



## **Join Creekside Education Trust as a trustee and make a difference in your community.**

### **About Creekside Education Trust**

Creekside Education Trust (CET) is a vibrant local charity working to connect people and wildlife and we recognise and value our place in a wider community seeking to combat global environmental threats.

We are based on a small site on the banks of Deptford Creek in South East London and offer a unique opportunity to safely access and explore the river bed at low tide. The site is managed for wildlife and over 300 species of wildflowers have been recorded. The purpose built Creekside Discovery Centre opened in 2002 and is equipped with offices, a classroom and full facilities.

CET was set up in 1999 in response to a wave of development that was sweeping the area and our charitable purpose is 'to promote the conservation and protection of the physical and natural environment in the Deptford Creek and river Thames area' and 'to advance public education in environmental matters'.

We have a fantastic team of passionate, knowledgeable staff and volunteers who manage a full programme of conservation and education work and run exciting and varied activities and events throughout the year.

We have an enormously popular schools programme for all Key Stages in term time as well as sessions and events that are suitable for home schoolers and we run family activities in the holidays.

Our wider education programme is open to all ages and includes regular Low Tide Walks, wildlife walks and talks and surveys and a varied series of workshops and events linking to the local environment in often surprising and creative ways, from mud art to creative writing and dance.

As well as managing the CET site, our experienced conservation team manages a number of other sites along the creek for the local authority, developers and housing companies. They also offer ecology consultancy services including advice and survey work.

Over 50,000 people have accessed Deptford Creek and learned more about the local environment through our work to date and we have engaged with a huge range of organisations and individuals including government agencies, developers, local authorities, businesses, charities, archaeologists, scientists, artists, thespians, dancers and anyone else who has shown an interest and even some people who didn't to begin with. We hope to extend this list further and in particular to ensure that our local community is welcomed and fully represented throughout our work.

### **The Trustee Role**

Charity trustees are the people who share ultimate responsibility for governing a charity and directing how it is managed and run. Being a trustee carries a lot of responsibility – it means making decisions that will impact on our community and landscape. It is also incredibly rewarding: you will be directly enabling our vision of building a vibrant community in the heart of London where people and wildlife can thrive.

You can read more about the role of the charity trustee and your duties and responsibilities on the [Charity Commission website](#).

## What you can expect from us

Our Trustees tell us that they love making a real difference through applying their skills and networks to support and develop our work. You'll have the opportunity to contribute to a growing charity at a time of change and development.

You don't need to have previous experience as a trustee to apply. We have a trustee induction pack with all the key documentation you need and you'll also meet with staff and trustees to help develop your understanding of our charity and the role of a trustee. We will also provide access to training and a trustee buddy to support you.

You will have the opportunity to apply your skills and experience, as well as develop new skills and knowledge of the charity sector through participating in the work of our Board. We currently meet monthly (mixture of onsite meetings and virtual), with additional meetings such as strategy away days. However we can be flexible about the scheduling of Board meeting dates to ensure that those with personal and work commitments are able to attend. You would also be expected to represent Creekside at various events and meetings with key stakeholders on an occasional basis.

Trustee positions are unpaid, but we don't expect trustees to be out of pocket for carrying out their role, so reasonable expenses can be claimed back.

## What we are looking for

In addition to the core trustee role description, there are some specific roles, skills and experience that we are particularly looking for to strengthen on our Board:

- **Treasurer** with knowledge and experience of charity financial management and statutory reporting including SORP
- **Board Secretary** with the organisational and administrative skills needed to ensure effective governance and committee procedures.

Additionally, we want to ensure that our Board better reflects the local community where our work is situated, so we particularly welcome applications from Black, Asian and Minoritised ethnic communities, people under the age of 35, and those with an interest or a local connection to Deptford and surrounding areas.

Above all, you'll need to be able to give the time, commitment and energy to the role that we need as a growing charity. We have a small staff team, and trustees need to be actively involved and work closely with the management and staff team, whilst respecting the boundaries of their governance role. We estimate that you would need to be able to commit 1-2 days per month to this role, although this may be higher in the beginning to support your induction and settling in.

## Trustee role description (general)

The duties of a trustee are as follows.

- Ensuring that the organisation pursues its stated objects (purposes), as defined in its governing document, by developing and agreeing a long-term strategy
- Ensuring that the organisation complies with its governing document (i.e. constitution or memorandum and articles of association), charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations
- Ensuring that the organisation applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its charitable objects (ie the charity must not spend money on activities that are not included in its own objects, however worthwhile or charitable those activities are) for the benefit of the public
- Ensuring that the organisation defines its goals and evaluates performance against agreed targets
- Safeguarding the good name and values of the organisation
- Ensuring the effective and efficient administration of the organisation, including having appropriate policies and procedures in place
- Ensuring the financial stability of the organisation
- Protecting and managing the property of the charity and ensuring the proper investment of the charity's funds
- Following proper and formal arrangements for the appointment, supervision, support, appraisal and remuneration of the charity Manager.

