

Recruitment of Chair of Friends of the Dales

Context

The Friends of the Dales is the only registered membership charity dedicated to protecting and enhancing the Yorkshire Dales National Park. We are a campaigning organisation working to care for and promote the landscape, biodiversity and cultural heritage of the Dales and the well-being of our local communities.

Friends of the Dales is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 7th June 1984 and registered as a charity on 12th July 1984 (under our original name of Yorkshire Dales Society). The charity's Articles of Association were updated and adopted at the 2015 AGM. The Directors of the company are also charity trustees for the purposes of charity law and under the company's Articles are known as members of the Council. There are currently 17 trustees. In charity and company law the Chair has very few formal powers. The Board shares collective responsibility for the decisions it makes.

Friends of the Dales is in pretty good shape. We have a strong reputation and an excellent track record over nearly 40 years of protecting the Dales and encouraging people to value and enjoy them. Over the last few years we have refreshed our strategy, rebranded ourselves, halted the decline in membership, and become a more active, effective and visible campaigning organisation. Challenges remain to get the organisation on a sustainable financial footing; we have healthy reserves but currently run with operational losses, and the outcome of the current government review of National Parks may present opportunities and challenges that we will need to respond to.

We are a small charity, having 1300 members, two part time staff, and a number of dedicated volunteers. Given our limited executive capacity, trustees tend to be more hands-on than would be the case in larger organisations, and this is the case for the role of Chair, where as well as leading on the governance of the charity, support is also required on some operational matters.

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Role description – Core Activities

- Shares the same governance responsibilities as other trustees
- Steers and takes a strategic lead in developing, promoting and representing the charity
- Helps plan and chairs the trustee board meetings (4 meetings per year)
- Leads on ensuring that trustees comply with their duties and the charity is well governed
- Chairs the Annual General Meeting
- Leads the organisation in partnership with the Executive Director and supports the development and implementation of the organisation's strategy
- A standing member of the 3 council committees - Finance and Governance, Policy, and Events, Communications and Membership; each meeting 4 times per year. The Chair has the option to attend as many events and meetings of the committees as he/she feels able to
- Leads on the development and cohesiveness of the board and ensures its decisions are implemented
- Acts as a figurehead and spokesperson for the charity, for example representing it with key stakeholders, at functions, meetings or in the press
- Provides clarity of purpose, enables considered decision making, and develops constructive relationships internally and externally
- Leads efforts to attract members and donors.

Likely time commitment is the equivalent of 1 day per week.

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Additional/Optional Roles

In addition to these core activities, depending upon the particular interests of the individual, other roles could involve, for example, representing the charity on the Council of the Campaign for National Parks and being a member of the editorial board of our membership magazine, Yorkshire Dales Review.

Person specification

- Capacity to lead, ability to relate, and with the appropriate personal attributes
- Passionate about protected landscapes and the environment, the Dales in particular, preferably
- Prepared to invest time and attention
- Ability to advance the organisation externally
- Experience in campaigning would be of benefit

Tenure

- 3-5 years

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Recruitment Process

- Informal discussions with current Chair, other trustees, or Ann Shadrake, Executive Director, are encouraged
- Recruitment Pack with more information about our charity (accounts, structure etc) is available to interested candidates. This contains
 - Articles of Association
 - 2017-18 Annual Report & Accounts
 - Roles and responsibilities of Trustees and Honorary Officers
 - Council and Committees
- Interested candidates are invited to submit their CV together with a covering letter focusing on:
 1. Why you would like to be Chair?
 2. The experience and skills you can bring to this role
- Selected candidates will be invited to an interview with a panel of trustees and the Executive Director

For initial information, to arrange an informal discussion and/or the Recruitment Pack, email

Ann Shadrake, Executive Director ann.shadrake@friendsofthedales.org.uk

For more information on our charity's work see our website at www.friendsofthedales.org.uk and social media accounts at <https://www.facebook.com/YorkshireDalesSociety> and Twitter/Instagram @YDS35