

Welcome from our Chair

Thank you for considering becoming a trustee at the Ramblers.

This year there are three Ordinary Member vacancies on the Board of Trustees, each for a three-year term beginning in April 2026.

Our trustees govern the Ramblers and provide strategic direction for how the charity is managed and run. As a trustee, you will draw on your skills and experience to help deliver our strategic ambitions, ensure our resources are used responsibly, and confirm that we remain compliant with relevant laws and regulations.

The role of trustee carries significant responsibility and time commitment, but it is also immensely rewarding. You will play an important role in ensuring the long-term stability and success of the Ramblers and in helping to deliver our vision of a country where everyone can enjoy the outdoors on foot and benefit from the experience.

The Ramblers is committed to equity, diversity and inclusion. We welcome applications from people with a wide range of backgrounds, experiences and perspectives, especially those who may be considering trusteeship for the first time. Professional expertise, voluntary experience and lived insight can all make a valuable contribution at board level.

All new trustees receive support through a structured induction programme, external training opportunities and peer-to-peer mentoring to help them contribute with confidence.

Prospective trustees who would like to find out more are invited to join one of two video calls in February with me and Ross, our Chief Executive, to ask questions and get a feel for what it's like being a trustee of the Ramblers. These calls will take place on Monday 9 February from 1pm to 2pm, and Monday 23 February from 5pm to 6pm.

If you are interested in attending one of these calls, or would like help or further information about the election process, please contact Simon Kellas, Head of Governance (simon.kellas@ramblers.org.uk).

The deadline for receipt of nominations is 14 March 2026.

Best wishes,

Lucy Robinson
Chair, Board of Trustees

Becoming a trustee at the Ramblers

The Ramblers is committed to developing and maintaining a Board that reflects the breadth of its membership and reach across Great Britain. We are committed to ensuring our Board includes the range of skills, experience and lived perspectives needed to make sound strategic decisions and provide effective oversight of our work. Whether you are an experienced trustee or taking your first step at board level, we would welcome your application.

Skills and experience sought

To complement the current skills and improve the diversity of the Board, we particularly welcome applications from individuals who can bring strategic-level insight and perspective in one or more of the following areas. You do not need previous trustee or board experience to apply.

- **Marketing, branding and communications:** Experience of contributing to strategic thinking about organisational communications, reputation, brand or stakeholder engagement, including how an organisation communicates its purpose and impact.
- **Campaigning and advocacy:** Experience or insight relating to campaigning, influencing or advocacy activity, with an interest in how charities pursue change responsibly, lawfully and in line with their charitable aims.
- **Equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI):** Experience, insight or lived perspective that supports inclusive decision-making and contributes to board-level discussions about equity, diversity and inclusion and how the charity reflects and serves different communities.
- **Fundraising and income generation:** Experience of, or interest in, fundraising or income generation (for example grants, partnerships, community fundraising or commercial activity), and an understanding of the importance of financial sustainability for charities.

As a trustee, you will apply your skills as part of a collective Board, sometimes offering an informed perspective where you have particular knowledge.

Trustees are not expected to undertake operational work or deliver projects, but to support and challenge the executive team through strategic oversight, while respecting the clear distinction between governance and management.

Most importantly, you should share our values and be able to commit the time required for the role.



Time commitment

There are five Board meetings each year, alongside committee meetings and occasional additional commitments. Overall, including preparation time, trustees should expect to commit approximately 10-12 days per year, plus travel to and from meetings.

Board meetings

- Four of the Board meetings are held in person, normally in London, on weekday afternoons. The June Board meeting includes an overnight stay and an additional full day.
- While trustees are encouraged to attend Board meetings in person, video conference facilities are always available.
- Additional Board meetings may occasionally be convened to address specific matters and are typically held online.

Other meetings

- Trustees are normally invited to join one of the Board's committees, each meeting up to four times per year by video conference, normally from 5.30pm to 7.30pm. Committee membership is discussed after appointment, reflecting interests, experience and availability.
- Trustees attend the Annual General Meeting and are invited, without obligation, to join some of our Area AGMs which run from November to March.

We recognise that trustees balance their role with other professional and personal commitments. Meeting dates are agreed and published well in advance.

All necessary and reasonable expenses are reimbursed, and accommodation is arranged where required.

Trustee induction and ongoing support

All new trustees are supported through a structured induction programme designed to help them understand their role, the charity's work and their legal responsibilities. This ensures that all trustees, including those new to trustee roles, are well-equipped to contribute effectively and confidently.

This includes an introductory induction meeting led by the Chair and Vice Chair, one-to-one meetings with the Chief Executive and the Executive Leadership Team, informal buddy support, and external trustee training.

The Board of Trustees

Trustee responsibilities

As a Board, trustees are jointly responsible for the strategic leadership and governance of the Ramblers. Collectively, they:

- Set the strategic direction of the organisation and ensure all activities support its charitable purposes.
- Ensure strong governance, financial sustainability and organisational performance.
- Oversee compliance with the Ramblers' governing document, charity law, company law and other relevant regulations.
- Safeguard the charity's reputation, values and long-term interests.
- Support and constructively challenge the executive team while avoiding involvement in day-to-day operations.

