

Chair of the Board of Trustees

Recruitment
Information Pack

Welcome to



**NORWICH HISTORIC
CHURCHES TRUST**

Tel: 01603 611530

NHCT-norwich.org

Friends of the Norwich Historic Churches Trust
and Centre for Parish Church Studies

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Dear Applicant,



Thank you for your interest in the role of Chair of the Board of Trustees with Norwich Historic Churches Trust.

Norwich Historic Churches Trust is responsible for protecting, preserving and finding new uses for 18 medieval churches in Norwich – from arts venues to theatres, antiques centres and charities. We also work with our tenants to ensure public access to these churches which are an important part of the cultural life, cityscape and history of Norwich.

The role of Chair is an exciting opportunity to lead Norwich Historic Churches Trust Board of Trustees and contribute to the ongoing success of the organisation. Our current Chair, Sarah Gore, is stepping down from the role after 4 years. Sarah has been an outstanding Chair, leading the organisation through the challenges of the pandemic, steering the Trust through a period of review and change which has resulted in a much-strengthened Board and staff team, and overseeing the restoration of St Margaret's Church on St Benedict's, one of the Trust's biggest restoration projects to date.

We value diversity and difference and wish to represent the full diversity of our community in recruiting to the Board of Trustees. We acknowledge that people of certain backgrounds are under-represented on the charity boards, and we want to address this. We are therefore keen to encourage expressions of interest from people who identify as disabled, people from culturally diverse backgrounds and people from low socio-economic backgrounds.

If you are interested in the role, I encourage you to contact me for an informal discussion. I can be contacted through the Trust's Operations Coordinator, Francesca Roche-Kelly (info@norwich-churches.org). Francesca is also able to assist you if you have access requirements, such as requesting this information in large print.

Best wishes,

Kate Heyman-Carreño

Chair of the Recruitment Committee, on behalf of Norwich Historic Churches Trust



An introduction from our Head of Operations, Conservation and Heritage

I joined Norwich Historic Churches Trust as Head of Operations, Conservation and Heritage in July 2024. In my short time at the NHCT, we have prepared three empty churches to welcome new tenants, conducted repairs to a further nine buildings, and applied for grant funding whilst carrying out an intensive programme of routine maintenance.

At the time of writing, the Trust is on the point of celebrating the reopening of St Margaret's Church after a three-year renovation project, undertaken with grant funding from Historic England and other highly respected supporters. It is very rewarding to work with my dedicated colleagues to pursue the Trust's charitable objectives at a time when so many exciting opportunities lie ahead.

Development of a new Conservation Management Plan is underway to ensure that we reduce the risk of unexpected repairs and prioritise renovations appropriately. Four of the churches in our care are on Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register. Over the next five to ten years, the Trust will need to develop an ambitious, targeted programme of fundraising to restore the fabric of these precious buildings and secure their futures at the heart of their communities. I am looking forward to continuing to work with the Board to face future challenges with a united front and to build public engagement by celebrating the Trust's achievements.

The majority of our tenants' activities are focussed on community service and the arts. Whilst Norwich's medieval churches have international architectural significance, perhaps their greatest wealth lies in their relationship with the social and cultural character of the city. As Senior Executive Officer, I am excited at the prospect of working in partnership with a new Chair to keep these historic bonds alive for future generations.



Dr Oliver Coulson.

Head of Operations, Conservation and Heritage



Norwich Historic Churches Trust

Norwich Historic Churches Trust (NHCT) is a Charitable Trust which was created in 1973 to care for, and find new uses for redundant, historically important churches in Norwich. Our main role is to conserve and carry out repairs, which we do using rental income and grants. We currently care for 18 churches Grade I listed medieval churches, all within the city centre, which are now used for a variety of purposes. Many of our tenants' activities have a focus on community service and contribute the cultural landscape of Norwich. These organisations include the Norwich Arts Centre, the Norwich Puppet Theatre, the Oak Circus Centre and Echo Youth Theatre.

The Trust also works to ensure public access to these churches which are an important part of the cityscape and the history of Norwich. Some are accessible daily while others can be viewed by appointment with the tenant. All of them are open during the annual Norfolk Heritage Open Days. The Trust's office is based at St Martin at Palace Church on St Martin at Palace Plain. The Trust is working to reopen this church as a visitor centre for those wishing to learn about historic churches and provide a base for our volunteers, the Friends of Norwich Historic Churches Trust, and the Heavenly Gardens Project.

Our Core Values and Behaviours:

NHCT's Core Values underpin our work. These include:

- Community Focus,
- Trust and Respect,
- Stewardship,
- Inclusivity,
- Expertise.



Our Purpose and Mission:

- To adopt, adapt and improve the buildings in our care, in partnership with our tenants and other key stakeholders,
- To build our brand to drive a sense of service and heritage expertise,
- To develop strategic partnerships and stakeholder relationships,
- To embrace commercial opportunities to enhance and diversify revenue streams,
- To maximise operational effectiveness,
- To increase public benefit through the activities in our buildings and through increased awareness, access and learning opportunities.

