

Chair/Co-Chair of Trustees Recruitment Pack



Closing Date 6th July 2025

Charity Number: 1153739



Introduction

Thank you for your interest in joining the St Nicks board of trustees! We are currently seeking a new Chair/Co-Chairs to help us shape the future of St Nicks, leading the board through a new strategy and ambitious building development project. We are interested in hearing from people who would like to take on the Chair role in its entirety, or to split the role with a Co-Chair.



The new Chair/Co-Chairs of trustees will be joining us at an exciting time, with plans to write our new organisation strategy, extend and retrofit the Environment Centre, and having recently appointed our new CEO. This is an excellent opportunity for a Chair of trustees to learn more about St Nicks and play a vital role in shaping the future of the organisation.

We have a dynamic and effective board with a broad skillset. Our trustees currently meet every other month, shaping the direction of our charity; overseeing our work and ensuring we are meeting our charitable objectives.

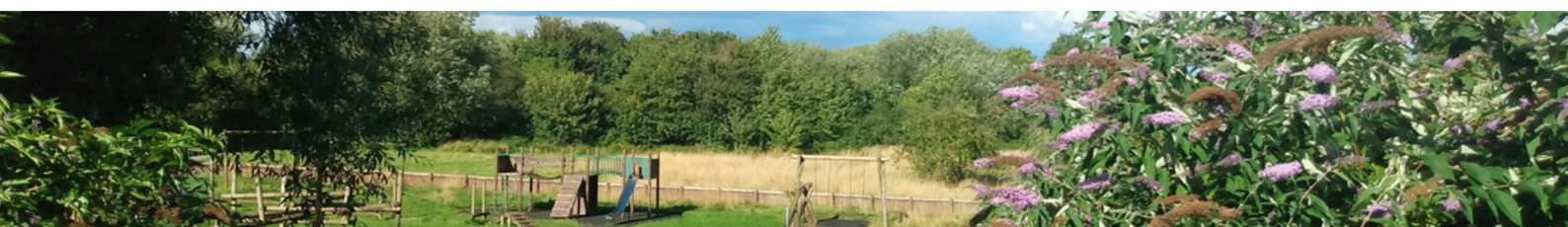
Our board structure currently includes an executive committee, made up of the chair, vice chair, secretary, treasurer and CEO. This group meets on alternate months to full board meetings. The board have recently been discussing structure, and this is something that is open to further discussion and development with a new Chair/Co-Chairs.

A note from the current Chair

Thank you for your interest in this exciting role. It has been an absolute pleasure to lead the St Nicks board, and after what will be nearly 5 years in post it is the right time to hand over the reins to a new Chair to bring a different perspective and some fresh thinking to carry on the charity's great work. It is with a heavy heart that I'm stepping down but I will be staying on until our AGM in November to ensure a managed handover, as agreed with our CEO at the start of 2025.

St Nicks continues to go from strength to strength and has seen significant growth in recent years, achieved with financial sustainability in mind, giving an excellent platform for someone new taking up the reins to focus on future opportunities and strategic priorities.

St Nicks is blessed with a committed and experienced staff team, passionate volunteers, and a skilled board from a range of professional backgrounds - great ingredients for a Chair to work with! I've been appreciative of all that support during what has been an incredibly fulfilling time and I would highly recommend this position to candidates looking for a rewarding experience whilst making a tangible positive impact in the local community.



About St Nicks



St Nicks is the green heart of York: a centre for nature and green living, with an ambitious vision to enable thriving and connected biodiverse communities. The charity started as 'Friends of St Nicholas Fields' in the 1990s by transforming a former landfill site into a thriving Local Nature Reserve. Over the years, our size and ambition has grown, and we have become an established and valued part of the York community.

Our work is underpinned by three core strategic aims:

- **Nature** - greenspace regeneration
- **People** - improving wellbeing through nature connectedness
- **Planet** - empowering communities to flourish sustainably

Our activities are delivered by a dedicated team of staff and volunteers who run a range of projects, events and services with the help of partners and supporters to help us achieve these aims

We have a diverse income stream, including funding from local authority contracts, large grant funds, traded income and fundraised activity.

