects the communities that we serve. We therefore particularly encourage applications from candidates who are currently underrepresented on our Board who share our vision of nature-rich places that benefit everyone.

If you share our passion for making a difference and feel you can help us in these roles, we'd be delighted to hear from you.

Lara



LARA BURCH, CHAIR

ABOUT US

Avon Wildlife Trust is the largest local charity working to protect wildlife in the West of England area (Bristol, Bath and North East Somerset, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire).

Our aim is to see nature recovering on a grand scale, with everyone able to enjoy increasingly abundant wildlife. We enable nature's recovery by working with partners and landowners to restore, create and connect habitats and increase species abundance. We connect people with nature and help them take action for wildlife where they are. We care for 30 nature reserves, from ancient bluebell woods to wildflower meadows and nationally important wetlands.

The Wildlife Trusts

Avon Wildlife Trust is part of The Wildlife Trust movement. There are 46 independent Wildlife Trusts across the whole of the UK, the Isle of Man and Alderney. With more than 900,000 members, The Wildlife Trusts are the largest UK voluntary organisation dedicated to conserving the whole range of the UK's habitats and species on land and at sea.

Who we are

Each Wildlife Trust is an independent charity which is deeply rooted within the local communities from which it was formed. Avon Wildlife Trust was established in 1980 as one of the UK's first urban Trusts.

What we do

We want to inspire people about the natural world so that they value it, understand their relationship with it and take action to protect and restore it.

- We represent a membership of 16,000 people
- We lead conservation work by taking an innovative approach to wildlife recovery on a landscape scale, to increase biodiversity in the wider environment
- We manage 30 nature reserves covering over 1,000 hectares (2,500 acres) - from nationally important salt marshes and wetland to wildflower grasslands, ancient woodlands and Iron Age forts
- We set the agenda as part of the national partnership of Wildlife Trusts with 800,000 members throughout the UK, and regionally as a member of the South West Wildlife Trusts
- We advise landowners, local authorities and many others on management and practice which can benefit wildlife
- We inspire lifelong learning through enjoyment and access to the natural environment, in both urban and rural areas
- We run [award-winning education programmes](#)
- We run a conference and education centre and wedding venue at [Folly Farm](#) in the heart of a 100ha (250-acre) nature reserve
- We co-ordinate a task force of more than 800 volunteers who help in all areas of the Trust's work, from conservation tasks on reserves to helping in the Trust office or at events
- We campaign as the leading voice and source of expertise on all local wildlife matters
- We work in partnership with public authorities, landowners, schools and colleges, businesses, local people and the media
- We encourage people to lead more sustainable lives

Our team

Avon Wildlife Trust has more than 17,000 members, over 800 active volunteers, more than 40 staff and a Board of up to 12 Trustees.

More information can be found at www.avonwildlifetrust.org.uk



ROLE DESCRIPTION

Title	Trustee
Location	West of England
Responsible For	The strategic direction of the charity
Responsible To	Board of Trustees
Time Commitment	Circa 5 hours per month
Salary	Voluntary (unpaid)

THE BRIEF

Help us achieve our vision of restoring nature on a grand scale.

Our Trustees have a key leadership role at Avon Wildlife Trust, setting the direction of the organisation and helping us to achieve our goals of creating wildlife-rich places and wildlife-rich lives.

Becoming a Trustee means taking on a voluntary role to support and guide a charitable organisation to achieve agreed vision and goals. Trustees are responsible for the overall governance of a charity.

Avon Wildlife Trust's Trustees set our strategic direction and provide guidance, support and challenge to the senior management team. They are passionate ambassadors for the charity's work, influencing key partners and helping to secure funding. Trustees also contribute through their own professional expertise and background as collegiate members of the team, to ensure the charity is positioned to deliver its strategic priorities. Our Trustees bring strategic vision, independent judgement and a willingness to commit to leading the Trust through challenges and opportunities.

Our Board and executive (the Trustees and management) are a team – a partnership, with mutual trust and respect – that work together with the shared purpose of achieving the Trust's vision and mission.

Though the board delegates authority to the executive, it remains legally responsible for the charity. Trustees are jointly and severally responsible for the overall governance and strategic direction of the charity, its financial health, the probity of its activities and developing the organisation's aims, objectives and goals in accordance with the governing document, legal and regulatory guidelines. This responsibility extends to the charity's culture as well as its performance.

We have a lot of work to do to restore the abundance of nature in the West of England and being a Trustee can feel demanding at times, but it is deeply rewarding and you will be part of a friendly and energetic team.

The Trust's new 10 year strategy is available [here](#) on our website.

Time Commitment

Trustees should expect to devote at least 5 hours per month to Trust affairs. This time will be spent preparing for and attending meetings of the Board and one or more Committees, as well as volunteering time to help develop the Trust's work and attending relevant internal Programme

Boards and other occasional meetings and events. The Board meets 4-6 times a year, usually on weekday evenings in Bristol or online, and committees on a similar basis.

