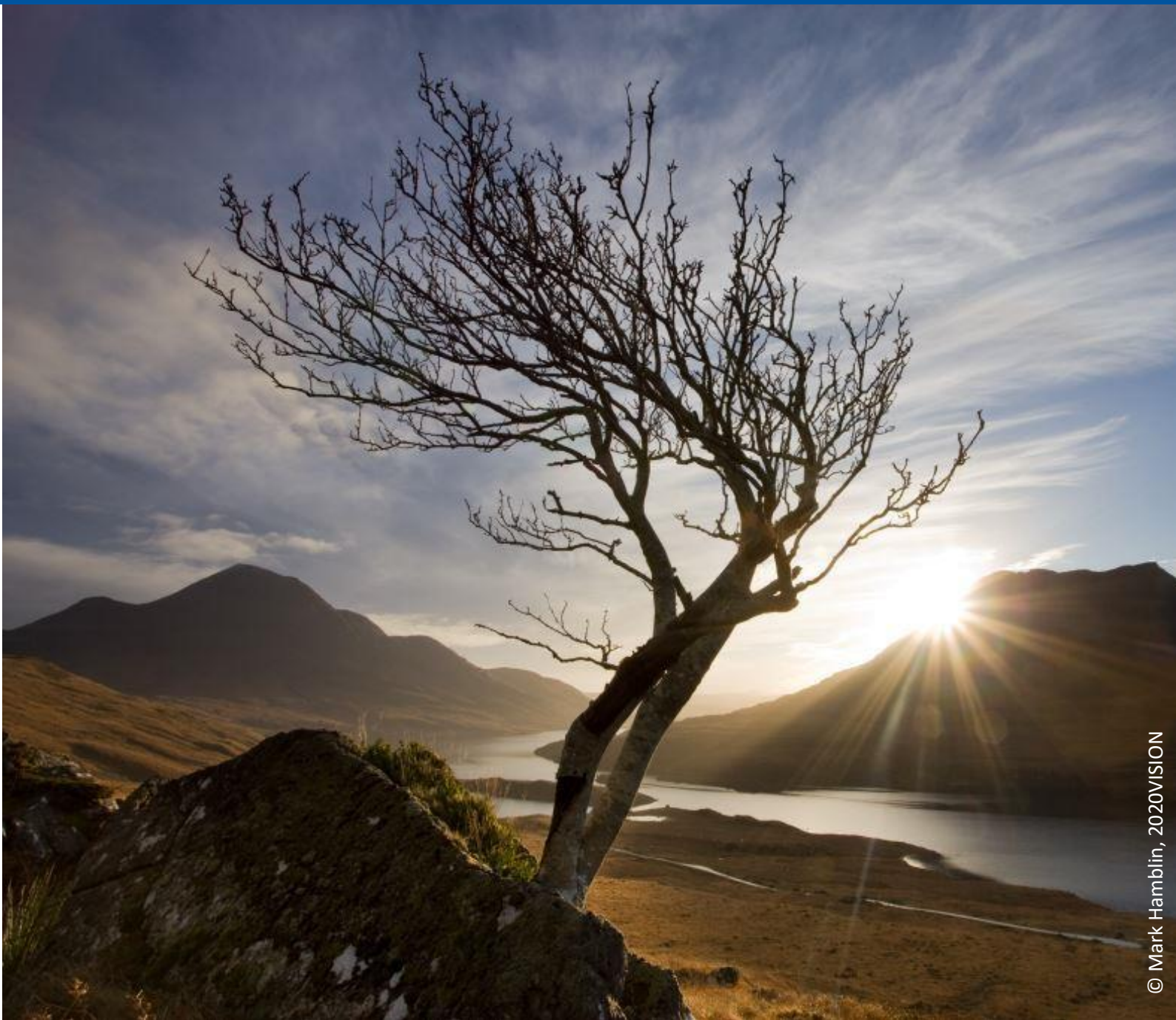


# Scottish Wildlife Trust

Trustee (co-opted) – Vice-Chair (Finance)



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## Application Information

## Welcome from Chair of Council

Thank you for considering becoming a member of Council. It is important that the Scottish Wildlife Trust continues to be governed and supported by a strong, diverse group of people, drawn widely from Scotland, so we very much welcome your interest. Governance is primarily concerned with the strategy, finances and processes of the organisation, so we particularly need people with relevant skills to apply. We also look to Council members to have a strong commitment to the wildlife and natural environment of Scotland, as well as a genuine desire to help the Trust on its journey towards ever greater diversity and inclusion.