Our Vision, Mission and Values

Vision

To create thriving
and connected
biodiverse
communities

Mission

To build and connect
flourishing communities
through urban greenspace
generation, nature-based
wellbeing and sustainable
living

Values

- Collaboration
- Integrity
- Innovation
- Professionalism



Overall Purpose of the Chair Role

As well as undertaking the role of trustee to:

- Ensure that we deliver on our strategic and business plans, achieve financial sustainability and manage our organisation's performance;
- Ensure that St Nicks complies with its governing document (its Articles of Association), charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations;
- Ensure that St Nicks pursues its objects as defined in its governing document;
- Ensure that St Nicks applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objects;
- Contribute actively to the Board of Trustees by giving firm strategic direction to St Nicks;
- Set overall policy, defining goals, setting targets, and evaluating performance against agreed targets;
- Ensure the financial stability of St Nicks

The Chair/Co-Chairs will:

- Be a constructive partner to the CEO - building a trusting, cohesive relationship, providing advice, challenge and support to orchestrate the development of the organisation
- Develop a highly effective board of trustees – creating the environment for a high performing team, evaluating and facilitating improvement of collective capability and performance. Undertake periodic Board effectiveness reviews and, alongside the CEO, ensure that new board members are fully inducted
- Influence and collaborate with stakeholders - understanding the environment and systems that the organisation operates within and collaborating with others to collectively achieve the biggest positive impact
- Chair board meetings, ensuring that high standards of corporate governance and ethical, professional behaviour are maintained
- Work with the CEO to ensure that matters are brought to the attention of the board for their information and/or debate in a timely manner and that an atmosphere is created in which all Board members are encouraged to participate and challenge constructively and appropriately
- Conduct an annual appraisal of the CEO and provide regular feedback on both performance and any areas of concern raised by the board

The Chair role is voluntary and thus unpaid. St Nicks will reimburse expenses reasonably incurred with any duties, including travel including travel expenses and costs relating to accessibility such as childcare or disability needs.

Time Commitment

As a trustee, the Chair would be expected to attend Board meetings every two months. These are friendly and informal sessions, at which trustees review what has happened since the last meeting, hear from the CEO and take any decisions that need to be taken.

