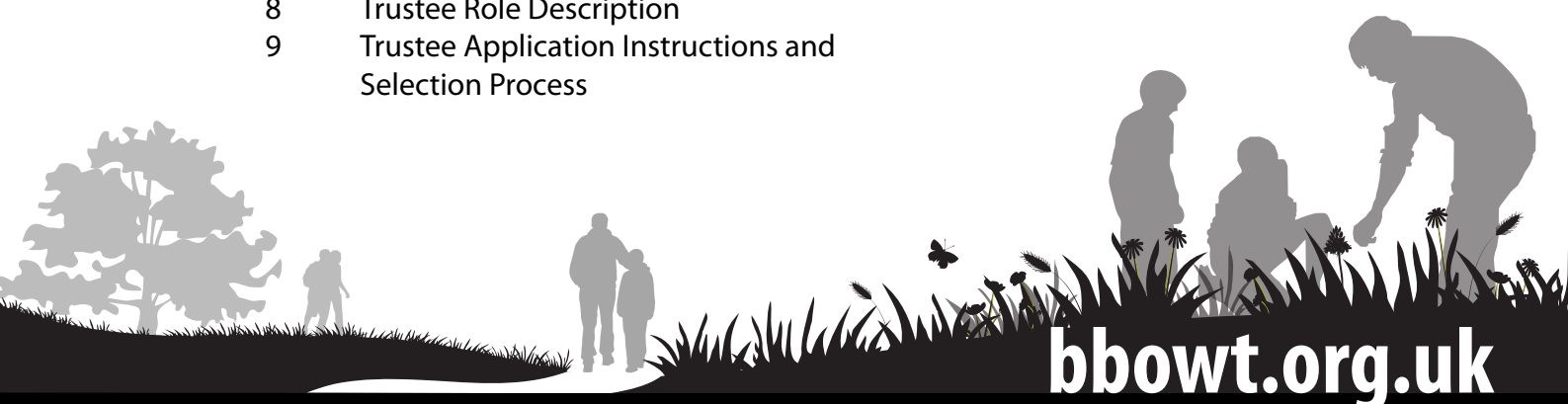




Candidate Information and Application Pack 2021

Contents

- 2 Introduction
- 3 About BBOWT
- 4 Strategic Objectives
Our Vision for 2030
- 5 Our Culture and People
- 6 The Board of Trustees
Being a Trustee - FAQs
- 8 Trustee Role Description
- 9 Trustee Application Instructions and
Selection Process



Introduction



Thank you for your interest in becoming a trustee of the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT).

BBOWT is a fantastic organisation to be involved with and the team has continued to achieve great things over the last year, despite all the challenges of Covid. We have an ambitious agenda and are looking for several new trustees from different backgrounds to help us take this forward. This includes a new Chair as I am (sadly) stepping down from the Board a year early due to my pending move to the Midlands.

This pack has been created by current trustees and staff members with the aim of providing the information you need before and during application. If you require a different format, or have any other questions, please email jadesturdy@bbowt.org.uk. Jade will also be happy to arrange for a telephone call with either me or another trustee if you would like to discuss things further before deciding whether to apply.



Joanna

Joanna Davidson
Chair

BBOWT remains deeply rooted to the beliefs and conservation actions of its founding members. This legacy has provided strong foundations on which, in the face of the ecological and climate emergencies and challenging political and financial backdrop, we pursue a new horizon with the aim of putting nature into recovery across our three counties.

Today, the Trust is of course bigger in size and in recent years our impact has grown but there is headroom to do more. We know that the natural environment is under immense threat, locally, nationally, and globally. Our strategic plans for the future include ambitious, innovative and large-scale conservation approaches to protect and enhance wildlife; species reintroductions; wide reaching education and engagement programmes; and campaigning and advocacy work.

This is an exciting time to be joining BBOWT as a trustee. You will be overseeing a period of change and growth as we realise our ambition.



