



Director of Finance and Operations

Wiltshire Wildlife Trust

Appointment brief, November 2024



Welcome

Thank you for your interest in joining the Executive Team at Wiltshire Wildlife Trust at a pivotal time for securing nature's recovery.



I joined Wiltshire Wildlife Trust as the new CEO in 2023. I have been struck by the huge benefits that arise from being part of The Wildlife Trusts federation, which connects the 46 county Trusts in a powerful learning network and has an exceptional track record in advocating for policy change nationally.

Wiltshire Wildlife Trust has a stunning network of nature reserves and an outstanding track record in connecting people with nature. Our pioneering Care Farms and Wellbeing programmes are bringing nature into the lives of those who most need its healing power.

In response to the urgency of the nature and climate crisis, we have set ourselves ambitious goals in our 'Wilder Wiltshire' Strategy to 2030. We want to collaborate with a wide range of partners to achieve nature's recovery in the wider landscape beyond our nature reserves. And we want to achieve a step change in the number of people taking action for nature and to ensure that everyone, everywhere in Wiltshire and Swindon can benefit from having nature in their lives.

Achievement of our ambitious goals will require us to build our financial resilience and invest in growing our unrestricted income pipeline from a diverse range of sources. The organisation has grown rapidly in recent years, and the time is right for a review of our systems and processes to ensure we are deploying our resources effectively and with maximum impact towards the delivery of our Strategy.

We're seeking an outstanding and dynamic Director of Finance and Operations to lead this reset of our ambition. You will bring expertise in finance but have the confidence to provide leadership on people, IT and operational management across the organisation. You will have the communication skills and emotional intelligence to bring out the best in teams and lead organisational change towards adoption of new systems and processes. You will be an instinctive collaborator, able to support the CEO and fellow Directors to identify organisational needs and fulfil their objectives in the context of the Strategy and annual plans.

If you have the desire to make a difference and the skills and experience we need, then I very much look forward to hearing from you,

Jo

Jo Lewis, CEO, Wiltshire Wildlife Trust



Who we are

We are part of The Wildlife Trusts:

a Federation of 46 local independent charities working across the UK to create a wilder future. Nationally we have 900,000 members and manage 2,300 nature reserves.

Wiltshire Wildlife Trust was founded in 1962 and is today the leading charity in Wiltshire and Swindon working to achieve nature's recovery and a sustainable future for wildlife and people.

We employ over 140 staff and are supported by more than 1500 volunteers and 23,000 members.

We manage 44 nature reserves across Wiltshire and Swindon, including wetland, woodland, meadow and chalk downland habitats.

We have two Nature Centres with cafés, where people can come and enjoy spectacular wildlife views whilst enjoying locally-sourced food and drink.

We also have two Care Farms, helping children with additional needs through therapeutic nature-based activities.

Our farming enterprise manages over 650 cows and sheep, from three farm hubs, which keep our grasslands healthy and species-rich through grazing.

We have over £15 million of assets and annual income of around £7 million.

Our Vision

is a sustainable future for wildlife and people.

Our Purpose

is providing leadership, driving nature's recovery, connecting all generations with nature and empowering them to take meaningful action for nature and the climate.





Our area

Wiltshire Wildlife Trust's work covers the unitary authority boundaries of Swindon and Wiltshire.

Wiltshire is a farming county: 80% of the land is farmed, with significant opportunities for farmers and landowners to lead nature's recovery at scale. There is an active network of farmer clusters across the county, keen to explore the opportunities for nature-friendly farming.

Swindon is the fastest growing city in Europe, with a diverse population. Wiltshire is also home to some fast-growing market towns such as Chippenham, Trowbridge and Melksham, making it vital that new housing developments achieve a net gain in biodiversity and that green infrastructure is created to ensure everyone is within 15 minutes' walk of natural greenspace.

Two thirds of Wiltshire lies on chalk. Wiltshire has half the UK's surviving species-rich chalk grassland, some 18,000 hectares, helping to make it one of the best places in the UK for butterflies. The Wiltshire and Hampshire Avon, with its sparkling chalk-stream headwaters, is one of the most biodiverse river systems in the UK. Wiltshire Wildlife Trust is a founder member of the Wiltshire Chalk Partnership, which aims to create at least 2000 hectares of new habitat to connect and enhance Wiltshire's ecologically and culturally significant chalk landscape.

