

Chief Executive Officer

Essex Wildlife Trust



Essex
Wildlife Trust



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We are the county's leading nature conservation charity, committed to protecting wildlife and inspiring a lifelong love of nature. We are proudly one of the largest Wildlife Trusts in the UK.

This is the most important decade in the history of nature conservation and an exciting time to be joining us. If we are to tackle the climate crisis and the ecological crisis, we need the best people to rally around environmental protection.

Our values are [Impactful](#), [Collaborative](#), [United](#) and [Proactive](#).





Message from the Chair

Dear Prospective Applicant

I am delighted to extend an invitation for you to apply for the pivotal role of Chief Executive Officer at Essex Wildlife Trust. As the Chair of the Board of Trustees, I am keen to welcome a dynamic and visionary leader who shares our passion for conserving and enhancing the natural beauty and biodiversity of Essex.

The role of CEO is integral to our mission and success. We seek a candidate with exceptional people and leadership skills, capable of inspiring and galvanizing our talented 180 staff and 1600 volunteers. Your ability to foster collaborative working relationships, both internally and with our numerous external partners, will be crucial in advancing our strategic goals.

Our dedicated teams at Essex Wildlife Trust are driven by a deep commitment to protecting wildlife and wild places. As CEO, you will have the opportunity to lead this enthusiastic and skilled group, leveraging their expertise and dedication to make a tangible impact. You will also work closely with a committed and supportive Board of Trustees, all of whom are steadfast in their dedication to our mission.

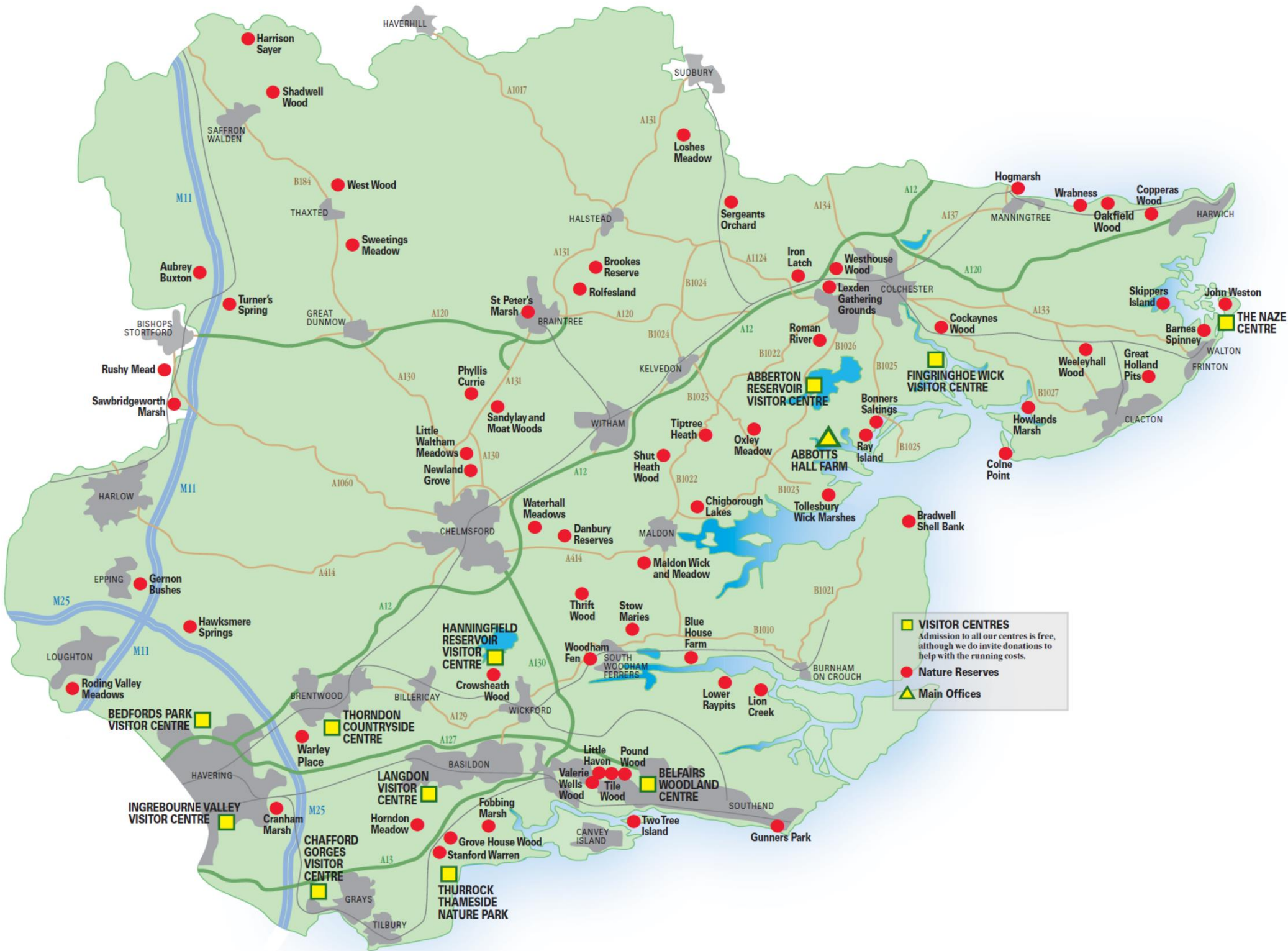
We are looking for a leader who can navigate the Trusts' complexities with innovative thinking and strategic vision, ensuring that our work remains relevant and impactful in an ever-changing environment. Your ability to articulate and implement a clear vision, combined with your strong leadership and people skills, will be key to our continued success.

