Cheshire Wildlife Trust

Board Member Information Pack

April 2026

Could you be our next Board Member?

"We are looking for people who are passionate about bringing wildlife back to Cheshire. We live in one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world and Cheshire has seen wildlife decline in the face of intensive farming, development and climate change.

We know that nature is good for our health and wellbeing and we rely on the natural world for so much including our food, clean air and water and natural resources but the inequality of access to nature is widening. Not everyone in Cheshire has access to high quality green space and many people have lost their connection to nature.

Our mission is to bring wildlife back - for everyone, everywhere. We need people on our Board who can help us deliver our strategy.

Our Board is drawn from our 17,000 strong membership to represent the 2.2m people we serve across the Cheshire region. We need an inclusive and diverse Board to help lead the charity as it grows.

We are looking for Board Members who can add different perspectives and life experiences to guide the work that we do. You don't need to have any previous experience of serving as a Board Member, nor do you need to be a natural history expert- we've got plenty of those amongst our staff!

Most importantly you need to be a team player and able to understand the differing needs and expectations that the people, landowners and businesses in Cheshire have, and to help contribute to our strategic thinking to support our brilliant team of staff in doing what they do best. You will need to be over 16 and ideally live in or near Cheshire."

Charlotte Harris

Chief Executive, Cheshire Wildlife Trust

About Cheshire Wildlife Trust

Cheshire Wildlife Trust is the only charity dedicated to the conservation of wildlife and wild places in the Cheshire region.

Formed in 1962 by volunteers, Cheshire Wildlife Trust benefits from the support of over 17,000 members and 500 volunteers. It is governed by a Board of Trustees and currently employs 63 staff. We are passionate about securing a future for local wildlife on land and sea and also work as part of the UK-wide Wildlife Trust movement to influence decision making for nature at the highest level nationally.

Our work is funded mainly through individual giving, delivery of services and grants. As a charity, our strength lies in the support of our members, donors and volunteers. By supporting Cheshire Wildlife Trust, you can do your bit for conservation in the knowledge that you are helping wildlife locally, on your doorstep.

Our membership not only provides financial support but also the mandate to lobby for policy change. We continually strive to grow our membership and volunteer base so that we can deliver more for nature.

Cheshire is an area of great ecological and demographic diversity, no longer recognised as a single administrative area. Our patch stretches from the Dee and Mersey Estuaries of the Wirral, across the Meres and Mosses landscape of the Cheshire plain to the Pennine fringes and large urban conurbations of South Manchester, Warrington and Halton.

Cheshire Wildlife Trust is one of 46 independent charities which together form the UK wide Wildlife Trust movement - the largest voluntary organisation in the UK solely dedicated to protecting wildlife. There are nearly 850,000 members and 2,256 nature reserves across the UK. The Trust's junior membership Wildlife Watch is part of this UK network. The Wildlife Trusts lobby for better protection of the UK's natural heritage and are dedicated to protecting wildlife for the future. You can view our latest annual review and statutory accounts here. You can find out more about the work of the Wildlife Trusts here.

Cheshire Wildlife Trust is a small and friendly organisation with a highly motivated and committed team of staff, volunteers, trainees and interns who are passionate about the natural environment and local wildlife conservation. Our Board complements this by supporting the governance of the charity, setting strategy and adding diversity of thinking.

Trust Governance

Cheshire Wildlife Trust is governed by a Board known as 'Council'.

Council is the ultimate leadership and decision making body for the Trust, responsible for ensuring effective Governance, setting the Trust's strategic direction and policies and ensuring compliance all relevant statutory and regulatory requirements, including the Charities Act and Companies Act.

The rules and regulations to which Council is accountable are set out in the Trust's Memorandum of Association.