This is an exciting time for the Trust. For over 60 years we have worked with Scotland's people and communities to ensure that our wildlife and natural environments, from mountain tops to inshore waters, are protected and restored. The challenges have never been greater, but the opportunities for positive action are many. We need people with ideas and relevant experience to step forward to help us in governance of this vital work.

I hope you find this pack useful and stimulating. Thank you again for your interest.

**Kenny Taylor**, March 2025



## Introduction to the Scottish Wildlife Trust

The Scottish Wildlife Trust is Scotland's leading nature conservation charity: a vibrant, impact-focused organisation seeking to achieve its vision of a network of healthy, resilient ecosystems on land and sea, supporting Scotland's wildlife and people.

During the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, we will work tirelessly to ensure that our network of wildlife reserves contribute directly to nature's recovery. We will engage with communities across Scotland, enabling everyone to play their part in tackling the nature and climate crises and benefiting from connecting with nature. We will catalyse large-scale change through our collaborative and pioneering initiatives to restore ecosystems on land and sea. We will encourage urgency and leadership from Scotland's decision makers, advocating for nature-based solutions to the threats and challenges faced by society.

With over 40,000 members, around 600 volunteers and a wide range of partners, we are a committed and passionate group of people, and together we will put nature at the heart of Scotland's future.







Steve Gardner

## Governance and structure

The Trust is a company limited by guarantee and without share capital, as well as a registered charity (Scottish charity number SCO005792). The Trust is led by a Board of Trustees, known as Council, comprising between 8 and 14 members and the Chair. Up to ten members are elected and up to four members are co-opted. Council members have a breadth of skills and experience and are central to the delivery of the Trust's governance through the provision of strategic leadership and oversight.

A scheme of delegation exists which outlines how Council delegates delivery of the Trust's plans and strategies to the Executive. The Chief Executive is accountable to Council for the efficient management of the Trust and for the implementation of Council-agreed policies and Strategy 2030. The Chief Executive is assisted in this task by the Directors of the three departments: Finance and Resources, Conservation, and External Affairs. The Trust currently employs around 110 staff.

The Trust depends upon financial support from memberships, donations and legacies. It is also supported by players of People's Postcode Lottery and receives grants from a range of organisations including the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, NatureScot and the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

The Scottish Wildlife Trust is a member of the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts which operates as an umbrella body for 46 individual Wildlife Trusts, covering the whole of the UK, the Isle of Man and Alderney. The Wildlife Trusts collectively manage around 2,300 nature reserves.

## Conservation

With over 100 wildlife reserves, the Trust is committed to the protection and restoration of species, habitats and ecosystems. Our practical wildlife management ensures that over 250 nationally important species and habitats are protected on our reserves across Scotland. Meanwhile, our knowledge and evidence team collect data and track trends to help us make the right management decisions on the ground.

Our practical work extends well beyond our own reserves into a growing number of landscape-scale initiatives, including our Living Landscapes. These big partnership projects aim to restore nature on a bigger scale than ever before.

The Trust currently leads on three Living Landscape projects as well as delivering a Living Seas Programme to support the rich wildlife and natural habitats within our seas.

Coigach-Assynt Living Landscape (CALL) is an ambitious partnership project to deliver one of the largest landscape-scale restoration projects in Europe. CALL is a ground-breaking project with a 40-year vision to restore the natural environment in the North West Highlands and in doing so help create jobs and stimulate the local economy.

The Cumbernauld Living Landscape programme uses innovative approaches to enhance, restore and reconnect green areas of the town. This includes work to integrate new and existing developments into a connected green network as well as involving communities in conservation projects.

