

Stonebridge City Farm

Recruitment of a Secretary to join the Board of Trustees



October 2021

Welcome!

Stonebridge City Farm is commencing the recruitment of a Secretary to the Board of Trustees. This is a voluntary, unpaid position but the rewards? Money certainly could not buy!

We are a community charity that delivers real impact to our beneficiaries including families, volunteers, schools, colleges and to the wider community. We are a well-known and important part of life in Nottingham.

Benefits of being a Trustee:

- An enjoyable and rewarding experience - a chance to use your energy and expertise to help deliver a real public benefit.
- Giving something back
- Meeting new people
- Learning new things
- Personal and professional development

A Trustee does not need to get involved in all the day to day operational detail of the charity. It is a strategic role, directing how the charity is run and managed, as well as offering advice and guidance to the management team. A Trustee should be a passionate advocate of the charity's work, uphold its values and always strive for excellence.

Here at Stonebridge City Farm, we are committed to creating a representative, skilled and knowledgeable Board of Trustees with a passion for the Farm and its work. We are looking for people who share our same passion, are committed to our charitable objectives, can spare some time and bring relevant skills and experience. Previous experience of working with a charity would be useful, but is not essential. Training will be provided where necessary.

About Stonebridge City Farm

Stonebridge City Farm was set up in the late 1970's to provide a much-needed green space in the newly regenerated area of the city, St. Ann's.

Today the farm is a charity-run initiative. It is a free community resource – a slice of the countryside in the heart of the City of Nottingham. The centre is open every day and provides a working farm environment for visitors from across the East Midlands, whilst also providing the platform for developing volunteers, particularly those with a learning disability or a mental health challenge. The site is accessible to all and is popular with schools and colleges.

Our Vision

"To be a special place, loved by the community"

Our Mission

"Stonebridge City Farm helps people through inclusive support and training and by providing a free, safe and accessible space for everyone."

- The farm has a wonderful range of animals, both large and small, as well as gardens, a new play area, a shop and a café. We attract over 60,000 visitors a year.
- We welcome children from local schools who attend structured school visits.
- We also attract many volunteers from local businesses and organisations who come to the farm for Team Challenge Days.
- Since reopening in April, after the last lockdown, we have supported nearly 200 volunteers. Two thirds have a learning disability, a learning difficulty or a mental health challenge. We could not run the farm without the support of so many wonderful volunteers.

- As well as aiming to be a flagship community organisation, operating in one of the most deprived neighbourhoods of the UK, the charity focuses on achieving the following social outcomes:
 - Improving health and well-being
 - Increasing social inclusion
 - Increasing independence
 - Realising potential and developing skills.

Our Values

It is important that everyone associated with the charity upholds our core values – they are the guiding principles that describe how we should behave.

Stonebridge City Farm's core values are that we will always strive to be:

- **Enabling** - We look for ways for people to grow.
- **Tolerant** - We respect different people's circumstances.
- **Positive** - We look to overcome problems and find solutions.
- **Accessible** - We are always available and willing to listen.
- **Inclusive** - We work with all people in the community.
- **Forward looking** - We look for better ways of doing things.

There will always be many challenges for community charities like Stonebridge City Farm, but it's also an exciting time – an opportunity to further develop our work to benefit the community and do more to support a growing number of beneficiaries. Our strategic goals include delivering more impactful social outcomes, being a vital community asset, maintaining financial sustainability, carbon neutrality and developing our on site facilities.

Come and join us!

Being a Trustee

Charity Trustees are the people responsible for controlling the administration and management of the charity. The Trustees are the Board of Directors of Stonebridge City Farm and should always act in the best interests of the charity. The board must act as a group and not as individuals.

The Trustees do not get involved in the day to day running of the charity but are responsible for developing the strategic plan, supporting the management team and protecting the financial strength of the charity.

Time Commitment

- Trustees are expected to attend an induction at Stonebridge City Farm, to meet the team, the animals and learn more about our work.
- Trustees are encouraged to attend as many board meetings as possible. Board meetings are held approximately eight times a year and usually take place mid-week, from 5.30pm. There may be a requirement to sit on sub-groups as and when necessary.
- Information for the board meeting is circulated in advance.
- Trustees may be asked to advise and support staff in a specific area of the charity's operations.

Secretary to the Board of Trustees

Role description

The role of Secretary to the Board is to ensure the smooth and efficient running of meetings, providing assistance and support to the Chair of the Board of Trustees. To be responsible for legislative and regulatory requirements affecting the charity and its activities, including ensuring all actions are in line with the charity's governing document. This role works alongside and with the support of the Chair, Vice Chair and General Manager.

Main duties

- Ensure that Stonebridge City Farm's activities are always in line with its charitable objects.
- Meeting charity and company law and insurance requirements.
- Deal with Trustee Board correspondence and keep a record of this.
- Ensure the Trustee Board meets its legal obligations, including reporting.
- Act as custodian of Stonebridge City Farm's governing documents.
- Ensure the annual report is written by the General Manager and Chair and sent to relevant bodies.
- Make arrangements for Trustee Board meetings.
- Receive agenda items and prepare the agenda with the Chair and General Manager.
- Ensure the circulation of agendas, previous minutes, and papers, prior to meetings.
- Checking a quorum is present at board meetings.
- Record decisions and policy in formal minutes.
- Check that action has been taken following decisions at previous meetings.
- Ensure members are informed of any additional, extraordinary or special meetings.
- Ensure that elections are in line with stipulated procedures.

General duties of a Trustee Board member are to:

- Ensure that Stonebridge City Farm complies with its Articles of Association, charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- Ensure that Stonebridge City Farm pursues its objects as defined in its governing documents.
- Ensure that risks are identified and adequately managed.
- Ensure Stonebridge City Farm applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objects, ie it must not spend money on

activities which are not included in the objects, however worthwhile they may be.

- Contribute actively to the Board of Trustees' role in giving firm strategic direction to Stonebridge City Farm, setting overall policy, defining goals and setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets.
- Safeguard the good name and values of Stonebridge City Farm.
- Act as an advocate and promote the charity's work at every opportunity.
- Ensure the financial resilience of Stonebridge City Farm.
- Appoint and support the General Manager and monitor his/her performance.

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 and management team reach sound decisions. This may involve leading discussions, focusing on key issues, providing advice and guidance on new initiatives, evaluation or other issues in which the trustee has special expertise.

Person Specification

Applicants are sought who have a strong empathy with our aim, vision and values. Experience, skills and expertise in charity law are desirable.

- An understanding of our work and ambitions are particularly sought.
- Good record keeping
- Writing agendas and concise minutes.
- Knowledge of Charity law and the voluntary sector.
- Commitment to the organisation and a willingness to devote the necessary time and effort.
- Preparedness to make recommendations to the board and a willingness to speak their mind with diplomacy.

- An understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship.
- An ability to work effectively as a member of a team.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.
- Commitment to promoting equality and diversity.
- Ability to organise time and work to deadlines.

Stonebridge City Farm believes in inclusivity and accessibility – we will not discriminate on the basis of disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

How to apply

If you are interested in becoming our Secretary and joining the Board of Trustees, please email our General Manager, Peter Armitage, peter@stonebridgecityfarm.com

Please give a summary of your relevant experience together with an explanation of why you would like to become a trustee.

If you would like an informal discussion first, then please feel free to contact Peter on 0115 950 5113 or 07713 341110.

We look forward to hearing from you. Deadline for applications is 30th November 2021.

Peter Armitage
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