

# Somerset Wildlife Trust Recruitment Pack

## Trustees



Protecting the  
species you love  
in the county  
where you live





## Message from the Chair of Trustees

Putting nature back into recovery to reverse the decline in biodiversity and bioabundance, tackle and adapt to the climate crisis and reconnect people with nature has never been more important.

Our charity's deep knowledge of the county, its habitats and wildlife, makes us well equipped to lead nature's recovery in Somerset so its towns and countryside are rich in wildlife and nature is part of all our lives. Our work is central to Somerset's future and we want to create a society and local economy where nature matters. The urgency of tackling the ecological and climate emergencies means the need for the Trust has never been greater.

We are backed up by a strong team of Trustees, staff, volunteers and supporters who all share a passion and commitment to our charity and its strategic objectives. We are about to commit to a new ten-year strategy, which will involve more people than ever before in taking action for nature in their local communities across Somerset. We will be supporting them to help deliver nature's recovery, and working with more organisations and people to achieve this. It's a really important time for Somerset Wildlife Trust and our county, and we need a mix of great people, who are dynamic individuals and experts in their field, to join us as Trustees in 2021.

You don't have to have experience of working in the charity sector so don't be put off if you haven't already been a Trustee. We are looking for people who have relevant knowledge gained from life, or from your work in other sectors. 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. 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 really critical time.

Our charity was formed back in 1964 and is one of 46 independent Wildlife Trusts across the country which are all part of a big national movement for change working to bring nature back. For more than 50 years, we have been a leading voice for nature in Somerset backed now by over 20,000 committed members and hundreds of volunteers. We are major landowners and look after some of the most special and rare habitats in the county. Beyond our nature reserves, we work with partners, local communities and other landowners, so nature can move freely and expand across Somerset. We want to put nature back into everyone's lives.

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

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

*Graeme Mitchell*

**Graeme Mitchell**



## Council of Trustees

The Trust's Council 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. Meetings alternate between daytime and evening. Trustees are expected to be available for regular consultation and input on a range of issues between meetings. Trustees are also expected to attend our Annual General Meeting and participate in a Council sub-groups as required and according to their skill set. Currently we are meeting virtually by zoom and papers are sent by email.

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 a Council, which reflects as closely as possible the profile of Somerset's population as a whole, 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.





## Role description: Trustee

### Main responsibilities

- With the rest of Council, to have oversight of the charity's strategy, including its development and implementation.
- Approve the annual business plan and budget, and monitoring performance against these.
- Oversee key organisational policies and procedures.
- Ensure the Trust has sufficient resources to pursue its goals and implement its policies.
- Monitor key organisational risks and ensure appropriate mitigation where possible.
- Represent the Trust at appropriate events and functions.

### 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 particularly interested in talking to people with specific expertise or interest in any of the following:

- Nature-friendly / regenerative farming practices as a land or estates manager
- Charity finance, including strategic financial planning, and business management
- Engaging with people and new communities through a community organising approach
- Creating experiences through digital engagement and marketing

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.





# Person specification

## 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.
- Attendance at Council meetings and an annual development day. These are held at various locations in Somerset (but are currently virtual meetings). These alternate between day time on a working day and evening on a working day. 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 in order to fully participate and execute their duties.
- Attendance at the Annual General Meeting in November.
- Play a full part in the work of sub-committees of Council or working groups – current sub-committees are Finance and Resources, Health and Safety, Risk and Nominations.
- Being in email/telephone communications with the staff team and other Council members about any urgent matters arising between meetings.

## Commitment

- A term of five years, with potential to renew. (This is likely to change to three terms of three years at the 2021 AGM.)

## 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](#).



# How to apply

## How to apply

If you are interested in becoming a Trustee, or would like to find out more about the role, we would be delighted to hear from you.

We ask that all potential Trustees contact Graeme Mitchell, Chair, Somerset Wildlife Trust on [graeme@wallsfarm.co.uk](mailto:graeme@wallsfarm.co.uk) or Sarah Nason, Vice-Chair on [sarah.jn@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:sarah.jn@hotmail.co.uk) for an informal discussion before applying.

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 [recruitment@somersetwildlife.org](mailto:recruitment@somersetwildlife.org) and must be received no later than 5pm Monday 4th January 2021.

Interviews will be held with shortlisted candidates during the weeks beginning 18th and 25th January 2021, most likely through zoom, to discuss your relevant skills and experience, and how you would complement the existing board of Trustees.



## Somerset Wildlife Trust

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