

Opportunity description

The Honorary Secretary is a key person within the Friends of the New Forest (FoNF). We are the voice for the New Forest - its friend and watchdog - an independent campaigning charity based on its membership and volunteers.

The role

The role of the Honorary Secretary is to support the Chair in ensuring the smooth functioning of the Board of Trustees and of the Council. The Hon Sec may if s/he wishes delegate some responsibilities to other people - see below.

Responsibilities include:

- Ensuring that the organisation is properly run, e.g. meetings are quorate, minutes are signed etc
- General correspondence and acting as the main point of contact between FoNF and all other bodies, and the general public, and also sometimes the media.
- Organising the AGM, the re-election and election of council members and officers, the annual report and its distribution.
- Acting as Charity Correspondent and ensuring annual returns are made to the Charity Commission.
- Ensuring that Trustees and Council members have carried out agreed actions.
- Ensuring that meetings of the Board of Trustees and of the Council are arranged, including, booking meeting rooms, sending agendas and producing minutes. This work has been carried out directly by the Hon Sec, but could be delegated to another member or volunteer responsible as Committee Secretary to the Hon Sec.
- Overall responsibility for events and shows. At present we do not have an Events Organiser to plan volunteer staffing and attendance at shows, management of the stand and banking of proceeds; and to organise other events, but hope to find a volunteer to whom this could be delegated.

The Membership Secretary (who works to the Hon Sec) – keeps membership records. Receives applications for membership, deals with renewals of membership. (This role is currently undertaken by a paid admin officer).

Required skills:

General management, strategic development and planning. Good interpersonal and communication skills.

Person description

To be a good organiser is the foundation of this role - you will be the kingpin to ensure the smooth and effective running of the organisation. Committee experience would be useful, and the ability to get people to do things! Knowing and loving the New Forest would be useful too, as the other Trustees are all there because of their commitment to it. But it is NOT essential!

What impact the opportunity will have

The New Forest Association, as it was known for many years, was set up in 1867 and so was 150 years old in 2017, when it re-branded itself as the Friends of the New Forest. So it is not surprising that it needs a bit of a blood transfusion and more and younger members. We are hoping to recruit a number of new people to help to make this happen, so you would be part of a small re-energising renaissance, working with an enthusiastic and committed Chairman and Vice Chairman.

What's in it for the volunteer?

If you want to make a huge difference to an important organisation, this is the role for you. The Association has responded to major threats to the Forest in the past, and that's when it flourishes most. But, today, there remain new and significant threats to the long-term protection of the New Forest. We value the special qualities of the Forest and articulate them, as the only all-inclusive organisation promoting its well-being. We embrace change for the better and seek to make it happen. Our key activists are enthusiastic and friendly.

Time commitment

Either in or out of office hours – an average of 2-3 hours a week plus meetings:

Afternoon Trustees' meetings are held quarterly and evening Council meetings every other month, both in Lyndhurst, but this pattern can be changed to suit the Hon. Sec. Otherwise working from home

You may also attend promotional events (including the New Forest Show) and other Forest-focused activities.