

Title	Job Descriptions for Trustees
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Duties of Principal Officers and Trustees

Job Description for Chair

Personal Profile

Durham Wildlife Trust is the leading nature conservation organisation in County Durham and the boroughs of Darlington, Gateshead, South Tyneside and Sunderland.

To lead an organisation of this stature requires an individual who is not only committed to the cause of nature conservation, but has a wide range of knowledge relevant to the management and ongoing development of Durham Wildlife Trust.

They must be adept at developing and maintaining relationships that are beneficial to the Trust, and be able to communicate the aims and objectives of the Trust to the widest possible audience.

The Chair must at all times adhere to Nolan's seven principles of public life (selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership) and operate within the governance and policy framework set by Durham Wildlife Trust.

Main Responsibilities of Chair

- Maintain close, regular contact with Trust Director, giving support and overseeing performance.
- Promote positive contact with media and be available for interview when required.
- Be first line of contact with the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts and attend RSWT conferences.
- Create and maintain relationships with potential funders and supporters of the Trust.
- Maintain close, regular contact with Trust Treasurer, Solicitor and Secretary to ensure Trust complies with statutes and is financially solvent.
- Chair Trust Council and Governance Committee meetings. Other Committees may be created from time to time to address specific issues or tasks and the Chair may play a role on those Committees.
- Attend Finance, Audit and Risk Committee meetings.
- Work with Trustees and senior management to agree overall Trust policy.
- Respond to serious concerns from members.
- Chair appointment panel for Director and Heads of Department.

- Conduct annual appraisal of the Trust Director.
- Supporting recruitment of new Trustees, including identification of potential candidates.
- Ensure that all Trust Council members have full induction and appropriate training.
- Ensure that Trust Council members have the requisite skills to effectively oversee DWT by conducting an annual skills audit.
- Sitting on appraisal, recruitment and disciplinary panels as required.

Commitment and Expectations

The Chair is appointed from the Board of Trustees, who act as trustees of the charity and directors of the company as Durham Wildlife Trust is also a company limited by guarantee. Only members of the Trust can become Trustees, so the Chair must maintain their membership throughout their tenure. They must also be eligible to serve as a trustee and director under relevant company and charity law. The Chair is expected to act in a manner that does not create conflicts with the interests of the charity or that might be expected to bring the charity into disrepute.

The role of Chair requires a minimum time commitment of 12 days per year to attend various meetings and conferences and author and read associated papers. However, it is expected that the Chair will act as an advocate for Durham Wildlife Trust whenever the opportunity arises. They may also wish to develop their role within the wider Wildlife Trust movement and seek appointments on national committees. A time commitment of 20 days per year may be appropriate.

The Chair role is delivered on a voluntary basis. Travel and expenses incurred whilst on official Trust business are re-imbursed.

Job Description for Honorary Secretary

Personal Profile

To fulfil the role of Secretary the candidate must show a commitment to the organisation and a willingness to devote the necessary time and effort. They must have:

- Strategic vision
- Independent judgment
- An ability to think creatively and objectively
- A willingness to speak their mind and listen to others doing likewise
- An understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship
- An ability to work effectively as a member of a team
- Organisational ability and efficiency
- Knowledge or experience of business and committee procedures
- Efficient minute-taking ability, ideally with experience.

The Secretary must at all times adhere to Nolan's seven principles of public life (selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership)

and operate within the governance and policy framework set by Durham Wildlife Trust.

Responsibilities

The Honorary Secretary will support the Chair by ensuring the smooth functioning of the Trust Board. Tasks will include the following (either by carrying them out directly or delegating to a member of staff and ensuring that they have been carried out):

- Checking that a quorum is present.
- Minuting the meetings and circulating the draft minutes to all trustees.
- Ensuring that the Chair signs the minutes once they have been approved.
- Checking that trustees and staff have carried out actions agreed at a previous meeting.
- Circulating agenda and minutes of the Annual General Meeting and any Special or Extraordinary General Meetings.
- Being a member of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee and carrying out the above duties for this group. Other Committees may be created from time to time to address specific issues or tasks and the Secretary may play a role on those Committees.
- Sitting on appraisal, recruitment and disciplinary panels as required.

Commitment and Expectations

The Secretary is appointed from the Board of Trustees, who act as trustees of the charity and directors of the company as Durham Wildlife Trust is also a company limited by guarantee. Only members of the Trust can become Trustees, so the Secretary must maintain their membership throughout their tenure. They must also be eligible to serve as a trustee and director under relevant company and charity law. The Secretary is expected to act in a manner that does not create conflicts with the interests of the charity or that might be expected to bring the charity into disrepute.

The role of Secretary requires a minimum time commitment of 10 days per year to attend various meetings and conferences and author and read associated papers. However, it is expected that the Secretary will act as an advocate for Durham Wildlife Trust whenever the opportunity arises. They may also wish to develop their role within the wider Wildlife Trust movement and seek appointments on national committees. A time commitment of 15 days per year may be appropriate.

The Secretary role is delivered on a voluntary basis. Travel and expenses incurred whilst on official Trust business are re-imbursed.

Job Description for a Treasurer

Personal Profile

To fulfil the role of Treasurer the candidate must show a commitment to the organisation and a willingness to devote the necessary time and effort. They must have:

- A suitable accountancy/financial qualification or considerable experience of the successful management of the finances on a similar scale
- Independent judgment.

- 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.

The Treasurer must at all times adhere to Nolan's seven principles of public life (selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership) and operate within the governance and policy framework set by Durham Wildlife Trust.