In addition to the above statutory duties, each trustee should use any specific skills, knowledge or experience they have to help the board of trustees reach sound decisions. This may involve scrutinising board papers, leading discussions, focusing on key issues, providing advice and guidance on new initiatives, or other issues in which the trustee has special expertise.

## Person specification

- A commitment and interest in the work of Creekside, its vision, mission and values.
- Strategic thinking and independent judgement.
- An ability to think creatively.
- A willingness to speak your mind.
- An ability to work effectively as a member of a team.
- A commitment to Nolan's seven principles of public life: Selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.
- A commitment to equity and inclusion.
- A willingness to devote the necessary time and effort to being an effective trustee including participation in training and development opportunities.

Whilst you do not need previous trustee experience, you must be willing to build your understanding of the legal duties and responsibilities of trusteeship and ensure that you meet these.

## Treasurer role description

In addition to ensuring financial viability and that proper financial records and procedures are maintained, the treasurer also has some specific responsibilities as outlined below:

- Working with the CET Manager, and in liaison with the book-keeper and the Independent Examiner, to ensure the production of key financial documentation including the annual budget, the annual statutory accounts and bi-monthly management accounts.
- Ensuring that the accounts are disclosed in the form required by funders and the relevant statutory bodies, including the Charity Commission.
- Ensuring that the accounts are scrutinised in the manner required (independent examination or audit) and any recommendations are implemented.
- Ensuring that the financial resources of the organisation meet its present and future needs, including that the charity has an appropriate reserves policy, and contributing to the fund-raising strategy of CET.
- To be a bank signatory for CET and authorise online payments.
- Ensuring that equipment and assets are adequately maintained and insured.
- Ensuring that appropriate accounting procedures and controls are in place.
- Keeping the board informed about its financial duties and responsibilities and supporting the board to fulfil these.
- Ensuring that the charity has an appropriate investment policy and that there is no conflict between any investment held and the aims and objects of the charity.
- Liaising with staff and volunteers about financial matters.
- Making a formal presentation of the accounts at the annual general meeting and drawing attention to important points in a coherent and easily understandable way
- Advising on the financial implications of the organisation's strategic plans.
- Sitting on appraisal, recruitment and disciplinary panels as required.

## Person specification for the Treasurer

In addition to the general responsibilities for all trustees as set out above, the Treasurer also needs additional skills and experience:

1. Work experience in the field of finance, and ideally a finance qualification.
2. An understanding of budgets and of management and statutory accounts.
3. A knowledge of charity-specific financial matters such as restricted funding – or the ability and willingness to learn about such matters.
4. The ability to explain financial matters to people who don't have specialist financial knowledge.
5. The skills to analyse proposals and examine their financial consequences
6. Being prepared to make unpopular recommendations to the Board.

## Board Secretary role description

In addition to the general responsibilities outlined above, the Board Secretary also has some specific responsibilities:

- Work with Chair and CET Manager to agree the annual schedule of Board meetings and AGMs
- Work with Chair to draft, finalise and circulate Board meeting agendas
- Take minutes at Board meetings, AGMs and EGMs, ensuring that they are accurate and stored on the CET Trustees Sharepoint system
- Maintain the organisation of the CET Trustees Sharepoint filing system
- Create and maintain Board Meeting Action Trackers, following up with relevant individuals to ensure completion of actions
- Ensure that accurate and up to date CET information is held with the Charity Commission and Companies House
- Create and maintain list of current CET policies, flagging to the Board as and when these come up for renewal/review
- Assist with the planning, coordination and communication of AGMs
- Support the recruitment and onboarding of new Trustees
- Organise relevant training for Trustees
- Work with Chair to conduct regular Board skills audits
- Work with CET manager on joint tasks to facilitate effective Board/ Staff workstreams
- Flag any areas of concern to the Chair.

## Person specification for the Board Secretary

In addition to the general responsibilities for all trustees as set out above, the Board Secretary also needs additional skills and experience as follows:

1. Experience in the administration of senior-level meetings
2. An understanding of how Boards work
3. A working knowledge of Charity governance and decision-making structures
4. Good IT/digital and minute-taking skills
5. Attention to detail and ability to follow up/through actions