

# Chair and Vice-Chair of Trustees Information Pack

NORWICH  
**RUSSIAN**  
THEATRE

*Pinocchio* touring production  
Image Andi Sapey



August 2022



## **Introduction**

The trustees of Norwich Puppet Theatre are inviting applications for a new Chair and also a Vice-Chair of its Board of Trustees. This is an open call for applications and we are reaching out extensively and inclusively for these roles.

We seek to meet the skills need for the best interests of the charity, to reflect the perspectives and interests of the communities we serve, and to be inclusive in wider terms of gender, ethnicity, educational and socio-economic background.

## **The Theatre**

Norwich Puppet Theatre delivers outstanding live theatre and educational experiences for families and communities of all ages. The Theatre communicates wonder through a wide-ranging programme of shows, events and activities focussed on puppetry and related art forms.

The Theatre's main strands of creative output include an active touring theatre company and an extensive outreach programme.

Our family puppet shows tour venues and schools nationally and on occasion internationally.

Our inspirational workshops deliver high quality creative experiences to children throughout our region, in schools and community settings.

## **The Board of Trustees**

Norwich Puppet Theatre Trust Ltd is a Charity registered in England (271041) and a Company Limited by Guarantee (1243558) overseen by a Board of 12 Trustees. We need Trustees from a wide range of backgrounds to reflect the community we serve. Their skills currently include performing arts management and delivery, education, finance, business management, events and stage management.

### **Commitment**

Trustee meetings are held each month and in order to contribute to the decision making process, Trustees are encouraged to work on a voluntary basis with the Theatre Director and other members of staff. This helps to contribute to the organisation and gain a clearer understanding of the charity's work. This may include fund-raising projects, such as two very successful Celebrity Puppet Auctions, or assistance with management initiatives – such as strategic recruitment or financial scrutiny.

Importantly, Trustees act as ambassadors to promote our work, gather insights about public needs and attract support and resources for our work.

### **Composition of Board Members**

We always welcome interest from professionals with experience and expertise at senior levels in financial management, governance, business/fundraising development and marketing, as well as staff and organisational management/development, whether

from the arts, public sector or commercial environments.

The diversity of our trustees is a fundamental principle and we are developing our recruitment procedures to be ever more open and inclusive for the future.

### **Appointment Process**

Trustees may be appointed by the board throughout the year, but all must stand for election at the AGM.

The charity's constitution requires that one-third of up to 12 trustees be subject to a rotation rule after three years service. From time to time, trustees may step down from the role, also giving rise to vacancies.

The composition of the board and recruitment is therefore planned in terms of a skills audit and profiling process. This is reviewed at regular intervals in terms of:

- The mix of skills the charity needs
- The degree to which the trustees possess these skills, along with the experience to apply them to the charity's benefit
- The professional perspectives the trustees represent including: education, performing arts management, business management and knowledge of our local arts landscape and stakeholders.
- The personal perspectives the trustees represent, including, but not limited to: gender, ethnicity, educational and socio-economic background.

# Trustee Responsibilities

Trustees are appointed Members of Norwich Puppet Theatre Trust Ltd. As active Directors of a company limited by guarantee, the Trustees form its governing body and shall carry out the following duties to meet statutory obligations for Company:

- Ensure that Norwich Puppet Theatre Trust Limited pursues its charitable objects as defined in its governing documents
- Use charitable resources, funds and assets reasonably, and only in furtherance of the charity's aims, setting all overall policy, defining goals and setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets
- Act with integrity, and avoid any personal conflicts of interest

- Safeguard the good name and values of Norwich Puppet Theatre Trust Limited
- Treat the information about the the company and its governance dealings as confidential
- Use reasonable care and skill in their work as trustees, using their personal skills and experience as needed to ensure that Norwich Puppet Theatre Trust Limited is well-run and efficient
- Obtain appropriate external professional advice on all matters where there may be material risk to the charity, or where the trustees may be in breach of their duties
- Ensure the financial stability of the organisation, protecting and managing the property of the charity and to ensure the proper investment and/or expenditure of the charity's fund
- Ensure that the Norwich Puppet Theatre does not breach any of the requirements or rules set out in its governing document and that it remains true to the charitable purpose and objects set out there
- Ensure that Norwich Puppet Theatre complies with charity law, and with the requirements of the Charity Commission as regulator; in particular, ensure that the charity prepares reports on what it has achieved and Annual Returns and accounts as required by law
- Comply with the requirements of other legislation and other regulators (if any) which govern the activities of Norwich Puppet Theatre Trust Limited
- Be accountable as employer for the recruitment, performance and well-being of staff employed by the charity



Thumbelina, touring production  
Image Andi Sapey

# Trustee Behaviours and Personal Qualities

## Trustee Behaviours

In addition to the above statutory duties, each trustee will use their specific skills, knowledge, and experience to help the Board of Trustees reach sound decisions.

