

Shropshire Wildlife Trust

Chair Recruitment Pack 2024



Shropshire Wildlife Trust

Who we are

Shropshire Wildlife Trust (SWT) has a vision of a thriving natural world, where Shropshire's wildlife and natural habitats play a valued role in addressing the climate and ecological emergencies, and people are inspired and empowered to take action for nature. We combine projects across Shropshire (including Telford & Wrekin) with advocacy and campaigning to restore nature and to engage people. We manage over 40 nature reserves and have almost 50 staff, 300 volunteers, and over 9,000 members. SWT is an autonomous charity, but we are increasingly working collectively, as part of The Wildlife Trusts (TWT), to ensure that our local actions have a national impact and help to address global issues.

Where we work

We are the only NGO solely dedicated to Nature's Recovery across the historic county of Shropshire, which now comprises the two unitary authorities of Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin. We work in close cooperation with Wildlife Trusts in the surrounding counties, including in Wales through the Wilder Marches initiative, and with other environmental NGOs, businesses, community groups and land managers.

What we do

Our nature reserves remain at the heart of what we do. Our Landscape Recovery specialists work to bring about nature's recovery at scale on third-party land, through direct delivery including river restoration and through the provision of ecological advice to farmers and land-managers.

Our People and Wildlife Team enable schools and young people to take action for nature; support our volunteers and local branches; run our visitor centre; lead on community mobilisation; and deliver programmes to demonstrate the value of nature for health and wellbeing.

Delivery teams are supported by a policy and evidence team; fundraising, communications, campaigns and marketing; finance and operations; and HR.

Our CEO

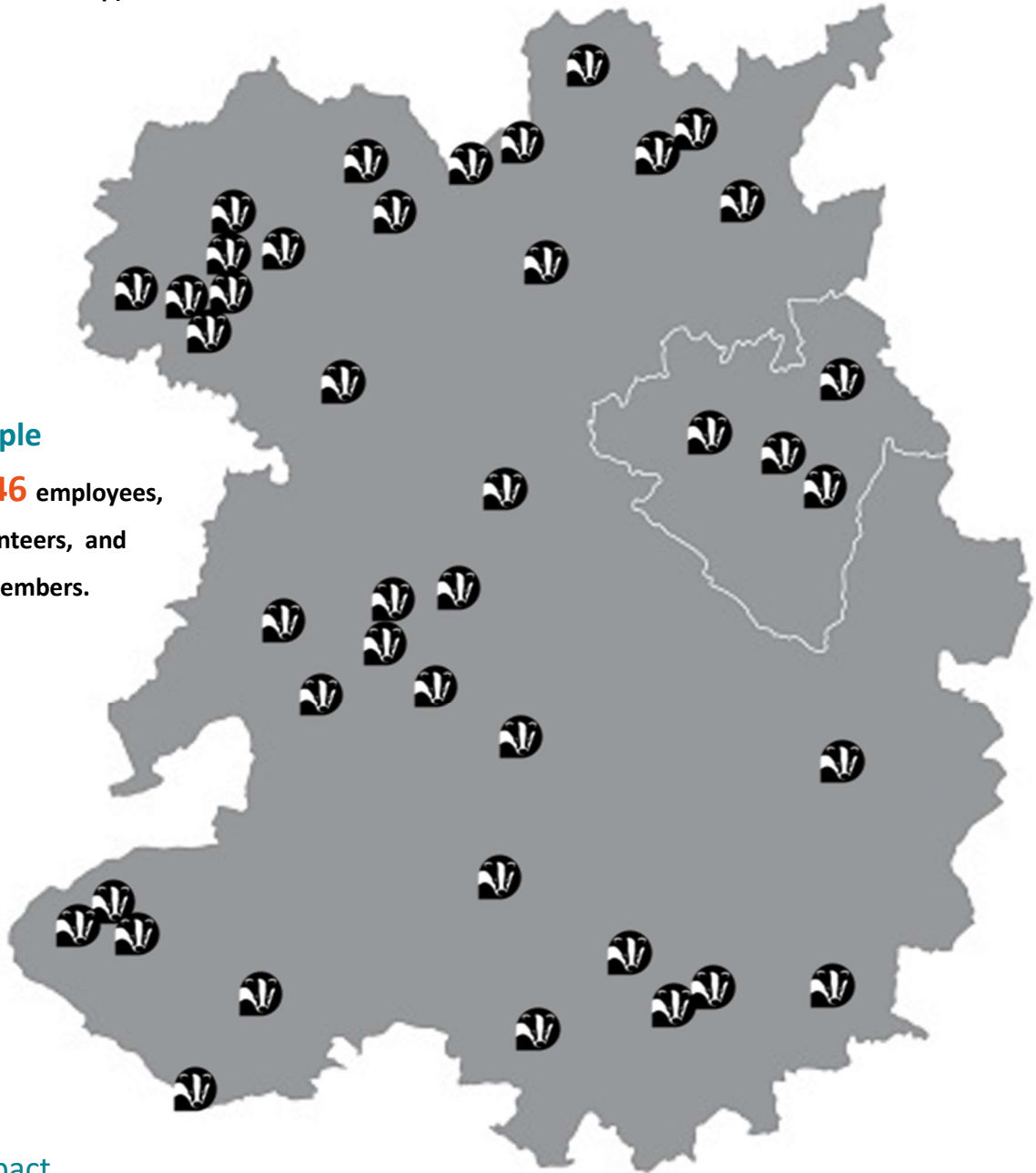
Richard Grindle joined the Trust in November 2020, having previously spent six years as Chief Operating Officer of London Wildlife Trust, following a career in the army and then in overseas NGOs. He has been working with the senior leadership team to develop our existing programmes and to maximise our impact, whilst modernising the Trust's structures and systems so that we can pursue our strategic goals at greater scale.



