



Vincent Wildlife Trust

A young wolverine is the central focus of the image, standing on its hind legs and looking directly at the camera. It has dark brown fur on its head and back, with a lighter, yellowish-brown patch on its chest. Its eyes are dark and alert. The background is a soft-focus natural setting with green foliage and some purple flowers at the bottom.

# Chair of Trustees

## Application Pack



# Contents

- 1 Applying for this post
- 2 Background to the Trust
- 3 Job description

Our **Vision** is that VWT is a catalyst  
for mammal conservation

Our **Mission** is to conserve threatened mammals  
by leading the way with scientifically sound  
conservation work

# 1 Applying for this post

**Please read all of the pack information that follows.**

If you feel you meet the job specification and job requirements, you are welcome to apply by submitting a CV with covering letter.

Deadline for applications is **5pm on 31 January 2021** by email to [lucyrogers@vwt.org.uk](mailto:lucyrogers@vwt.org.uk)

## **Interview dates**

**First Interview:** Thursday 25 February or Tuesday 2 March 2021

**Second Interview:** Wednesday 10 March 2021



## 2 Background to the Trust

For more than 40 years, Vincent Wildlife Trust has led the way in supporting the recovery of mammal species such as otter, water vole, horseshoe bats and, more recently, pine marten. VWT is respected internationally as a leader in developing and implementing innovative approaches that halt and reverse declines in threatened mammal species.

Our late founder, the Honourable Vincent Weir, endowed the Trust with the resources to continue his lifetime's work in mammal conservation and for the last ten years we have focused on building an ambitious, sustainable organisation without its founder. During this period, we have secured strategic partnerships, enabling VWT to embark on new flagship projects, including the nationally important Pine Marten Recovery Project. Our work has focused on the needs of selected British and Irish mammals, including the weasel family and the rarer bats.

VWT is a specialist NGO and a key player in research-led conservation interventions for a range of mammal species. This is possible thanks to a firm financial base that is independent of membership income, together with a high degree of flexibility that enables VWT both to act quickly and to plan for the long term. This approach has allowed the Trust to focus on mammals with particular and often challenging conservation needs, with which other organisations are unwilling or unable to engage. For example, acquiring and managing greater horseshoe bat maternity roosts and surrounding land in the 1980s and 1990s enabled VWT to protect 50% of the British population of this European Protected Species. Our bat reserves remain a unique resource as exemplars of roost management. Combined with research into their ecology and habitat needs, this has led to the population of these rare bats more than doubling in recent years.

While VWT is not a campaigning or lobbying organisation, our expertise, advice and impartial evidence provide support to a wide range of decision makers. We want to deliver significant change to the fortunes of threatened mammals through a positive and bold conservation strategy. We are extending our reach to prioritise a greater range of species over a larger geographic area, and we are working increasingly at a landscape scale, across Britain, Ireland and strategically targeted areas of continental Europe.

This post is to replace the current Chair who is coming to the end of his term in 2021.

**More detailed information is available on our website: [www.vwt.org.uk](http://www.vwt.org.uk)**

# 3 Job description

## Location

The Trust's Head Office is based at Eastnor, near Ledbury in Herefordshire. Board meetings take place at a range of locations, including Bristol, Birmingham and London.

## Remuneration

The role of Chair is not accompanied by any financial remuneration, although expenses for travel and subsistence may be claimed.

## Time commitment

Chairing of the Trust requires a significant time commitment. It involves preparing for and being available to Chair quarterly meetings of the Board of Trustees and maintaining regular contact with the CEO. Routine meetings with the CEO facilitate oversight, good management and dealing with routine administrative duties. At a minimum, effective performance of the role will require between 8 and 10 days commitment each year.

## Reporting

To the Board of Trustees

## Role

Working with the Board and CEO, the Chair will assist delivery of the Charity's mission and vision, providing inclusive leadership to the Board of Trustees, ensuring that each Trustee fulfils their duties and responsibilities for the effective governance of the charity. They will be an ambassador and the public face of the charity in partnership with the Chief Executive.

## Principal responsibilities

### Strategic leadership

- Provide leadership and strategic direction, ensuring that the Charity has maximum impact for its beneficiaries
- Ensure that Trustees fulfil their fiduciary duties and responsibilities for the effective governance of the Charity
- Ensure that the Board operates within its charitable objectives and adheres to charitable and company law.



## **Governance**

- Ensure good governance of the Charity.
- Develop the knowledge and capability of the Board of Trustees, and ensure its performance is reviewed at least on an annual basis.
- Ensure that the Board of Trustees retains the right balance of skills, knowledge and experience needed to govern and lead the charity effectively.
- Ensure there are adequate systems in place to enable the Board to identify, manage and mitigate risk.
- Line manage and cultivate a strong, constructive working relationship with the Chief Executive for the effective delivery of the Trust's Strategic Plan and Operational Programmes.
- Conduct an annual appraisal and remuneration review for the Chief Executive in consultation with other Trustees.

## **External relations**

- Act as an ambassador and advocate for the Charity.
- Maintain close relationships with key influencers.
- Represent the Charity at external events when appropriate.

## **Personal characteristics and experience**

In addition to the qualities required of a Trustee of the Charity, the Chair must also meet the following requirements:

### **Personal characteristics**

- Demonstrate a passion and commitment to the NGO conservation sector and the mission of the Trust
- Have the ability to lead and inspire the Board, the staff and VWT's partners
- Strong networking capabilities and strong existing networks that can be utilised for the benefit of the charity
- An ability to foster and promote a collaborative team environment

### **Experience**

- Have operated at a senior strategic leadership level within an organisation
- Successful track record of achievement through their career
- Experience of charity governance and working with or as part of a Board of Trustees
- Financial management expertise and a broad understanding of charity finance issues
- Experience of external representation, delivering presentations and managing stakeholders
- Significant experience of chairing meetings and events

## **Conflicts of interest**

The Trust has a robust process for dealing with any potential conflicts of interest that may arise in the performance of its duties and in the delivery of its work programme. Any perceived conflict of interest need not preclude prospective candidates from applying for the post. However, in their application prospective candidates should note any aspect of their personal or professional life that has the potential to create a conflict of interest and suggest why this should not be an impediment to their appointment as Chair.

## **Terms**

The Charity's Chair (and board members) will serve a three-year term to be eligible for re-appointment for a maximum of two additional terms.



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**Front cover photograph:** Pine marten ©James A Moore  
**Back cover photograph:** Greater horseshoe bat ©Andrew McCarthy