Estelle

Estelle Bailey
Chief Executive



About BBOWT

Berkshire
Buckinghamshire
Oxfordshire



Founded in 1959 by a small group of volunteers, BBOWT is the only charity working across the Thames Valley to safeguard its unique natural environments and their wildlife.

BBOWT now has over 27,000 members, 1,700 volunteers, and 150 staff members. We have strong finances with an annual turnover of £6 million and are proud of our highly effective and dedicated staff team.

We work in partnership through collaborative projects with local communities, businesses, landowners and local authorities. Each year around 12,000 schoolchildren visit our four education centres.

As part of a national network of 46 Wildlife Trusts - known collectively as The Wildlife Trusts (TWTs) - we have national reach, so our work makes a difference for wildlife everywhere.

BBOWT operates one wholly owned subsidiary company:

Future Nature WTC LTD

Dormant subsidiary companies:

Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust Limited
Berkshire Wildlife Trust Limited
Buckinghamshire Wildlife Trust Limited
Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire
Naturalists' Trust LTD
Thames Valley Wildlife Trust Limited

Along with six other Wildlife Trusts, we jointly own and run Wildlife Fundraising (Central) Limited, a business which works to recruit new members.

Our website, bbowt.org.uk, provides a good overview of the range and reach of our work, as well as details about our many assets (properties and nature reserves).





Strategic Objectives – Wilder, More Nature Everywhere

Our 'Wilder' plan for 2021-2026 sets one simple overarching aim: to create more nature everywhere. To do this, we need to inspire people to take action and we need to do all we can to restore wilder landscapes.

Our strategic plan is set out with three main goals. We aim to:

- Put nature into recovery
- Empower people to act for nature
- Secure our future



By 2030, the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire region will have started to look and sound very different. There will be more natural processes creating wilder, connected landscapes, with thriving and diverse wildlife.

We will have delivered new conservation projects, directly influenced landowners to do more for nature, and we will be on the journey towards establishing a rewilding demonstration project.

Our nature reserves will be rich in wildlife spilling out into the countryside that surrounds them, connecting pockets of wildlife and rebuilding habitats.

We will have inspired people to act for nature and worked with partners across the spectrum of farming, government, business and communities to join up action and nature.

We will continue to be a resilient, financially robust charity delivering measurable impact, underpinned by sound values and an inclusive workplace for all staff and volunteers.

We will live our brand and tell captivating and compelling stories which make people want to support us.



Our culture and people

Berkshire
Buckinghamshire
Oxfordshire



We pride ourselves on being a welcoming community of people - members and supporters, volunteers, partners and staff - who share a love of Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire's wildlife and who work together to protect it. Our values are summarised below.

Our values

We are bold

We speak up for local nature and are determined to transform our ambitions into reality.

We are committed to collaboration

We work together with others to deliver change.

We are passionate champions for nature

We put nature at the heart of everything we do.

We act with integrity

We are professional, transparent and objective in all that we do.

We are guided by science

We look to science to help us solve the difficult problems and build our understanding of the natural world.

We are inclusive

We are united with our communities to inspire nature where anyone can belong.



The Board of Trustees

BBOWT is governed by a Board of Trustees. We are responsible for ensuring effective governance, setting the Trust's strategic direction and policies, and ensuring compliance to all relevant regulations (including the Charities Act and Companies Act).

BBOWT's Board applies the Charity Governance Code, which sets standards of best practice for governance, and can be found at charitygovernancecode.org/en.

Trustees are normally expected to use their skills and experiences to take part in a variety of leadership roles, working groups and committees. For example:

- the Chair of the Board and Honorary Treasurer are trustees elected annually by the Board
- this pack has been prepared by the Nominations Committee
- a Finance and Audit Committee meets quarterly with a particular focus on finance, fundraising and risk

- time limited working groups are established from time to time e.g., to progress a particular new work area

Trustees attend Board Meetings (usually two away days and four evening or afternoon meetings), the Annual General Meeting and Conference, and any committees or working groups they are involved in.

