



# Information for prospective trustees

**Invitation for expressions of interest**

December 2023

# Message from David Daniels

## Chair of the Board of Trustees

Thank you for your interest in joining the Board of Plantlife International at this important time for the organisation. 2023 has been a very busy and successful year for Plantlife and we have great ambitions for the years ahead. We are working hard to conserve and improve the state of nature here in the United Kingdom as well as advocating for more action to protect natural habitats around the world. Plantlife's Strategy to 2030 demonstrates our ambition and passion for the conservation of plants and fungi by protecting and restoring our fragile ecosystems, building partnerships and connecting people with nature. The events at the COP28 Climate Summit in Dubai have highlighted the need for organisations such as Plantlife to champion the importance of biodiversity. Central to our strategy is building effective collaborations, working with local communities, farmers, and landowners and being part of the movement to accelerate change in our relationship with nature.

We are currently looking to appoint a Treasurer and two trustees to join our very active Board of Trustees to oversee the continued growth and development of Plantlife. The Trustees will support our excellent CEO and leadership team to continue their work in growing and shaping the organisation. We are looking for individuals with a clear understanding of the current ecological, climate and societal challenges and how these impact the natural world. All three roles are responsible for ensuring we use the resources available effectively and help Plantlife increase and diversify its funding through different channels. These are fantastic opportunities for highly motivated individuals with a passion for nature and an interest in helping restore and protect it for future generations.

If this sounds interesting to you and you would like to join our Board, please send in your expression of interest.

Many thanks,

David

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David". The signature is stylized, with a large, sweeping initial 'D'.

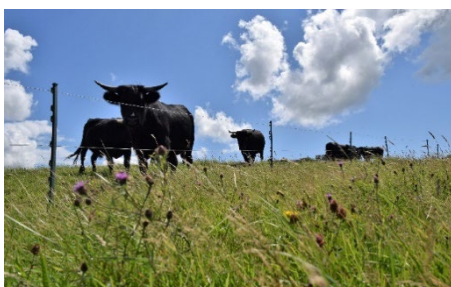
## Introduction

Wild plants and fungi underpin all life on earth. They enrich our natural landscapes, support food chains, are a powerful force against the climate crisis and their beauty and colours can calm our minds.

Plantlife is the global charity working to enhance, protect, restore and celebrate the wild plants and fungi that are essential to all life on earth. With two in five plant species at risk of extinction, biodiversity loss is now the fastest it's ever been – which means our work has never been more vital. We champion and accelerate conservation action, working at the heart of a global network of individuals and organisations, to influence and inspire landowners and land managers, public and private bodies, governments and local communities. As time begins to run out, we are using our position as the global voice for wild plants and fungi to bring lasting and positive change to our natural world – for everyone's sake.

Through our work, we connect people with nature so that everyone in society can enjoy and help protect the natural world around us. Our aim is to raise awareness of how important wild plants and fungi are to life and to inspire more people to take action to help them thrive again.

Plantlife is funded by donations from its 20,000 members, its supporters, grants and charitable trusts and through its pioneering land management advice and projects.



## About Plantlife

Plantlife owns and manages 24 nature reserves and land, covering close to 2,000 hectares/ 5,000 acres across England, Scotland and Wales. We carry out conservation and outreach work on our own land and in partnership with many others. We advise land managers and publish best practice guidance. We carry out research and gather data to inform government policy. We engage people of all ages and abilities in plant conservation and education and give everybody opportunities to enjoy wildflowers. In the UK we work closely with many other organisations including Rethink Nature, a grouping of seven species focused organisations.

Plantlife collaborates and influences on the world stage to share our passion and achieve our goals. We work overseas by contributing to international conventions on climate and biodiversity and we are a registered Observer at the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. In addition, our work with the Global Partnership for Plant Conservation was instrumental in the creation of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation and the initiation of Important Plant Areas across the world – planning their conservation with governments, conservation organisations and community groups. In 2022 we were recognised by the Environment Funders Network as one of the top 10 impactful eNGOs in the UK.

Besides our applied conservation work, Plantlife initiated and leads on the annual engagement campaign of No Mow May, and on re-imagining greener road verges. We are one of seven strategic partners of the King Charles III Charitable Fund supporting our science and impact work.