Responsibilities

- To assist the Chair in ensuring that the organisation applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objects, i.e. the charity must not spend money on activities that are not included in its own objects, no matter how worthwhile or charitable those activities are.
- To contribute actively to the Board of Trustees, particularly in reference to financial matters, by giving advice to the organisation to allow the setting of overall policy, goals and targets and evaluation of performance against agreed targets.
- To chair the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee.
- To ensure that systems are in place to allow the effective and efficient financial administration of the organisation in order to ensure the financial stability of the organisation.
- To provide advice to Trust Council on the management of the property of the charity and investment of the charity's funds.
- Liaising with auditors to ensure that statutory accounts are prepared, audited and submitted to the relevant authorities.
- Sitting on appraisal, recruitment and disciplinary panels as required.

Commitment and Expectations

The Treasurer is appointed from the Board of Trustees, who act as trustees of the charity and directors of the company as Durham Wildlife Trust is also a company limited by guarantee. Only members of the Trust can become Trustees, so the Treasurer must maintain their membership throughout their tenure. They must also be eligible to serve as a trustee and director under relevant company and charity law. The Treasurer is expected to act in a manner that does not create conflicts with the interests of the charity or that might be expected to bring the charity into disrepute.

The role of Treasurer requires a minimum time commitment of 10 days per year to attend various meetings and conferences and author and read associated papers. However, it is expected that the Treasurer will act as an advocate for Durham Wildlife Trust whenever the opportunity arises. They may also wish to develop their role within the wider Wildlife Trust movement and seek appointments on national committees. A time commitment of 15 days per year may be appropriate.

The Treasurer role is delivered on a voluntary basis. Travel and expenses incurred whilst on official Trust business are re-imbursed.

Board Members of Durham Wildlife Trust

Durham Wildlife Trust is both a charity and a company limited by guarantee. Members of the Board act as trustees of the charity and directors of the company.

Person Specification

All members of Durham Wildlife Trust aged 16 or over are eligible to stand for election to the Board. In their capacity as trustee and director, Board members have legal duties and responsibilities they must fulfil. Where possible they should have some organisational experience and may have held a management position in the public, private or voluntary sectors. Experience of working on the boards or committees of charitable, voluntary or partnership organisations is valuable, but the key requirement is that they support the mission, aims and objectives of the charity. They must have an interest in the environmental issues the Trust is seeking to address but specialist knowledge of these issues is not essential.

Trustees must at all times adhere to Nolan's seven principles of public life (selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership) and operate within the governance and policy framework set by Durham Wildlife Trust.

Responsibilities

Board Members are responsible for the overall governance of the charity, ensuring that it operates in a manner which fulfils its Memorandum and Articles of Association. Due attention must be paid to charitable and company law and the views and aspirations of the members of Durham Wildlife Trust.

Board members must:

- Understand the Charity's Memorandum and Articles of Association and their role in ensuring that those documents are adhered to.
- Ensure that the Company operates within the law, particularly with regard to the Charities and Companies Acts.
- Attend and contribute to all meetings of the Board and other Committees and Groups. Trustees are expected to attend all Board meetings, but membership of other Committees and Groups is voluntary.
- Represent the Board's agreed position when speaking publicly on behalf of Durham Wildlife Trust.

Board members must maintain a governance perspective by ensuring that the Board:

- Establishes the Charity's strategic direction and goals.
- Understands and acts upon the financial and other monitoring information presented to it, questioning such information when appropriate.
- Defines the boundaries of management authority.
- Contributes to the development of the annual budgets and periodic business plans.
- Delegates to the Director the implementation of its decisions, plans and budgets.

- Devises and regularly monitors key performance indicators and holds the Director accountable for outcomes.
- Reviews the Director's performance and development annually.
- Reviews its own performance annually.
- Helps to identify, recruit and induct new Board members, the Chair and senior employees.
- Supports the Director and other staff in carrying out their work when requested to do so.

Commitment and Expectations

Board Meetings - These are normally four times a year (January, April, July, October), lasting approximately two hours and usually starting at 6pm.

In addition there is an Annual General Meeting, which is usually held in September/October, which all Board members are expected to attend as the AGM is a vital part of the governance of the Charity. An 'Away Day' is usually held each year to provide an opportunity for in-depth discussion on a particular topic.

Committees and Groups - There are a number of Committees and Groups operating. They include Finance, Audit and Risk Committee, which meets four times a year in March, June, September and December and Conservation Committee, which meets in February, May, August and November. There are Governance and Staffing and Pay review task groups that meet as required.

Board members will not be compelled to attend any particular Committee or Group, but they are asked to contribute where they feel they are best placed to contribute. Board members are expected to attend all Board meetings and the meetings of all the Committees and Groups they have volunteered to join. If there is a reason a Board member cannot attend a particular meeting they should provide apologies in advance for their absence. If regular attendance becomes a problem the issue should be discussed with the Chair and a resolution sought. Board members who are absent without the permission of the Board from all their meetings held within a period of six months can be removed from office.

Events – DWT runs various launches, openings, open days, guided walks and similar events a year to which Board members are invited. Attendance at a small number of these activities each year is encouraged so that Board members have an overview of the work of the Trust. Events are often at weekends or in the evening.

Advocacy and Contact with Staff – Board members are encouraged to get to know the staff and the various job roles and projects that members of staff deliver. Their role is to support and motivate the staff and provide advice and guidance when requested rather than to give instruction.

Governance Training - The Trust Chair takes the lead role in ensuring that all new members of Trust Council are fully conversant with their dual role as director of the company and trustee of the charity. On becoming a member of the Trust Council, new members will be required to put aside some time to familiarise themselves with the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on the responsibilities of trustees,

and other documents such as the Memorandum and Articles of Association, Governance Handbook and the organisation's policies and procedures. The Board member role is delivered on a voluntary basis. Travel and expenses incurred whilst on official Trust business are re-imbursed.