



the friends of Westonbirt Arboretum

Chair

March 2023

Royal Patron The former Duchess of Cornwall
Friends of Westonbirt Arboretum, Westonbirt Arboretum, Tetbury, Gloucestershire, GL8 8QS
Registered Charity No. 293190



Welcome from Mike Mintram, Chair

Thank you for your interest in becoming the next Chair of the Friends of Westonbirt Arboretum (FoWA).

Established in 1985 by a small group of enthusiasts with a desire to work closely with Forestry England to help preserve, enhance, and develop this unique landscape by raising funds from our membership scheme. Today we have grown to become an organisation with an income in excess of £1.7m per annum that employs 23 members of staff and serves more than 38,000 members.

We are immensely proud of our work, its impact, our partners, and the generous support we receive from our Ambassador, The Hon. Beth Rothschild and our Royal Patron. We benefit from having firm foundations in place to build on our achievements, with the role of Chair representing an amazing and unique opportunity to join a dedicated, passionate, and high-performing team, all of whom are incredibly proud of being part of and celebrating Westonbirt Arboretum.

You will also be joining us at one of the most significant and exciting times in the history of both FoWA and the Arboretum. With a new and aspirational 10-year vision, developed in partnership with Forestry England to transform Westonbirt Arboretum and secure its place as "a world leader in trees". Inspiring many more people through 'Conservation, Education, and Participation'.



To realise this vision, the charity relies on the support and guidance of a dedicated and skilled Chair and Board of Trustees, who are actively involved in the organization's strategic direction, governance, and decision-making, who will be fundamental in driving the master plan from concept to completion.

With you as our new Chair expected to share our passion for the enhancement, conservation, and care of Westonbirt. Working collaboratively with Forestry England and our CEO to help shape the long-term sustainable future of both Westonbirt Arboretum and the charity, horizon scan, broker new introductions, and effectively mobilise new opportunities. Act as an ambassador and a public face, support the CEO and ensure that the board functions as a unit and works closely with the entire team at FoWA to achieve our strategic objectives.

If this appeals to you and you would welcome the opportunity to apply your skills and expertise to support our work and achieve our future ambitions, please read on.

Best wishes,

Chair, Friends of Westonbirt Arboretum

Connecting people with trees...

...to improve the quality of life



Friends of Westonbirt Arboretum

We aim to further public enjoyment and knowledge of this world-renowned tree collection and secure its sustainable future. We do this by engaging, informing, and increasing membership and by giving financial and practical support to the management and development of Westonbirt, The National Arboretum.

Our vision

Our vision is to support Westonbirt Arboretum to be a world leader in trees, inspiring people through education, participation, and conservation.

Our mission

Our mission is to support Westonbirt Arboretum to connect people with trees to improve the quality of life.

Our work helps to support this historic, Victorian picturesque landscape and internationally important tree and shrub collection, with 15,000 labelled specimens from Britain, China, North America, Japan, Chile and other temperate climates.



Westonbirt Arboretum is not only an important environmental and educational resource for those who live locally but performs work that has national and international benefits. At Westonbirt Arboretum, Forestry England trains expert arborists to help care for woodlands and forests across the UK and participates in climate change research that benefits worldwide environmental understanding.

The Arboretum now covers 635 acres and consists of three main areas: the Old Arboretum, a carefully designed landscape dating from the 1850s offering beautiful vistas, stately avenues, and trees from around the world; Silk Wood an ancient, semi-natural woodland which has exotic planting throughout its landscape; and the Downs, a Grade 1 registered landscape and hosts species-rich grassland.

A highly influential partner, and members of a Joint Working Panel, which ensures collaborative working to support Westonbirt Arboretum in partnership with Forestry England, FoWA is regarded as a "critical friend," providing a consistent presence to keep sight of long-term objectives and capital development projects. We also hold the accolade of being the most successful Friends Group and charity supporting a Forestry England wood.