The Board of Trustees

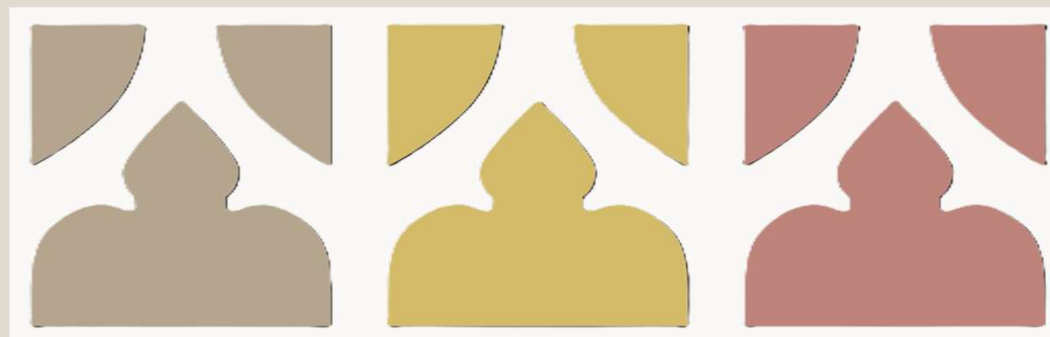
Our Board of Trustees meets at least four times a year. We select all our Trustees based on a skills matrix which reflects good governance and the needs of Norwich Historic Churches Trust.

We currently have a board of eleven Trustees who bring a balance of experience, skills and knowledge, including in the following areas:

- Heritage and conservation management,
- Architecture,
- Charity,
- Finance,
- Commercial property management,
- Community partnerships

There are currently four sub-committees of the Board which are chaired by the Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer or other Trustee.

NHCT is both a registered charity and a Company Limited by Guarantee (i.e. a charitable company) therefore Trustees have duties and responsibilities as a charity Trustee and Company Director (working to charity and company law).

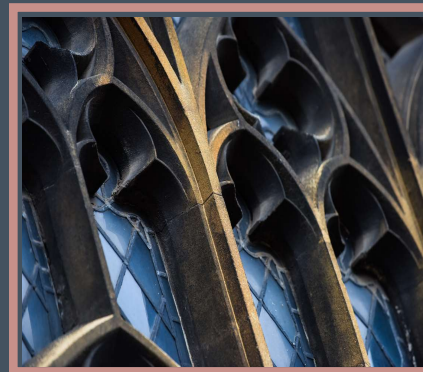


Trustee Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees has overall legal responsibility for the strategic direction and control of the charity, including accountability for compliance with relevant legislative and regulatory requirements (e.g. the Charity Commission, Fundraising Regulator, HSE). Trusteeship is a voluntary role; all Trustees must be committed to furthering our charitable objectives and have the skills, experience and personal qualities needed to help the strategic leadership of the organisation.

The day-to-day management of the charity is delegated to the Head of Operations, Conservation and Heritage, the Trust's Senior Executive Officer (SEO), who leads a small staff team to deliver the agreed strategy. To serve as a Trustee you must be over the age of eighteen and not be disqualified because of bankruptcy, unspent criminal convictions for offences of deception or dishonesty, or a legal order or removal/disqualification as a Trustee or company director. It is a criminal offence to act as a Trustee while disqualified. As a Trustee, you must act in the interests of the charity at all times.

NHCT is both a registered charity and a Company Limited by Guarantee (i.e. a charitable company) therefore Trustees have duties and responsibilities as a charity Trustee and Company Director (working to charity and company law).



Role Profile

We are looking for an individual with previous charity Board experience who will work with fellow Trustees, the Head of Operations, Conservation and Heritage (SEO), and the small staff team. The Chair will lead the Board in supporting the SEO and staff team in the effective delivery of the NHCT's vision, mission and strategy, as well as leading all Trustees in the fulfilment of their duties and responsibilities for the effective governance of the charity. Through support and constructive challenge, the Chair will ensure the Board works cohesively with the SEO and the staff Team to achieve agreed objectives. Ideally, the Chair will be passionate about medieval architecture and heritage buildings, and its importance to Norwich's social, cultural and economic landscape.

Leadership:

Lead the Board, ensuring the charity acts within its Articles of Association and that all activities are governed appropriately. This will include the following key areas:

- Strategic development,
- Risk management,
- Supporting the SEO and staff team in delivering the agreed strategy,
- Monitoring overall organisational performance,
- Working to the Charity Governance Code,
- Lead the Board in setting clear expectations for effective Board meetings and the contributions expected, alongside the values and behaviours of the NHCT,
- Ensuring impartiality and objectivity in decision making,
- Developing and nurturing supportive working relationships between Trustees, the SEO and staff team,
- Undertaking an effective annual review of Board performance and contributions of all Trustees, including one-on-one meetings.