Wiltshire is also rich in ancient woodland, including one of our newest acquisitions, Great Wood in the Braydon Forest.

Our 2030 Strategy

Creating a Wilder Wiltshire

We face an ecological and climate emergency and an epidemic of mental ill-health. We want to see the abundance of nature restored and experienced by people in ways that enrich their daily lives. We want to ensure every child can build a lasting connection with nature.

In Spring 2023, we launched our new Strategy to 2030.

Our vision for a wilder Wiltshire:

By 2030, Wiltshire's internationally important chalk streams will have the protection they deserve, and restoration and connection of our precious chalk downland, floodplain meadows and ancient woodland will be happening at scale. Wiltshire's soundscape in spring and summer will be more alive with the calls of farmland birds and the hum of insects, signalling that species abundance is being restored across the county. Nature-friendly farming and agroforestry will be common features of Wiltshire's farmed landscape, balancing the needs of climate-resilient food production and nature's recovery whilst supporting the livelihoods and wellbeing of Wiltshire's farming communities.

Everyone, everywhere in Wiltshire and Swindon will be able to make a better connection with nature in their daily lives, benefitting their mental health and wellbeing and strengthening the mandate for nature's recovery. Working with schools, partners and communities, we will ensure access to green spaces and to nature, sharing ideas for how everyone can support nature's recovery and take meaningful action.

Our Goals

Goal 1

Nature's Recovery

By 2030, nature will be in recovery in Wiltshire and Swindon. To achieve this, we need to ensure:

Target 1.1 30% of land is in positive management for nature.

Target 1.2 Species abundance and diversity are increasing.

Target 1.3 Natural processes are being restored.

Target 1.4 Nature-based solutions are being used to address the climate and water emergencies.

Goal 2

Connecting People with Nature.

By 2030, people will be taking action for nature and benefitting from nature in their lives. To achieve this, we need to ensure:

Target 2.1 One in 4 people are taking meaningful action to drive nature's recovery locally and nationally.

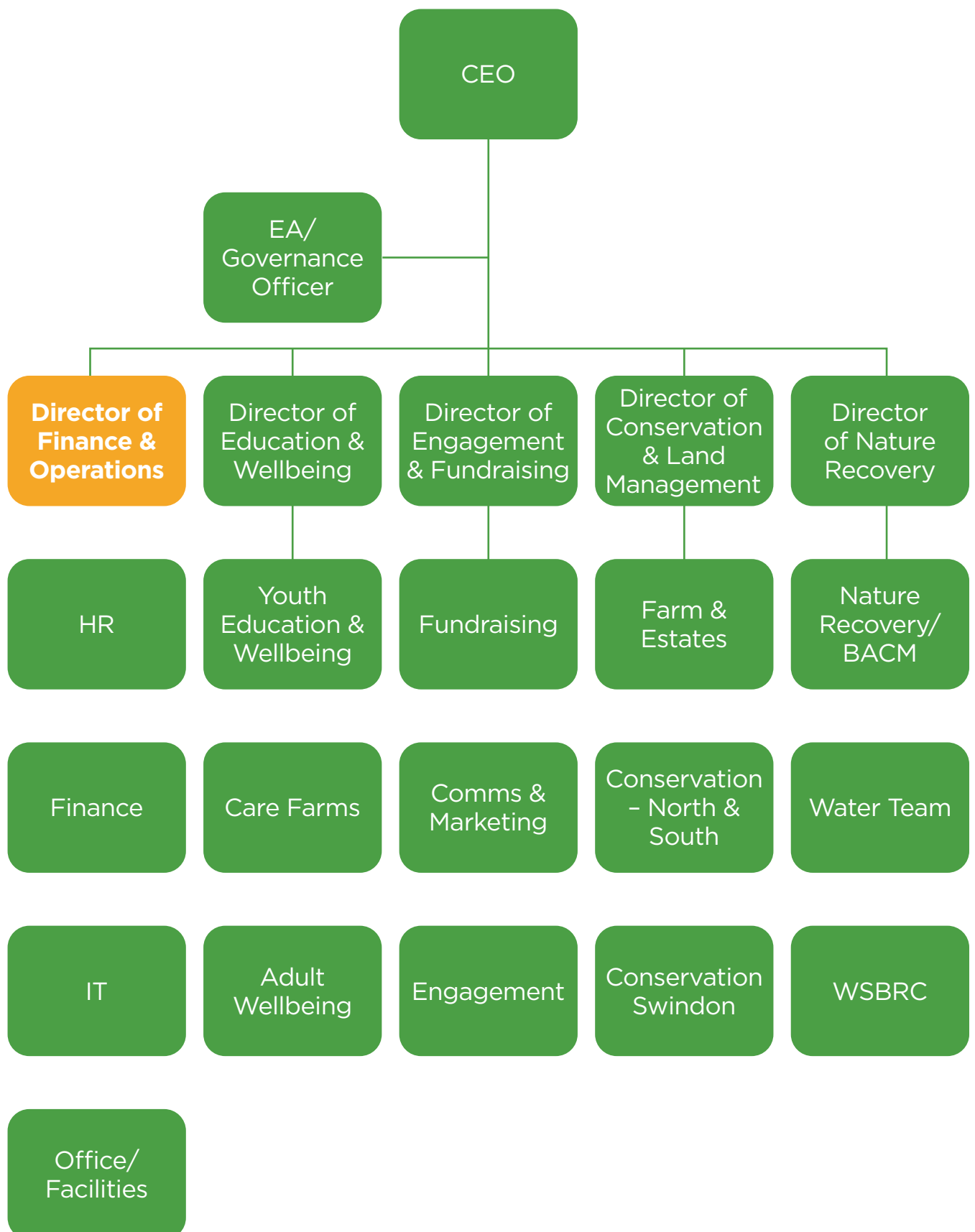
Target 2.2 The health and wellbeing of people is improved through their engagement in and with nature.