## Our finances

Plantlife has seen increases in both unrestricted reserves and unrestricted income in recent years. Total income to the end of 2022/23 was £5.5 million. Grants remain our largest income source, but we continue to diversify our income streams. We have particular ambitions to grow unrestricted income from individuals, major donors and corporates, as well as seeking avenues to increase our commercial income.

Please see our [Strategy 2030](#), our latest [annual review](#), and our latest [audited annual accounts](#) which are available on the Charity Commission website.



## Our work

Underpinning the health of our environment, wild plants and fungi are the foundation upon which we can help resolve the climate, ecological and societal challenges we face.

Our work spans four strategic areas:

### Protect and restore



### Connect people with nature



### Work in partnerships



### Collaborate and influence



## Our work

### Protect and restore

Our aim is to protect and restore a wide variety of wild plants and fungi in our countryside, towns and cities.

We work across grasslands, mountains, woodlands, coasts, heathlands, farmland and peatlands. Our goal is to make sure the country's common plant species do not become at risk.



We work to protect and restore important habitats, such as hay meadows, grassland, limestone pavement and blanket bog. We also lead conservation projects so that plants and fungi everywhere can thrive.

You can read more about some of our protect and restore projects in the case studies below, or in our [Annual Review 2022/23](#).

### Unlocking funds to restore vital grassland

Plantlife has secured funding which could help restore 500 hectares of species-rich grassland over the next 15 years. [Read more](#)

### Saving England's lowland juniper

We've planted more than 1,500 native junipers to bolster populations in the Wiltshire and Oxfordshire countryside. [Read more](#)

### People and plants in the Cairngorms

During the third year of our Rare Plants and Wild Connections project in the Cairngorms, we trialled alternative grazing techniques and identified two new waxcap fungi sites. [Read more](#)

### Flying the flag for plants and fungi on the world stage

We are continuing to act as a voice for wild plants and fungi by helping to shape the new Global Strategy for Plant Conservation. [Read more](#)

## Connect people with nature

We want to connect people with nature so that they are inspired to help save different species and their habitats.

By helping develop sparks of fascination, we believe we can help people achieve their goals for the natural world while also boosting their wellbeing. At the same time, we empower communities to care for and protect the rich and varied environment around them.



You can read more about some of our projects in the case studies below, or in our [Annual Review 2022/23](#).

## Connecting people and plants

The Green Links Bridgend initiative has chalked up some impressive achievements over the past 12 months while continuing to strengthen the links people have with the green spaces around them. [Read more](#)

## Bringing new audiences to conservation at Ranscombe

Many visitors are unaware of Ranscombe Farm Nature Reserve's importance for nature conservation. Ranscombe will play a leading role in a new strategy to connect people with nature. [Read more](#)

## No Mow May blooms bigger than ever

No Mow May lets wild plants flower by asking the public to relax their mowing regime each spring. Find out why 2023's campaign was bigger and wilder than ever. [Read more](#)

## Using species data to identify the richest lichen areas

Plantlife's work to protect the long-term future of Britain's temperate rainforests has been boosted by valuable new analysis which has examined more than 100,000 species records. [Read more](#)

## Work in partnerships

Working in partnership gives everyone the chance to take action for the environment. We believe that the climate and nature crisis we face is so complex and urgent that solutions can only be found by working together.

You can read more about some of our projects in the case studies below, or in our [Annual Review 2022/23](#).



## On the road to wildflower-rich verges and greenspaces

Our drive to empower and support local authorities to change the way they manage road verges took a significant step forward during the year when the project expanded its remit. [Read more](#)

## Boosting plant diversity at Beldorney

We discovered an incredible 479 species at the Beldorney Estate in Banffshire, Scotland, while carrying out comprehensive surveys to help restore its valuable ecosystems. [Read more](#)

## Restoring dynamic dunescapes at Braunton Burrows

Plantlife has continued to lead the biggest sand dune restoration works ever attempted in the UK, with impressive results. [Read more](#)

## Saving Wales' threatened species

Our exciting plans for Natur am Byth, Wales' flagship green recovery project, were fully developed during 2022/23, paving the way for the initiative to begin in earnest in summer 2023. [Read more](#)

## Collaborate and Influence

We collaborate with others and use our influence around the world to protect plants and fungi.

Alongside our partners, we push for environmental strategies which will restore native plant species and habitats. Together, we also campaign to end activities which threaten and destroy them. This will help us make sure that future generations can enjoy a healthy, plant-rich world.