If you are a passionate advocate for wildlife conservation with the leadership prowess to drive our organisation forward, we would be thrilled to hear from you. This is a unique opportunity to lead a respected and influential conservation organisation and make a lasting difference to the natural world in Essex.

Thank you for considering this exciting opportunity. I look forward to receiving your application.

Warm regards, Keeley Hazelhurst **Chair of the Board of Trustees**





About Essex Wildlife Trust

We are a local wildlife charity supported by over 1,600 volunteers and 38,000 members. We are one of 46 other Wildlife Trusts across the UK that combined make up the federation of Wildlife Trusts under the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts.

Founded in 1959 by a group of pioneering volunteers with the foresight to recognise the importance of a county-based Trust to protect wildlife and inspire a lifelong love of nature.

As one of the largest Wildlife Trusts in the country, we now have the benefit of over sixty years of experience in tackling environmental challenges, spanning terrestrial, freshwater, and marine ecosystems.

There has never been a more important time for Essex to have a Wildlife Trust that delivers high impact. We are at the centre of the nature crisis: our county is one of the most over-developed in the UK, a country which is, according to the Biodiversity Intactness Index, one of the most nature depleted countries on Earth.

With our track record of delivering tangible benefits for wildlife across the county, we are well placed to support stakeholders, landowners, and decision-makers to deliver solutions that secure wildlife gain and help nature's recovery, while also widening access to nature and bringing people and wildlife closer together.

How we are run

Essex Wildlife Trust has a Board of Trustees that consists of 13 members, all of whom are unpaid volunteers. The Board meets around six times a year and is responsible for the overall governance and direction of the Trust, whereas operational management of the Trust is the responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer and Senior Managers of the Trust.

As well as Essex Wildlife Trust Ltd, there are a number of company subsidiaries which are; Essex Wildlife Sales Ltd (retail operations and visitor centre sales), Essex Ecology Services Ltd (consultancy arm), and two locational subsidiaries of Thameside Nature Park Ltd and Chafford Gorges Ltd. TNP, Chafford Gorges and EWT are all charitable bodies, registered with the Charities Commission.



Our Strategic Plan

Our strategic plan serves as the roadmap guiding our actions, decisions and resource allocation to achieve our goals and objectives. It outlines a comprehensive framework that aligns the our mission, vision and values with the dynamic external environment.

A full copy of our Strategic Plan (2020-2030) can be found on our [website](#).

