



# CHISWICK HOUSE & GARDENS TRUST





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## Chiswick House and Gardens Trust Trustee Recruitment

**Would you relish the opportunity to use your skills and experience to support our charity?  
The Trust is seeking new trustees to join our Board at Chiswick House and Gardens.  
If you're passionate about what we do and want to help shape our future,  
we'd love to hear from you.**

### About Us

Chiswick House & Gardens Trust cares for a thriving 350 year old haven in West London, open for everyone every day. Teeming with nature, stories and activities, our spectacular Grade I listed gardens are completely free to roam thanks to our supporters. As a charity our mission is to keep Chiswick House & Gardens flourishing today and for the next 350 years, so that everyone and their dog can stroll, play, learn, relax and meet here.

We're 75% visitor and supporter funded; we don't exist without the community around us. Internationally recognised and locally loved, our gardens are home to lots of wonderful wildlife and trees that clean and cool the air. At the centre of our 65 acres we run an open, working Kitchen Garden where everyone is invited to wander, taste what's growing, or enjoy activities we run with and for our local community.

We're proud to have a special place in design history as the first ever English landscape garden and English rose garden. Memories have been made here since the mid-1700s, rooted deeply amongst the trees, architecture, lake and historic walls.

We believe that heritage sites have more than one role to play, and that we can offer both a historic experience while also recognising the enormous potential of Chiswick House & Gardens to respond to some of the challenges society faces. In 2020, we launched our [Ten Year Strategy](#) setting out a new vision for our future: a four-phase capital development plan, informed by the needs of our local communities, to fulfil our mission to expand our community, learning and creative programme.

Since then, we have made significant progress: establishing a successful and oversubscribed community programme, launching a new membership scheme, embarking on our Cedar Yards capital project and creating a new Case for Support that reflects our ambitions to better serve our local community. You can see photos of recent highlights here for [2022](#) and [2023](#).

Chiswick House & Gardens Trust was formed in 2005 to bring together the management of Chiswick House and its surrounding gardens. The Trust is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity. All Members of the Board are Directors of the company and Trustees of the Charity. The Trust has a trading subsidiary, Chiswick House Trading Company which is responsible for all commercial income. We have a staff team of around 20, and a volunteer team of around 200. Information about the Trust, including annual reports and accounts, can be found on the websites of the Charity Commission and Companies House.

You can find details of our Board and current Trustees here: [Governance - Chiswick House & Gardens \(chiswickhouseandgardens.org.uk\)](#)



# CHISWICK HOUSE & GARDENS TRUST

## The role of Trustee

Like all charities, we have a Board of Trustees. Our board is made up of around 12–14 people who bring a wide range of skills, experience and perspectives to help us achieve our Charitable Objectives and overarching mission of being for everyone, every day. Five of our trustees – including the Chair - are nominated by English Heritage and/or the London Borough of Hounslow who are key stakeholders and the ultimate owners of the assets we manage. The remaining trustees are independent and appointed by the Board.

The Board is responsible for governance of the charity including major policy, long term direction and accountability. Collectively it takes important decisions on the Trust's strategic direction, including the approval of the business plan, budgets and appointment of the Director. Our trustees have a range of skills and experience to inform debate and decision-making.

The Director is responsible for the day-to-day management and running of the Trust and together with their senior team, provides advice to the Board to inform its decisions. The Board acts as a 'critical friend' to the senior staff by offering constructive challenge, insight and support and bringing their own work, life experiences and suggestions to discussions.

Trustees play a critical role in advocacy for the charity, and support fundraising by attending events. Trustees can also help us by connecting us to valuable contacts among their professional, personal or community networks.

The overall responsibility of the Board is to safeguard the Trust's future, ensure it is well governed and achieves its Charitable Objectives. The six main duties of a charity trustee are to:

- Ensure the charity is carrying out its purpose for the public benefit;
- Comply with charity's governing document and the law;
- Act in the charity's best interests;
- Ensure the charity is accountable;
- Manage the charity's resources responsibly; and
- Act with reasonable care and skill.

Trustees are expected to adhere to the Seven 'Nolan' Principles of Public Life: Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty and Leadership. You can find out more about the role here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-essential-trustee-what-you-need-to-know-cc3>

The Trustees at CHGT have a collective responsibility and our expectation of all trustees is that they will:

- work collaboratively with the senior staff to develop and deliver the Trust's vision and strategic plan;
- be responsible for the Trust's long-term financial health and safeguard its reputation and assets;
- ensure the Trust functions within the required legal and regulatory frameworks and has satisfactory financial controls;
- be alert to risk;
- proactively seek opportunities for the Trust to earn, raise and generate income;
- be an advocate and ambassador for our work; and
- regularly attend programmes and events.