Our aim is to inspire more and more people to work with us and make a difference. This will help us safeguard everything from stretches of golden sand to areas of ancient woodland for people and wildlife.

You can read more about some of our projects in the case studies below, or in our [Annual Review 2022/23](#).

## Showcasing Important Plant Areas (IPAs) across the globe

Plantlife seized the opportunity presented by the global gathering of world leaders at COP 15 to inspire conservation action for plants and fungi. [Read more](#)

## Saving Scotland's Rainforest

The collaborative work of the Alliance for Scotland's Rainforest, of which Plantlife is a leading partner, could be finally starting to turn the fortunes around for this internationally-important habitat. [Read more](#)

## Conservation of rare Brecks flora gathers pace

It has been another successful year for our dedicated volunteers who are helping to monitor plant populations in the Brecks. [Read more](#)

# Plantlife Governance

A registered charity, Plantlife is funded by donations from its members and supporters, by grants and charitable trusts and by our pioneering land management advice and projects. Plantlife has an evolving Group structure with one fully owned trading subsidiary (with its own Board of Directors), focusing primarily on paid for advisory services, and potential for further group diversification.

We are governed by a Board of 12 Trustees, who are both charity Trustees and Company Directors, and we have around 90 staff located across the UK. We also support a team of around 1,500 volunteers who work in the field, at events and in our offices.

The Board carries ultimate authority and responsibility to hold the charity ‘in trust’ for current and future beneficiaries. Board members accept all the duties and responsibilities of the roles. The requirements of Trustees are set out in Charity Commission guidance<sup>1</sup>. Additionally, all Trustees are required to sign and abide by Plantlife’s ‘Code of Conduct for Trustees’.

The Plantlife Board includes a Chair, Vice-Chair and a Treasurer, each of whom has a specific role in addition to their role as Trustee. The Chair leads the Board; the Vice-Chair deputises for the Chair, as necessary; the Treasurer is the Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

Plantlife aims to ensure that all staff, volunteers, partners, clients, contractors, members and the public are treated fairly, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity.



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<sup>1</sup> The Essential Trustee <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-essential-trustee-what-you-need-to-know-cc3>

# The Role of a Plantlife Trustee

Trustees work together and with highly motivated and sector-leading staff to help deliver tangible conservation impact and engage the public in plant conservation.

Trustees play an active and direct role in guiding the charity, supporting the CEO and staff and, whenever possible, inspiring members of the public to support Plantlife.

Trustees are part of a small, dynamic, motivated and diverse team, united by the goal of furthering the charity's objects. Site visits allow trustees to see the effects of Plantlife's activities on the ground. There are also opportunities to further develop Board skills, for example through an informal Plantlife Board 'buddy' system.

## Key trustee relationships

- At Board level, trustees work with all other Board members and ensure regular communication with the Chair and Vice Chair.
- At staff level, trustees liaise with the Chief Executive and other senior staff as required
- Trustees engage with their informal and professional networks on Plantlife's behalf, as well as interacting as required with Plantlife members and the public.



# Role Description - Trustee

## Skills and experience

Plantlife is keen to ensure that its trustees have a range of necessary skills, experience and contacts which will benefit the charity, and is particularly keen to attract an increasingly diverse pool of talent. While we encourage and welcome applications from candidates of all backgrounds, we are keen to hear from those with a background in plant and fungi conservation, agriculture and networking/partnership building as a force for good.

### Essential skills and experience

- Understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of charity trusteeship and company directorship.
- Willingness and flexibility to devote the necessary time to fully engage and participate in Board business.
- The ability to work effectively and participate fully as a member of a team, in the best interests of Plantlife.
- Evident enthusiasm for, and commitment to, championing the conservation of plants and fungi.
- Integrity and honesty.
- Ability to think strategically and problem-solve.
- Good, independent and level-headed judgement.
- Ability to work and attend meetings in the UK.
- Normally resident in the UK.

#### Desirable skills and experience

- Experience of charity Boards or of senior charity management roles.
- Knowledge of plants and plant conservation, ecological background or scientific training.
- Knowledge or experience of plant conservation on agricultural land, working with the land management community or public environmental land management support schemes.
- Business or entrepreneurship skills.
- Knowledge or experience of conservation in an urban context or working with urban communities.
- Knowledge or experience of public engagement in conservation activities.