Our Vision:

"A county rich in wildlife with people connected to nature".

We are dependent on the natural world in every aspect of our lives. The air that we breathe. The water we drink. The food we eat. Our physical and mental health. We know that the state of nature is the best barometer for the overall health of our planet, and we know that the more connected we feel to nature, the more we strive to protect it. Bringing people close to nature is the key to unlocking a better, brighter future for everyone. We are ambitious for our county's future. We want Essex to be known for the richness of its wildlife, which will be the hallmark of a healthier, happier county.

We want Essex to be wilder because we need a wilder Essex. We want people to value natural capital, but we also want wildlife to be valued for its own sake, because of its beauty, its complexity, and its enduring power to inspire.

Our Mission

"Protecting wildlife and inspiring a lifelong love of nature".

We will achieve our vision of being a county rich in wildlife and connecting people with nature by focusing our efforts and resources on two areas: protecting and inspiring. Modern conservation must inspire people beyond the conservation community. We cannot do it all ourselves.

In this way, we see our engagement work as 'indirect conservation' because the outcome should be the same: a better deal for wildlife. Although we have relatively large landholdings in Essex, we cover a proportionally small area of the county and only some of these are coastal. If every garden in Essex were to become a mini nature reserve, the amount of space for nature in our county would be significantly higher.

We serve the entire county. We want to inspire people of all ages and backgrounds to develop a lifelong love of nature and to enable access, covering every area of Essex, urban as well as rural, coastal as well as terrestrial.

Our Values:

Our values are fundamental to who we are and how we operate as an organisation.

Impactful: We are science-led. We demonstrate impact across all activities. We start with the end in mind. We recognise the power of storytelling.

Collaborative: We work with partners for the greater good. We explore new opportunities and thinking. We embrace innovation and change. We share our vision and expertise.

United: We all play a part in achieving our mission. We show a united front. We support colleagues. We work together as one.

Proactive: We are solutions focused. We have a can-do attitude. We are optimistic about the future. We are not afraid to lead.



