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Chair of  
the Board

# Welcome

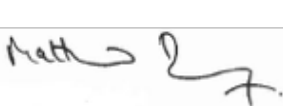
Thank you for your interest in becoming our next Chair at Nene Park Trust. The Trust and the Park itself have grown to become one of the country's most successful and respected 'Park Trust' models, providing a broad range of benefits and activities to almost two million visitors per year.

Originally established by the Peterborough Development Corporation during the late 1970s and 1980s, Nene Park Trust, the charity that now looks after the Park on a 999-year lease, was established in 1988. We are responsible for over 700 hectares of land comprising one of the most visited country parks in the UK at Ferry Meadows, as well as significant areas of farmland, woodland and open water. Nene Park is also the venue for a broad range of recreational activities which are set to be enhanced. The Park is a haven for wildlife and provides the community of the City of Peterborough, and its fast growing region, with a wonderful series of high quality green spaces and recreational venues which benefit the environment, health and wellbeing, education and the local economy.

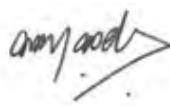
We have taken our organisation through a period of major change and development in recent years, culminating in the launch of a new Master Plan and strategy, reorganisation and rebrand. This is providing the Trust with an exciting future that combines commitment to improve the quality and consistency of our impact, with the confidence to grow and develop new projects. The Trust is also in a strong financial position. Due to the impending retirement of our current Chair, Jon Marsden, we are now looking for an exceptional candidate with an outstanding record of achievement in his or her field to succeed him.

The role is to provide clear leadership to the Board, championing effective governance while also shaping and sustaining a high-quality and diverse non-executive team. As an ambassador for Nene Park, you will lead our relationships with senior local and national stakeholders and with those representing the broad range of sectors and communities we support. With a strong track record of strategic leadership in civil society, business, politics or public life, you will have the utmost credibility and integrity and will bring the high personal standing and influence required to lead a significant local organisation. You are likely to be an experienced chair who has a visible passion and commitment to our charity, our objectives and social and environmental impact.

This is a particularly exciting time to join us. Working in close partnership with the Chief Executive, Senior Leadership Team, wider colleagues and increasingly the people we seek to support, we are further building on our significant values and resources. Nene Park is visited and loved by an incredibly diverse range of people. We are actively encouraging applications from people of all backgrounds. If you believe you offer the skills and qualities we are seeking for this appointment, we very much look forward to hearing from you.



Matthew Bradbury  
Chief Executive



Jon Marsden  
Chair



# About Nene Park Trust

Nene Park Trust's charitable objective is: For the public benefit to provide parks and recreation grounds for the inhabitants of Peterborough and the surrounding region and for visitors with the object of improving the quality of life for such persons. The Trust's vision is: To be the region's favourite Park, providing a permanent haven for heritage and wildlife and a wide choice of recreational activities for the people of Peterborough and the wider community.

Our plans are big and bold! This is the beginning of an exciting new era. The Trust, which is the charity responsible for the long- term custody and day-to-day management of the Park, has reflected on almost three decades of successfully looking after such a wonderful place. Together with our partners and communities in Peterborough and beyond, we have developed an ambitious Nene Park Master Plan. The Plan demonstrates how, resources permitting, we are preparing to address a wide range of future challenges and opportunities in and for the Park up to and beyond 2050.

The Plan links inseparably to a new 10-year Business Strategy (from 2017), Doing More with More which informs the five-year Business and Action Plan for the Trust. The Strategy identifies four key pillars of work:

- 1. Celebrating our environment** Nene Park will be managed and protected as a clean, safe, sustainable and attractive natural environment that retains its river valley character and celebrates local culture, arts, heritage, archaeology and biodiversity.
- 2. Engaging our communities** Nene Park will be a beautiful, accessible and enjoyable place that, as well as providing opportunities for healthy relaxation and learning, also provides excellent facilities and an exciting range of events and activities.
- 3. Developing our resources** Nene Park Trust will be recognised as an innovative and inspirational charity that invests in its people, its processes, its sustainability – and most of all its Parks and infrastructure.
- 4. Growing our Park** Nene Park Trust will be recognised as a collaborative and commercially minded charity operating as a key regional partner.