Individually, each trustee must:

- Act only in the best interests of the Ramblers, exercising care, diligence and sound judgement.
- Ensure the charity's resources are applied solely to advance its charitable objects.
- Identify risks and opportunities and contribute actively to informed, collective decision-making.
- Draw on their own skills, experience and perspective to strengthen the board's effectiveness.

Trustees are expected to demonstrate:

- Commitment to the Ramblers' mission and values.
- Integrity, independence of mind and sound judgement.
- Strategic thinking and the ability to take a long-term, organisation-wide view.
- Willingness to learn about trusteeship and keep their knowledge up to date.
- Collaborative working style and respect for collective responsibility.
- Ability to meet the time commitment required for the role.

Further information about the role and responsibilities of trustees is available in the Charity Commission publication [The essential trustee: what you need to know, what you need to do](#)

Who are our trustees?

The Ramblers is governed by a Board of Trustees comprising up to 15 members:

- A Chair and an Honorary Treasurer, elected by the General Council
- Nine Ordinary Members, elected by the General Council
- One appointee of Ramblers Cymru
- One appointee of Ramblers Scotland



TRUSTEE RECRUITMENT PACK 2026

- Up to two members co-opted by the Board
- A Vice Chair, who is one of the above trustees, appointed by the Board.

You can read more about our current trustees at <https://www.ramblers.org.uk/about-us/our-trustees>.

As the Ramblers is both a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee, our trustees are also company directors.

Please note: At the Annual General Meeting in April 2026, members will vote on proposals to change the size and composition of the Board of Trustees. Regardless of the outcome of that vote, the three vacancies being recruited this year will each serve a full three-year term.

The staff team

The Ramblers employs around 80 staff, working in a hybrid way from hubs in London, Edinburgh and Cardiff, and from home. The Board appoints and supports the Chief Executive, and formally delegates responsibility for the day-to-day management and operation of the organisation to them.

Application and election process

Key dates and deadlines

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| 14 March 2026 | Deadline for submission of completed nomination form |
| 16–20 March 2026 | Candidates invited to record a short video statement |
| 27 March 2026 | Candidate statements issued to Council members as part of the AGM papers |
| 25 April 2026 | Election of trustees by members of the General Council at the AGM |

Eligibility criteria

Candidates must have been members of the Ramblers for at least one year as of 14 March 2026 and be at least 16 years old. Certain legal restrictions apply, including disqualification due to specific criminal convictions, insolvency, or previous removal as a trustee or director. These requirements reflect statutory charity and company law obligations. If you are unsure about eligibility, confidential advice is available.

Application checklist

Before submitting your nomination, ensure you have:

- ✓ Completed the online form
- ✓ Three eligible proposers who have emailed confirmation
- ✓ Your candidate statement prepared
- ✓ Availability for the video recording window (optional)
- ✓ Checked eligibility requirements

What you need to complete and submit

Online nomination form

- The online nomination form is at www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/ramblerstrusteeform2026.
- Early submission is encouraged, as this allows us to confirm that candidates and proposers meet the eligibility criteria and that submissions have been received on time.

Proposers

- Ask three proposers to send email confirmation of their willingness to propose you directly to simon.kellas@ramblers.org.uk.
- Our constitution requires that each candidate be supported by three proposers who have each been members of the Ramblers for at least the previous three years (as of 14 March 2026). Each proposer may support only one candidate.



TRUSTEE RECRUITMENT PACK 2026

- We want the nomination process to be open and accessible to everyone who is interested in standing. We recognise that not every prospective candidate may have these connections. If you don't yet have three eligible proposers, please don't let that discourage you – join one of the calls with the Chair and Chief Executive to learn more.

Supporting statement

- The statement is the main opportunity to tell members who you are, explain your motivation and how your expertise and perspective will help the charity achieve its goals.
- Candidate statements are sent to General Council members in the Annual General Meeting papers and published on our website.
- The statement is themed around three questions (each section up to 250 words):
 - *Thinking about your professional or learned skills, how would you use these to support the board's strategic decision making?*
 - *What personal insight and understanding about walking and the walking environment will you bring to the board?*
 - *Why are you interested in becoming a trustee of the Ramblers?*

Video statement

- Following receipt of your completed nomination form, we offer the optional opportunity to record a video message alongside your written statement.
- Your video will appear in a compiled candidate reel (watch the [2025 candidate reel](#)), shared with Council members before voting. You can watch last year's candidate reel on Ramblers.

Election process

- If there are more candidates than vacancies, a ballot will be held.
- General Council members will vote for new trustees at the Annual General Meeting on 25 April 2026. All candidates are invited, though not required, to attend.
- Results are announced at the AGM, with candidates notified by email on the same day.

Appointment process

- Following the election, successful candidates will be asked to complete some formalities before being registered with the Charity Commission (as trustees) and Companies House (as directors).
- New trustees are now also legally required to complete compulsory Companies House ID Verification.
- Welcome calls will be arranged with the Chair and Chief Executive, and we will be in touch to start the induction process, confirm meeting dates, and answer any questions you might have.

Questions?

For further information or if you have any questions, please contact Simon Kellas, Head of Governance (simon.kellas@ramblers.org.uk).