

Birmingham Botanical Gardens **Chair of Trustees Vacancy**

Birmingham Botanical Gardens is looking for a new Chair of Trustees to join our important charity.

As a Trustee and Chair, you will play a vital role in shaping the future and the direction of the Gardens, which are a much-loved part of Birmingham's landscape and heritage, and crucial to the provision of the botanical world. We are looking for enthusiastic, passionate and experienced candidates with a range of skills and who are happy to help deliver the core ethos of our charity.

About Birmingham Botanical Gardens

Opened in 1832, Birmingham Botanical Gardens (BBG, registered charity number 528981) is one of just two independent charitable botanical gardens in the UK. Spread across 15 acres, just one mile from Birmingham City Centre, BBG consists of over 7,000 formally documented plants, making it the largest and most diverse botanic collection in central England. BBG's heritage is woven into Birmingham's history – the most important manufacturing town in the world – and the site welcomes over 180,000 visitors each year.

As well as the gardens, which are a green sanctuary within the city, the charity also provides a unique educational resource for learning about plants, conservation, and the environment. We welcome visits from nurseries, schools and colleges, as well as uniformed groups such as scouts and brownies, and run adult courses and workshops including photography, nature and wildlife, and heritage and cultural courses.

As an independent charity, we rely on the support of visitors, donors and grants, as well as generating income from our trading arm, hosting weddings and special events and providing catering. This support ensures that we can maintain our Victorian glasshouses and our 15-acres of wonderful gardens, and also enables us to develop exciting new educational projects for the Birmingham community.

A diverse botanical world that enhances all our lives

Our mission is to support plant biodiversity and an understanding of its importance to the natural environment through conservation, education, engagement and enjoyment.



Our Team

BBG employs 12 full-time members of staff and is supported by a wonderful team of 50 volunteers who contribute across all areas of the Gardens' activities. This team is led by Chief Executive and Curator, James Wheeler and the Gardens Management Team.

Governance of BBG is led by a Board of 10 Trustees who meet eight times a year, and also host sub-committees, including education, finance and development:

- **Martyn Liberson, Current Chairman of the Board of Trustees:** Partner, Knights PLC, and an expert in property law, property management and dispute resolution. Martyn will remain as Chair until March 2022 and will work alongside a newly recruited Chair through a robust handover process.
- **Amit Sharma, Trustee, Information Technology:** Director, Business Development, Inco Software Solutions. Amit is an expert in supporting organisations with the creation of innovative web, digital and marketing solutions.
- **Caroline Clutton-Brock:** Expertise in event management and customer relations management, as well as over 30 years' experience in sales and marketing in the retail and cosmetics industry, including the previous National Account Manager at Yves Saint Laurent Beaute.
- **Darren Share:** Assistant Director for Birmingham City Council with 30 years' experience in environmental management. Currently a National Britain in Bloom judge for the RHS.
- **Dr Barry Leadbeater, Trustee, Education:** Authority on cryptogamic botany (spore-bearing plants) and Protozoa, and expert in biology, natural sciences and education.
- **Harjinder Kang:** Director Healthcare, Life Sciences & Bio Economy at the Department of International Trade and the Vice Chair at Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust.
- **James Brown:** Expert in building and surveying, and the current Senior Technical Manager at Seven Homes.
- **John Taylor, Trustee, Operations:** Board Member, Cadbury (retired) and expert in leadership, business strategy and project management.
- **Peter White, Deputy Chairman:** Director, Fresh Life Consulting and an Associate of L&R Consulting. Peter is an expert in the re-use of historic buildings, development of financially sustainable schemes and area-based regeneration strategies.
- **Victor Aspland:** President of the Cyclamen Society and Senior Manager and Industrial Chemist (retired), Albright & Wilson Ltd. Victor has over 50 years expertise in horticulture.

Your Role as a Trustee

The current Chair has been in post for six years, during which time the Gardens have engaged with numerous stakeholders and have committed to applying to the National Lottery Heritage Fund in order to help the Gardens fulfil its vision of being one of the most important botanical gardens in the country and to further its objectives as an important educational charity.

In accordance with the principles of good governance this is an appropriate time for the Gardens to appoint a new Chair to lead the Board on the next stage of this exciting journey.