Our impact

Our land

We manage **1,100** hectares of land, **41** nature reserves (shown on this map) and one visitor centre



Our people

We have **46** employees, **300** volunteers, and **9,000** members.

Our impact

In 2022-23: **36** hectares of habitat restored; **4km** of hedgerows planted and **17km** of rivers re-naturalised. **6,716** people attended SWT community events. **121** teachers trained by SWT. **10%** of Shropshire's farmers made changes for nature following SWT advice.

Our 2030 Strategic Goals

The UK is one of the most nature depleted countries in the world, with increasingly fragmented remnants of habitat isolated across our land and seas. We know that 41% of our species have declined in abundance since the early 1970s, and 15% of our species are threatened with extinction

Given these historic and more recent losses, it is no longer enough just to protect the wildlife that remains. The Wildlife Trusts will be at the forefront of efforts to reverse the declines in nature, on land and at sea.

Our Three Strategic Goals set out what we believe needs to happen by 2030 in pursuit of our longer-term vision.

Whilst set out as distinct, these Goals are interdependent and highly connected, and achieving nature's recovery will require all of them together.

GOAL 1 Shropshire's nature is in recovery, with abundant, diverse wildlife and natural processes creating wilder land and seascapes where people and nature thrive.

GOAL 2 People are taking action for nature and the climate, resulting in better decision making for the environment at both the local level and across Shropshire.

GOAL 3 Nature is playing a central and valued role in helping to address local and global problems



Our Shared Values & Beliefs



Passion

Everything we do is driven by our desire to make the World a better place. Our passion for nature is the prime motivator for our skilled, motivated and dedicated team. We focus our energy on where we are uniquely placed to deliver the most impact for wildlife, enabling us to work with purpose and focus.

Respect

We act with respect for nature, respect for people, and respect for diversity. We work collaboratively and champion inclusion and diversity within our communities, being locally sensitive whilst ensuring that we have impact beyond our borders.

Trust

We seek first to find the common ground, and always start with the presumption that each other's intentions are good. We accept that difference, competition and conflict exist, but we work openly, collaboratively and with tolerance to resolve them.

Integrity

We are committed to transparency and inclusivity within our actions and projects, co-designing to deliver the greatest impact for nature. We will always uphold our values and beliefs and speak truth to power.

Strength in diversity

We are comprised of 47 independent organisations, that work as one movement, who hold unparalleled knowledge of the wildlife and natural systems within their communities across England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Isle of Man and Alderney. We celebrate our differences and work to our common strengths.