We're a charity with over 38,000 members and supporters

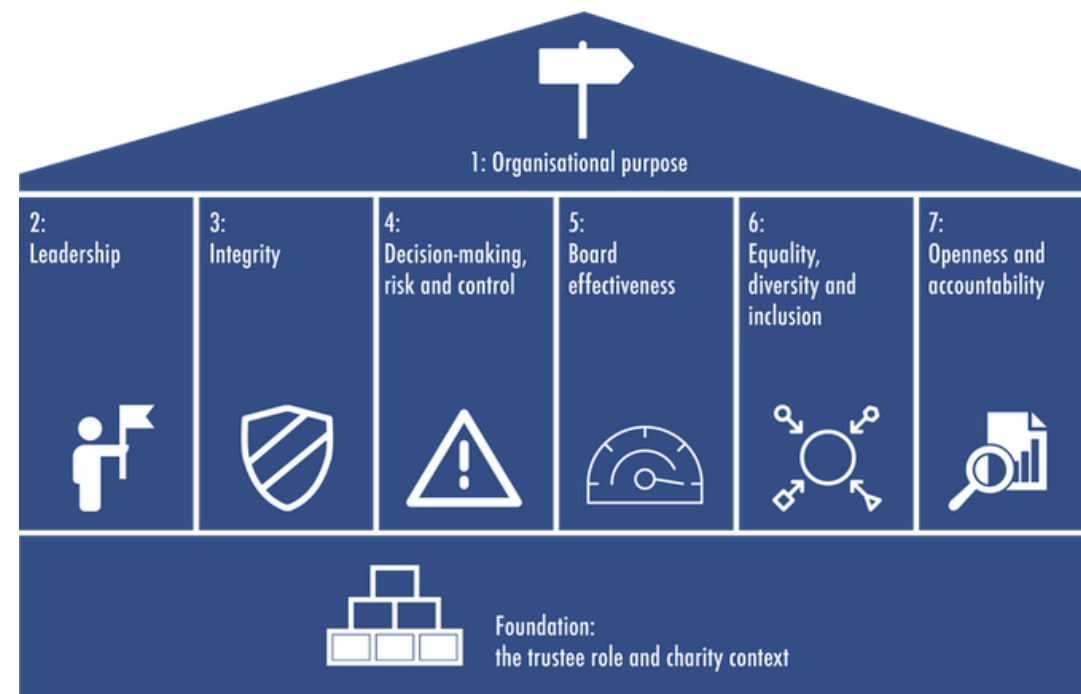
We help support Westonbirt Arboretum, with over 15,000 trees and 600 acres of woodland

Good Governance

Good governance is fundamental to every charity's success and FoWA. It enables and supports a charity's compliance with the law and relevant regulations. It also promotes a culture in which everything works towards fulfilling the charity's vision.

It is the aim of the Charity Governance Code to help charities and their trustees develop these high standards of governance, providing a practical tool to help trustees achieve this.

For more information, visit the [Charity Governance Code website](#).



Protecting trees

Enriching lives



Chair

The role of Chair is about exercising soft power, persuasion, and diplomacy, with an occasional burst of more executive-style decision-making when needed. It is also never straightforward, nor one solely about strategy.

Terms

The role is offered on a voluntary basis, however, trustees are eligible to claim reasonable expenses for attending meetings and functions on behalf of FoWA.

Time Commitment

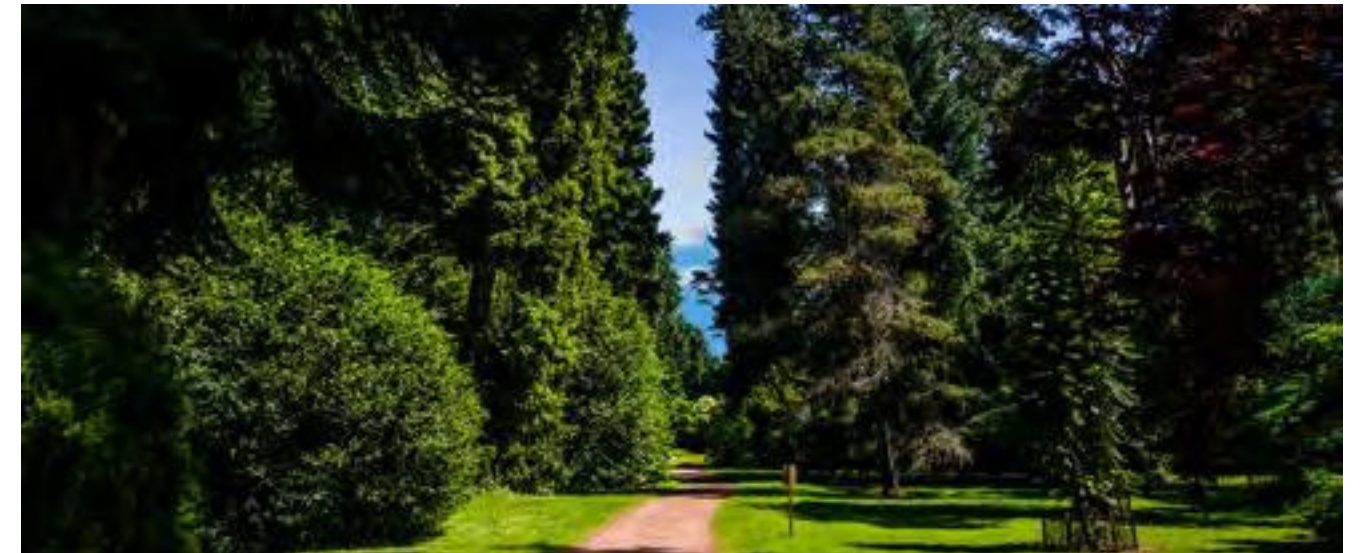
The time commitment is approximately 2/3 days per month.

Board Meetings

6 per year (each lasting approximately 2.5 hours) with prep time in advance, plus a one-day trustee away day and attendance at two additional committee meetings quarterly (each lasting 1-2 hours).

