



Head of Development

Accountable to: Chief Executive Officer

Responsible for: Digital Marketing Manager
Content & Communications Officer
Senior Grants Officer
Fundraising Manager
Capital Campaign Lead (when initial funding secured)

Works with: Heads of SWT Delivery Teams
Head of Finance & Operations
Other Wildlife Trusts, and TWT central teams

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.

Objective of the job

Head of Development will plan, lead, and coordinate all development activities including fundraising (membership, legacies, major gifts, corporates, donations and appeals), grant funding and communications, campaigns and marketing. They will ensure that each function is efficiently and expertly run in line with the relevant strategy and organisational business plan, so that SWT has the resources and the influence to make a demonstrable positive impact on nature across the county.

The Head of Development will also be responsible for growing our profile with new audiences and maintaining the public image and reputation of SWT handling our approach to press, media, complaints and crisis communications.

A particular focus in 2026-27 will be the development of a major (£5-6m) capital campaign to secure funding for the expansion and modernisation of the Trusts visitor centre and office in conjunction with wider urban regeneration guided by the Shrewsbury 'Big Town Plan'.

Key results expected

- SWT has a pipeline of new grants and contracts to support SWT programmes on a multi-year basis, in line with the agreed business plan.
- The Trust is aware of all relevant potential funding streams in good time.
- New projects and funding opportunities are considered carefully but only pursued if they support agreed strategic goals.
- Programmes and funding are developed in cooperation with other Wildlife Trusts and partners where this will increase our impact.

- The Trust's unrestricted income grows to a level which allows us to resource core functions fully and to invest our own funds in new initiatives. This will focus on maximising membership and developing fundraising, philanthropy, legacies and corporates; together with oversight of the Trust's membership recruitment partner.
- Unrestricted income is diversified where feasible, with due regard to any opportunity costs.
- Outline plans for a major capital campaign into developed into a coherent, detailed and realistic fundraising strategy, with support from specialist consultants as appropriate.
- SWT communications, campaigns and marketing team have clear priorities and their expertise is focused on agreed strategic goals, working with other SWT teams as appropriate.
- SWT is increasingly well-known with proactive approaches to increasing engagement with the wider public, including audiences who have not traditionally engaged with nature.
- SWT has positive press and media coverage, with strong relationships with local broadcasters and journalists.
- Complaints and reputational risks are managed promptly and professional to mitigate negative coverage for SWT, and The Wildlife Trust movement.
- SWT runs professional and effective local campaigns and takes part in national campaigns on relevant strategic issues.
- All external communications and conversations with members, supporters, funders and current or potential funders, as well as relevant membership and fundraising information, are recorded in the SWT CRM system. Information is kept up to date with regular campaigns, and is fully exploited by the development team.
- The development team works effectively as a unit in support of the whole Trust, with specialists focused on their own roles but aware of the wider goals that they support.
- Your line reports have clear direction, support, and training if required
- SWT is involved in key discussions within TWT on funding and communications.
- The performance of all development activities is monitored against agreed budgets and any concerns raised with the CEO in good time.

Key tasks

- Build, develop and maintain strong relationships with key funders, partners and supporters in tandem with the Senior Grants Officer and Fundraising Manager.
- Develop unrestricted income through fundraising, philanthropy, legacies and corporates.
- Ensure SWT builds its reputation with professional communications across all channels, good management of enquiries and complaints, as well as proactive press and media coverage.
- Lead the Development team in preparing accurate annual and three-year budgets and monitor revenue and expenditure against them.

The post must comply with The Trust's safeguarding policy and procedures and code of practice for appropriate behaviour.

Core skills

- Experience of financial planning and reporting, including budgeting, business cases, and return on investment, is **essential**.
- Strong experience of leading a team of specialists to achieve wider collective goals is **essential**.
- An awareness of relevant grant and government funding streams is **desirable**.
- Experience of building productive relationships with external partners is **essential**.
- A good understanding of communications, campaigns and marketing is **essential**.
- Very strong written and verbal communication skills are **essential**.
- An ability to work collaboratively with other departments and organisations, whilst challenging where necessary, is **essential**.
- Experience in fundraising, including campaigns, is **desirable**.
- Experience of major capital campaigns and stewarding major gifts is **desirable**.
- Experience in the charity sector is **essential**.
- A knowledge of, or interest in, wildlife and the natural environment is **desirable**.

Terms of employment

Salary:	£41,857 to £47,597 depending on skills and experience.
Hours:	Full time – 35 hours per week; but for the right candidate we would be prepared to discuss part-time working. The nature of the post's duties may from time-to-time require evening and weekend work. Paid overtime is not available, but time off in lieu of hours worked will be given, if requested.
Pre employment checks:	The post does not require a DBS check. The successful applicant will need to provide proof of right to work in the UK, presented at interview.
Probationary period:	All Trust appointments are subject to the satisfactory completion of a probationary service of six months.
Contract	Fixed-term (12 months)
Holidays:	A full-time member of staff has 25 working days per annum in addition to normal public holidays. An additional day is added for each year's service up to a maximum total of 30 days holiday.
Pension:	After three months the employee will be eligible to join the Trust's group personal pension scheme and if they pay a minimum of 3% of salary the Trust will contribute 7% of the salary to this scheme.
Notice Period:	During your probationary period, the period of notice for termination of your employment will be one week on either side. After successful completion of your probationary period, the minimum period of notice is three months.
Place of Work:	Shrewsbury, Shropshire
Home working	The Trust is committed to building a diverse workforce and has an Agile Working policy which will allow colleagues to work in a flexible manner.
Travel:	Pool vehicles are not normally available You are required to have insurance to cover business use and a mileage allowance of 45p per mile will be payable for such journeys. For the purposes of the mileage claims calculations will start from home. If you use a pedal cycle, you may claim a mileage allowance of 20p per mile.
Training:	The Trust is fully committed to personal development and training through its annual review and progress meetings.
Closing date:	2 March 2026
Interview dates:	13 and 18 March (to be confirmed)