### **Specific responsibilities**

- Ensure that Plantlife complies with its Memorandum and Articles of Association; charity law; company law; any other relevant legislation; and guidance from the Charity Commission on good practice.
- Ensure Plantlife pursues its charitable objects, as defined in its governing documents.
- Ensure Plantlife applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objects.
- Contribute actively to the Board's role in giving clear strategic direction, setting overall policy, defining goals, setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets.
- Safeguard the good reputation and values of the charity.
- Ensure the effective and efficient management of the charity.
- Seek to ensure the financial stability of the charity.
- Protect and manage Plantlife's assets, including land and property, and ensure the proper investment of the charity's funds.
- Foster positive relationships with all staff and volunteers.
- Appoint the Chief Executive and monitor their performance.

# The Role of the Plantlife Treasurer

In addition to the role outlined for all Trustees the Treasurer works together with the CEO to:

- Maintain an overview of Plantlife's financial affairs.
- Ensure Plantlife is financially viable and legally compliant.
- Chair the Finance and General Purposes (F&GP) Committee.
- Ensure that proper financial records and procedures are maintained.

Key relationships

- At Board level, the Treasurer works with all Board members, and maintains regular communication with the Chair and Vice Chair.
- At staff level, the Treasurer liaises with the Chief Executive and other senior finance and development staff.
- The Treasurer may also engage with their informal and professional networks on Plantlife's behalf, as well as interacting as required with Plantlife members and the public.

## Role Description - Treasurer

### Skills and experience

For the role of Treasurer, we would particularly welcome applicants that have experience of charity financial management and are chartered in a suitable accountancy field. In addition, HR, communications or partnership and networking skills would be valuable. The Treasurer will bring their broad range of skills, experience and contacts to benefit the charity and will be confident in representing it externally.

In addition to the qualities needed by all trustees, the Treasurer will possess the following:

- Professional financial qualifications (CCAB or CIMA qualified), credibility, track record, and experience of implementing financial processes and management.
- Some direct knowledge and a sound understanding of charity finance including compliance issues.

- Some experience of commercial sector work especially consultancy and regulatory services.
- The skills to analyse proposals and examine their financial consequences.
- Understanding and experience of risk, and risk management in organisations.

## Specific responsibilities<sup>2</sup>

Financial processes and procedures:

- Advising Board and staff on budgets, accounts and financial statements.
- Ability to act as financial signatory as needed.
- Ensuring that appropriate accounting procedures and controls are in place including the fixed asset register.
- Ensuring that adequate insurance is in place to cover organisational activities.

Financial reporting:

- Advising on the preparation and presentation of financial reports to the Board as appropriate.
- With the Chief Executive, overseeing communications with the Plantlife Members on organisational financial matters including presenting the annual accounts at the AGM in an understandable and accessible format.

Financial planning:

- Advising on the financial implications of the organisation's strategic plans.
- Being assured that Plantlife's financial resources meet its present and future needs.
- Ensuring that Plantlife has an appropriate financial reserves policy.

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<sup>2</sup> It is accepted that many of these duties can be conducted effectively by digital means.

## Investments:

- Ensuring that Plantlife has an appropriate investment policy.
- Ensuring that there is no conflict between any investment held and Plantlife's aims and objects.
- Monitoring Plantlife's investment activity and ensuring its consistency with the organisation's policies and legal responsibilities.

## Compliance:

- Liaising with Chief Executive and senior staff to ensure the organisation's compliance with relevant legislation and Charity Commission guidance.
- Keeping the Board informed about its financial duties and responsibilities.
- Ensuring that the annual accounts are prepared and disclosed in the form required by the relevant statutory bodies, e.g. the Charity Commission and/or the registrar of companies and ensuring compliance with SORP.
- Ensuring proper conduct of audit processes and implementation of recommendations. Advising the Board on audit matters, including review of audit reports and advising on appointment of auditors.



## **Statement on openness, equal opportunities and diversity in selection of trustees**

Plantlife's Board seeks to ensure that the charity follows the principles of equality and diversity and encourages inclusive and accessible participation. Plantlife values diversity, in the widest sense. It considers diversity as essential for its Board to navigate the fast-paced and complex changes facing the voluntary sector. Plantlife recognises that trustees from different backgrounds, with a variety of experience and perspective are more likely to encourage debate and help the Board make better decisions. To help balance current Board membership, we are looking for individuals who can demonstrate the relevant capabilities and an active involvement/ interest in the sector, and would especially welcome expressions of interest from younger applicants, those from ethnic minority backgrounds, those with disabilities, and/or those whose track record is demonstrated through lived experience as distinct from more traditional routes.

