

# Wessex Museums

Trustee Recruitment Pack

July 2023

## Welcome

Thank you for your interest in becoming a trustee. This guide for prospective trustees outlines the work of Wessex Museums Trust, explains what it means to be a trustee, highlights the benefits, and provides information on how to apply.

We are looking for trustees with a strong regional connection who can provide new voices and lived experiences from parts of our communities that are currently underserved by our partner museums, specifically:

- People between the ages of 18-35 years old
- People from low-income backgrounds
- People from ethnic minority groups
- People who are LGBTQ+
- Disabled people, including physical, mental and invisible conditions

We hope to have included information that encourages you to apply, if you would like to have an informal conversation or require any adjustments to the application process, please get in touch. Contact information is located on the final page.

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## Our Partners

Dorset Museum

Lydiard House Museum

Poole Museum

STEAM - Museum of the Great Western Railway

Swindon Museum and Art Gallery

The Salisbury Museum

Wiltshire Museum

## About Wessex Museums Trust

Wessex Museums is a partnership of museums which best tell the stories of Dorset and Wiltshire from prehistoric times to the present day – Dorset Museum, Poole Museum, The Salisbury Museum, Swindon Museums and Wiltshire Museum.

Wessex Museums Trust exists to build the resilience and relevance of the partner museums and our vision is: Museums thriving through collaboration. [Our partnership charter](#) sets out our mission and values as an organisation.

The partnership formed the Wessex Museums Trust, a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, in January 2017 to support the accredited museums in Dorset and Wiltshire for the benefit and education of the public. Together we seek ways to add value to our partner museums and share the stories of the Wessex region.

Wessex Museums (and its constituent museums) is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) 2023-26, and as such is currently delivering an ambitious collaborative programme. The Wessex Museums Trust is responsible for the governance of the NPO programme and ensuring that the partnership delivers on its funding agreement with Arts Council England. Activity included in our NPO programme is outlined in our action plan, read our [what we do page](#) to find out more.

## The role of the board of trustees

To be a Trustee of an organisation is an engaging and fulfilling role. The role of a Trustee is to ensure that the Wessex Museums Trust abides by its partnership charter and fulfils its charitable objectives. The trustee board must always act in the best interests of the Wessex Museums Trust and must act as a group and not as individuals.

## Diversifying our Board

The most effective boards are ones which benefit from individuals from a diverse range of backgrounds, experiences and skill sets. Our [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion \(EDI\) Framework](#) and action plan sets out our commitment to diversifying the Wessex Museums Trust Board ensure that our organisation reflects the diversity of our region. We are specifically seeking trustees from communities currently underserved by our partner museums (see Person Specification).



Photo: Conversation club at  
The Salisbury Museum, by Ash Mills



**The Wessex Museums Trust charity board of trustees is comprised of:**

- Five nominated trustees, one from each of the partner museums.
- Five appointed trustees, including the Chair, Financial lead and three further trustees.

**Remuneration**

This position is not remunerated but reasonable out of pocket expenses incurred fulfilling the duties of the role, including travel to meetings, are reimbursed.

**Location**

The partner museums in Dorset and Wiltshire.

**Time commitment**

Trustees are expected to attend six Board meetings per year, half are currently conducted online on Teams, the other half in person alternating around the museum locations. Additionally, trustees are invited to attend and represent the charity at partnership events, meetings and functions.

**Term**

The term for trustees is three years with the option for reappointment.



## **The benefits of becoming a trustee**

Becoming a trustee with Wessex Museums offers a range of benefits.

It presents an incredible opportunity to enhance your career while developing a diverse range of skills. By taking on a trustee role, you can actively contribute to the partnership and seven partner museums, that are engaged in important work and make a meaningful difference.

As a trustee, you will have the chance to deepen your skillset, broaden your network, and gain understanding of governance in museums. Trustee experiences commonly involve leadership, teamwork, communication, the ability to create change.