Our strategic framework

1. Restore

Objective 1.1

Leading wildlife gain across the county

Objective 1.2

Enhancing the conservation value of our land

2. Take Action

Objective 2.1

Creating places of wonder

Objective 2.2

Bringing people and wildlife closer together

3. Thrive

Objective 3.1 Working together for wildlife

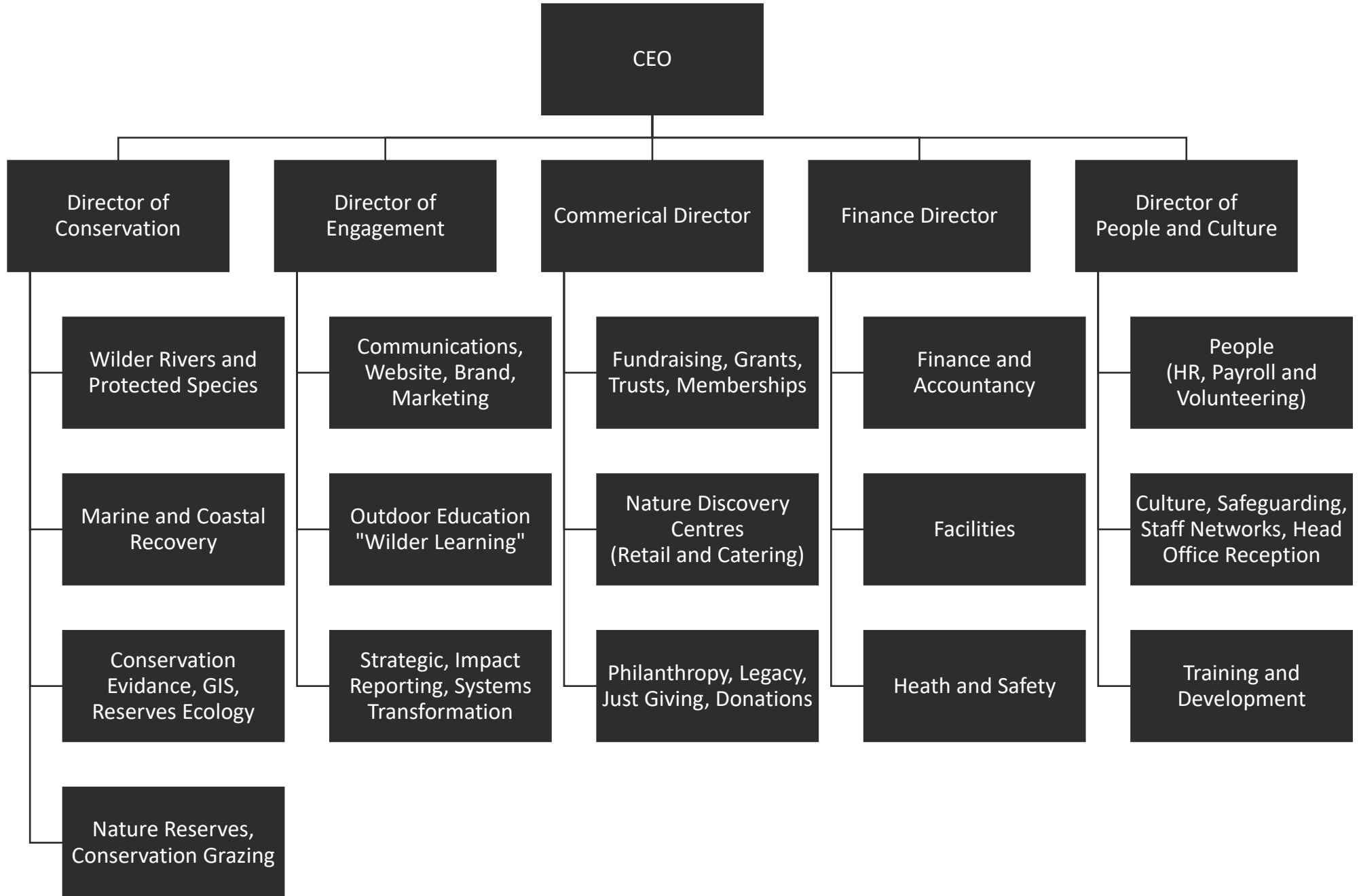
Objective 3.2 Making the best use of our resources

Delivering our strategy

We will support the delivery of the strategy by ensuring that all staff, volunteers, and members understand how they can contribute to achieving our aims and objectives and are supported by clear, relevant work plans and an Impact Framework that drive the direction of travel and measure success.



Organisational Structure



About the Role

As Chief Executive Officer, you will provide inspirational leadership to Essex Wildlife Trust in accordance with its charitable objectives, providing clear direction, setting strategic goals, engaging all members, supporters, staff, stakeholders and volunteers for the effective delivery of the Trust's objectives, whilst ensuring that all Trust activities are legally compliant and executed to the highest standard.

You will deliver the strategic framework of the Trust, ensuring that all activities and initiatives align with the Trust's vision, mission, values and purpose. This includes setting long-term goals and objectives that prioritise wildlife conservation and community engagement. You will also be responsible for overseeing the Trust's subsidiaries (Essex Wildlife Sales, Essex Ecology, Thameside Nature Park and Chafford Gorges), ensuring strong financial performance for return on investments for funding conservation across Essex.

Upholding and embodying the Trust's vision, mission and values will guide your decision-making and actions. You will prioritise being impactful, collaborative, united and proactive in all aspects of the Trust's work, in order to achieve the Trust's vision of a county rich in wildlife where people are connected to nature. Through the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) and Operational Leadership Team (OLT), and dedicated combined workforce of employees and volunteers, you will ensure that the Trust's strategic vision and charitable aims and objectives are achieved via a culture that enables a high performing, high impact workforce, that inspires passion and commitment towards wildlife conservation. Nurturing and retaining talent for the leadership of the Trust is paramount, as is your communication that will be marked by passion, authority and clarity, instilling a shared understanding of the Trust's purpose.



