

# TRUSTEES Candidate Information Pack

January 2024



**Devon**  
Wildlife Trust



# Dear Candidate

Thank you for your interest in becoming a trustee of Devon Wildlife Trust at such a critical time for nature. We hope that this recruitment pack gives you a flavour of who we are and what we do.

Nature is in trouble and DWT's mission stems from the need for urgent change and our belief that, if enough people care and act, we can bring nature back and do it on a grand scale. For over 60 years, we have been at the forefront of protecting wildlife and the wild places that make Devon so special and we passionately believe that a better world is one where nature and people thrive together. We are the only Devon-focused charity that exists to protect and restore the county's natural environment, both on land and at sea.

Over the coming decade, DWT wants to double the area of land and sea that is rich in nature. We want all Devon's soils, rivers, farmland and urban areas to be managed sustainably, so the air we breathe, the water we drink and the fields and streets we walk through make us healthier and happier. We want to bring back wildlife that has been lost and which drives nature-based solutions to our fight against climate change. We want at least a quarter of the population to be taking action for nature as a part of their daily lives.

We are looking for people who can help us to deepen and widen our base of skills, knowledge and experience in one or a number of the disciplines outlined in this recruitment pack. As a Board we continue to focus on our core mission of protecting nature but recognise that we need to do more to strengthen the other part of our mission to engage all communities in making nature part of their daily lives. In order to achieve this, we are committed to developing an inclusive and diverse Board of Trustees, in which everyone feels supported, valued, and able to be their full selves. If you bring a characteristic, perspective or life experience which you feel is underrepresented on our Board, we are particularly interested in receiving your application.

If you share our mission and vision for nature recovery and you can commit to actively contributing to our work, we'd be delighted to hear from you.

**Vicky Pope**  
Chair

**Nick Bruce-White**  
Chief Executive



# Devon Wildlife Trust

Founded in 1962 by a small group of volunteers, Devon Wildlife Trust is the only charity that exists to safeguard Devon's unique natural environments and their wildlife. DWT is a member-led organisation with over 36,000 members. It has 100 staff, 63 nature reserves, 350 regular volunteers and a turnover of approximately £5.7 million per annum. It has six offices including its headquarters at Cricklepit Mill in Exeter.

We believe wildlife affects every part of everyone's lives and that everything we do impacts nature. We know that the natural environment is under immense threat here in Devon, nationally, and globally. Our strategic plans 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.

As part of a national network of 46 Wildlife Trusts - known collectively as The Wildlife Trusts (TWT) - we have national reach, so our work makes a difference for wildlife everywhere DWT operates two wholly owned subsidiary companies:

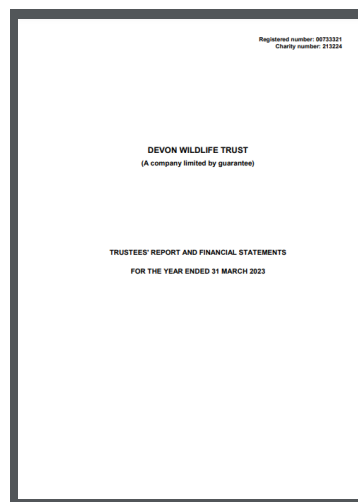
- Devon Wildlife Enterprises (DWE) delivers commercial ecological consultancy work.
- Warren Crocus Company Limited holds the lease for land and property owned by DWT at Dawlish Warren.

Along with 7 other Wildlife Trusts, we jointly own and run South West Wildlife Fundraising Limited (SWWFL), a business which works to recruit new members.

Our website ([www.devonwildlifetrust.org](http://www.devonwildlifetrust.org)) provides a good overview of the range and reach of our work, as well as details about our many assets (properties and nature reserves).



## Your Support - Our Annual Review



## Our Annual Report & Accounts





# Our Ten Year Vision for Wilder Devon

Our vision for Devon is bold:

## **Nature is everywhere:**

Wildlife is no longer confined to small, isolated pockets. A network of wildlife rich spaces extends into every corner of our landscape and our seas, along with the many species it supports. The network includes larger, better connected and better protected nature rich areas.

## **Nature is normal:**

Children everywhere have the chance to experience nature in schools, gardens, parks and the wider countryside. Everyone has better access to nature. Flower and tree-lined paths criss-cross the landscape.

## **Wilder cities:**

Our cities have wildlife rich parks, roundabouts and waterways, and the roads are lined with trees. Our houses have green roofs, green walls and wildlife rich gardens, and they are designed to maximise energy efficiency.

## **Wildlife is abundant:**

Our farmland is alive to the sound of birds, bees and other insects. Wildflower margins and wide, tree-lined hedges can be seen everywhere, and the widespread use of pesticides is a distant memory. Large areas of the landscape are semi-natural, with expanded areas of species rich grassland, hay meadow and heath.

## **Living seas:**

Our reefs, seagrass beds, kelp forests and other marine habitats are all protected and recovering, and so are the many fish that thrive off them. Snorkelling in Devon will be as exciting as anywhere in Europe.

## **Whales and dolphins:**

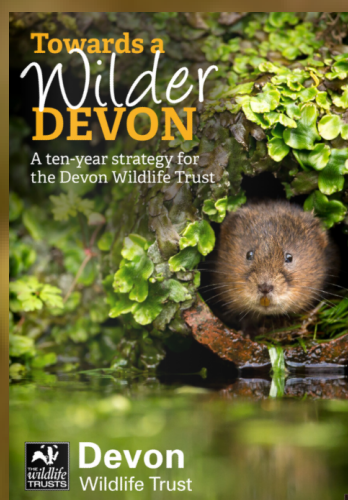
Whales, dolphins, seals, basking sharks, blue fin tuna...these and other species, once common around our coasts, can now be seen again regularly. So can the flocks of gannets and other sea birds that once graced our seas and skies.

## **Vibrant rivers:**

Our rivers are clean, clear and full of fish and aquatic wildlife. Pollution from soil erosion, Victorian sewers and poor urban drainage is a thing of the past, and our bathing waters are pristine. Our river courses look natural again, and beavers and water voles are common sights across the county.

## **Uplands restored:**

Dartmoor, Exmoor and other upland areas are rich in wildlife again, with wide expanses of woodland, heath, mires and peat bog in prime condition. Once common moorland birds like the curlew and dunlin have returned in large numbers, and the pine marten can be seen in our forests.



Read our full Ten Year Strategy





## The Board of Trustees

DWT is governed by a Board of Trustees, 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).

DWT's Board has adopted the Charity Governance Code, which sets standards of best practice for governance, and can be found at [charitygovernancecode.org/en](https://charitygovernancecode.org/en).

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

Trustees attend Board Meetings (usually 2 Saturday away days and 3 evening meetings), the Annual General Meeting, and any Committees or Working Groups they are involved in.

Committee meetings are held virtually and in person (in Exeter, or on a DWT site). At present, awaydays are held in person and evening meetings are via video-conference.

We are incredibly fortunate to have the exceptional support of the Trust's experienced, passionate, and dedicated Leadership Team, CEO, and Governance Officer.

# Being a Trustee - FAQs

## How much time do Trustees devote to their role?

Being a Trustee requires time preparing for and attending meetings; effort spent understanding complexities and staying updated on the conservation sector. The precise time commitment varies, but probably up to 2 days per month. Trustees serve in terms of 3 years, and don't normally serve for more than 2 consecutive terms.

## What is it like to be a Trustee?

Our recent Trustee audit found numerous reasons why being a DWT Trustee is a rewarding experience. They include social aspects of working in a team, and "working with a group of like-minded people from different backgrounds".

## As a DWT Trustee, you can expect to be:

- inducted to your role and provided with tailored, ongoing support
- part of the team; to share 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
- remunerated for out-of-pocket expenses related to your role in line with our expenses policy

## 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 being a Trustee right for me?

If you believe you fit the Role Description, then yes. We encourage you to apply.

DWT is seeking to better reflect our commitment to diversity. We particularly welcome applications from people aged under 40; people with disabilities; and people of colour. These demographics 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 farmers, communications experts, ecologists, charity workers, self-employed people, lawyers and students, all with their own unique experiences and perspectives on Devon's wildlife.





# Trustee Role Description

Trustees are committed to devoting time and effort to use their skills, knowledge and experience to help achieve the aims of Devon 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 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 DWT 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.

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

## Trustees will be:

- A member of DWT (or become one)
- 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 demonstrate behaviours consistent with Nolan's 7 Principles of Public Life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, and leadership
- A team player, able to build mutually respectful relationships with others
- Happy to act as an ambassador and advocate for DWT (e.g. at events, on social media)
- Able to help develop the Trust's networks with key partners, funders, donors and other stakeholder groups



# Specific skills sought

**Underpinning everything below, we are seeking candidates from a diverse range of backgrounds and lived experiences.**

## **Conservation Management**

An understanding of legal and risk matters associated with land & estate management (a qualified rural surveyor/ land agent would be ideal, for instance)

## **General ecology/ natural history knowledge (relevant to Devon)**

## **Green Finance**

knowledge of emerging environmental investment markets, such as biodiversity net gain, carbon offsetting and nutrient neutrality

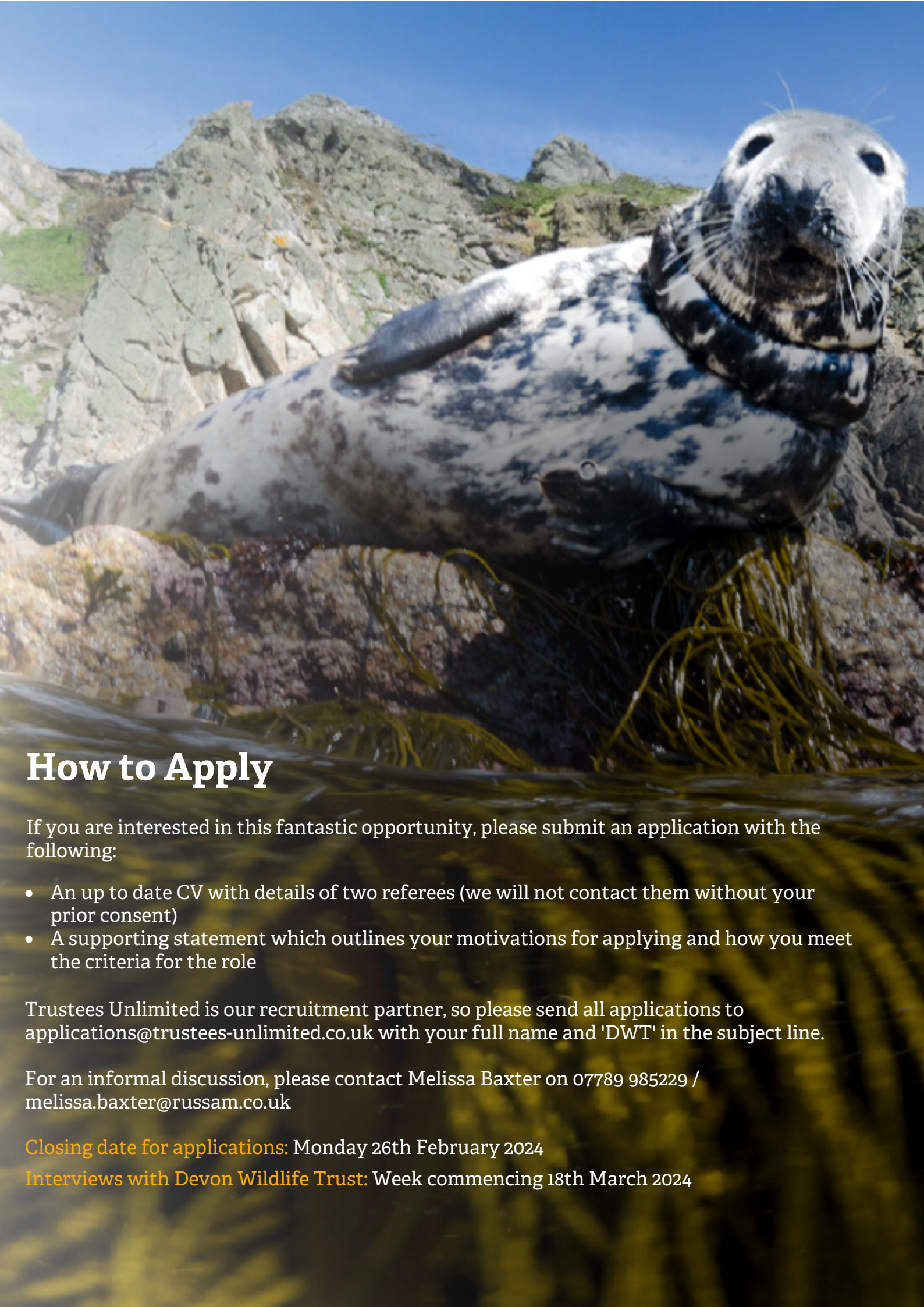
## **Working with and through communities**

## **Marine**

Knowledge of marine & fisheries policy OR marine spatial planning OR marine conservation







## How to Apply

If you are interested in this fantastic opportunity, please submit an application with the following:

- An up to date CV with details of two referees (we will not contact them without your prior consent)
- A supporting statement which outlines your motivations for applying and how you meet the criteria for the role

Trustees Unlimited is our recruitment partner, so please send all applications to [applications@trustees-unlimited.co.uk](mailto:applications@trustees-unlimited.co.uk) with your full name and 'DWT' in the subject line.

For an informal discussion, please contact Melissa Baxter on 07789 985229 / [melissa.baxter@russam.co.uk](mailto:melissa.baxter@russam.co.uk)

**Closing date for applications:** Monday 26th February 2024

**Interviews with Devon Wildlife Trust:** Week commencing 18th March 2024