

# Newcastle Parks Trust



## Chair role profile and person specification

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## Role title

Chair of Trustees of the Newcastle Parks Trust  
(a charitable company)

## Direct reports

Board of Trustees and Chief Executive of the  
Newcastle Parks Trust

## Background

A background in any of the following or similar:  
land and property management, finance, fundraising,  
law, HR or commercial operations and development  
would be welcomed. Previous experience as a Chair,  
Trustee or Chief Executive would be welcomed.  
Experience in the charity, environment or heritage  
sectors would also be welcomed.

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## Introduction

This is a groundbreaking opportunity to lead the Board of the first charity set up by a local authority to run its parks and allotments.

Newcastle City Council and National Trust wish to recruit an experienced individual to chair the Board of the new independent charity. The Board will consist of 13 Trustees, 11 appointed through open recruitment (including the Chair) and 2 nominated by the City Council.

This is an exciting opportunity to help shape the future of Newcastle's parks and allotments. If you can help Newcastle's parks and green spaces reach their fullest potential by bringing fresh ideas, impetus and ambition to the table, we want to hear from you.

## Purpose of the role

At this critical moment in the history of green space in Newcastle, the Chair of Newcastle Parks Trust will play a crucial role in driving forward transformation.

The Chair will represent the interests of the city's parks and green spaces and help shape and steer the charity to secure the many benefits parks provide to people, the environment, wildlife and the city.

You will work collaboratively to set the agenda for the new charity, facilitating change and new ways of working.

You will lead implementation of the vision, ethos and values of the new charity as well as steer the development of the charity's founding strategy.

As the inaugural Chair, you will have the opportunity to work with the City Council and National Trust to establish the charity, including recruiting fellow Trustees and the CEO. You will coordinate and facilitate knowledge, skills, expertise, networks, and insight to enable the Board of Trustees to provide efficient and effective governance.

For the right individual, this is a unique and exciting opportunity to help shape the future of Newcastle's parks and green spaces, and help Newcastle's parks reach their fullest potential. Your contribution will help evolve how we care for our natural environment, at local and national level, for generations to come.

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## Key requirements of the role

As Chair of the Newcastle Parks Trust, you will:

- Work with the Board to establish the new charity and recruit the CEO.
- Provide leadership and direction to the Board of Trustees and enable the Board to fulfil their responsibilities for the overall governance and strategic direction of the charity.
- Provide strong vision and bring creative and innovative thinking and a culture of problem-solving to the challenge of running parks.
- Provide the Board with insights and perspectives, wider contacts, and access to key organisations and individuals, to ensure the Board is in touch with issues within its remit and able to provide effective governance to the charity.
- Work with fellow Board members to take a lead on fundraising for the new charity, including securing an endowment to support the running of the parks.
- Work in partnership with the CEO and support the employees, helping them achieve the aims of the charity; and optimise the relationship between the Board of Trustees and the staff.
- Ensure the smooth running of a representative Communities Group and consider the recommendations they make to the Board of Trustees.
- Act as an ambassador for Newcastle Parks Trust, be passionate about its work and communicate this effectively to the external world.
- Act in a manner that promotes the charitable cause of Newcastle Parks Trust as a whole.
- Help ensure that the new charity complies with its legal, regulatory and other requirements, and has the resources, policies and structures necessary to be effective and ensure high standards of governance.

This is a volunteer position which is not remunerated, but agreed expenses may be reimbursed. You will not be employed by Newcastle City Council.

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## Responsibilities of the Chair

### In relation to the Board

- Formulate strategic plans and regularly review long-term strategic aims of the charity.
- Develop and define organisational goals and evaluate performance against agreed targets.
- Approve the annual cycle of the Board meetings, meeting agendas, chair and facilitate meetings, monitor decisions taken at meetings and ensure they are implemented.
- Liaise regularly with the Treasurer and Financial Officer to maintain a clear grasp of the charity's financial position and to ensure full and timely financial transparency and information disclosure to the Board.
- Lead and mentor other Board members to fulfil their responsibilities and enable access to training/coaching/information to enhance the overall contribution of the Board.
- Encourage team working among Board members.
- Create a strong, profitable and fulfilling working relationship with trustees and the Chief Executive through review and self-reflective evaluation of the effectiveness of the Board.