These four pillars are broken down into 10 specific business goals, which then flow into a number of specific objectives – 35 in total – which we are committed to delivering. Underlying all of these is a need to ensure smarter working, financial sustainability and an increase in the range of activities offered throughout Nene Park.



Our Business Plan (2017-2022) sets out the Trust's key strategic priorities and the projected financial impact of delivering on those objectives. It identifies the top priority annually to be to generate a surplus, with by far the largest contribution coming from the generation of additional income.

Two key sources have been identified, namely:

- Making more of the Trust's charitable status through various fundraising initiatives.
- Ensuring the Trust obtains maximum value from existing and new assets, including the development of new sources of income from existing facilities both those managed in house and those leased to our tenants.

Three years into the Strategy, we have been very successful in attracting income from both sources.

For 2020 we have a number of other key priorities which will help us meet our primary objectives of serving the needs of our beneficiaries, improving our facilities and biodiversity, encouraging wider use of the park (and beyond) and continuing to improve on the experience that visitors have when they come to Nene Park.

1. To take a whole organisation approach to fundraising and projects, involving trustees, staff and volunteers, to make the most of our charitable status for the sake of our beneficiaries.
2. To accelerate the progress towards achieving the financial targets for our commercial activities, prioritising Nene Park Services and Nene Outdoors.
3. To appraise and deliver opportunities for commercial development and inward investment in the Park.
4. To broaden the nature, scope and diversity of volunteering and increase community engagement, particularly through development of the Heritage Fund project 'Peterborough's Community Greenspace' to Stage 2 application submission, and through the successful delivery of the Arts Council-funded 'Associate Artists' project.
5. To focus on the wider estate, improving the visitor experience at Thorpe Meadows as well as initiatives on the rural estate that better deliver the Trust's charitable objectives.
6. To implement a methodology for evaluating the social and environmental impact of our work.
7. Subject to business case, to secure agreement to acquire and manage new areas of greenspace and facilities.

Our current Board of Trustees is:

- Jon Marsden (Chair; member, Finance and Governance and Nominations Committees)
- Colin Prosser (Chair, Finance Committee; member Governance and Nominations and Nene Park Services Committees)
- Cllr Simon Barkham
- Martin Chillcott
- Tommy Cooper (member, Finance Committee)
- Ian Hodge (member, Governance and Nominations Committee)
- Paul Simmons (member, Finance Committee)
- Allan Simpson
- Christine de Ferrars Green (member, Governance and Nominations Committee)
- Jamie McCann (member, Finance Committee)
- Linda Cook
- Ashley Dunseath (Chair, Governance and Nominations Committee)
- Beki Sellick (member, Governance and Nominations Committee)
- Cllr Kim Aitken
- Cllr Lucinda Robinson

Further information can be obtained from the Trust's Business Strategy, Master Plan and current Annual Report and Accounts. All of these documents are available at [www.nenepark.org.uk](http://www.nenepark.org.uk)

# Role Description

The Chair is referred to as the “Chair of Directors” in the Trust’s articles of association.

The Chair enables the Board to fulfil its responsibilities for the overall governance and strategic direction of the Trust, ensuring it has agreed priorities, appropriate structures, processes and a productive culture. The Chair ensures that the organisation complies with its governing document, charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations and makes sure that the organisation pursues its objects as defined in its governing document.

The Chair holds the Board and Senior Leadership Team to account for the Charity’s mission and vision, providing inclusive leadership to the Board of Trustees and ensuring that each trustee fulfils their duties and responsibilities for the effective governance of the charity. The Chair supports and, where appropriate, challenges the Chief Executive and provides clear leadership to the Board in order to ensure that it functions as a cohesive team. He or she will act as an ambassador and the public face of the charity in partnership with the Chief Executive.

Principal areas of responsibility:

**1. Provide strategic leadership to the Trust and its Board, ensuring that the Trust has maximum impact for its beneficiaries by**

- ∞ Ensuring that Trustees fulfil their duties and responsibilities for the effective governance of the Charity.
- ∞ Ensuring that the Board operates within its charitable objectives, and provides a clear strategic direction for the Charity.
- ∞ Making sure that the Board is able to regularly review major risks and associated opportunities, and satisfy itself that systems are in place to take advantage of opportunities, and manage and mitigate the risks.
- ∞ Enabling the Board to fulfil its duties to ensure the sound financial health of the charity, with systems in place to ensure financial accountability. Liaising regularly with the Chair of the Finance Committee to maintain a clear grasp of the charity’s financial position and ensuring full, timely and transparent financial reporting to the Board.

