

# Job Description for Chair of Oxford Urban Wildlife Group

Please see our website [www.ouwg.org.uk](http://www.ouwg.org.uk) for more information about us.

This is an exciting time for Boundary Brook Nature Park, and Oxford Urban Wildlife Group (OUWG) is looking for a Chair to help us build on the new lease of life that we are creating as we restore this wildlife haven and community space. We are working in partnership with BBOWT and Oxford City Council to maintain the site, and before COVID-19, we were collectively offering a programme of community events, training courses & practical conservation volunteer opportunities, whilst also hosting Forest Schools and Ecotherapy Practice. We hope to resume these when circumstances permit. We will also be preparing to renew our lease with Oxford City Council in September 2020.

We have 9 engaged trustees supported by some very active members, conservation volunteers, and a member of BBOWT staff allocated to work with us a number of days a month. We are also working actively to expand our volunteer base and links with the local community. We are looking for a Chair to run our Business Meetings every 6 weeks, ensure that we follow good governance and that we have an effective relationship with our key stakeholders (members, the public, BBOWT, the Council, conservation volunteers and schools as well as the flora and fauna in the local area). Previous experience or expertise in nature conservation is not necessary, though it would be an advantage. We are happy to consider people who wish to be Chair or to share the role as Co-Chair.

OUWG is both a charity and a membership organisation. Decisions about how the Group and Boundary Brook Nature Park is managed and administered is made by Business Meetings of our members where all members have an equal vote. BBOWT also brings some external grant funding to the Nature Park, and the Business Meetings are the key place where we work through how this grant is managed within its funding parameters. The Chair is expected to run the Business Meetings which (when not in COVID-19 lockdown) are open to trustees, members and the public. In addition to preparing the agenda, attending the meeting and approving the minutes, the Chair probably needs to be able to find an additional 3 hours in-between meetings for liaison etc – and there is also scope for many more hours if they have the availability. It would also be appreciated if they were able to attend some events or volunteer days but this is not essential.

Key to success in this role will be an ability to work with the responsibilities of the role without direct decision-making power. The Chair will need to be able to work in a grassroots, community-based manner within OUWG fostering inclusive, collective, collaborative working, whilst also ensuring that OUWG fulfils its obligations as a charity. Another key aspect to the role will be working with the group to ensure that relationships with other stakeholders such as BBOWT and Oxford City Council are maintained in a professional and mutually-rewarding fashion.

## Overall

- Facilitating OUWG to enable it to fulfil its purpose and apply good governance.
- Planning and running OUWG Business Meetings and the AGM with others as appropriate
- Ensuring an effective relationship between:
  - trustees, members, the public and volunteers (or any future staff)
- OUWG and the external stakeholders/community such as BBOWT, the Council, external conservation volunteer groups and schools.
- Acting as a spokesperson as appropriate, but in the spirit of being one among many.

## Specifically

- Plan and prepare the OUWG Business Meetings and the AGM with others as appropriate.
- Chair OUWG Business Meetings ensuring:
  - A balance is struck between time-keeping and space for discussions.
  - Business is dealt with and decisions made.
  - Decisions, actions and deliberations are adequately minuted.
  - The implementation of decisions is clearly assigned and monitored.
- Ensure adequate support and supervision arrangements are made for any other trustees, members or volunteers directly managed or reporting to the Business Meetings.
- Ensure successful renewal of the lease with Oxford City Council
- Ensure that a successor is found before the term of office finishes.

## Qualities

- Has a willingness to lead the organisation through facilitation, building our collective sense of ownership and responsibility to the Nature Park and to the community and other stakeholders
- Possesses empathy, integrity and diplomacy
- Possesses relevant knowledge
- Has the relevant skills to run a meeting well
- Previous experience or expertise in nature conservation is not necessary, though it would be an advantage

This is a volunteer role, as are all the other roles in OUWG. The outgoing Co-Chairs will support the new Chair (or Co-Chairs) through a three-month induction period, at the end of which both parties can decide if they wish to commit to a full appointment.

For more information contact: [info@ouwg.org.uk](mailto:info@ouwg.org.uk)