



Avon
Wildlife Trust



Candidate information pack:

Trustee

WELCOME MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR

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

Nature is key to our health, happiness, and success, yet it is under incredible pressure as we continue to face the ecological and climate emergencies together.

At the halfway point of our ten-year strategy, whilst the challenge remains severe, there is much that brings hope as we double-down on our efforts towards nature's recovery locally and at scale.

We see, support, and celebrate more people taking action for nature in their neighbourhoods and with their communities. These cumulative and interconnected actions are bringing huge benefits for people and wildlife across our cities, countryside and coast. Nature is for everyone, so our priority is to ensure that access to nature is a right, not a privilege. We're working with more farmers, landowners and land managers in our region to work at landscape scale, providing advice, support, and a pathway to transforming outcomes for species and habitats.

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We're calling for nature and development in harmony, to ensure a sustainable future for our communities with nature-positive growth. We see nature as the solution that can fix a range of interconnected issues that we face.

To ensure that the future is flourishing for nature and people, we will listen to the hopes and experiences of a wide range of voices within communities to help shape our plans for nature's recovery.

We will create more opportunities for young people to influence and get involved in our work, and more opportunities to platform individuals and groups from across our region. As the first ever urban Wildlife Trust, Avon Wildlife Trust has a long track record of standing up for nature and for communities, and we're incredibly proud of the impact we've made over the last 45 years.

We see ourselves as having a critical and central role, being bold and influential in our contemporary approaches to accelerating nature's recovery which is essential for the future.

We are now seeking up to three 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 one or more of the following areas: charity fundraising, income generation, digital marketing & comms and planning & development.



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 and in the environmental / charity sector and young people 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 OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

ABOUT US

Avon Wildlife Trust is the longest established charity working towards nature's recovery in our region. We cover the former county of Avon which includes the local authority areas of: Bristol, Bath and Northeast Somerset, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire.

Our strong track record of creating, restoring and protecting valuable habitats for nature puts us at the forefront of tackling the challenges of the ecological and climate emergencies. We were established in 1980, and connecting people with nature remains one of our key priorities. We draw on our vast experience of listening to and supporting communities to take local action for nature. Our region has an amazing array of different habitats and we are working across them all. From our urban roots to the breathtaking Levels and Moors, through magical woodlands and precious grasslands, our dedicated teams work purposefully to secure a thriving future for nature and people.

With the support of our members, communities and partners we're energised and ready to deliver our refreshed strategy.

Our Purpose: To secure nature's recovery across our region – in urban, rural and coastal areas.

Our Vision: Nature as the solution, a flourishing future for wildlife and people together

Our Mission: To lead the way in nature's recovery at scale, co-creating solutions that transform outcomes for nature. To nurture a lifelong connection with nature, inspiring everyone to take positive action in their community.

Our Goals:

Mobilise: We will develop a movement where everyone feels inspired to take meaningful action for nature in their neighbourhoods.

Transform: We will take bold, joined-up action at a landscape scale, escalating our efforts to secure nature's recovery.

Influence: We will advocate for nature at the heart of decision making and demonstrate best practice for nature-positive growth.

The Wildlife Trusts

Avon Wildlife Trust is part of The Wildlife Trusts federation. 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. 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 and was the UK's first urban Wildlife Trust.

Who we are

We're determined - nature is facing huge challenges, but we have the skills, tenacity and experience to help it recover and thrive.

We get things done - nature's recovery requires bold and decisive action. Our ability to work both locally and at a landscape scale enables us to make an immediate and effective impact.

We're collaborative - nature connects us all. We work to bring like-minded people together, co-creating solutions that help nature and people flourish.



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 are a membership organisation, with over 16,000 members
- We lead nature's recovery by taking innovative approaches to transforming land on a landscape scale, to increase biodiversity in the wider environment
- We manage almost 800 hectares of prime habitat and strategically selected sites ranging from urban parks to ancient bluebell woods, rare wildflower meadows, peatlands, farmland, and our urban growing hub and wildflower nursery. Most of our nature reserves have public access and are free to explore.
- We advise landowners, farmers and 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 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 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 work with landowners in the countryside across our region to reverse the decline in wildlife by creating connected living landscapes.
- Our 'Team Wilder' community organising for nature movement provides inspiration and support for communities, individuals, and young people to take action for nature in their local area.
- Our outdoor learning experiences bring children and educators closer to nature, to inspire a long-lasting connection with our natural world.