Edinburgh Living Landscape exists to bring a transformational change to the city's urban environment through greening at multiple scales from tiny gardens to large parks and open spaces. The Trust has led on the development of the Edinburgh Nature Network, the first of its kind in Scotland which highlights opportunities to take action across the city, using natural solutions to address the threats of biodiversity loss and climate change.

Our other flagship projects include Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels, which focuses on protecting our native red squirrel population, and Riverwoods which aims to create a network of thriving riverbank woodlands and healthy river systems across Scotland to benefit both people and wildlife.



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## External Affairs

Our External Affairs department focuses on maximising the influence, profile and impact of the Trust's work with external audiences.

Our Policy team develops and advocates evidence-based policy on a wide range of issues related to the health of Scotland's natural environment. This involves engaging with politicians, civil servants, academic institutions, other environmental NGOs and a range of other stakeholders including businesses.

Our Marketing and Communications team works proactively to engage Scotland's people in understanding the importance and benefits of Scotland's wildlife and wild places. This is done through a combination of print, online and face-to-face communications, including the Trust's flagship magazine, its website and social media platforms. The team works closely with policy colleagues to ensure we convey our message clearly to business leaders and decision makers.

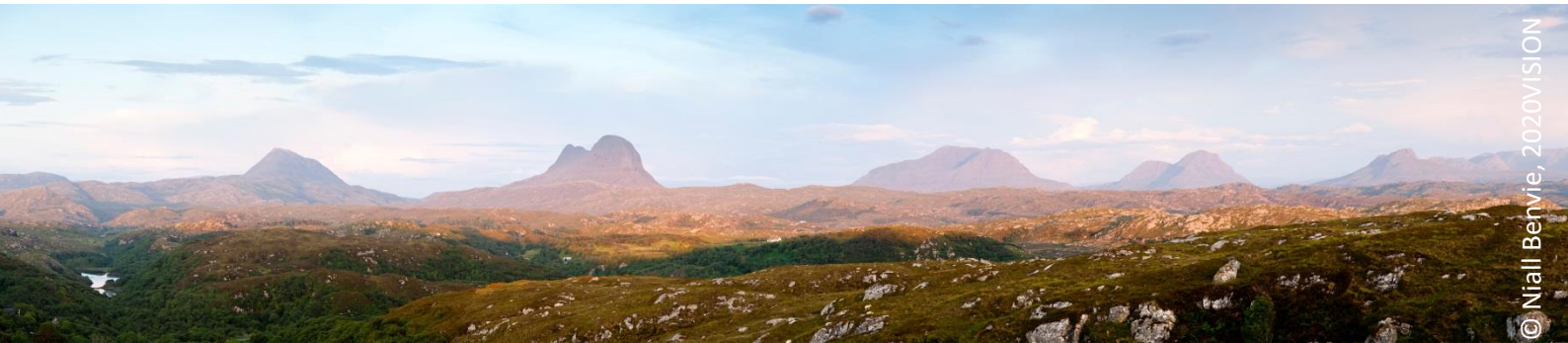
Our Engagement team supports over 600 volunteers, 15 local groups and over 25 Wildlife Watch Groups. Volunteers not only support reserve staff with practical conservation but also engage local communities by leading hundreds of events and activities throughout the year. Our three Visitor Centres engage tens of thousands of people every year with wildlife through informal and formal education sessions.



## Finance, Resources and Governance

The Finance and Resources department includes finance, fundraising, HR, Health & Safety, IT and administration. Its main functions are to support governance, secure and manage resources, manage and develop IT infrastructure, and recruit and retain a high-quality staff team. All of these activities are essential to supporting front-line delivery and the achievement of the Trust's impact.

The Trust's latest Annual report and financial statements can be found [online here](#).



## Council

Council meets five times a year, including an annual planning and/or away day, which is in-person. Quarterly meetings are currently held on a Thursday 12pm to 4pm/4:30pm and are usually hybrid (face-to-face but with an online option).

Papers are distributed a week in advance electronically. The Chair runs Council on the assumption that all Trustees have read the papers.

Council has supporting committees which new Trustees may be encouraged to join:

- Conservation Committee meets quarterly and advises Council in relation to nature conservation matters.
- Finance & Audit Committee meets quarterly to consider and advise on audit and financial risk.
- Nominations Committee provides oversight of the structure, composition and effectiveness of the Council of the Scottish Wildlife Trust and advises Council on all Board (and CEO) appointments. Meets as required.