We are seeking an innovative Chief Executive to lead Essex Wildlife Trust during a period of significant opportunity in green finance. With the emergence of established codes like Biodiversity Net Gain and Carbon Codes, as well as new, innovative opportunities, our CEO must have the vision and an entrepreneurial mindset to navigate and capitalise on these prospects.

The successful candidate will assess where to invest our time and efforts, integrating short and long-term green finance opportunities into their financial strategy and planning. This role requires forecasting abilities and strategic insight to position Essex Wildlife Trust at the forefront of sustainability initiatives.

Overseeing the implementation of the Trust's strategic framework, which revolves around restoring habitats, taking proactive conservation actions, and enabling wildlife to thrive in Essex, will be a key aspect of your role. Equally, you will build and nurture relationships with external stakeholders, including landowners, local authorities, and government agencies, in order to promote wildlife-friendly policies and establish meaningful partnerships.



Job Description

Leadership and Advising the Board

- Work with the Chair, Board of Trustees and the SLT to continue developing the strategic vision for the future of Essex Wildlife Trust.
- Provide strong leadership to Essex Wildlife Trust, ensuring staff and volunteers are engaged with the Trust's vision and motivated to deliver it.
- Lead, develop and motivate the SLT to deliver Essex Wildlife Trust's mission, empowering their directorates and operational teams to deliver against agreed operational plans and individual/team goals.
- Through the SLT and OLT and employees and volunteers, ensure that the Trust's strategic vision is achieved via a culture that enables a high performing, high impact combined workforce, that inspires passion and commitment towards wildlife conservation.
- Identify the key issues facing the Trust in both the short and long term, and respond to these while mitigating operational, reputational and financial risk.

External Relations and Engagement

- Be pro-active and vocal in communicating the vision, philosophy and achievements of Essex Wildlife Trust through external advocacy.
- An ambassador for Essex Wildlife Trust.
- A key and active strategic participation in the federated wildlife trust movement.
- Develop productive and mutually beneficial relationships with key partners and individuals in the public, private and voluntary sectors to further the Trust's aims and elicit ongoing support for our work.
- Ensure timely and effective engagement with the Trust's extensive membership.
- Lead the Trust's representation and participation in the federated Wildlife Trusts movement, engaging proactively with RSWT and building relationships with other individual Wildlife Trusts.
- Host the Trust's Annual General Meeting where you will provide updates on achievements, challenges and future plans to members and stakeholders, ensuring open communication and engagement.