As well as ensuring that the charity complies with its governing document and our legal and financial compliance as a registered charity, you will also provide strategic leadership and direction to the Board of Trustees and enable the Board to fulfil its responsibilities. You will work alongside an experienced and diverse team of Trustees and senior management in a developing environment.

Main Duties and Responsibilities for all Trustees

All Trustees at BBG are expected to commit to c.8-10 hours per month to the role and have a core set of duties and responsibilities:

- Ensure that BBG pursues its objectives as defined in its governing document and shows a continued commitment to BBG's vision, mission and values.
- Attend all Board meetings (eight times per year) and any relevant sub-committees.
- Ensure that BBG complies with its governing documents (Memorandum and Articles of Association), charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- Ensure that BBG applies its resources exclusively for the fulfilment of its objects.
- Provide overall strategic direction to BBG, setting out the overall policy, defining goals and setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets.
- Ensure the financial stability of BBG, ensuring the proper investment of all funds.
- Work alongside the Chief Executive and Curator and continually monitor his performance (alongside the performance review framework).
- Agree and have responsibility for required policies such as Health and Safety, Safeguarding, and other internal policies, and develop, agree and monitor the strategy, planning and risk register.

- Appoint, succession plan and appraise the performance of fellow Trustees/Directors.

Main Duties and Responsibilities as the Chair of the Board

In addition to the above duties and responsibilities, the Chair has role-specific duties and responsibilities:

- Guiding Birmingham Botanical Gardens through an exciting phase of development.
- Providing strategic leadership and direction to the Board of Trustees in setting, agreeing and monitoring strategy and policy.
- Maintaining careful oversight of any risk to the reputation and/or financial standing of the charity.
- Enabling the Board to fulfil its responsibilities for the overall governance and strategic direction of the charity.
- Supporting the CEO to achieve the charity's aims, vision and mission and providing effective line management and accountability for the CEO.
- Optimising the relationship between the Board of Trustees and the charity's staff.
- Liaising regularly with the Treasurer to maintain a clear understanding of the charity's financial position and to ensure full and timely financial transparency and information disclosure to the Board.
- Reviewing all strategic work and BBG's annual accounts.
- Leading the Board in fostering relationships with potential donors / funders.
- Effectively chairing and facilitating the Board meetings effectively and efficiently.
- Representing the charity as an ambassador at key events, meetings or functions.
- Acting as a spokesperson for the charity when appropriate.
- Attending and being a member of sub-committees / working groups when appropriate in the role as Chair.
- Liaising with the Board and CEO on Board recruitment, development and retention.

Who are we looking for?

We are looking for a Chair with previous charity Board experience. The successful candidate will:

- Have at least three years' experience as a Trustee and preferably existing experience as a Chair of a charity
- Understand the community and area in which BBG operates
- Be passionate about BBG's vision and work
- Display strong leadership ability including motivational skills
- Have effective communication skills, tactfulness and diplomacy, open to the views of others
- Have a clear understanding of the legal responsibilities and liabilities of being a Trustee and a Chair
- Have strong, independent judgement and the ability to think creatively and strategically
- Be able to give constructive feedback and to challenge other Board members and the charity
- Be able to analyse risks and opportunities and take a balanced approach to both
- Be able to work as part of a team, and be willing to take collective responsibility for the governance of our charity
- To understand the culture dynamics of an effective charity Board.

As part of our commitment to equality BBG wants to ensure that the Board reflects its ambition to be an inclusive and diverse organisation and to be representative of the communities we serve. We therefore welcome applications from individuals from all backgrounds to reflect the diversity of communities, visitors and audiences to the Gardens. Our definition of diversity encompasses responding to issues around race, ethnicity, faith, disability, age, gender, sexuality, class and economic disadvantage and any social and institutional barriers that prevent people from creating, participating or enjoying our Gardens.

The deadline for applications is 1st September. Please note that this role is unpaid.

The current Chair will remain in place until March 2022 and will work alongside a newly recruited Chair through a robust handover process.

To apply, please send a one-page covering letter, your CV and a completed Trustees Skills and Equal Opportunities Monitoring Assessment Form to James@birminghambotanicalgardens.org.uk

This is a fantastic opportunity to be a part of an organisation making a real difference in Birmingham and the wider natural world, and to play an active role in the future direction and strategy employed by the charity.