Pragmatic activism

We seek radical change and bold thinking, but we are evidence-led and solution-focused and are convinced that working with partners and communities is the way to maximise our impact for nature.



Our Governance

SWT Board of Trustees

Known as 'Council', this is the governing body of the Trust. It is ultimately responsible for setting strategic direction, overseeing the Trust's finances, and safeguarding its brand and reputation. The Board is made up of:

- The President, who currently also serves as a trustee
- Three officers: Chair, Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer.
- A further 11 trustees who bring expertise in a range of areas including farming, education, safeguarding, campaigns, land management, ecology, digital comms and marketing.

At present we have one early career trustee (under 35). Equality, diversity and inclusion is a key priority, and we aim to ensure that our trustee board is balanced in age and gender and represents all of Shropshire's communities.

There are executive sub-committees for finance and personnel. Advisory committees include land management, and communications, campaigns and marketing (CCM). Other working groups are established as appropriate.

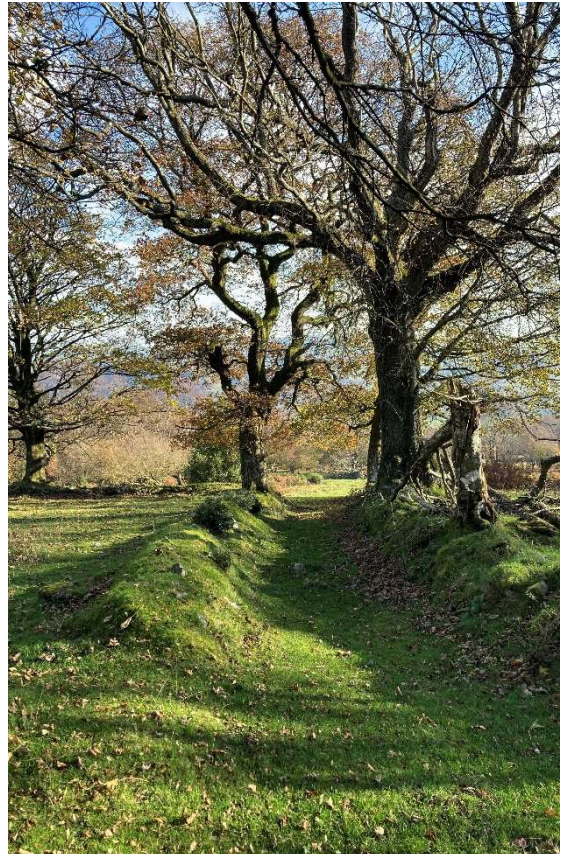
You can meet our current Trustees [here](#).

National level

Our membership of The Wildlife Trusts federation gives us a strong collective voice and enables the coordination of delivery and support functions so that individual Wildlife Trusts do not need to duplicate work and can focus their efforts on delivery work. Our articles of association were updated in 2022 to bring them into line with other Wildlife Trusts. However, we remain an autonomous charity, rooted in the local community and accountable to our members.

For its part TWT recognises that each Trust has a right to establish its own policies and approaches in line with agreed overall strategy. Individual Trusts recognise that there are situations where a collective approach is required. SWT has signed up to the TWT Memorandum of Cooperation which sets out the relationship between individual Trusts and the federation.

Chair and CEO meet their counterparts on a regular basis, including two in-person meetings or field visits a year. Other trustees represent SWT on a range of 'communities of practice', covering topics such as equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI), safeguarding, health and safety, governance & compliance, data security, and digital transformation.



Role Description - Chair

Background

We're at an exciting time in the Trust's development. In 2022 we adopted a new theory of change and impact measurement framework setting out how we will implement The Wildlife Trusts' strategy for 2030 in Shropshire. We build on the Trust's strong reputation and detailed experience to develop ambitious new programmes to deliver the strategic goals in Shropshire, and in partnership with other Trusts in the Severn basin and the Wilder Marches.

We are looking for a forward thinking and inclusive Chair to help lead us on our journey, who can combine personal humility with an urgency to achieve the Trust's strategic goals and the drive to support ongoing organisational development. This is a demanding, yet rewarding, role suited to someone who can navigate through complex relationships and communicate well at all levels.

Experience of conservation is not essential. More important is an understanding of governance and of the charity sector, an ability to see the strategic picture and the ability to harness the skills of talented board members.

