

Board of Trustees
Personal statements
January 2019

Rob Pickford

Trust Chairman since March 2014. I have a long term interest in wildlife and landscapes born of much walking of coast paths, hills and mountains. This has bred a commitment to ecological sustainability and biodiversity as valuable in their own right but also as a major contributor to our well-being. I am an organic gardener and allotment holder. My personal contribution over and above these enthusiasms come from the more years than I like to recall in local government and the civil service in Wales. I bring therefore experience in the fields of governance, resource management and the achievement of sustainable change. I also have expertise in organisational development.

Sash Tusa

Vice Chairman since November 2010. I have had a passion for the wildlife of South and West Wales for over 20 years and, as the nearest 'neighbour', a particularly close interest in Skomer, Skokholm and Lockley Lodge. As a Trustee I would bring my skills as a financial analyst, knowledge of other conservation organisations, and a strong collegiate style, as well as my understanding of how to manage complex corporate structures and their volunteers. WTSWW Trustee since 2009. Treasurer since AGM 2017.

Spencer Gammond

I have 25 years experience in corporate public relations and marketing and have also developed a deep understanding of the communications challenges facing charities after a busy decade responsible for PR and corporate communications at the RNLI. I have always had a strong interest in all aspects of natural history and wildlife preservation. Now retired, I live in Pembrokeshire where our home overlooks Llangloffan Fen. I hope to assist the Trust in the development of its future communications and marketing strategies – as well as giving a hand on our local reserve. WTSWW Trustee since 2014.

Shirley Matthews

I have been a member of the Wildlife Trust since the 1980's and am committed to their work in educating the public and in raising awareness of the value of our flora and fauna, which are beyond price. I believe in the conservation and protection of nature but accept that at times other interests may have to take priority where compromise cannot be reached. I have been bound by professional codes of conduct and ethics for many years (as a Member of the British Psychological Society and senior social worker) and have wide experience in managing meetings and minute taking. WTSWW Trustee since 2015. Joint Chair of Local Groups Forum.

Alexis Kirsten

I am passionate about nature and would love to use my skills to help promote and protect it. I have over 15 years marketing experience as a Senior Creative Copywriter for global brands including: De Beers, Investec, Cadbury, Kellogg's, Mutual & Federal, L'oreal Garnier and BMW. I have a degree in Humanities plus a post graduate diploma in advertising and moved from the corporate world into the third sector seven years ago in order to use my skills for worthwhile causes. I have WCVA and Welsh Government/ERDF project experience and have successfully marketed a number of local non profit organisations. WTSWW Trustee since 2015. Joint Chair of Local Groups Forum.

Mike Alexander

I recognise my lifelong commitment to wildlife conservation when as a thirteen year old I was so inspired by a visit to Skomer that I decided that I would, one day, become the warden, eventually I spent 10 years as warden of Skomer. In 1986 I moved to North Wales where I managed 5 NNRs. For 17 years I was responsible for coordinating the management of all NNRs in Wales. My text book on adaptive conservation planning has become a standard text on the subject. I teach a Masters module on conservation at Birkbeck, University of London, and also at Bangor University where I am an Honorary Lecturer. Trustee since September 2017. Recently taken over as chair of the Islands Conservation Advisory Committee (ICAC)

Sally Weale

I am passionate about wildlife conservation and this would be a perfect opportunity to use my skills and experience to support the work of the Trust, bringing both knowledge of the area and my skills as a documentary producer. This includes managing the Natural History Museum's Broadcast Unit – which makes films about the museum's research, public outreach and conservation work – and producing documentaries for the BBC and various independent production companies. Through this I will bring a wide range of media, science and natural history contacts. I have a degree in Natural Sciences and a PhD in Zoology. Trustee since September 2017.

Mark Brian

I became a Trustee at Brecknock Wildlife Trust to do something for my locality and develop my amateur enthusiasm for wildlife and the environment. I would like to continue in the newly merged WTSWW, ensuring that Brecknock is well represented but also in the wider context of the Trust's role of championing environmental integrity on land and sea. My activity thus far has been internally focussed due to the needs of Brecknock Wildlife Trust, I hope to bring an aptitude for developing a coherent approach to opportunities and problems to support field activities and advocacy of a vital cause in the governance team. Co-opted April 2018, appointed to the Board Dec 2018.

Rosey Grandage

I am a physiotherapist, Chinese medicine practitioner and founder of a community interest company art gallery which promotes awareness of the environment and conservation and have worked with a wide range of conservation groups. I have worked for both the NHS and in private practice. I have an interest in education and ethics and was a senior lecturer and course leader at University of Westminster for 17 years. I was Chair of Brecknock Wildlife Trust and led it through the merger with WTSWW. I enjoy hill walking, qi gong, Chinese philosophy and growing wildflowers, trees, medicinal herbs and vegetables. Co-opted May 2018, appointed to the Board Dec 2018.

Stuart Bain

I have worked in Risk, Compliance and Governance roles across financial services for ~20 years. My strengths include integrity, being trustworthy, confidence to challenge the 'status quo' and making difficult judgements impartially. Over the last 15 years I've held positions that require regulatory approval; Non-Executive Director, Responsible for Compliance Oversight (two firms) and I am currently Money Laundering Reporting Officer (two firms). This approval places significant personal liability on me and demonstrates my confidence and ability to perform my role effectively. I want to use my skills, knowledge, experience and commitment to support the Trust in achieving its strategic objectives. Appointed Dec 2018.

Gillian Berntsen

I am an experienced tourism, marketing and management professional with the broad range of skills required to lead multi disciplinary teams across varied projects and partnerships. I have managed large budgets, successfully applied for external funding and set up partner funding initiatives. I was Head of Marketing at Visit Wales until 4 years ago. Since that time I have worked as a marketing/communications consultant and sat as a Trustee on a community regeneration project. I love wildlife and nature and now that I am semi-retired hope to develop my knowledge of these things while contributing my skills to the role of Trustee of the WTSWW. Appointed Dec 2018.

Richard Payne

I have a lifelong interest in the natural world (fuelled by reading Gerald Durrell's 'the Drunken forest' and his other works as a child). I am an experience solicitor, managing partner in a small firm having previously run my own firm of solicitors dealing with a wide range of legal areas. I have previous experience as both chairman and a trustee of a small charity providing holidays for children with disabilities. I am honest, independent, and an enthusiastic but very amateur ornithologist, and would welcome using whatever experience I have for the benefit of the Trust and Welsh wildlife. Appointed Dec 2018.