Our team

Avon Wildlife Trust supports around 400 active volunteers, employs more than 40 staff, and is advised by a Board of up to 12 Trustees.



Meet the team at www.avonwildlifetrust.org.uk/our-people

ROLE DESCRIPTION

Title	Trustee
Location	West of England (Board meetings are held in Bristol in person, quarterly)
Responsible For	The strategic direction of the charity
Responsible To	Board of Trustees
Time Commitment	Circa 5 hours per month for a 3-year term, then eligible for re-appointment
Salary	Voluntary (unpaid). Trustees are encouraged to claim for the reimbursement of their travel expenses (with prior agreement). Refreshments are provided at Board meetings.

THE BRIEF

Support us to achieve our vision: nature as the solution, a flourishing future for wildlife and people together.

Our Trustees have a key leadership role at Avon Wildlife Trust, setting the direction of the organisation in line with our charitable objects and helping us to achieve our three goals: mobilise, transform and influence.

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 agree our strategic direction and provide guidance, support and challenge to the senior leadership team. They are passionate ambassadors for the charity's work, influencing key partners and helping to secure support. Trustees also contribute through their own professional expertise, lived experience and backgrounds as collegiate members of the team, to ensure the charity is positioned well to deliver strategic priorities. Our Trustees bring strategic vision, independent judgement, diversity of thinking and a willingness to commit to guiding the Trust through challenges and opportunities.

Our Board and executive (the Trustees and senior leadership) 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.

The board 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, as well as 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 strategy is available [here](#) on our website.

Time Commitment

Trustees should expect to devote at least five hours per month to the Trust. 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 meet 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

Trustees of Avon Wildlife Trust should:

- have or develop a real commitment to the charity;
- get to know and understand the charity's purpose and mission;
- give counsel (when needed) and support the Chief Executive and senior leadership team;
- advise the Chief Executive about advantageous opportunities, partnerships and contacts that might be able to provide support or development opportunities – 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 approves the Annual Trustees' Report and Accounts and ensures all other public accountability requirements are met;
- approves the purchase of land and real property;

¹ [Charity trustee: what's involved \(CC3a\) - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charity-trustee-whats-involved)

JOB IMPACT

The Board:

- 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:

- agrees strategy, in pursuit of the Trust's charitable purposes;
- approves the 5-year Strategic Plan and the Annual budget, 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 support the Trust as part of a team for the benefit of the Trust and its charitable objects.

This year, we are particularly looking for candidates from diverse backgrounds, including young people with experience and expertise in one or more of the following areas:

- Charity fundraising - you have experience in generating charitable income from a variety of sources and the capacity to support us with revenue and capital fundraising through membership, grants and trusts, donors & philanthropy, appeals and corporate partnerships.
- Income generation - you are financially minded– you are / may have been a finance professional with experience of working with charities or small business to grow earned income and commercial operations for example through consultancy, private hires, catering and events.
- Digital, marketing & Comms – you are a marketing professional or work in the field of online communications who can support us with developing our comms strategy, digital content, positioning and building supporter journey.
- Planning and development – you have experience in planning and are able to support with responding to planning applications across our region, building relationships with developers and influencing development in harmony with nature.

Nature is for everyone, and Avon Wildlife Trust is committed to building an inclusive organisation where our team 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 under-represented groups in the nature conservation sector. We would welcome a young person or someone who may not have held a trustee position previously to join our Board. We would be able to 'buddy' a new Trustee with an experienced Trustee for additional support. The Chief Executive would be willing to help a new Trustee prepare and understand pre and post information for Board meetings as needed.

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

HOW TO APPLY

To apply, please email Avon Wildlife Trust HR at HR@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 HR on the email above or call 0117 917 7270 in the first instance, to be put in touch with Leah McNally (CEO) or Lara Burch (Chair) to discuss the Trustee roles.

Closing date for applications: 3rd February 2026

Shortlisted candidates will be invited for interview which will be held on the **10th February 2026**

We look forward to hearing from you!