



Bristol Zoological Society
Saving Wildlife Together



Bristol Zoological Society is looking for:

- **Trustee and Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee**

Bristol Zoological Society (BZS) is world-famous. Established in 1835, BZS is a charity dedicated to *saving wildlife together*. We do this through conservation action and engaging people with the natural world. We operate two zoos, Bristol Zoo Gardens and Wild Place Project; the Institute of Conservation Science and Learning and also lead a dozen field conservation programmes throughout the world.

Bristol Zoo Gardens is the fifth oldest zoo in the world: we opened our doors in Clifton to the public on Monday 11 July 1836. Within the beautiful gardens are popular exhibits such as Gorilla Island, Seal and Penguin Coasts and Monkey Jungle as well as a wide range of mammals, birds, fish, reptiles, amphibians and invertebrates.

In 2013, Wild Place Project, our second zoo, was launched on a large, natural site in South Gloucestershire. Wild Place Project has been expanding rapidly. In 2017, we opened a new Giraffe House and a major new exhibit – Bear Wood – opened in summer 2019. Over 800,000 people visit our two zoos each year.

In the last 182 years, as the largest visitor attraction in the South West, our zoos have welcomed 75 million guests. We lead a number of rewilding and conservation translocation initiatives through our UK-based and global field conservation projects, including those for Western Lowland Gorillas, White-Clawed Crayfish, Desertas Wolf Spiders and African Penguins. We are currently working on conservation and research projects in places such as the Philippines, Madagascar, and South Africa and locally on the River Avon. Our award-winning education team has taught almost a million school children the value of nature, wildlife and the impact our society has on the world. Our Institute of Conservation Science and Learning provides undergraduate and postgraduate zoology and conservation programmes in partnership with four universities and colleges.

Following the appointment in 2018 of a new Chief Executive, Justin Morris, and the launch of our conservation strategy, we have approved a long-term strategy for our business activities - visitor experience and marketing, commercial and finance, people and culture, digital and estates.

Both zoos were closed for several months due to coronavirus restrictions. They have now reopened with reduced visitor capacity and social distancing arrangements in place for our staff, visitors and volunteers. While we moved to quickly secure operational cash flow for the short term, the financial impact of the closures and ongoing social distancing is significant and we are currently reviewing our strategic plans in the light of this.

More information on the Society and its activities is available on our website www.bristolzoo.org.uk.





Governance and leadership

Our Chair and Board of Trustees are responsible for our activities and our assets, ensuring legal and charitable compliance and efficient use of resources. They contribute to the development and review of the mission and values of the Society, long-term plans and key performance indicators as well as formally approving them and ensuring that these meet the interests of the Society's beneficiaries and stakeholders.

Charlotte Moar is our Chair of Trustees and Chris Booy OBE is our Vice Chair. Our twelve Trustees (including Charlotte and Chris) have a wide range of skills and expertise and are based in Bristol and beyond. Details of our current Trustees are available at <https://bristolzoo.org.uk/zoo-information/about-us/our-trustees>,

We have four Board sub-committees chaired by Trustees. Membership of these sub-committees includes both Trustees and Independent Members with relevant skills and experience.

- Conservation, Ethics and Sustainability
- Finance and Business
- Audit and Risk
- People

The day to day business of the Society is overseen by our Chief Executive, Justin Morris and the Executive Board which is comprised of the Chief Executive, the Director of Science and Conservation, the Director of Finance and Corporate Services and the Commercial Director.

Role of Trustee and ARC Chair

We are looking for a new Trustee to join us to take our vision forward and to chair our Audit & Risk Committee (ARC). Details of the role, experience and time commitment are set out below. Our Trustee roles, which are voluntary, are high profile and rewarding and offer individuals the opportunity to make a significant contribution to our vision and mission and at the same time expand and enhance their own professional experience, expertise and networks. Trustees and Committee members work with senior executives from the Society alongside other Trustees from a wide variety of backgrounds.

Trustees are critical appointments for the Society. Successful applicants will display obvious enthusiasm for the Society's work and values and commitment to its vision and mission.

The main responsibilities of a Trustee are:

- Contribute meaningfully to the strategic development of the Society, considering the organisation as a whole, and its beneficiaries, in all discussions around strategic planning and activity.
- Develop positive and constructive relationships with the Chair and Trustees, Chief Executive and Executive Board to enable effective discussion and decision making.
- Hold the Executive Board to account for its leadership and management of the Society, provide constructive challenge and support, ensure that adequate systems of control and risk management are in place and assure that the Society is sustainable and financially viable.
- Act with integrity, objectivity and honesty and to promote openness and trust in accordance with accepted standards of behaviour in public life.





- Represent the Society at key events and meetings.

The Board meets for two full days each year plus four evening meetings (currently on a Monday evening). Trustees are also expected to attend the Annual General Meeting. Trustees also are normally members of a sub-committee. Meetings are held in Bristol (currently by zoom). Dates of meetings are set approximately six months in advance and papers are generally available seven days before each meeting. We have a number of Trustees who work full-time and our arrangements are designed to support this.

Trustees are also invited to attend Society events from time to time – this might include conservation lectures, Zoo events and staff meetings. These are not a requirement, however getting to know the wider organisation helps contribute to success as a Trustee.

Some Trustees represent the Society at networking and fundraising events and meetings within Bristol and beyond. This is not a requirement and will be suitable for Trustees with particular skills, experience or interest in this and is particularly suitable for those living or working within the Greater Bristol and South Gloucestershire area.

The term of office for Trustees is three years with the potential to extend for two further appointments of three years.

Trustees are not paid but do receive free admission for themselves and their immediate families to our sites. Travel and accommodation expenses are reimbursed.

Person specification – Trustee and Chair of Audit & Risk Committee

Our current ARC Chair will be stepping down at our Annual General Meeting in November 2020. We are looking for a Trustee who will be able to chair the ARC which supports the Board in its responsibilities of risk, control and governance and associated assurance. ARC meets four times a year currently on a Monday afternoon. ARC membership is three Trustees including the Chair and two Independent Members. The Chief Executive and Director of Finance and Corporate Services routinely attend by invitation.

The ARC Chair is also a member of the People Committee which is drawn from the Chairs of the four sub-committees plus the Chair of Trustees. The People Committee meets twice a year.

We are keen to engage with individuals from a wide range of backgrounds and are committed to building a Board which is characterised by a diversity of thought perspectives and life experiences. We want our Trustees to reflect the wide range of diverse communities who live and work in Bristol. For this role we are looking specifically for experience and skills as below:

- significant experience in governance and risk, ideally across a range of sectors – private, public and charity
- experience of membership (and ideally chairing) of Audit & Risk Committees
- ideally a qualified accountant with an audit background
- sufficient time to attend Trustee meetings, chair ARC, and meet regularly with the Director of Finance and Corporate Services and with external auditors.

Previous Trustee experience is not required as appropriate induction and training will be given.





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Appointment process

We very much hope that you will want to be considered for this role. Potential applicants are welcome to contact the Chair of Trustees or Chief Executive for a discussion in confidence around the role or the Society via Kristina Haldane, Executive Assistant to the Chief Executive (email: khaldane@bristolzoo.org.uk). If you then wish to be considered for the role, please forward your curriculum vitae with a covering letter setting out why you are interested in this role to Kristina Haldane by Friday 11 September 2020

Successful applicants will need to confirm that they are eligible to be a charity trustee in line with Charity Commission guidance (www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission).

A shortlist of applicants will be invited to meet a small group of Trustees in late September. The appointment will be confirmed by Trustees at their meeting in October and formally ratified at the Annual General Meeting in November.