### In relation to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

- In participation with the Board, appoint the CEO and lead the process of appraising and constructively guiding the performance of the CEO.
- Assume guardianship of the legal and financial integrity of the organisation.
- Consult with CEO on matters of strategy, governance, finance and HR.
- Oversee the CEO's activities in the context of the implementation of Board's strategy.
- Maintain careful oversight of any risk to reputation and/or financial standing of the charity.
- Receive regular informal progress reports of the charity's work and financial performance through the CEO.

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## Responsibilities of the Chair (cont)

### In relation to the community and code of conduct

- Represent the charity as a spokesperson at appropriate events, meetings or functions.
- Ensure the smooth running of the representative Communities Group and consider the recommendations they make to the Board of Trustees.
- Protect and manage the property of the charity.
- Lead the Board in fostering relations with potential partners, funders, donors and clients.
- Act as final stage adjudicator for disciplinary and grievance procedures if required.
- Facilitate change and address conflict within the Board of Trustees/within the charity and liaise with the Chief Executive to achieve this.
- Undertake review of external complaints as defined by the complaints procedure.
- Ensure adherence to and compliance with legislation and policies e.g. Health & Safety and Data Protection.
- Attend and be a member of other committees or working groups when appropriate as Chair.

In order to perform the above role, the Chair should have reasonable access to all staff and information, in line with the Board's fiduciary duties.

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## Person specification

The Chair of the Board of Trustees should have a background in any of the areas below and experience of the public, private or charitable sectors. The Chair should be willing and able to provide leadership and facilitation beyond their own areas of expertise.

**Business development, Finance, Legal, Land and property management, Fundraising, Visitor operations, Commercial operations/development, HR/People development, Heritage, Environment, Health and wellbeing**

Factor	Essential	Desirable
<b>Knowledge</b>	<p>Understanding of and commitment to the work of Newcastle Parks Trust</p> <p>Knowledge and background in at least one of the key areas listed above</p>	<p>Understanding of the multiple benefits of the public open spaces and its good management</p> <p>Knowledge of the Newcastle area and its greenspace resource</p> <p>Good networks in (local) business and the charity/voluntary sector or more broadly</p>
<b>Experience</b>	<p>Proven experience of delivery in a management role and in at least one of the key areas listed above</p> <p>Experience of developing partnerships</p> <p>Experience of work at a Board level and/or senior management</p> <p>Experience of securing significant finance or major fundraising, and investment planning</p>	<p>Experience of working with complex organisations</p> <p>Experience of business planning, analysis and management</p> <p>Experience of developing / managing commercial operations</p>
<b>Skills</b>	<p>Ability to identify and manage high level risks</p> <p>Strategic thinker</p> <p>Output orientated</p> <p>Ability to commit the necessary time and effort</p> <p>Ability to identify stakeholders, and manage critical relationships</p> <p>Team player, open and participative</p> <p>Good communication and interpersonal skills, including tact and diplomacy</p> <p>At ease with diverse audiences</p> <p>Ability to act as an ambassador for the charity</p>	<p>High level business planning</p> <p>Good organisational skills</p> <p>Sound financial understanding</p>

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## Time Commitment

It is expected that the role of Chair will require a commitment of up to 1 day per week in the first year to 18 months. It is likely that this will include some evening and weekend working. This will reduce over time and as the charity establishes itself.

**Appointment during this transitional phase of the charity is for a period of three years.**

## Exemptions

The following are not eligible to be an appointed Chair or a Trustee of Newcastle Parks Trust:

- Anyone under the age of 18.
- Anyone who has been convicted of an offence involving deception or dishonesty unless the conviction is spent.
- Anyone who is an undischarged bankrupt, or is the subject of a bankruptcy restriction order or bankruptcy restriction undertaking.
- Anyone who has made a composition or arrangement with or granted a trust deed for, his or her creditors and has not been discharged in respect of it.
- Anyone who has previously been removed from trusteeship of a charity by the court or the Commissioners.
- Anyone who is under a disqualification order under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986 or is the subject of a disqualification undertaking.
- Anyone with a connection to Newcastle City Council which would also make them a person who, at law, is regarded as “associated” with the Council.

**If you are interested in this role but consider yourself to have a conflict of interest, please do not hesitate to discuss it with us.**

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