Responsibilities of Council:

- To ensure the Trust works effectively to achieve its objects in accordance its governing documents and all relevant statutory and regulatory requirements.
- To approve the Trust's Strategy, annual budget and related operational business plans
- To acquire, dispose, protect and manage the land and property of The Trust and to ensure the proper investment of The Trust's funds.
- To ensure the Trust's income is spent efficiently and effectively in line with membership, funders and donors known wishes.
- To approve the Trust's Annual Report and Accounts and ensure the Trust will remain solvent.
- To appoint the Chief Executive of the Trust on the recommendation of the Trust Chairman
- To establish and oversee the performance of sub committees.

Requirements of Board Members

- Board Members will normally serve in terms of three years, with a maximum of three consecutive terms.
- Board Members should aim to attend all six Council meetings each year together with any relevant Committee or Task & Finish meetings.
- The composition of Council will be reviewed annually to determine whether it is appropriately representative of Trust membership and, where appropriate, of the wider Cheshire community, whether there are barriers to individuals from any sector and whether action can be taken to encourage under-represented groups to take part in the governance of the Trust.
- Honorary Officers can only be appointed from among Board Members by Board Members.

Role Description for Board Members

Role

- To attend all Council meetings and Committee meetings as appropriate and contribute to the proceedings
- To apply any particular personal expertise as a contribution to Trust business
- To promote the role and reputation of The Trust
- To undertake ad hoc duties from time to time as requested by Council.

Accountability

- Board Members are accountable to Council and The Trust's members
- At the start of each Council and Committee meeting Board Members shall be asked if they have an interest to declare
- A register of interests shall be retained and Board Members will be asked annually to record their interests.

Regulatory Responsibilities

- To ensure that the Trust pursues its objectives as defined in its governing documents (Memorandum and Articles of Association)
- To ensure that the Trust applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objects no matter how worthwhile or charitable other activities might be.

Other Responsibilities

- To use any specific skills, knowledge, experience or expertise they may have to help The Board reach sound decisions
- To become a member of at least one Committee or Working Group, attend their meetings, contribute to discussions and take ad hoc duties as requested by the Committee/Working Group
- To sit on recruitment and disciplinary panels as required
- To safeguard the good name and values of the organisation
- To act with integrity and avoid any personal conflicts of interest or, if they occur, to declare them as appropriate
- To prevent any misuse of charity funds or assets
- To actively support the work of The Trust by recruiting members and seeking and/or supporting opportunities to raise funds for the Trust.

Desired attributes

- A passion for wildlife conservation and its promotion
- A strong sense of propriety, prudence and care in the work of the Trust
- Some knowledge of the work of a Wildlife Trust
- A strong commitment to volunteering for charity work
- Some understanding of reviewing and monitoring business by Committees
- A good team player

If you would like more information about the role before applying, please contact the Chair, Charles Neame or CEO, Charlotte Harris who will be happy to discuss the position with you informally.

Board Member recruitment process

Potential new Board Members are invited to apply via our website here by answering a few simple questions and submitting your CV. You can submit your application in writing or by video or audio file.

For the next stage of the process we'll ask for a short CV, and if shortlisted, an informal interview with the CEO and some of the existing Board Members.

Recommendations for appointments will be taken to the next Board meeting and following approval, candidates will be co-opted on to the Board. New prospective Trustees remain co-opted until they are appointed at an AGM. The Trust's AGM typically takes place in November. Board Members co-opted close to the forthcoming AGM may remain co-opted until the following year to allow both the individual and Council time to access suitability.

Generic competencies and characteristics of potential Board Members are assessed during the recruitment and appointment process, and requirements include:

- A general understanding of and empathy with the cause
- Ability to work in a team
- Understanding of how successful organisations operate
- IT literacy, numeracy skills, interpersonal skills.

Attributes such as protected characteristics and geographical area are also taken into account during Board Member recruitment to try to ensure a balanced and representative board.

Cheshire
Wildlife Trust

Wild About Inclusion

Get in touch

Telephone: 01948 820728

Website: cheshirewildlifetrust.org.uk

Cheshire Wildlife Trust: Let's bring wildlife back - for everyone, everywhere. Registered charity number 214927.