**2. Ensure that governance arrangements are working in the most effective way for the Trust by**

- ∞ Developing the knowledge and capability of the Board of Trustees.
- ∞ Encouraging positive change where appropriate and addressing and resolving any conflicts within the Board.
- ∞ On an annual basis, conducting trustee appraisals via 360 to include feedback and development plans via 1-1 mentoring.
- ∞ Ensuring that the Board of Trustees is regularly refreshed and incorporates the right balance of skills, knowledge and experience needed to govern and lead the charity effectively, and which also reflects the wider population as far as is reasonably possible.
- ∞ Working within any agreed policies adopted by the Trust.

**3. External Relations: act as an ambassador for the Trust and its charitable objects by**

- ∞ Maintaining close relationships with key stakeholders and with key influences.
- ∞ Acting as a spokesperson for the organisation when appropriate.
- ∞ Representing the charity at external functions, meetings and events.
- ∞ Facilitating change and addressing any potential conflict with external stakeholders.

# Role Description

## 4. Chair Board meetings effectively and efficiently, bringing impartiality and objectivity to the discussion and decision-making process and ensuring that votes of the Board are conducted properly and decisions are formally minuted

- ∞ Ensuring that Trustees are fully engaged and that decisions are taken in the best, long-term interests of the Trust and that the Board takes collective ownership.
- ∞ Fostering, maintaining and ensuring that constructive relationships exist with and between the Trustees and between the Board and the executive team.
- ∞ Working closely with the Chief Executive and Company Secretary to give direction to Board policy-making and ensuring that meetings are well planned, meaningful and reflect the responsibilities of Trustees.
- ∞ Monitoring that decisions taken at meetings are implemented.
- ∞ Attending of other committees or working groups when appropriate in the role as Chair.
- ∞ Exercising a second or casting vote if a vote on a trustees' decision is tied, but only as specified in the Trust's governing document.

## 5. Establish and build a strong, effective and a constructive working relationship with the Chief Executive and Senior Leadership Team by

- ∞ Ensuring they are held to account for achieving agreed strategic objectives.
- ∞ Supporting the Chief Executive, whilst respecting the boundaries which exist between the two roles.
- ∞ Ensuring regular contact with the Chief Executive and developing and maintaining an open and supportive relationship within which each can speak openly about concerns, worries and challenges.
- ∞ Conducting an annual appraisal and remuneration review for the Chief Executive in consultation with other Trustees.
- ∞ Ensuring that the Chief Executive has the opportunity for professional development and has appropriate external professional support.

The Deputy Chair acts for the Chair when he or she is not available and undertakes assignments at the request of the Chair. The above list is indicative only and not exhaustive. The Chair will be expected to perform all such additional duties as are reasonably commensurate with the role.



# Person Specification

In addition to the qualities required of a Trustee of the charity (Annex refers) the Chair must also meet the following requirements:

## **Part One Knowledge and Experience**

- Outstanding personal and professional record of achievement; direct experience as a chair is desirable.
- Deep experience of operating effectively at a strategic leadership level within a significant organisation ideally in the context of change or growth.
- Strong experience of working with or as part of a Board of Directors or equivalent.
- Experience of forming and managing effective stakeholder partnerships and alliances.
- Broad understanding of commercial performance, people management, leadership, evaluation and scrutiny, as integral aspects of Nene Park Trust's operations.
- Broad knowledge of the charity sector; an appreciation of charity finance issues is desirable.

## **Part Two Skills and Abilities**

- Effective leadership skills, with the ability to engage and motivate staff and volunteers, bring people together, and promote a collaborative team environment.
- Able to provide credible and effective leadership to the Board and CEO.
- Outstanding communication, interpersonal and influencing skills.
- Strong ambassadorial abilities and is a highly effective networker.
- Ability to formulate and implement strategy.