Term of Office

Trustees are appointed in a voluntary capacity for a 3-year term. Trustees can be reappointed for further 3-year terms (most will complete two terms, and the maximum is three). We provide an induction and opportunities for training and personal development.



MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

Avon Wildlife Trustees should:

- develop real commitment;
- get to know and understand the charity's purpose and mission;
- give counsel (when needed) and support the Chief Executive;
- advise the Chief Executive about advantageous partnerships and contacts that might be able to provide support – financial or otherwise;
- be willing to help with events that might further or support the work of the trust;
- be willing and able to communicate the work of the charity to the community, friends and business contacts.

The Charity Commission's *Six Essential Duties of a Trustee*¹:

- To ensure your charity is carrying out its purposes for the public benefit
- To comply with your charity's governing document and the law
- To act in your charity's best interests
- To manage your charity's resources responsibly
- To act with reasonable care and skill
- To ensure your charity is accountable.

MANAGEMENT AND SUPERVISION

The Board

- decides the responsibilities and duties of the Chief Executive, and monitors the performance of the Chief Executive

ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESOURCES

The Board:

- determines/approves the annual budget for the Trust and monitors progress against this;
- oversees the preparation of and approve the Annual Trustees' Report and Accounts and ensures all other public accountability requirements are met;
- approves the purchase of land and real property;
- approves non-budgeted expenditure over £10,000.

JOB IMPACT

The Board:

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/the-essential-trustee-new-guidance-on-trustees-responsibilities>

- has significant and wide-ranging impact both internally and externally through its approval of Trust policies and its strategic decision-making, which can significantly affect organisation-wide results, including financial stability.

INDEPENDENCE AND JUDGEMENT

The Board:

- determines strategy, in pursuit of the Trust's charitable purposes;
- approves the 5-year Strategic Plan and the Annual Plan, and monitors progress against them; approves policies for the Trust.

PEOPLE AND CONTACTS

Board members:

- develop and maintain relationships for the Trust and successfully influence people externally at all levels.

CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION

Board members:

- apply creative thinking to influence the development and implementation of organisational policies and strategy.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

EXPERIENCE

Trustees bring a diverse range of skills, knowledge and experience to the Board.

The requirements for applicants are enthusiasm and commitment to work with a team of others for the benefit of the Trust and its objectives.

This year, we are particularly looking for candidates with experience and expertise in:

- Fundraising you have significant experience in generating charitable income from a variety of channels and the capacity to help us develop our approach to revenue and capital fundraising through channels including membership, grants and trusts, appeals and community fundraising,
- Charity governance– you have a good understanding of charity governance in the UK and a thorough understanding of charity compliance
- Finance – you are / have been, a finance professional with experience of working with small business and commercial operations

Nature is for everyone, and Avon Wildlife Trust is committed to building an inclusive organisation where the workforce reflects the cities and areas we serve and where colleagues feel confident about being themselves at work.

Applications are welcome from people of all backgrounds, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, race, disability, marital status, age and religion, and are particularly encouraged from sections of society that are under-represented in the conservation sector.

COMPETENCE, KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

- Ability to build and sustain relationships with key stakeholders and colleagues to achieve organisational objectives
- Understanding of the difference between Non-Exec and Executive responsibilities
- Good, independent judgement and strategic vision
- An ability to work effectively as a member of a team
- Ability to understand and accept the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship and the respective roles of the Chair, Trustees and Chief Executive
- Dedication to impartiality and fairness and the ability to respect confidences
- Commitment to the seven principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership
- Commitment to promoting equality and diversity
- Commitment to the organisation and a willingness to devote the necessary time and effort
- A willingness to bring a diverse range of perspectives to the table.

- Willingness to be available to staff for advice and enquiries on an ad hoc basis.

PERSONAL QUALITIES

Trustees are expected to:

- Act in the best interests of the Trust
- Exercise due care and attention and use reasonable skill in dealing with the Trust's affairs
- Apply personal skills, knowledge and experience to help the work of the board and assist in decision-making by the trustees
- Declare potential conflicts of interest
- Attend board meetings and play an active part in discussions and decisions
- Serve on board committees and working groups as required
- Have a strong empathy with our vision to restore nature on a grand scale across the West of England.

HOW TO APPLY

To apply, please e mail Nigel Wilson, our interim CEO at nigel.wilson@avonwildlifetrust.org.uk with a CV and covering letter detailing how you meet the person specification above. Please title your email 'TRUSTEE'.

If you would like to discuss this role or have any questions, please email Nigel in the first instance, who will be able to discuss the Trustee roles.

Closing date for applications: 7th March 2025

Shortlisted candidates will be invited for interview by an initial selection panel during **W/c 17th March 2025**

We look forward to hearing from you!

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