### **Consider the possibilities that await you as a trustee with Wessex Museums:**

- Develop skills in new areas
- Be part of a dynamic museum partnership
- Contribute to the promotion of culture and heritage in the region
- Utilize your voice and lived experience to represent and give back to the community
- Contribute to the long-term vision and direction of the museum partnership

## The statutory duties of a trustee are:

- To ensure the organisation complies with its governing document - known as the constitution.
- To ensure that the organisation pursues its objectives as defined in its governing document.
- To ensure the organisation applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objectives - the charity must not spend money on activities which are not included in its own objectives, no matter how 'charitable' and 'worthwhile' those activities are.
- To contribute actively to the Board of Trustees' role in giving firm strategic direction to the organisation, setting overall policy, defining goals and setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets.
- To safeguard the good name and values of the organisation.
- To ensure the effective and efficient administration of the organisation.
- To ensure the financial stability of the organisation.
- To protect and manage the property of the organisation and to ensure the proper investment of the organisation's funds.
- If the organisation employs staff, to appoint the Chief Executive Officer and monitor their performance.

In addition, with other trustees, to hold the charity "in trust" for current and future beneficiaries by:

- Ensuring that the charity has a clear vision, mission and strategic direction and is focused on achieving these.
- Being responsible for the performance of the charity and for ensuring that the charity complies with all legal and regulatory requirements.
- Acting as guardians of the charity's assets, both tangible and intangible, taking all due care over their security, deployment and proper application.
- Ensuring that the charity's governance is of the highest possible standard.

As well as the various statutory duties, any trustee should make full use of any specific skills, knowledge and experience to help the Board make good decisions.



Photo: Dorset Museum

## Person specification

The Wessex Museums Trust is seeking trustee applicants with a strong regional connection who can provide new voices and lived experiences from parts of our communities that are currently underserved by our partner museums.

Specifically:

- People between the ages of 18-35 years old
- People from low-income backgrounds
- People from ethnic minority groups
- People who are LGBTQ+
- Disabled people, including physical, mental and invisible conditions

## Each trustee must have:

- Integrity
- Strategic vision
- Good, independent judgement
- An ability to think creatively
- A commitment to the purpose, values and mission of the Wessex Museums Trust
- A willingness to meet the time requirement for being a trustee
- A commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI)
- A willingness to speak their mind and contribute their skills
- An ability to work effectively as a member of a team and to take decisions for the good of the Wessex Museums Trust
- Willingness to be available to staff for advice and enquiries on an ad hoc basis

## Experience

Individuals are sought who have a range of experience, skills, and expertise, an interest in cultural heritage/museums/arts, and a connection to the Wessex region. Following a skills audit of current trustees the board collectively would benefit from skills and experience in the following areas:

- Digital
- Campaigning
- PR/Communications
- Income generation & fundraising

## How to Apply

To submit your application, please send the following documents to [hello@wessexmuseums.org.uk](mailto:hello@wessexmuseums.org.uk), with the subject line "TRUSTEE", by 10am on Monday 4th September 2023:

- CV outlining relevant experience (no more than two sides of A4)
- [Equal Opportunities Form](#)
- An expression of interest in the trustee role to include what knowledge, skills, experience you would bring to the role, and what you personally hope to gain by becoming a trustee of Wessex Museums Trust. This can take the form of:
  - A written letter (no more than two sides of A4)
  - A film or audio recording (up to 5 minutes length)
  - A visual representation (this could be a collage, PowerPoint, mindmap, etc)

If sending an audio or video file please send via WeTransfer to the above address, clearly labelled.

If you want to arrange an informal conversation before submitting an application, please contact Gill Donnell (chair) via email [chair@wessexmuseums.org.uk](mailto:chair@wessexmuseums.org.uk).

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Once applications have been reviewed, we will invite suitable candidates to interview on 13 or 14 September. The panel will include current trustees, and the CEO. Prior to the interview a list of discussion points will be shared with you in advance.

Thank you for your interest in the trustee role. For further information about Wessex Museums visit [wessexmuseums.org.uk](http://wessexmuseums.org.uk). To see our latest achievements read our [impact report](#). To understand our approach to equality and diversity read our [action plan](#).

For questions and informal conversation please contact Gill Donnell (chair), [chair@wessexmuseums.org.uk](mailto:chair@wessexmuseums.org.uk). To submit your application email [hello@wessexmuseums.org.uk](mailto:hello@wessexmuseums.org.uk).

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Museums**  
Sharing • Collaborating • Enhancing



[wessexmuseums.org.uk](http://wessexmuseums.org.uk)



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