The Board of Trustees are ultimately responsible for the management and administration but operational delivery of the Trust's vision is delegated to the Chief Executive, Jo Pike. Jo is accountable to Council for the efficient management of the Trust and for the implementation of Council-agreed policies and Strategy 2030. The Chief Executive is assisted by the Directors of the three operational departments: Conservation, Finance and Resources, and External Affairs.

In addition to five Council meetings each year, Trustees are invited to attend the Annual General Meeting, training events and a small number of visits to members' groups and field operations.

## Looking for a new Trustee – for Vice-Chair (Finance) position

The current postholder is set to retire in September 2025 following a successful six year period covering two terms. We are seeking their successor with the intention being for a period of overlap so that the successful candidate can be suitably inducted into this important role.

The position requires a commitment to attend both Council meetings (held quarterly) and chair our Finance & Audit Committee (also held quarterly) which reports into Council.

This position will be a co-opted one which, in line with the Articles of Association, means that our Council will decide on the appointment as opposed to our membership.

The Trustee will be co-opted for a three-year term and can serve a second, and final, three-year term if approved by Council.

Newly appointed members of Council will be invited to the next Council meeting and will be given a formal induction by senior staff prior to this.

All Trustees will be registered at Companies House as Directors of the Scottish Wildlife Trust. They will also be registered at the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) as Trustees of the Scottish Wildlife Trust.

All members of Council must sign the Trust's Code of Conduct and must adhere to the conditions therein on taking office.

Candidates who wish to apply for this Trustee position are asked to consider the role description and person specification below before submitting an application; being your CV, accompanied by a short email outlining your interest. Applications are welcome from a diverse range of individuals who can share their enthusiasm, skills and experience.

The closing date for applications is Monday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2025 with online interviews during week commencing Monday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2025. We particularly welcome applications from under-represented groups.

The Company Secretary, CEO and Council will review applications after the closing date, and contact applicants whom we seek to invite to a short interview.



## Role description – Trustee & Vice-Chair (Finance)



### Trustee

In general terms the Council is responsible for determining the Trust's strategy and ensuring that the proper procedures are in place for the Trust's management. The main responsibilities of Trustees are:

- To ensure that the Trust is run and developed properly, responsibly and lawfully in the interests of its members in accordance with the Memorandum and Articles of Association;
- To work closely with senior staff to develop, and separately to approve, the strategy and policies of the Trust;
- To ensure effective and accountable management;
- To ensure that all the Trust's activities fall within its Charitable Purposes;
- To ensure that the Trust acts openly and accountably;
- To ensure that the Trust complies with the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and any enactment thereof and responds to all requests and directions from the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator;
- To agree a financial budget and to put in place procedures for monitoring financial performance;
- To ensure that the charity has adequate resources to carry out its Charitable Purposes including the calculation and maintenance of an appropriate financial reserve;

- To assess major risks and opportunities relating to the Trust, maintain and review regularly a Risk Register and take appropriate action if needed;
- To ensure the Trust remains financially resilient and sustainable, and importantly that it does not find itself continuing its operations when it would be illegal to do so under applicable company and charity legislation (for example, being insolvent);
- To appoint the Chair and the Vice-Chairs;
- To set up any necessary advisory committees as allowed under the Articles of Association and to appoint the members of such committees in accordance with the remit of each committee;
- To put in place procedures for the appointment (or dismissal) of the Chief Executive and to ensure that the Chair reviews the Chief Executive's performance on an annual basis;
- To ensure the Trust has a proper and achievable plan for fundraising;
- To ensure that there is an efficient and proper response to all donors and benefactors;
- To approve the conservation policies of the Trust in the light of advice from the Conservation Committee;
- To approve the acquisition or disposal of Reserves in accordance with agreed procedures and policy;
- To ensure that the Trust reports accurately and promptly to OSCR:
  - a) Annual Returns
  - b) Annual Monitoring Returns
  - c) Annual Accounts;
- To ensure that the Trust reports accurately and promptly to Companies House:
  - a) Annual Accounts
  - b) Annual Returns
  - c) Changes to key company details when they occur;
- To ensure that the Chair, with the support of Council, reports accurately and at least annually to the members of the Trust;
- To approve subscription rates for approval by the membership in Annual General Meeting.