All meetings have been held over Zoom for the past year, but we will aim for a mix of video call and in-person meetings in future. Meetings may be at the BBOWT office in Littlemore, Oxford, or at nature reserves such as College Lake, nr Tring, or the Nature Discovery Centre at Thatcham.

We are fortunate to have the exceptional support of the Trust's experienced, passionate and dedicated Chief Executive and Senior Leadership Team.

Being a Trustee - FAQs

How much time do trustees devote to their role?

Being a trustee requires a range of voluntary work – time preparing for and attending meetings; effort spent understanding the work of the organisation and staying updated on the conservation sector. The precise time commitment varies, but probably averages around 12 days a year.

The Chair needs to devote considerably more time to their leadership role, including acting as line manager and support to the CEO. The Chair's time commitment is likely to be around 30 or so days per year.

Trustees serve in terms of three years, and don't normally serve for more than two consecutive terms, though a third term is possible in certain circumstances.

What is it like to be a trustee?

Our current trustees find their role a rewarding experience. They contribute to the direction and oversight of an amazing organisation – while being careful not to overstep the line between governance and day to day management. They enjoy working in a team, with a group of like-minded people from different backgrounds.

As a BBOWT trustee, you can expect to be:

- inducted to your role and provided with ongoing support
- part of the team, sharing in the Trust's successes and challenges
- provided with high quality, timely information to support your statutory responsibilities
- involved in aspects of the role that particularly interest you, have your views heard and



respected, and to feel that your skills and your contribution are valued

Am I eligible to be a trustee - and do I have to declare conflicts of interest?

All trustees are required to either be or become a member of the charity. To be eligible to serve as a trustee, you must not have unspent convictions for any offence involving deception or dishonesty; have been adjudged bankrupt and not been discharged; have made an arrangement with creditors and not been discharged; have been removed from the office of charity trustee on the grounds of misconduct or mismanagement in the administration of a charity; or be subject to a disqualification order under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986 or the Insolvency Act 1986.

Trustees are asked to make declarations relating to financial, professional, personal or prejudicial interests - anything which conflicts with the charity's mission and values and/or which hinders their ability to act fairly, impartially and in the best interests of the charity.

Is there any remuneration?

No – trustees are volunteers and are not paid for the role – except in the satisfaction they receive. Where a trustee incurs expenses beyond the day-to-day attendance at meetings, it is possible for these to be met by BBOWT.

Is being a trustee right for me?

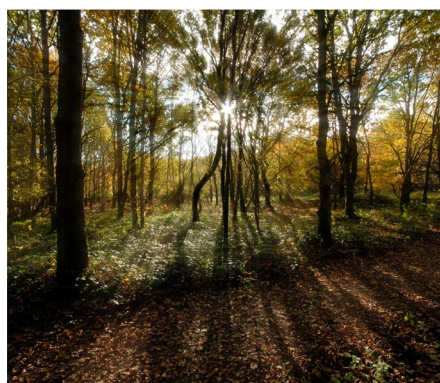
If you believe you fit the role descriptions below, then yes! We encourage you to apply. BBOWT is seeking to better reflect our commitment to diversity and the communities in which we work. We particularly welcome applications from Black, Asian, and minority ethnic people as they are underrepresented on our Board of Trustees.

You don't need to have had previous Board experience to be a great trustee. Current and previous trustees include people skilled in business and finance; ecology and conservation; human resources, fundraising, marketing etc, all with their own unique experiences and perspectives on our wildlife.

To be the Chair, we are looking for someone with relevant leadership experience which probably includes having run a significant sized organisation. This year we would also particularly welcome applications from people with backgrounds in the areas we have highlighted as desirable below.

However, we appreciate that having a trustee role isn't for everybody, or now might not be the right time. There are many other ways to get involved with our Wildlife Trust, including other voluntary roles, all of which can be found on our website and if this is not for you then please talk to us about something different.

*Bowdown Woods,
Berks*



*College Lake,
Bucks*



*Warburg Nature
Reserve, Oxon*



Trustee Role Description

Trustees are committed to devoting time and effort to use their skills, knowledge and experience to help achieve the aims of the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust.