We welcome and encourage expressions of interest from people of all backgrounds. We do not discriminate on the basis of disability, race, colour, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, age, veteran status or other category protected by law.



## **Time commitment**

The expected time commitment is around 8 - 10 days annually for Trustees, and 12 days annually for the role of Treasurer.

Trustees will need to prepare for and attend Board meetings currently held four times a year (usually two in-person meetings and two online meetings). In addition, there may be occasional events around Britain, or fundraising events.

Trustees are also expected to serve on Plantlife committees, working groups or task and finish groups and/or to offer their specific expertise to ensure the charity is well managed, has the appropriate policies in place and is legally and financially compliant.

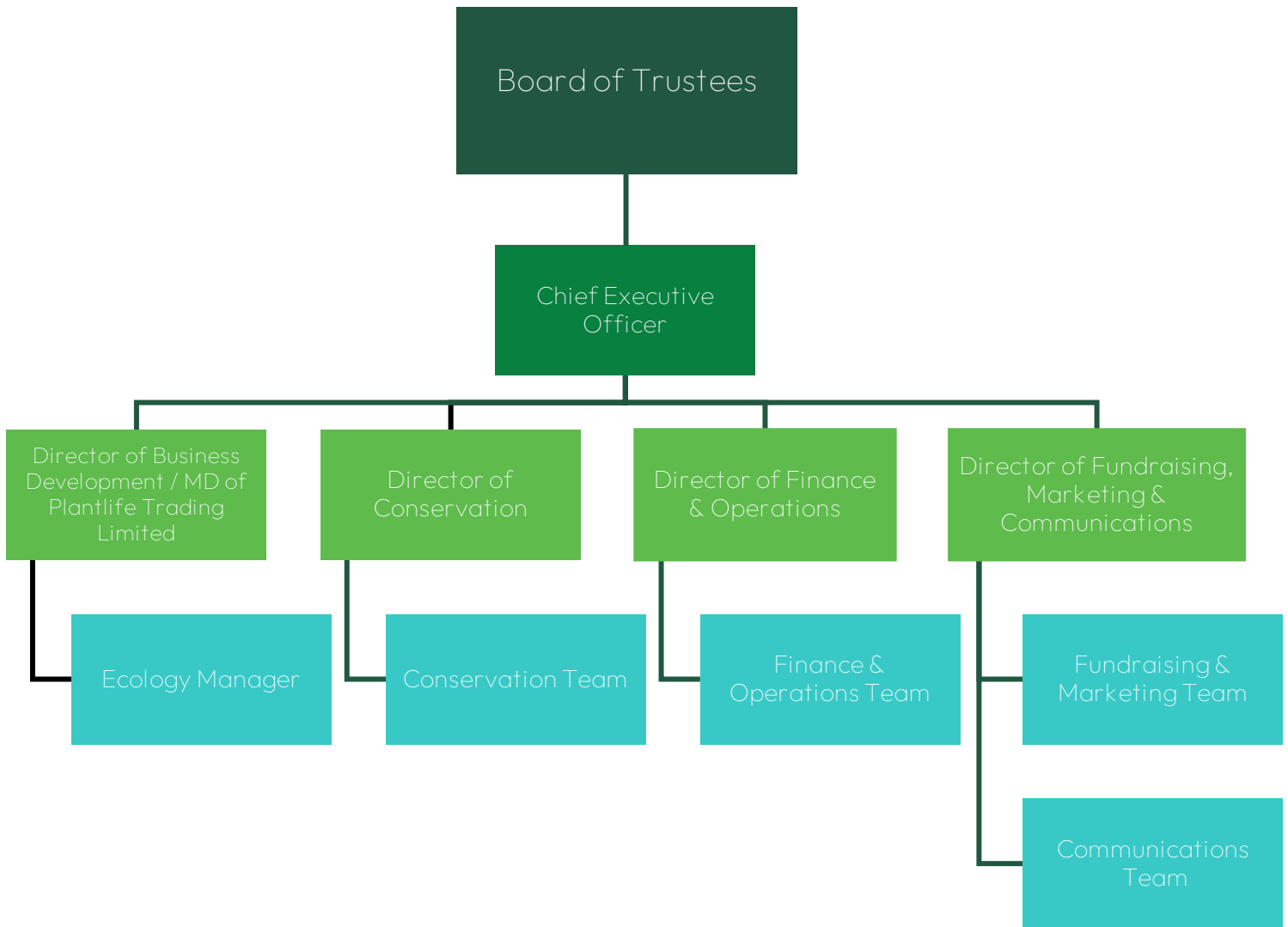
The position of trustee is unremunerated. All trustees are encouraged to claim back their travel and other eligible expenses.



