

Northumberland Wildlife Trust Limited
Company Number 717813, Charity Number 221819

Trustee Recruitment and Selection Policy

1 Introduction

It is a legal requirement for all charities that they be led and controlled by a group of unpaid Trustees. In Northumberland Wildlife Trust, this body is known as Council and is made up of trustees who either are elected by the membership at the AGM, or co-opted by Council.

Council is the legal entity which is ultimately responsible for everything which the Trust does, and is accountable for the organisation's financial regularity and all other aspects of propriety. The duties imposed on trustees, through their membership of Council, are significant and potentially onerous.

Northumberland Wildlife Trust recognises the vital importance of ensuring not only that its trustees have the skills they need to undertake their governance duties effectively, but also that Council as a whole has an appropriate balance of skills across its membership.

The Trust is committed to ensuring sound and effective governance and has therefore formulated this policy to guide all aspects of trustee recruitment from identification of vacancies through to induction and training. The Trust aims for continuous improvement in the systems used to deliver this commitment.

The Trust recognises that it is a membership-based organisation and, as such, it undertakes to uphold the democratic right of members to both stand as, and vote for, trustees.

The Trust will set aside appropriate financial resources, through the annual budgeting process, to support recruitment and induction and will allocate time to support these activities.

The Trust will ensure adherence in all recruitment and induction of its trustees to its policies on Equal Opportunities, Disclosure and Management of Data.

2 Recruitment

In order to properly identify the Trust's needs and to objectively recruit potential trustees to meet these requirements, a needs analysis will be undertaken. This will identify both the core competencies which are required of trustees, as well as any specialist skills, knowledge and experience which may be desirable.

Whilst the core skills are unlikely to change from year to year, the strategic direction of the Trust might dictate changes of emphasis on particular specialist skills. Written job roles for trustees will be produced and will be made available to interested candidates. When recruiting for Chairs and CEOs, the RSWT code of good practice (Succession Planning for Chairs and CEOs) will be followed.

Vacancies will be notified through a variety of mechanisms, which could include external advertising, the use of volunteering websites, information to members and word of mouth. The

Trust is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity to apply and will strive to uphold this principle.

Prospective trustees will be asked to produce a short written statement outlining their skills and why they are interested in becoming a trustee. This will be made available to members at the AGM. Prospective trustees will be expected to declare any potential conflicts of interest and to confirm their eligibility to stand as trustees; this information will be checked against relevant databases. They may also be asked to provide details of appropriate referees.

Information about the Trust and its work will be made available to all prospective trustees. An informal, but structured, assessment process will take place and will be led by the Chair and the Chief Executive. These individuals will have the power to involve other trustees or external assessors if required. The assessment process will be based on merit against the agreed skills requirements.

Members who choose to exercise their democratic right to stand for trusteeship will be asked to go through the assessment process.

A report from the assessment process will be made to Council in advance of the AGM each year. If there is likely to be competition for places, Council will have the right to make recommendations to the AGM regarding the most suitable candidates for trusteeship in the context of the skills gaps identified.

A structured process for recruitment of trustees will be followed each year. The elements of this process will include the following:

- Identification of existing or forthcoming vacancies
- Review and updating of the needs analysis
- Providing information to members about how to apply for election as a trustee
- Advertising vacancies
- Undertaking a formal assessment process
- Sending information about prospective candidates to members with the AGM notice
- Election of trustees at the AGM

Council retains the right to co-opt trustees to fill ad-hoc vacancies which might arise at other times of year.

3 Induction and Review

The Trust aims to provide a consistently high standard of induction to all new trustees.

The process will be led by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair

The process is designed to ensure that trustees have sufficient background information to enable them to discharge their duties effectively. They will be required, amongst other things, to read the Trust's governance documentation.

The competence and performances of all trustees, and of Council as a whole, will be regularly reviewed. This process will be led by the Chair, with the support of the Chief Executive.

Last review: January 2020

Next review: January 2022