The role requires a time commitment – approximately equating to four days per month on average for a four-year term, which can be renewed by mutual agreement. In addition, there are four council meetings and an AGM to chair annually (currently there is no vice-chair). This is a voluntary position; it is not remunerated although expenses are reimbursed.

The Role

To lead the Trustee Board in ensuring that it fulfils its responsibilities for the governance of the organisation by ensuring that the organisation acts in accordance with its constitution, the Charity Commission Code of Practice and by managing its activities.

To work in partnership with the Chief Executive helping them to achieve the Trust's strategic goals, and with the Board of Trustees ensure appropriate line management of the CEO.

To optimise the relationship between the board and staff/volunteers; and between SWT and The Wildlife Trusts.

To attend all board meetings plus RSWT events such as open days, conferences and leaders days where appropriate.

Key priorities for Chair during tenure

To support the CEO and leadership team in the successful implementation of the 2030 Strategy in Shropshire.

To drive forward becoming a truly inclusive and diverse organisation, supporting our internal development but also reaching out to new audiences.

To maintain and nurture our standing and relationships within The Wildlife Trusts and with other key partners.

About you

Key Competencies

Contextual: A Trustee should have an ability to understand the charity, its values, culture and philosophy and a willingness to show commitment and devote necessary time and effort.

Strategic: A Trustee should have the ability to help to actively shape the charity's vision and future and be prepared to take responsibility for the charity's long-term success or failure.

Leadership: The Chair must provide leadership to the board with the prime responsibility for ensuring it has agreed priorities, appropriate structures, processes and a productive culture and has Trustees who are able to govern well and add value to the charity.

Interpersonal: A Trustee should put energy into acting as part of a team and helping to develop it and its shared sense of purpose and group decision-making.

Analytical: No matter how passionately committed a Trustee is, each trustee must have the capacity to look at situations dispassionately and analytically, drawing on multiple perspectives and to apply good, independent judgment.

Political: The Chair should have the ability to understand and navigate different interest groups and perspectives and have the confidence and gravitas to build consensus and take people with them.

Essential Skills

- Experience as a Chair
- A natural team player and good listener
- Leading, motivating, and empowering others
- Building trusting relationships – diplomatic, gutsy but caring
- Rational, clear thinker who forms judgements independently
- Developing strategy and effecting change
- Flexibility, sensitivity, and consensus building including conflict resolution
- Leading with a visionary and strategic perspective
- Some understanding of relevant legal duties, responsibilities, and liabilities (although training will be given)

Desirable Skills

- A current or previous executive role in a not-for-profit/public sector organisation
- Federated Charity / Complex Organisations experience
- Experience of / strong commitment to The Wildlife Trusts or environment sector
- Adept and persuasive communicator, confident on a stage
- Business acumen
- Performance management
- Financial management

How to apply

Application process

The application process is overseen by a Nominations Advisory Panel made up of selected SWT Trustees and supported by senior Shropshire Wildlife Trust staff to ensure a fair and balanced process.

The process runs as follows:

1. Apply online via Networx by uploading your CV and a brief covering letter to introduce yourself and your relevant skills / experience. Please ensure your CV includes a summary of your education, qualifications and two referees. References will only be sought with your permission at the end of the recruitment process <https://wildlifetrustshropshire.current-vacancies.com/Jobs/Advert/3488867?cid=856>
2. Shortlisted candidates invited for interview
3. References checked for chosen candidate
4. Election at AGM
5. Induction begins

If you require any special provision or adjustments to facilitate your application, please do let us know.

Please inform us of any dates that you may not be available or might have difficulty with the indicated timetable.

If you would like to arrange an informal discussion with a member of the nomination panel ahead of submitting your application, please contact Anna Pierce, HR Manager via annap@shropshirewildlifetrust.org.uk or 07534 124095.

Recruitment timetable

Deadline for applications	7 June
Stage 1 Interviews	18 June
Stage 2 Interviews	26 or 27 June
Introduction to the Board of Trustees and co-option as trustee	17 July
Formal election as Trustee at AGM	12 October
Election as Chair by SWT council	16 October



**Shropshire
Wildlife Trust**

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Registered Charity Number 212744

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