## **Statement on expenses**

The role is entirely voluntary and unpaid. However, we recognise that travelling for in-person Board meetings and events generally has associated costs. We do not want this to present a barrier to prospective trustees. Board members are encouraged, in accordance with Plantlife's financial procedures and processes, to claim the costs of covering their reasonable and necessary expenses legitimately incurred while acting on behalf of the charity. Such payments of expenses do not constitute a trustee benefit. Plantlife also expects and encourages Board members to use public transport whenever possible and/or to lift share.

# Senior staff structure



## How to express interest

To express your interest in becoming a trustee, please email your CV (maximum three A4 pages) and a short covering letter (maximum one A4 page) together with contact details for two referees, to Julia Clements, Executive Assistant to the CEO, at [julia.clements@plantlife.org.uk](mailto:julia.clements@plantlife.org.uk). If you wish to be considered for the role of Treasurer please make this explicit in your covering letter. References will only be taken once your express permission has been granted.

If you would like an informal discussion about either role, please contact Julia, who will put you in touch with the Chair or another member of the Board.

## Diversity monitoring

Plantlife wishes to meet the aims and commitments set out in its Equal Opportunities policy and seeks to build an accurate picture of the make-up of our workforce, including trustees. We would appreciate it if you could complete our Equality and Diversity Monitoring form, although completion is voluntary. The information will be kept separate from your expression of interest and not seen by the recruitment panel.

[Equality, Diversity and Monitoring Form](#)

Please email, with your expression of interest, to Julia Clements, Executive Assistant to the CEO, at [julia.clements@plantlife.org.uk](mailto:julia.clements@plantlife.org.uk)

## How will selection be made?

A small recruitment panel of trustees will review expressions of interest received by the closing date against an agreed set of criteria, to arrive at a shortlist of potential trustees. Those shortlisted will be invited to an interview with the panel. This aims to be an opportunity for prospective trustees to ask questions and assess whether the role would suit them, as well as for existing trustees to explore the degree to which each person's profile fits with the Board's needs at this time. The full Board will then have the opportunity to review the CVs and covering letters of the individuals recommended by the recruitment panel to join the Board.

### Key dates

Closing date for receipt of expressions of interest is Sunday 21st January 2024. Anticipated interview date: Tuesday 27th February 2024. Interviews will be held in London.

# Privacy

Plantlife is committed to protecting your privacy. The [Privacy and Security Notice](#) on Plantlife's website explains how and why we use your personal data, to ensure you remain informed and in control of your information. We regularly review this document (minimum of every 12 months) to ensure it remains accurate and up-to-date, and incorporates any changes required by amendments to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and other legislation. Any updates replace previous versions of this Notice.

We will never sell your personal data.

Plantlife takes its responsibilities in relation to personal privacy seriously. If you have any further comments or questions in relation to this, please let us know.

Our governing documents may be found on the [Charity Commission website](#).

## plantlife.org.uk

Plantlife is the global charity working to enhance, protect, restore and celebrate the wild plants and fungi that are essential to all life on earth. With two in five plant species at risk of extinction, biodiversity loss is now the fastest it's ever been – which means our work has never been more vital. We champion and accelerate conservation action, working at the heart of a global network of individuals and organisations, to influence and inspire landowners and land managers, public and private bodies, governments and local communities. As time begins to run out, we are using our position as the global voice for wild plants and fungi to bring lasting and positive change to our natural world – for everyone's sake.

Plantlife International - The Wild Plant Conservation Charity is a charitable company limited by guarantee. Registered in England and Wales, Charity Number: 1059559. Registered in Scotland, Charity Number: SC038951. Registered Company Number: 3166339. Registered in England and Wales.