#### **Vice-Chair (Finance) (responsibilities in addition to above)**

- Chair the Finance & Audit Committee, this being a sub-committee of Council made up of a selection of Trustees with the main reporting member of staff being the Director of Finance & Resources.
- The Committee reports to Council and has no delegated responsibilities; its main role is to advise Council on all finance and resources related matters that may have an impact on the Trust's ability to meet its objectives including audit, financial planning & management, human resources, risk management and internal controls.
- May be asked to sit as member of Oversight Board in relation to a closed Defined Benefit Pension Scheme of which the Trust is an employer member
- Provide mentoring & support, where needed, to the Director of Finance & Resources.

**Note:** It is not the duty of Trustees to become involved in the Operational Management of the Trust. Having laid down the strategic direction of the Trust's affairs, it is right and proper for the Trustees to delegate the management of the Trust to the staff via the Chief Executive, subject to adequate monitoring and action by Council in pursuance of the responsibilities listed above. The Chair of Council is the line-manager for the Chief Executive.



## Person specification

### Personal qualities (essential)

- Commitment to the Trust's mission and values
- Ability to work as part of a team and accept collective responsibility for the Board's decisions
- Integrity and commitment to equal opportunities and promotion of diversity and inclusion
- Independence of thought and judgement
- Willingness and ability to devote the appropriate time to Council duties
- Openness to appraisal, learning and development

### Aptitude and skills (essential)

- Extensive experience in financial management and leadership; additionally, this experience would be desirable as focused on the third/charitable sector
- Experience with investment management, so as able to act as lead in appraising investment portfolio performance, strategy and the appointed managers
- An understanding of the legal duties and responsibilities of being a Trustee
- Ability to evaluate and interpret information
- Ability to think strategically and differentiate between strategy and operations
- Ability to constructively challenge fellow Trustees and senior management

### Specialist knowledge (desirable)

We recognise that our work will benefit hugely from increasing equality, diversity and inclusion across all our activities, especially as we want everyone to reconnect people with nature and be part of the effort to reverse the loss of biodiversity. Nature conservation has never been more important and this is an exceptional opportunity to join a vibrant and committed Board of Trustees, which provides the governance function for the charity.

We will support and help to develop of individuals without previous Trustee experience.



## Additional information

<b>Remuneration</b>	The position of Trustee is without remuneration, although reasonable out of pocket expenses for travelling to meetings may be claimed.
<b>Location</b>	The Scottish Wildlife Trust main office is in Leith, Edinburgh. Council welcomes applications from throughout Scotland.
<b>Time commitment</b>	Time commitment is expected to be around 12-15 days per annum.
<b>Oversight</b>	Performance appraisal occurs periodically to ensure the Council is operating effectively.
<b>Term</b>	A co-opted Trustee can serve two three-year terms. Their 2 <sup>nd</sup> term requires approval by the Board of Trustees ("Council"). A retiring Trustee is not eligible for re-appointment until they have been out of office for one year.
<b>Charity requirements</b>	The Scottish Wildlife Trust is a registered Scottish charity. Trustees control and manage the charity and must meet certain legal requirements and be aware of their responsibilities. More information is available <a href="#">here</a> .
<b>Legal requirements</b>	Trustees must comply with charity law. This means they must be at least 16 years old and they cannot be a Trustee if they have an unspent conviction for an offence involving dishonesty or deception; are bankrupt or have entered into a formal arrangement with a creditor; have been removed as a Company Director or Charity Trustee because of wrongdoing.
<b>Other</b>	Trustees must be fully-paid up members of the Trust.





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Nation of spectacular wildlife including red squirrels, golden eagles, dolphins and Caledonian pine forest. The Scottish Wildlife Trust has fought to protect Scotland's wildlife for over 50 years and provides safe havens for wildlife on around 120 reserves.

[scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk](http://scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk)