
RE AGENDA ITEM 5 – ELECTION OF THE MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees wishes to nominate the following for re-election to the Board:

Suzanne Goodfellow

I am passionate about connecting people and wildlife for their mutual benefit and have worked all my life in conservation. This was initially in academic research, then with the Nature Conservancy Council and the Dartmoor National Park Authority where over 30 years I worked as an ecologist, landscape conservation officer, Director of Park Management and Director of Conservation. I then ran my own environmental consultancy, and worked as a Senior Associate with Europarc Consulting on projects across the UK and Europe. I was a Director of Europarc Atlantic Isles for 8 years and Chairman of Natural Devon (the Devon LNP) from 2013 to 2018 where I particularly promoted the links between nature and health. I am a qualified Moorland Guide, and enjoy leading walks on Dartmoor for people of all ages. I also write and lecture on Dartmoor's wildlife.

I have been a DWT member for over 40 years and ran a Watch Group in the Teign Valley when my children were younger. I have been privileged to be a member of the Board of Trustees since 2013, the Executive Committee since 2015 and Chairman of the Board since 2018. I am also a Director of Devon Wildlife Enterprises. Having been a trustee for 6 years, I have witnessed at first hand the amazing commitment, professionalism, expertise and enthusiasm of the staff, trustees and volunteers. I would very much like to continue to work with you all to ensure that Devon becomes an even richer place for wildlife and people!

The Board of Trustees wishes to nominate the following (all of whom were co-opted during the year) for election to the Board:

Rebecca Bower

I am a chartered accountant and spent most of my working life in London at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew leading the Finance Department. As a member of the senior management team I was involved in developing the strategy of the organisation and was involved in all its activities, ranging from pure botanical science to the commercial operations of a major visitor attraction. I was also part of the team that delivered the hugely successful Millennium Seed Bank Project at Kew's sister garden, Wakehurst Place in Sussex. It was rewarding and challenging work. Over the years I have also been a Trustee of various other charities, several with an environmental focus.

I joined Devon Wildlife Trust five years ago when I moved to Exeter and I volunteer regularly with the South Devon and Dartmoor Practical Conservation Group where I enjoy working on some of DWT's wonderful reserves. I am keen now to use my extensive experience as a trustee and of charity accounting to support DWT and help it deliver its mission and all the aspects of its ever more important work.

Rebecca Broad

Having lived, worked and studied in Exeter for the past 6 years, I feel as if I can represent the local demographic with which Devon Wildlife Trust urgently needs to engage: young people. Having recently graduated with a BSc in Biological Sciences from the University of Exeter, I highly value rigour and evidence-led decision making. In addition, I have knowledge of how a variety of environments work at an ecological level, and my dissertation on science communication enabled me to understand the psychology and sociology behind how the general public see 21st Century biological challenges.

I bring a variety of perspectives to the Board, having previously volunteered and then worked for DWT. My experience leading a university conservation society introduced me to the challenges of making decisions when people's time and money is in strong demand. I now work as a full-time freelance communicator, focusing on local ethical businesses.

Andrew Burns

A lifelong interest in natural history and conservation has fuelled a passion for wildlife and the natural environment. I am now seeking to apply the expertise and skills I have developed during my 30-year career in the Royal Navy to supporting the conservation sector. As a Devon resident I can think of no better way than playing an active role in the work of the Devon Wildlife Trust. I want to help address the challenges we face to protect the natural environment and play a part in maintaining biodiversity for future generations.

Having been a trustee since 2018, my aim remains to contribute to the leadership of the trust and support the management team in realising the vision of a county where nature thrives. I am particularly enjoying the opportunity to be part of a team that promotes conservation and the value of the natural environment to all sectors of society.

Gaynor Castle

I am fortunate that my full-time working career has been interesting, challenging, rewarding and exciting. I have explored a variety of sectors in private industry from telecommunications and insurance to commercial airlines, and a range of roles, in purchasing, sales, technical project management, customer experience and product development.

I hope my broad commercial experience will complement the talents and capabilities of the other Trustees and I can offer Devon Wildlife Trust my experience of strategic investment planning and project delivery gained while working for British Airways, managing the design and development of aircraft cabin interiors.

While travelling extensively I became painfully aware of the monumental challenge to protect habitat and species and integrate human activity that exists almost everywhere,

and the health benefits the natural world can bring to humans leading ever more urban, mechanised and sterile existences.

I wanted to make a personal contribution internationally and locally and having recently moved to Devon I am confident that as a Trustee of Devon Wildlife Trust I can bring my commercial skills and experiences to help in delivering transformational change over the coming years, secure a stimulating personal purpose and connect more fully with the new, beautiful, but threatened place which is my home.

Gail McKenzie

First and foremost, I have a real love of Devon and the natural world, and admire all that the Trust is achieving here for both wildlife and people. I am deeply impressed by the vision, expertise and commitment shown by the whole team – and really hope that I can bring some of my own passion and skills to the Trust.

Having been born and raised in Devon, I returned to my 'homeland' 6 years ago and am now a freelance communications consultant. Having developed my particular skills in national nature and environmental organisations, and worked in partnership with many others, I feel I could offer a balanced view and strategic outlook. I have dealt with many high impact and crisis situations, and often been the key liaison person between the organisation and the public, and of course the media in all its forms.

Having studied Zoology and Botany, I worked at the Natural History Museum in London for several years, and then moved to Bristol as publicist for the BBC Natural History Unit on major series such as The Private Life of Plants and Blue Planet.

I became a member of the Devon Wildlife Trust 6 years ago, and was previously a Trustee of the Avon Wildlife Trust.

Helen Nathanson

My interest in wildlife and the countryside began at school but I am learning all the time about the issues facing our environment and the Trust has been a significant source of information and inspiration. I would like to continue to serve as a Trustee because decline in habitat and species continues to be an urgent cause and I feel that my background and skills can help the organisation to thrive.

My professional background is in management of finance, administration and governance which makes me well placed to understand the role of a Board of Trustees to a large and diverse organisation. I have worked extensively with volunteers and community groups and have a very good knowledge of local planning policies and their role in protecting habitats against development.

An experienced teacher, I support the Trust's education and engagement programmes, encouraging young people to value and make positive contributions towards their natural environment.

I have lived in Devon for 25 years and am a member of the Trust's Avon Valley Project which seeks to improve the diversity and abundance of species in South Devon. As a smallholder I want to ensure that the land is managed in the best possible way for wildlife and am committed to improving and creating new habitat.

I hope that my skills and experience can support the Board and help the Trust with its vital work.

Vicky Pope

My career has been devoted to the development and application of cutting edge science to understanding and solving environmental problems in various roles at the Met Office. At different times I have led the Met Office response on climate change, air quality, drought and access to data.

I am keen to diversify the application of my knowledge and skills in a voluntary role benefitting the local environment. Climate change, in particular, means that the landscape and habitats will change whatever we do locally. I believe that I can help the Devon Wildlife Trust to make well informed evidence based decisions. Whilst passion for wildlife and the environment is important, objectivity and strong evidence are vital to ensure that we make the right choices for a sustainable environment.

The government's 25 year environment plan sets out the issues as well as anyone: 'The scale of human impact on the planet has never been greater than it is now... The effects on wildlife and habitats are stark. We are in danger of presiding over massive human-induced extinctions when we should instead be recognising the intrinsic value of the wildlife and plants that are our fellow inhabitants of this planet. Furthermore, human-induced climate change threaten unpredictable and potentially irreversible damage to our planet. It is in everyone's interest to be part of the solution.'

The success of this plan depends on implementation. DWT has a valuable role, and in some cases such as the Beaver project a unique role, in influencing that implementation. This project is close to my heart as I live a few hundred yards from the River Otter. I have been a member of DWT since shortly after moving to Devon in 2003.