Target 2.3 All children and young people have the opportunity to nurture a lasting interest in nature.

Target 2.4 Nature and climate are at the heart of decision-making locally and nationally.

To read our strategy in full, visit: www.wiltshirewildlife.org/strategy

Organisation chart





Role profile

Job title: Director of Finance and Operations

Salary: £65-70,000 per annum

Reports to: CEO

Line management: Management Accountant, HR Manager, IT Manager, Office Manager, Governance Officer.

Key relationships: Treasurer, Chair and Trustees, Auditors, Executive Team, Heads of service/team managers.

Purpose of the role

- To provide leadership on people (HR and organisational development), financial, governance, IT and operational management across the Trust and its infrastructure.
- To operate as a business partner to the CEO and other Directors, leading and coordinating operational and financial planning to enable the successful delivery of our strategic aims.
- To apply a strong commercial approach and ensure our strategic and operational decision-making is informed by strong financial analysis and supported by timely management accounts.
- To develop our HR systems to attract and retain talented people and to ensure we are creating an environment in which all our people can thrive and bring their best to the Trust.
- To champion strong systems and project management processes to support the efficient achievement of the Trust's ambitious goals.
- To oversee the Trust's approach to risk management and Health & Safety.
- To act as Company Secretary, managing our governance processes and overseeing compliance with company and charity law.

Key objectives

Leadership:

- Provide clear, consistent and confident leadership as a key member of the Executive Team and a trusted advisor to the CEO.
- Responsible to the CEO for overseeing the operational (including governance) and financial performance and management of the Trust, and ensuring that the infrastructure (properties, facilities, equipment) optimally supports the work of the organisation.
- Act as Company Secretary, managing our governance processes and overseeing compliance with company and charity law.
- Oversee Board reporting of progress against objectives, performance measures and financial targets.
- Ensure an environment is created within which all our staff feel motivated, valued and supported to bring their best to the Trust.
- Engage regularly and proactively with directors and senior managers across the Trust to identify their support needs and enable them to fulfil their objectives.

Finance:

- Lead the development of a flexible and robust financial strategy to support the delivery of our organisational Strategy.
- Lead the development of multi-year financial plans and oversee preparation of annual budgets and audited accounts.
- Apply a strong commercial approach and ensure our strategic and operational decision-making is informed by strong financial analysis and supported by timely management information.
- Lead a transition to active budget management by teams across the Trust, building financial literacy and ensuring finance software is fit for purpose.
- Monitor, maintain and plan the financial health, security and compliance of the organisation, including effective cash flow and reserves management.

People:

- Oversee the development of a new People and Culture Strategy and lead its implementation.
- Oversee the HR function to deliver high quality support for our people across all areas of HR including performance management, learning and development.