# CHISWICK HOUSE & GARDENS TRUST

Trustees fulfil their role by participating actively in board meetings, committees and working groups, attending events and where appropriate, working one-to-one with team members on specific projects that utilise their skills, knowledge and experience.

Charity trustees are volunteers and the role is not paid. However, we are happy to pay reasonable expenses such as travel or childcare.

Appointments are for four years, renewable up to eight years in total.

## What we are looking for

Our Trustees are passionate about the value of culture, heritage and environment more widely; and the impact that places like Chiswick House and Gardens can have in the community. There are many perspectives on this: different skills and lived experiences can be relevant to the role.

It is not necessary to have experience of sitting on a board or of being a trustee of a charity, nor to have reached any particular stage in your career, nor to have a background in heritage. An enthusiastic interest in our work, and a commitment to the local community, perhaps as a resident or through involvement with a local business or community organisation, are more important. We are happy to provide training and support to those who are new to trusteeship and we are interested to hear from those who see the role as contributing to their own development.

We are keen to find new trustees with skills and experience in:

- **community engagement** - to help us build and expand our successful [community programme](#);
- **landscape gardens, biodiversity and public realm** - to support our work to make our estate even more sustainable and wildlife friendly;
- **capital projects** - to help steer our major building project – [The Cedar Yards](#);
- **fundraising strategy and networks** - to support us to achieve our revenue and capital fundraising targets.

We are equally keen to hear from candidates who do not have these backgrounds but believe they could actively contribute to our thinking and our success.

We particularly welcome applications from those with a variety of lived experience, including younger candidates, people of colour and disabled people. We want our Board to be more representative of our Hounslow community. Candidates must be able to show that they share our commitment to diversity, equality and sustainability.

## Time Commitment

You'll need to be able to devote the necessary time and effort to be a Trustee. On average this means around 1 to 2 days per quarter.

The full board meets four times a year, usually on Friday afternoons, on-site at Chiswick House and Gardens, with senior staff in attendance. Once a year, we hold a half-day strategy session, also involving senior staff, which takes a more workshop style and allows us to stand back, consider and discuss our broader strategy. Some additional time will be required for reading and digesting Board or committee papers in advance.



# CHISWICK HOUSE & GARDENS TRUST

We have a number of sub-committees and advisory groups. Most board members will normally serve on at least one – often linked to their particular skills and experience - in order to spread the workload and provide an opportunity for more in-depth focus on different aspects of our work. The committees also benefit from the expertise of co-opted members who are not trustees but have specific skills or experience that is relevant and helpful. Committees meet at various times of day, online or in person. They include:

- Finance, Audit and Risk – meeting quarterly a few weeks before full board meetings;
- Development – meeting twice a year and focusing on fundraising;
- Capital Project Board – meeting monthly to oversee the Cedar Yards building project;
- Trading – a subsidiary board that oversees and supports commercial activity such as retail, hires and catering; and
- Heritage Advisory Panel – a group of external experts chaired by a trustee.

Board members are expected to see the Trust's work in action – visiting the House, Gardens and key community programmes. They are also asked to support the trust by attending occasional events alongside senior staff, such as fundraising cultivation events or the annual volunteers thank-you party.

## How to apply

To express your interest in joining the board, please write to the Chair of the Board, Sian Alexander, enclosing a copy of your CV or a short biography.

In your letter (no more than 2 A4 pages) please tell us why you would like to join the Board, a little about yourself, and what you would bring to the Board. We are committed to ensuring that our Board is representative of our Hounslow community and so please complete our diversity survey here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/5ZZSL3W>.

If we need to make any adjustments to enable you to participate in our recruitment process such as providing this information in a different format (eg hard copy, large print or text only version) please contact [info@chgt.org.uk](mailto:info@chgt.org.uk). You may send a video or audio (no more than 5 minutes) as an alternative to a letter if this enables you to make an application.

**Expressions of interest should be submitted to [info@chgt.org.uk](mailto:info@chgt.org.uk) by 12 noon on Monday 3 June 2024. Please put TRUSTEE24 in the email header and indicate your availability for the proposed interview dates of 13 and 14 June in your email.**

We will invite shortlisted applicants for a short interview with the Chair and 1 or 2 other trustees, and to visit the site and meet the Director. We will contact everyone to let them know the outcome of their application.

If you would like an initial informal and confidential conversation with the Chair, Sian Alexander, or the Director, Xanthe Arvanitakis, please contact [info@chgt.org.uk](mailto:info@chgt.org.uk).

Thank you for your interest in Chiswick House and Gardens. We look forward to hearing from you.