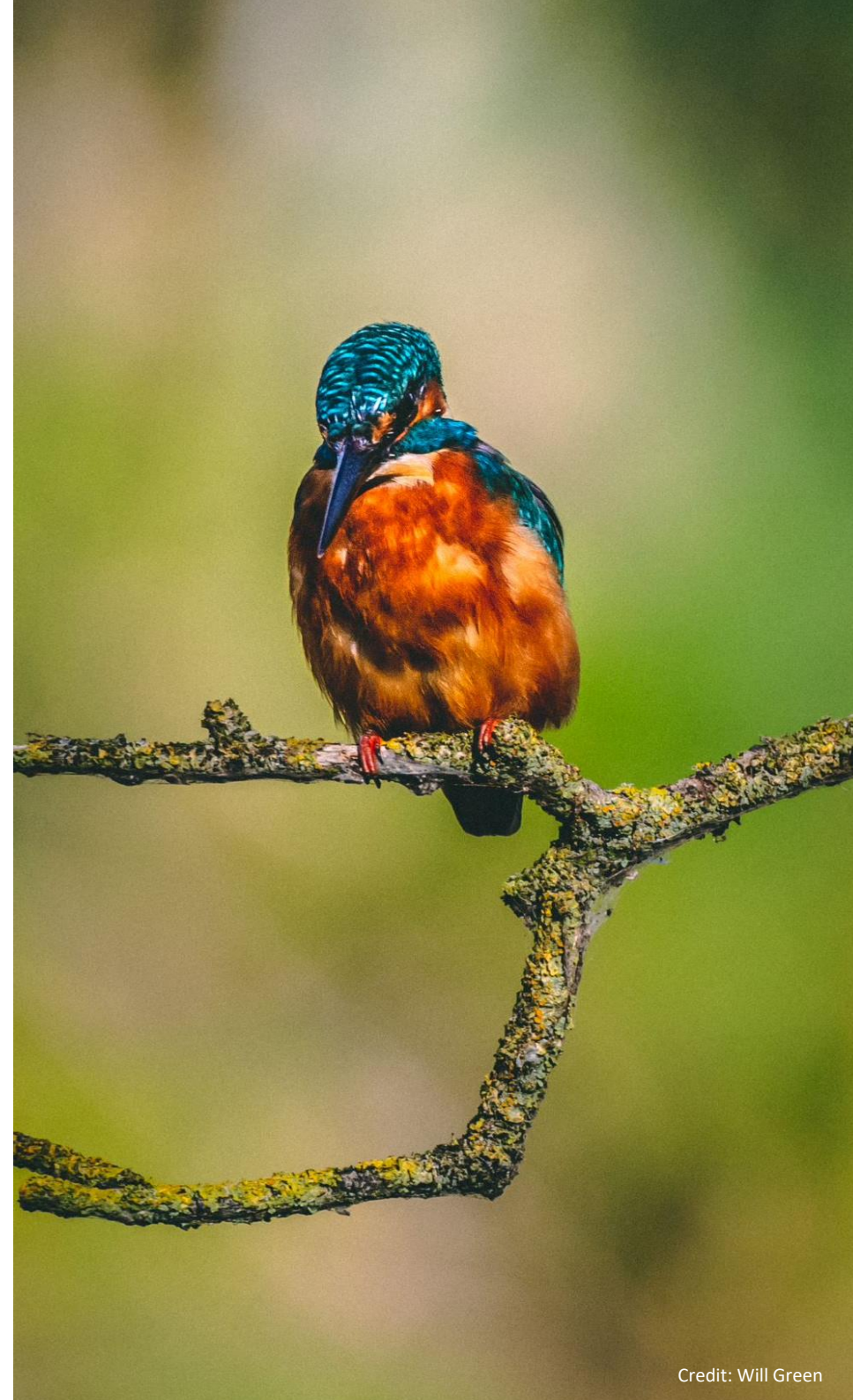


Governance

- Keep abreast of legislative, regulatory and governance issues which may impact the Trust, and ensure mitigation strategies.
- Ensure that communication with Trustees is open, timely and effective.
- Ensure that Essex Wildlife Trust maintains financial security in both the short and long term, and has procedures to manage both financial and reputational risk.
- Ensure that Essex Wildlife Trust meets all legal and compliance requirements, including legislation relating to health and safety, data protection, employment, safeguarding and the regulatory framework for charities, as well as all requirements associated with fundraising.
- Oversee management activities of the Trust's subsidiary undertakings (Essex Wildlife Sales, Essex Ecology, Thameside Nature Park and Chafford Gorges) and affiliated local groups, and any related and/or associated ventures for which the Trust has management responsibility.
- The postholder will have overall responsibility for all committees (for example, Finance & Audit, Health & Safety) albeit some lead responsibility being delegated to members of the Strategic Leadership Team.

Operations and Delivery

- Work closely with the SLT to ensure their teams are accountable and empowered to deliver the smooth and effective day to day running of the Trust, meeting the delivery of operational plans and longer-term strategy, reporting to the Board on strategic and financial performance against agreed objectives on a regular basis.
- Ensure that Essex Wildlife Trust is able to respond rapidly to emerging opportunities, challenges and risks.
- Ensure the effective deployment of the Trust's resources of people, land, buildings, equipment and finance to deliver its objectives.
- Support a culture of feedback and learning and development that will encourage staff and volunteers to grow, flourish and enhance their skills.
- Actively promote a recognition culture in relation to volunteers, recognising volunteer impact and service, ensuring that volunteers and local groups remain integral to the operation of the organisation, and are encouraged and supported.