## **Part Three Personal style and attributes**

- Has the personal standing and demeanour required to lead a significant local organisation and establish trust and confidence quickly.
- Tactful and diplomatic style; listens effectively and has sound judgement.
- Highly effective team worker at Board level.
- Willing and available to commit the required time to the role.
- Demonstrates a strong and visible passion and commitment to the charity, its strategic objectives and cause.



# Terms of Appointment

## **Remuneration**

This appointment is offered on a voluntary basis. All reasonable expenses incurred on Nene Park Trust business will be reimbursed.

## **Time commitment**

Up to 12 days per year. Full Board meetings are held four times per year, supplemented by Finance Committee meetings, occasional task and finish group meetings and an annual site visit to meet the wider team and see projects at first hand.

In addition to chairing the main Board meetings, the Chair has the right to attend Board sub-committee meetings such as the Finance Committee and Governance and Nominations Committee.

## **Term of appointment**

The Chair will serve a three-year term to be eligible for re-appointment for one additional term. There is the option to extend for a further year in exceptional circumstances. The additional year would be used to aid succession planning.

## **Location**

The Trust is based at Ham Farm House, Ham Lane, Peterborough PE2 5UU.





# How to Apply

We hope you will consider making an application. If you have questions about the appointment and would find it helpful to have an informal conversation, please contact our advising consultant [Juliet.Taylor@starfishsearch.com](mailto:Juliet.Taylor@starfishsearch.com) and we will be happy to arrange a call.

To make an application, please go to <https://starfishsearch.com/jobs/nene-park-chair/> and click on the apply now button, with the following prepared:

- your CV (no more than three sides)
- a supporting statement that sets out why you are interested in this appointment and the experiences and qualities you believe you can bring in order to be successful in post.

Please also tell us about any dates when you are not available for interview.

|   |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| Closing date  | Friday 28th August 2020              |
| Screening discussions                               | w/c 14th September 2020              |
| Agreement of the final shortlist                    | Final week of September 2020         |
| Informal conversation with the CEO / outgoing Chair | Following agreement of the shortlist |
| Final panel interview event                         | By mid-October 2020                  |



# Annex: Trustee Competencies and Skills Profile

## Competencies

Trustees should demonstrate a proven ability to perform at a strategic level and have a history of achievement that reflects high standards for themselves and for others. The skills, knowledge and personal characteristics of the Board as a whole should cover the following competencies:

### Leadership

Able to demonstrate commitment and to remain focused in unpredictable circumstances. To be able to lead the organisation through change and to shape the culture of the Trust. To have high ethical standards and integrity.

### Strategic Thinking

Able to think creatively to analyse the viability of new ideas and identify future consequences across a wide range of issues.

### Communicating and Influencing

Able to anticipate and use the most effective approach to influence people and situations. Willing to encourage and listen to the views and opinions of others, and to be articulate and persuasive and able to build effective relationships. Able to constructively challenge and contribute to the development of strategy.

### Decision Making

Able to reach conclusions based on a rational interpretation of available information, whilst keeping to the level of detail appropriate to the Trustee role.

### Representing

Able to create and maintain a good image for the Trust, and to demonstrate loyalty and build and manage external relationships. In particular, to be able to play an ambassadorial role, engaging with stakeholders and key partners in furtherance of the Trust's charitable objects.

### Business Awareness and risk management

To be able to interrogate and evaluate business propositions presented to the Board. Competent in the use of financial reports and able to assess whether the financial information is accurate and that financial controls and systems of risk management are robust and defensible.

### Performance Management

Ability to scrutinise the performance of the Trust senior leadership team in meeting agreed goals and objectives, and monitor the reporting of performance. Able to fulfill a prime role in appointing and, where necessary, removing senior management.

### Team Working

Willing to challenge freely and constructively, but also to accept consensus decisions.

### Charitable Objectives

Clear understanding of and empathy with the Trust's charitable objective in providing Nene Park. To live/work locally enough to make regular visits to the Park to maintain an awareness and interest in the impact of the Trust's work.

### Self Management

Capacity to prepare well for meetings and demonstrate enthusiasm for and commitment to the work of the Board, respecting confidences and responding to issues requiring action between meetings.



# Nene Park



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