

Appendix D - Qualities and experience for holders of governance positions

The qualities and experience listed below in relation to each body are those which the Board of Trustees or the Council, as the case may be, would normally regard as essential or important for the particular post. However, the lists are not exhaustive and may be modified in particular cases if the body making the appointment considers that appropriate.

Because of the risk of conflict of interests members of Trust staff will not be considered eligible for appointment or election to governance positions. Normally there should be a gap of 23 months between a member of staff leaving the Trust and becoming a governance volunteer, to allow a period of independence from the Trust. The final decision should rest with the relevant governance body chair, having first taken advice from The Secretary.

D.2 Members of the Board of Trustees

All Trustees should have or acquire upon appointment thorough knowledge of:

- the core purpose of and issues facing the Trust over the 5-10 years ahead
- the Trust's strategy and plans in place at any time
- the Trust's governance, in particular the different roles of the Board of Trustees and the Council
- general Trustee responsibilities and obligations within the charity sector

In addition, each member of the Board of Trustees (including the Chair and Deputy Chair) should be able to demonstrate the following:

Qualities

- an understanding of, commitment to, and a passion for the National Trust and its work
- objectivity, fairness, independence of mind, integrity, wisdom, discretion and good judgement
- a commitment to act solely in the best interests of the Trust, and of the wider public, without regard to personal interest or benefit
- strategic vision and the ability to focus on practical issues
- readiness to take and be accountable for decisions
- awareness of how the world is changing politically, economically and socially
- the necessary time to be an effective Trustee
- a good team player

- ability and willingness to be an ambassador for the Trust and to represent the Trust positively to external audiences
- no significant potential conflicts of interest

Experience

The Board of Trustees overall should be able to demonstrate a broad range of the following:

- experience of leadership and board-level decision-making
- experience of large organisations with many stakeholders
- experience of wider financial issues and specific skills in audit and risk management (for potential members of the Audit Committee)
- a broad experience of good governance in business, the public sector or not-for-profit organisations and an understanding of the governance of charities and the duties and responsibilities of Trustees

Knowledge and skills

The Board of Trustees overall should have experience and knowledge of current relevance, such as:

- cultural heritage
- countryside and land management
- nature conservation
- learning, outreach and access
- buildings, chattels and gardens
- volunteering
- financial management/investment expertise
- business acumen
- strategy
- change management
- legal
- people management
- procurement
- IT and business processes
- marketing and communications

The time commitment for Trustees is expected to be between 20 and 30 days a year.

D.3 Members of the Council

All Council members should have or acquire upon appointment or election a good knowledge of:

- The core purpose of the Trust
- The Trust's strategy
- The Trust's governance, in particular the different roles of the Board and the Council

Beyond these fundamental needs, Council members should be able to demonstrate the following:

Qualities

- an understanding of, commitment to, and a passion for, the National Trust and its work
- objectivity, fairness, independence of mind, integrity, wisdom, discretion and good judgement
- a commitment to act solely in the best interests of the Trust and of the wider public without regard to personal interest or benefit
- a readiness to take and be accountable for decisions
- awareness of how the world is changing politically, economically and socially
- the necessary time to be an effective Council member
- a good team player
- ability and willingness to be an ambassador for the Trust and to represent the Trust positively to external audiences
- no significant potential conflicts of interest
- readiness and time to get involved in non-governance Trust volunteer activity

Experience, knowledge and skills

The Council collectively should have all the attributes needed to fulfil its role and responsibilities, including in particular:

- experience, knowledge and skills in a range of areas of the Trust's work
- a range of perspectives and knowledge of the communities with an interest in and a connection with the Trust's work
- volunteer experience of the Trust's work
- an understanding of the current and future needs of the Trust's beneficiaries, including members and the wider public
- knowledge of and skills in a range of the work areas in which the Trust is involved
- sufficient people with the potential to become members of the Board of Trustees

The time commitment for Council members is expected to be approximately 10 days a year.