Key objectives

Support services, Facilities, Health and Safety and Risk:

- Support the work of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee.
- Oversee the Trust's approach to risk management.
- Oversee our organisational approach to Health and Safety, ensuring all compliance goals are met and exceeded, including chairing the Health and Safety working group.
- Take overall responsibility for the Trust's built property portfolio (facilities), ensuring they are well managed.
- Lead on the development of a facilities strategy, including the business case for transition to a new HQ, to ensure plans cost-effectively meet organisational needs.
- Oversee the delivery of our carbon reduction strategy and action plan. Ensure that our vehicle fleet is fit for purpose and meets our sustainability aims.

IT and Procurement

- Ensure the organisation has the infrastructure, systems, equipment and skills required for the most effective and adaptable ways of working.
- Develop and deliver an ongoing programme of systems change to ensure the Trust is digitally-enabled and skilled and making effective use of data.
- Ensure that our technology and our use of data is safeguarded and meets the full expectations of anyone whose data we hold or use.
- Keep under review our approach to procurement to ensure this meets strategic and sustainability needs.

It is the nature of the work of Wiltshire Wildlife Trust that tasks and responsibilities are in many circumstances unpredictable and varied. All staff are, therefore, expected to work in a flexible way when the occasion arises where tasks that are not specifically covered in the job description must be undertaken, including providing cover for absent staff to maintain organisational effectiveness.

Person specification

Skills and experience

Essential

- Track record of achievement in a senior strategic-level management role.
- Substantial experience of overseeing the preparation of monthly management accounts and the development of effective business and financial strategies.
- Experience of leading organisational change processes and fostering trust through clear communication.
- Experience of leading and managing teams and ensuring they can develop to their full potential.
- Competence in the use of standard Microsoft Office software.
- A driving licence valid in the UK.

Desirable

- Qualified accountant (CCAB recognised or equivalent) with senior level post qualification experience and strong technical skills.
- Experience of working in the Charity sector and knowledge of charity financial management and charity governance.
- People Management training.
- H&S management qualification eg IOSH/NEBOSH.
- Experience of managing or overseeing properties and organisational H&S management.

Personal qualities:

Essential

- Strong emotional intelligence with the ability to build strong, collaborative working relationships.
- Ability to foster trust by delegating, empowering and coaching teams.
- An eye for strategic opportunities and a calm and confident approach to managing key strategic risks.
- Strategic mindset combined with a willingness to get 'hands on' with operational delivery in support of the team when the need arises.
- Ability to work with initiative and autonomy, while being a good team player.
- Systematic and organised, with a track record of delivering to tight deadlines and overcoming setbacks.



Key terms of employment

Contract: Permanent

Hours: Full time (37.5 hours per week), with occasional evening or weekend work for which time off in lieu is given. Driving licence and some use of own vehicle is required for travel and occasional overnight stays.

Location: Head Office in Devizes with flexible and hybrid working.

Equal opportunities: Wiltshire Wildlife Trust is an equal opportunity employer. We are committed to developing an inclusive and diverse organisation, in which everyone feels supported, valued, and able to be their full selves. To achieve our vision of creating a sustainable future for wildlife and people, we need talented people, and more diverse people, on nature's side.

Benefits: Wiltshire Wildlife Trust is an exemplary employer with high staff satisfaction and multiple benefits for employees.

These benefits include:

- Employer pension contribution up to 7.5%
- Group risk insurance – death in service and income protection
- 27 days annual leave (rising to 30 days after 5 years' service) plus public holidays (pro-rata)
- Staff discount at Dragonfly Cafe
- Free tea and coffee
- Head office in town centre with parking
- Cycle to Work Scheme
- Two staff wellbeing days per annum

How to apply

To apply for the role, please send your CV together with a supporting statement (of no more than 1000 words) to: **recruitment@wiltshirewildlife.org**

Please ensure you have included a telephone number as well as any dates when you will not be available or might have difficulty with the recruitment timetable.

Recruitment timetable

Deadline for applications: Wednesday 27 November 9am

First stage interviews: Wednesday 4 December

Second stage interviews: Tuesday 10 December

If you wish to have an informal discussion about the opportunity, please contact the CEO, Jo Lewis, on JoannaL@wiltshirewildlife.org

