**Role Profile: Chair of the Board of Trustees**

Leading plant conservation charity Plant Heritage is looking for a new chairperson for our Board of Trustees, to take over in Autumn 2025. This is a pivotal moment to join the charity as we head towards our 50th anniversary in 2028. We have exciting plans to raise our profile, get more people involved in our conservation schemes, diversify our funding base and harness digital tools to streamline our work. The role will particularly suit someone who is passionate about plants (you don’t need to be an expert) and who will enjoy engaging with our partners and network of local groups and members, who are at the heart of our work.

**How to apply**

Please submit a covering letter setting out why you are applying for this role and how you meet the skills/experience asked for, along with a short CV, by email to [comms@plantheritage.org.uk](mailto:comms@plantheritage.org.uk) by **5pm on Friday 27th June.** Shortlisted applicants will be invited to interviews during the weeks of 14th or 21st July 2025 and we aim to inform the successful candidate by early August.

For more information about the charity, please visit our [website](https://www.plantheritage.org.uk/), or look at our most recent [Annual Report](https://www.plantheritage.org.uk/about-us/annual-report-accounts/). We have also prepared a short information booklet, which you can [download from our website](https://www.plantheritage.org.uk/about-us/job-and-volunteer-vacancies/). If you have any questions, please feel free to email us on [comms@plantheritage.org.uk](mailto:comms@plantheritage.org.uk) or you can phone the office on 01483 447540.

**The Role**

Plant Heritage Trustees are the people who ultimately exercise control over, and are legally responsible for, the charity. The Chairperson is responsible for providing leadership and direction to the Board of Trustees in fulfilling their responsibilities for the overall governance and strategic direction of the charity. You will be supported by the Vice Chair and will work closely with the Chief Executive, who exercises day to day leadership of the charity.

Main responsibilities:

* **Representation and engagement**: You will represent the organisation at various external events and meetings, as well as meetings with leaders of our Plant Heritage local groups and national events for our membership. You will play a key role in helping to strengthen existing relationships and developing contacts with new potential partners and funders.
* **Good governance**: You will promote and act in the best interests of the charity at all times. You will ensure that Plant Heritage pursues its objects as defined in our governing document and complies with the requirements of UK charity law, company law and other relevant legislation/regulations. You will follow the Charity Commission Governance Code and the charity’s Governance Guidelines to maintain best practice on being a Trustee at all times.
* **Strategic Leadership**: You will ensure that the charity has a sound strategic plan with clear goals and targets, and that performance against these is reviewed on a regular basis. You will facilitate and provide direction for Board discussions, and work with the rest of the board, the Chief Executive and team to help deliver on goals agreed.
* **Board leadership:** You will plan and chair board meetings to ensure well-rounded discussions and objective decision making. You will support other Board members to fulfil their responsibilities, enabling access to training/coaching/information as necessary. You will encourage team working and ensure a smooth succession when vacancies arise, with the right mix of skills and experience at the board’s disposal.
* **Financial sustainability:** You will keep in close touch with the Treasurer and the Finance and Fundraising Committee to ensure you have a clear grasp of the charity’s financial position and action is taken as necessary. You will ensure information is disclosed to the Board in a timely manner. You will also ensure the charity’s accounts and Annual Report are submitted on time to the respective authorities.
* **People and Culture:** You will be the charity’s lead on safeguarding and health and safety. You will work with the Chief Executive and the Governance and People Committee to ensure we have the right organisational policies and practices in place, and to foster a positive, inclusive, and collaborative culture across the charity. You will ensure that change is well managed, and conflicts addressed effectively across the charity, including within the Board of Trustees. You will undertake a review of any external complaints, as defined by the charity’s complaints procedure, and act as final stage adjudicator for disciplinary and grievance procedures if required.

In relation to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

* **Recruitment and appraisal:** If a vacancy arises, you will lead the process to recruit the new CEO, with the participation of the Board. You also lead the process to appraise and constructively guide the CEO’s performance.
* **Working relationships:** You will create a good relationship between the Board and the Chief Executive and team, ensuring that the Board focuses on its governance role rather than management. You will consult with the CEO on matters of strategy, governance, finance and human resources.
* **Monitoring progress:** You will oversee the CEO’s activities in the context of the implementation of Board’s strategy and policies. You will receive regular informal progress reports of the organisation’s work and financial performance through the CEO, and will maintain careful oversight of any risk to reputation and/or legal or financial integrity of the organisation.

All trustees are expected to comply with Plant Heritage rules, policies, procedures, codes of conduct and relevant external regulations.

**Key Skills and Experience**

Essential

* Commitment to Plant Heritage’s objectives, values and a willingness to devote sufficient time to carry out the responsibilities of this role
* Sound and independent judgement, political impartiality and the ability to think strategically and creatively in the context of the organisation and our external environment
* Understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of Trusteeship and adhering to [Nolan’s seven principles of public life](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life/the-7-principles-of-public-life--2): selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership
* Good communication and interpersonal skills and the ability to engage diverse audiences and respect the confidences of colleagues. You will be able to balance tact and diplomacy with a willingness to challenge and provide constructive feedback

Desirable

* An interest in plants and conservation
* Prior experience as a charity trustee
* Experience of chairing meetings, committee work
* Experience of charity finance, charity fundraising
* Leadership skills exercised through a period of change

**Eligibility**

To become a trustee for Plant Heritage, you must be over 18 and meet certain other requirements [set by the regulators](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/automatic-disqualification-rules-for-charity-trustees-and-charity-senior-positions#summary-of-the-legal-disqualification-reasons). As a membership organisation, we also ask that all Plant Heritage trustees are members of the charity (if you are not already a member, you can find out more about joining [from our website](https://www.plantheritage.org.uk/get-involved/join-us-or-renew-a-membership/)).

We value **diversity and inclusion**, and we want to ensure equality of opportunity in our work. We particularly welcome applications from under-represented groups. Please let us know if you would like any reasonable adjustments in the application process.

**Practical Details**

* **Location:** You can be based anywhere UK-wide (with meetings in London and Surrey at least twice a year).
* **Time Commitment:** Approx. 1 day a month, on average (including 4 Board meetings per year; national AGM; annual Members’ Day event; liaison with CEO, Executive Committees and charity regulators; and representing the charity at external events.
* **Term:** Initial term of three years, which can be renewed for a second term. On an exceptional basis, the Chairperson can serve up to 8 years in total.
* **Remuneration:** This is a voluntary position and unpaid. Reasonable out of pocket expenses will be covered.

**Start Date**

The current Board chairperson intends to step down with effect from the Board Meeting scheduled for 11th September 2025. The intention is for the new role holder to take over at that point.