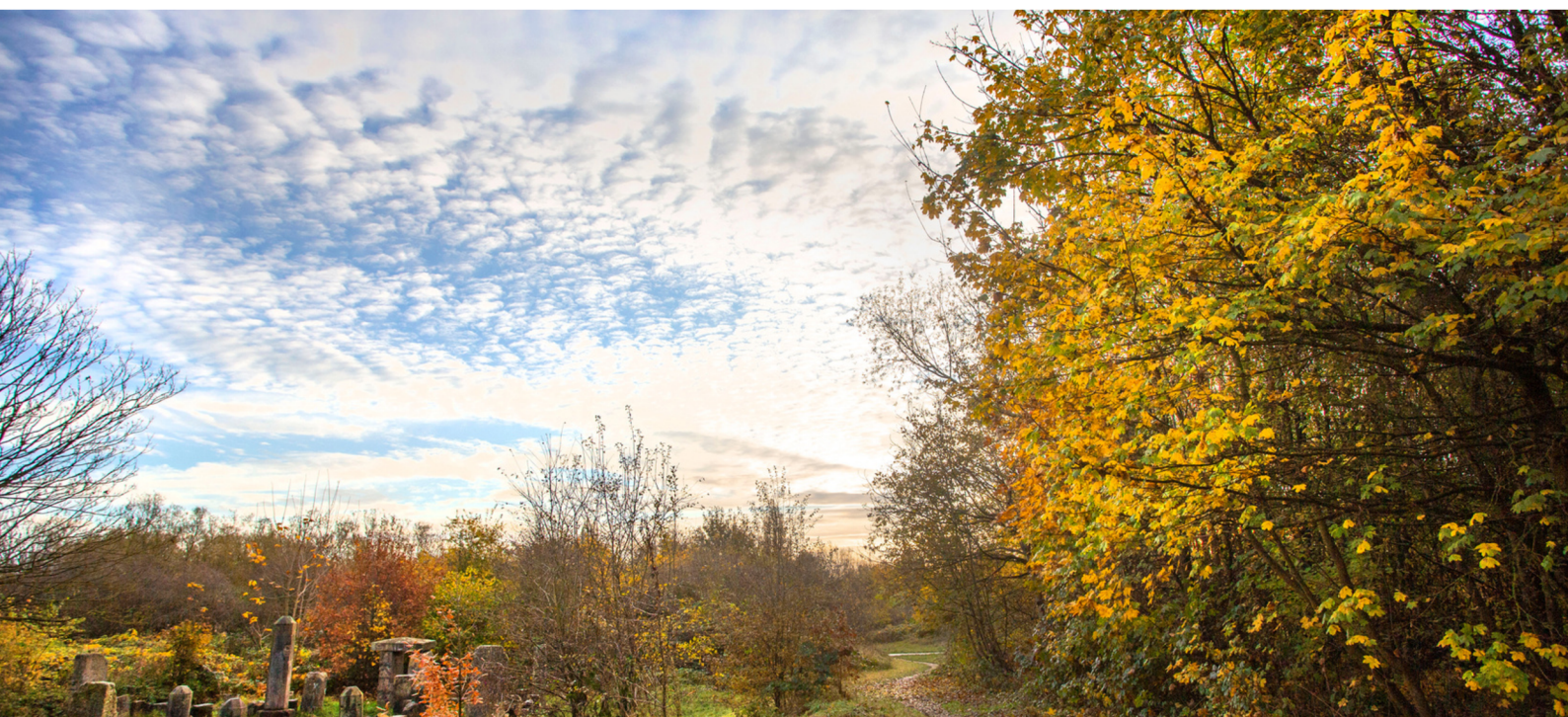
In addition, as a member of the Executive Committee you would be expected to meet with the other committee members every two months (alternate months to the Board), for up to two hours per meeting, to review and resolve any urgent matters between Board meetings and to prioritise matters for discussion at the next full Board meeting.

As Chair, you would be expected to be available for infrequent, ad-hoc conversations with the CEO as and when needed.

Meetings have typically been held outside of office hours. We will work with the Chair/Co-Chairs to agree meeting dates and times that suit your availability.

A successful candidate is somebody who...

- Is personally motivated to make a positive difference to the environment
- Is a strategic thinker who can see the big picture and navigate complex and contentious issues
- Is able to engage and collaborate effectively with people at all levels from different backgrounds and organisations
- Is progressive and innovative, capable of stimulating, challenging and influencing others to contemplate and consider different solutions
- Is able to facilitate others and develop effective team working, with experience of planning, preparing and chairing meetings at senior levels
- Is well organised and willing to devote time to the organisation



Our Commitment to Equality and Diversity

We are fully committed to making sure that our services, special places and the support we offer are as welcoming, inclusive and accessible as possible.

We want St Nicks to reflect a diverse society where we learn from each other and build a healthy respect for each other, both so that we can thrive together today and so that we can live together as sustainably as possible in the future.

We will strive to ensure that people of all backgrounds and characteristics are able to fully gain from and contribute to St Nicks, and we are committed to listening to everyone in our community to make sure that this is the case, identifying and addressing issues as they arise.

Next Steps/How to Apply

If you are interested in joining St Nicks as our Chair/Co-chair then we'd love to hear from you!

Please send us a CV and short covering letter detailing why you would like to become our Chair/Co-Chair and what you could bring to the role.

CVs and cover letters should be sent to centre@stnicks.org.uk

If you would like an informal conversation about St Nicks or the role, please contact Vicky on chiefexec@stnicks.org.uk

Closing date for applications is 6th July 2025.

We anticipate interviews being held w/c 14th July 2025.

Please contact us on info@stnicks.org.uk if you would like an audio or a large print application form, if you have other accessibility needs or if you would like help with applying.