Governance and Compliance:

- Ensure the Board works effectively and is accountable for the overall governance of the organisation which meets the requirements of relevant legislation, including Charity Law and Company Law,
- Lead on the annual Board appraisal,
- Take all steps to safeguard the good name and reputation of NHCT,
- Work with the SEO and Trustees to ensure effective Board succession planning is established, ensuring an effective team of Trustees are in place for the effective overall governance of NHCT,
- Ensure sound financial management and charity compliance.

General Responsibilities:

- Meet regularly with the SEO for key updates and support,
- Approve Board agendas,
- Chair Board Meetings and Special Meetings of the Board,
- Externally represent the charity,
- Be a member of all Sub-Committees.

Responsibilities to the SEO and Staff Team:

- Lead the process of recruitment, on-boarding and the departure of the SEO and other staff as required,
- Build a strong, effective working environment with the SEO, providing support and constructive challenge whilst respecting the boundaries between the two roles,
- Undertake the annual appraisal of the SEO,
- Provide recommendations to the Staff and Remuneration Group of the Finance Committee with regards to the SEO's pay and benefits,
- Support the SEO's continued professional development.

Person Specification

We are seeking an experienced and inclusive leader with a sound understanding of governance (charity, public or private) who can bring strategic insight, commitment and integrity to the leadership of our governance and Board.

In addition to chairing skills and a track record of executive and non-executive leadership, candidates must demonstrate a commitment to NHCT's purpose, mission, values and behaviours. The Chair will have experience of the heritage and charity sectors, knowledge of current workplace issues and a sound understanding of the challenges of property management in historic buildings.

The following person specification criteria apply:

- Sound understanding of the role of Chair and Trustee and the relationship between Chair, the Board and SEO including a good understanding of governance,
- Knowledge of and an understanding of heritage conservation and the city we serve,
- Well connected both within the heritage sector and locally, and able to bring contacts and networks to the charity,
- Able to think strategically, synthesise complex information, weigh up options, measure risks and build consensus amongst Board members,
- Skilled at chairing meetings effectively, ensuring different viewpoints are heard and considered, that clear decisions are made and followed up,
- Collaborative in style, leading by example and encouraging fellow Trustees to contribute and to feel engaged and valued,
- A good understanding of the communities in which we operate,
- A proven commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion,
- Experience of building productive external relationships and partnerships,
- Excellent interpersonal, communication and presentation skills,
- Excellent people management skills and the ability to motivate,

- Skilled at negotiation and conflict resolution,
- Drive, energy and enthusiasm for NHCT and its mission,
- High levels of integrity and compassion.

Additional Information

Time Commitment:

- The Board meets at least four times a year. There are also one or two other Board sessions annually, such as strategic development.
- In-person meetings are the norm although occasional online attendance is permitted.
- There are currently three Sub-Committees of the Board which the Chair may also attend, as follows:
 - Property and Heritage Committee meets quarterly, chaired by the Vice-Chair,
 - Finance Committee meets quarterly, chaired by the Treasurer,
 - Health and Safety Committee meets quarterly, chaired by the Vice-Chair.
- We are in the process of setting up a Fundraising Committee, which will meet quarterly.
- The Chair meets regularly with the SEO, visits the office and attends the Operations Team meeting when appropriate.
- The Chair holds an annual one-to-one meeting with each Trustee.
- Other ad-hoc duties such as attendance at events, panels and working groups may be required.

Conflict of Interest

All candidates will be asked to disclose any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest, and these will be discussed with the candidate to establish whether and what action is needed to avoid a conflict or the perception of a conflict.

Term of Appointment

An offer will be made once shortlisted candidates have been interviewed and the appointment has been approved by the Board. It will be subject to satisfactory completion of eligibility checks, including reference checks.

The appointment will be made for a three-year term, renewable for up to two further three-year terms.

How to Apply

NHCT is an equal opportunities employer, committed to equality, diversity and inclusion in all areas of its work. We welcome applications from all backgrounds so that our Board mirrors the community we serve. We welcome applications from anyone regardless of age, disability, ethnicity, heritage, gender, sexuality, religion, socio-economic background or other difference.

If you would like to apply, please supply the following by email to Francesca Roche-Kelly (info@norwich-churches.org), by 4 March 2025:

- A CV setting out your career history, with responsibilities and achievements (maximum two sides of A4),
- A covering letter (maximum two sides of A4) highlighting your suitability for the role and how you meet the person specification,
- Details of three professional referees, outlining their relationship to you and how long they have known you. Referees will not be contacted without your prior consent.

We encourage you to apply even if you feel you are stronger in some areas of the person specification than others. We value diversity and believe that certain skills can be developed with training and/or over time.