They are expected to:

- govern in line with our mission, values and charitable objectives
- provide strategic direction (e.g., set policy, monitor performance) at Board level and in any sub-Committees and working groups they are involved with
- be responsible for ensuring compliance with charity law, company law, and all other statutory and regulatory requirements
- ensure that we effectively apply our resources exclusively in pursuance of the objects defined in our governing documents
- examine organisational risks and the actions needed to minimise them, including those to our property and assets
- enthusiastically contribute in meetings and via email
- ensure efficient organisation administration, delegate day-to-day management to the CEO, and support and hold the CEO to account
- treat all BBOWT staff and volunteers, including other Trustees, with respect and consideration; and abide by the decisions of the majority
- put the interests of the charity first, and safeguard its reputation and values.

In addition, the Chair of the Board:

- chairs the meetings of the Board, working closely with the senior team behind the scenes to plan ahead and review progress between meetings
- works closely with the Chief Executive, supporting her to achieve the organisation's mission and acting as her line manager
- acts as the Board's link with the Wildlife Trusts' collective work nationally, through the team at the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts

Trustees are individually accountable to the Board and to BBOWT's members.

Essential criteria - you are:

- committed to meeting the expectations above
- eligible under charity law to act as a Trustee
- a member of BBOWT (or will become one)
- a confident user of email and the internet
- confident in communicating your views and making collective, impartial decisions
- able to objectively analyse information, ask questions, and debate and provide challenge when necessary
- able to show some records of behaviours consistent with Nolan's Seven Principles of Public Life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, and leadership
- a team player, able to build mutually respectful relationships with others
- willing to act as an organisation champion

Essential criteria in addition, if applying to be Chair of the Board, that you:

- have senior leadership experience, preferably gained from running a significant organisation
- have a strategic approach
- have past experience of chairing
- are happy to act as a spokesperson, ambassador and advocate for BBOWT

Desirable criteria for trustees - you are:

- happy to act as a spokesperson, ambassador and advocate for BBOWT (e.g., at events, on social media)
- able to help develop the Trust's networks with key partners, funders, donors and other stakeholder groups
- considered skilled or experienced in any of the following areas:
 - farming or land management
 - digital / IT skills
 - campaigning and / or advocacy
 - senior local government experience e.g., in planning or policy

We particularly welcome applications from Black, Asian, and minority ethnic people. These demographics are underrepresented on our Board of Trustees.

Trustee Application Instructions

Berkshire
Buckinghamshire
Oxfordshire



If you would like to apply for either a trustee or the Chair role, please send an up to date CV with a covering letter to Jade Sturdy (Executive Assistant, jadesturdy@bbowt.org.uk).

The cover letter should set out why you are interested in the role and how you meet the relevant role description.

The deadline for applications is 10 May 2021.

Selection Process

Applications will be reviewed by the Nominations Committee on 17 May 2021.

Short-listed applicants will be invited for a friendly, informal interview on 24 May (the majority of candidates) or the afternoon of 8 June. We hope that this will be in person at The Lodge in Littlemore, Oxford but if necessary, it will be by Zoom.

The Nominations Committee will then recommend candidates to the BBOWT Board of Trustees for appointment.

Successful applicants will be invited initially as observers to the Board and relevant committees and appropriate induction will be arranged. The next AGM (Autumn 2021) will be asked to vote the recommended trustees onto the Board. It is possible that we may co-opt them to the Board in advance of that AGM.

(The Board of Trustees has the power to co-opt trustees. You become a trustee from the date of the Board's decision to co-opt, and the Charity Commission and Companies House are notified of your appointment. BBOWT's Articles of Association require that any trustee co-opted during the year has to be voted in by the membership at the next AGM.)

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To read about a trustee's experience within the Wildlife Trusts, please see this article:
<https://environmentjob.co.uk/blog/becoming-a-wildlife-charity-trustee>.

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Graphic: Nik Pollard