



**National  
Trust**

## Volunteer Role Description Regional Advisory Board Member East of England

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### **About the National Trust**

The National Trust was founded in 1895 and we have been active in the protection of our natural, built and cultural heritage. We look after special places throughout England, Wales and Northern Ireland for ever, for everyone. We do it, in the words of Octavia Hill 'for the everlasting delight of the people' – rich and poor, city and country dweller, young and old.

We try to make sure that the unique spirit of each property can come alive in the hearts and minds of visitors. So we want to be local in our approach, giving frontline staff and volunteers the power to innovate and build strong bonds with local communities.

We are Europe's biggest conservation body. We are independent of Government, receiving no direct state funding for our core work. Our future depends on the generosity and active involvement of over 5 million members, over 25 million visitors and over 60,000 volunteers, as well as benefactors, tenants and other partners.

The National Trust benefits the public through conserving the country's most beautiful places for ever, and by welcoming everyone to experience the joy and inspiration they bring.

### **About the National Trust in the East of England**

The East of England region of the National Trust covers a huge geographical area, stretching from Dunstable Downs in Bedfordshire to the coastlines of Norfolk and Suffolk. Our four most popular mansion properties are Wimpole, Anglesey Abbey, Ickworth and Blickling. Other substantial (but smaller) estates are at Oxburgh, Felbrigg and Melford.

The region also manages extensive tracts of open countryside, many of them acquired early on in the Trust's history for their value as natural habitats. Wicken Fen in Cambridgeshire is a rare example of an original fenland landscape in the midst of extensive lowland agriculture, Hatfield Forest in Essex is Europe's most complete surviving medieval hunting forest, while Dunwich Heath is a popular area of gorse-covered heathland on the Suffolk coast.

Although we cover a large territorial range, the region benefits from being relatively compact in terms of its team structures. We have ten General Managers, reporting to

two Assistant Directors of Operations. Our consultancy is based in a single regional hub at Westley Bottom near Bury St Edmunds and is supported by a hub based Business Support team which allows for more efficient and effective working. Despite the diversity of our places, we are a family united by our passion for the Trust's work and for the East of England region.

- We care for over 15,000 hectares of countryside and 49 properties in the East of England
- We are supported by one of the largest volunteer forces in the UK and 5,000 people regularly volunteer with us in the region.
- We are one of the country's largest out-of school-classrooms with our properties receiving many school visits in the region last year.
- We are the largest membership conservation organisation in Europe, with 400,000 members living in the East of England
- We open 33 pay for entry properties and gardens to the public that welcomed over 1.8 million visitors last year.
- We operate Europe's largest network of holiday cottages and gift shops across the country
- Nationally, we are the third largest landowner of Sites of Special Scientific Interest. We care for over 5080 hectares of SSSIs in the region, with four National Nature Reserves.
- We look after over 100 species of priority conservation concern in the region with Wicken Fen in Cambridgeshire having the largest species list in the UK, with over 8000 species recorded on the site.
- We are a large farmland owner with over 4527 ha of tenanted farmland in the East of England and over 77 agricultural and grazing tenancies.
- We own and manage 1,000 buildings including 325 cottages, nine mansions, five watermills and one atomic bomb store.

## **What is a Regional Advisory Board?**

Regional Advisory Boards provide support and advice to the National Board of Trustees and the Regional Director and his/her team in each of our eight regions in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Advisory Boards act as mentors to the Regional Directors and their teams in a non-executive capacity by:

- Providing knowledge about the region and its population and supporting the team in establishing good local relations.
- Promoting the Trust's work by being ambassadors and champions, utilising their contacts and networks to do so.
- Advising on the region's strategic direction and the external issues affecting it.
- Advising on major schemes, projects, acquisitions and initiatives in the region.
- Providing constructive challenge and support on the region's overall performance.
- Supporting specific areas of opportunity and challenge

Advisory Board member positions are part time, unpaid volunteer roles, although support is available to cover necessary expenses.

## How could you make a difference?

By:

- Supporting us on the delivery of our vision in the East of England, to connect people with places and to offer inspiring experiences of beauty, history and nature.
- Feeding into and shaping the future direction of Europe's largest conservation charity in the East of England region.
- Contributing to our thinking about the long-term implications of looking after places of historic interest and natural beauty.
- Working with National Trust staff and volunteers in pursuit of our shared cause of looking after special places forever, for everyone.

## What's involved?

- To advise on how the Trust's national strategy is implemented in a regional/country context and to offer constructive support and challenge to the director and his/her team in the delivery of regional/country business plans.
- To contribute to debates on major issues affecting the future success of the region/country.
- To support the regional/country director to establish and develop a presence in the region/country by acting as an ambassador for the Trust externally, opening doors and making introductions with key contacts and stakeholders.
- To bring knowledge of the region/country, its people and their needs to the Trust.
- Wherever possible, to provide support on projects and other challenges as requested by staff, outside of the RAB meetings.

**This role will suit people who...** are strategic thinkers, passionate about the Trust's cause and vision, already have good networks in the East of England and are skilled in delivering organisational objectives. Key areas of knowledge we are looking for include:

### SKILLS

- Ability to advise constructively at a senior level.
- Ability to work as part of a team, sharing learning and ideas.
- Ability to act as a mentor and coach to individual staff and projects.
- Willingness to act as an ambassador for the National Trust in the East of England, and to develop this aspect of the role.

### EXPERIENCE

- Ideally, we are looking for people who have held leadership positions in fields across the public, private or voluntary sectors and can bring their experience to bear on the work of the Trust.
- The role would suit those who already have an awareness of the value of working with volunteers at a strategic level, and of developing partnerships across sectors/organisations.

## **KNOWLEDGE**

- Good understanding of the East of England – its people and its places.
- Insight into the economic, environmental and social trends facing the region and the challenges and opportunities they could present for the National Trust.
- We are especially keen at the present time to hear from people who may have knowledge in one of the following areas:
  - Management of large complex organisations
  - Staff and volunteer organisational development
  - Managing large programmes of projects
  - Land use planning
  - Visitor experience
  - Stakeholder engagement
  - Built heritage conservation
  - Compliance

## **Additional information**

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| <b>Meetings</b>                     | Meetings are usually held once every 3 months. Business meetings are normally held at various properties from 10am until early afternoon and include lunch.  |
| <b>Confidentiality and conflict</b> | Individual members may also support specific properties, projects, working groups or regional boards as requested.<br>Requirement to be open about other relevant responsibilities and positions you hold and declare any conflict of interest<br>Requirement to maintain confidentiality when requested   |
| <b>Timetable for recruitment</b>    | Deadline for receipt of completed applications: 12 October 2018. Interviews will be in early November 2018.  |
| <b>Staff Contact</b>                | Regional Director, Paul Forecast on 01284 747560 or email paul.forecast@nationaltrust.org.uk   |
| <b>Training/Resources</b>           | Newly appointed members will be invited to meet with the Chair of the Advisory Board and the Director for the East of England to gain a better understanding of the Trust's work in the Region and expectations of Advisory Board members.<br><br>A full induction programme will also be arranged. As part of this, newly appointed members will also be invited to a National Induction Day, held twice a year at our Head office in Swindon. This offers an introduction to the Trust, including the opportunity to meet the Director General and the Executive Team, to hear about how the organisation as a whole is managed and our strategic ambitions. |
| <b>Expenses</b>                     | Out-of-pocket travel costs between home and volunteering place will be paid, and other reasonable expenses agreed in advance   |

**This role is purely voluntary and this arrangement is not meant to be a legally binding one or an employment contract**