Person Specification

Passion for Wildlife Conservation

- Demonstrable understanding of environmental issues as they pertain to the aims and objectives of Essex Wildlife Trust, including a broad strategic view of the issues affecting Essex Wildlife Trust and its role in the voluntary sector.
- Demonstrable and genuine passion for wildlife conservation and environmental sustainability.
- Strong commitment to protecting and enhancing biodiversity in Essex.

Educational Background

- Hold a degree (or equivalent qualification)
- Additional qualifications Level 6 or above in business management, leadership, or nonprofit management are desirable (or demonstrate equivalent experience).

Personal Attributes

- Strong integrity and ethical conduct in professional and organisational practices.
- Resilient, adaptable, and capable of leading through change and uncertainty.
- Inspiring, visionary and capable of motivating others towards conservation excellence.
- Able to welcome, support and develop a diverse workforce and membership, promoting inclusivity and diversity of thought, background and history.

Strategic Vision and Strong Leadership

- Substantial leadership and senior management experience preferably at Chief Executive level, gained within a wildlife, environmental, community and/or not-for-profit organisation.
- Proven experience in developing and executing strategic plans that align with the organisation's mission and goals.
- Ability to inspire, empower and lead a diverse team of employees and volunteers towards achieving the Trust's strategic aims and objectives.

Stakeholder Engagement and Relationship Building

- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills, with the ability to engage effectively with stakeholders, including government bodies, local authorities, landowners, and community groups.
- Demonstrable experience of working with Boards, Chairpersons etc.
- Demonstrable track record of building and maintaining positive relationships with key stakeholders.

Communication and Organisational Skills

- Strong communication skills at all levels (public speaking, clear and persuasive writing, media relations, listening and engagement, negotiation and diplomacy, internal communication).
- Strong organisational abilities, with experience in overseeing complex projects and teams.
- Capable of making informed decisions and managing resources efficiently.
- Willingness to listen to other's opinions and understanding of differing needs and viewpoints.

Financial and Commercial Acumen

- Sound financial management skills, including budgeting, fundraising, and grant management.
- Clear understanding of charity finances, specifically restricted and unrestricted funds.
- Strong commercial and business management and leadership skills.
- Experience in diversifying funding streams and maximising financial resources for conservation initiatives.

Community Engagement and Advocacy

- Experience in top-level community engagement and advocacy, fostering public awareness and support for wildlife conservation.
- Skilled in promoting nature-based solutions and encouraging public participation in conservation activities.

Strategic Thinking and Innovation

- Proven ability to think strategically and innovatively, identifying new opportunities and approaches for wildlife conservation and the Trust as a whole.
- Capable of adapting to changing environments and emerging challenges, both internal and wider operating environment.

Collaboration and Partnership Development

- Collaborative approach to working with diverse stakeholders and partners to achieve strategic objectives.
- Experience in developing and nurturing strategic partnerships for conservation impact.

Advocacy and Policy Influence

- Knowledge of environmental policies and regulations, with the ability to advocate for wildlife-friendly policies and practices.
- Experience in influencing policy development and engaging with policymakers at local, regional, and national levels.

Commitment to People, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

- Excellent human resource and business leadership practices.
- Commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion in the workplace and organisational practices.
- Ability to foster an inclusive and supportive work environment for staff and volunteers.



Terms and How to Apply

This role is a permanent full-time position. We are proud of the flexible working practices at Essex Wildlife Trust including offering flexible homeworking arrangements. The position comes with an annual salary of £85,000.

The post holder will be based at our Head Office at the beautiful Abbots Hall in Great Wigborough, near Colchester.

Annual leave entitlement starts at 26 days per annum increasing annually to 29 days plus Bank Holidays. We provide company sick pay increasing with length of service, an employee assistance programme, a combined 8% contribution pension scheme, staff social days, peer nominated Merit scheme and discounts in our Nature Discovery Centres.

How to Apply

To make an application, please complete an online application form on our website by 12 noon on Wednesday 10 July 2024. The first round of interviews will be held week commencing 29 July 2024. Second round of interviews will be held week commencing 05 August 2024.

Thank you for your interest in this position and I look forward to receiving your application.

Keeley Hazelhurst, Chair of the Board of Trustees