CEO

Fortnightly meetings with the CEO, plus attendance at other meetings where required (estimated 8 hours per month).



Responsibilities

Leadership

- Provide strategic and inclusive leadership to the FoWA and its board, ensuring the charity achieves its strategic ambition and vision.
- Ensure that trustees fulfill their duties and responsibilities for the effective governance of the charity.
- Contribute actively to the board's role in shaping strategy, framing and reviewing policies, and achieving our strategic ambitions.
- Ensure the financial sustainability of the charity through the application of appropriate financial controls and policies, which are reviewed regularly.

Westonbirt Arboretum is home to 2,500
species from the far corners
of the globe...

... and 5 national tree collections

Governance

- Encourage active discussion at board meetings, summarising key points and ensuring decisions made are implemented.
- Work with board committees and the CEO regarding governance and the setting of priorities.
- Develop the knowledge and capability of the board of trustees.
- Appraise the performance of trustees, and the board's contribution, in terms of its role in achieving FoWA's strategic ambitions and vision.
- Work with the CEO to ensure the board of trustees is regularly refreshed and incorporates the right balance of skills, knowledge, and experience needed to govern and lead FoWA effectively.

External

- Actively promote FoWA and act as spokesperson and ambassador.
- Actively seek to introduce the CEO to organisations and individuals who could be supportive.
- Develop a strong working alliance with National Forestry England senior leadership and close relationships with key stakeholders, thought leaders, influencers, and funders.
- Represent FoWA at events, conferences, receptions, and other public functions.
- Be supportive of profile-raising and fundraising activities.



CEO

- Establish and build a strong, effective, and constructive working relationship with the CEO, ensuring they are accountable for achieving the agreed strategic objectives.
- Regularly engage and act as a communication channel between the board and the CEO, clarifying board decisions, agreeing on performance criteria, and providing feedback to the CEO.
- Develop and maintain an open and supportive relationship where each can speak openly about concerns, challenges, and opportunities.
- Lead an annual appraisal and remuneration review for the CEO in consultation with other trustees.
- Ensure that the CEO has the opportunity for professional development and has appropriate external professional support.

The above list is indicative only and not exhaustive. The Chair will be expected to perform all such additional duties as are reasonably commensurate with the role.

Be a part of bringing Westonbirt's
10-Year-Vision to life...

...and help connect even more people
with trees

Person Specification

Expectations are high. As our new chair, you will need to evidence and demonstrate commitment and be fully engaged and motivated by our vision for Westonbirt Arboretum and bring the necessary experience, expertise, and energy to ensure we are able to achieve all that we hope to achieve.

Experience

- Significant senior strategic leadership experience.
- Successful track record of achievement throughout your career.
- Demonstrable experience of having chaired, together with experience or an understanding of charity governance and working as part of a non-executive board.
- Entrepreneurial, with the ability to successfully navigate strategic, financial, operational, and reputational challenges.
- Experience in external representation, delivering presentations, and managing stakeholders.

Knowledge & Skills

- An understanding and acceptance of the role and responsibilities of a Chair.
- Broad knowledge of the charity sector and current issues affecting it.
- Sound independent judgement, strategic vision, and the ability to think creatively.
- Strong leadership skills, ability to motivate staff and volunteers and bring people together.
- Commitment to fairness and to promoting equality and inclusion.
- Strong financial and business acumen and a broad understanding of charity finance law and regulation.



Attributes

- Strong and visible passion and commitment to the values and vision of FoWA.
- Personal gravitas, credibility, and impact to lead a significant local organisation of national importance.
- Strong interpersonal and relationship building abilities to build and sustain positive relationships with key stakeholders and colleagues to achieve organisational objectives.
- Tact and diplomacy, with the ability to listen and engage effectively.
- Ability to commit the necessary time and effort to conduct the role well, including travel and attending events outside of office hours.

The arboretum plays a vital part in research and conservation...

... as well as being a stunningly place to visit and explore

How to Apply

If you would welcome the opportunity to apply, please forward the following:

- A CV or an extended biography outlining your executive and non-executive appointments, achievements, and academic and professional qualifications.
- A supporting statement (maximum 2 x A4 pages) demonstrating why you are interested in applying for the role, how your skills and experience are relevant to the role, how you can add value to the Board, and any other relevant information.

Your application should be sent to our advising consultant, Philip Nelson, at philip.nelson@thehiringdept.com.

Please also let us know if you require any special provisions should you be called forward for an interview.

Timetable

Closing Date: Monday 24th April

Preliminary Interviews: Monday 15th & Tuesday 16th May

Final Panel Interviews: Tuesday 6th or Wednesday 7th June

Queries

For an informal and confidential discussion, to ask a question on any aspect of the appointment process, or for additional information, please contact Philip Nelson at on 07771 953959 or philip.nelson@thehiringdept.com.





Thank you

Philip Nelson
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the friends 
of Westonbirt
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fowa.org.uk

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