Trustees will be ready to:

- Focus on key issues rather than operational matters
- Promote the work and reputation of our charity
- Scrutinise board papers and lead discussions in Board meetings
- Provide advice and guidance on new initiatives, or other issues in which the trustee has special expertise

On top of these, some may find they have the skills, contacts and enthusiasm for proactive action such as

- Playing an active role in accessing new resources and fundraising for the charity
- Becoming a champion for strategic priority topics and/or projects
- Taking on some of the strategic management and conduct of the charity's business affairs with an active officer role, such as Chair or Treasurer

In addition, trustees are very welcome to contribute additionally to the work of Norwich Puppet Theatre Trust Limited as volunteers and, where the charity's approved rules are followed and the work requires, as paid service providers.

## Trustee Person Specifications

Trustees will demonstrate:

- An enthusiastic commitment to the organisation
- A willingness to devote the necessary time and effort
- Strategic vision
- Good independent judgement
- An ability to think creatively
- A willingness to speak their mind
- An understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship
- An ability to work effectively as a member of a team
- Sound principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership





## The Role of Chair

The role of Chair requires a committed and motivated individual, with strong business and leadership skills, who can commit the time to help drive the charity forward to its next sustainable stage and help increase the delivery of its public cultural benefits.

### **Objectives**

The Chair will hold the Board and Executive Team to account for the Charity's mission and vision; providing inclusive leadership to the Board of Trustees; ensuring that each trustee fulfils their duties and responsibilities for the effective governance of the charity. The Chair will also support the Theatre Director and ensure that the Board functions as a unit and works closely with the Executive Committee and wider team to achieve agreed objectives. Along with the Theatre Director, they will act as a public face of the charity.

The Chair is supported by the Officers of the Company: a new role of Vice-Chair (trustee); an Honorary Treasurer (trustee); a Company Secretary (Member of the Company currently acting on a voluntary basis); as well as the salaried members of the Executive Committee (Theatre Director and Financial Controller).



CYCLES shadow show created in collaboration with migrants for Love Light Festival

Image Molly Farley



Beastly Belle previous touring production

Image Andi Sapey

## Key Role Details

### **Location**

Norwich – ease of access to the Charity’s team and venue is highly desirable.

### **Time Commitment**

Preparation, leading and following up at least 10 Board meetings per year. Additionally, the Chair is also expected to have regular meetings with the Theatre Director and Financial Controller as an Executive Committee and also represent the Charity at various events and meetings with key stakeholders.

### **Accountable to**

The public, via:

1. The Annual General Meeting of the Members of the Company. Members are the current and past Directors, and these are all or have been Trustees of the Charity.
2. The Regulators – Charity Commission and Companies House

### **Remuneration**

As a Registered Charity regulated by the Charity Commission, the role of Chair is not accompanied by any financial remuneration, although expenses for travel and other incidentals may be claimed. Such expenses may be voluntarily donated back to the charity to enable Gift Aid to be claimed.

# Chair Person's Responsibilities

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## Strategic Leadership

- Provide leadership to the charity and its Board, ensuring that the charity has maximum impact for its beneficiaries
- Ensure that the Board operates within its charitable objectives and provides a clear strategic direction for the charity
- Ensure that the Board is able to regularly review major risks and associated opportunities, and satisfy itself that systems are in place to take advantage of opportunities and manage and mitigate the risks
- Ensure that the Board fulfils its duties to ensure sound financial health of the charity, with systems in place to ensure financial accountability

## Governance

- Ensure that the governance arrangements are working in the most effective way for the charity, working within any agreed policies adopted by the charity
- Support the Trustees in fulfilling their duties and responsibilities for the effective governance of the charity, through induction, advice, appraisal, access to training and other measures
- Encourage positive change where appropriate and address and resolve any conflicts within the Board
- Ensure that the Board of Trustees is regularly refreshed and incorporates the right balance of skills, knowledge and experience needed to govern and lead the charity effectively and which also reflects the wider population

## Efficiency and Effectiveness

- Chair meetings of the Board of Trustees effectively and efficiently, bringing impartiality and objectivity to the decision making process
- Ensure that Trustees are fully engaged and that decisions are taken in the best, long-term interests of the charity and that the Board takes collective ownership
- Foster, maintain and ensure that constructive relationships exist with and between the Trustees
- Work closely with the Theatre Director and Executive Committee to give direction to Board policy-making and to ensure that meetings are well planned, meaningful and reflect the responsibilities of trustees
- Monitor that decisions taken at meetings are implemented

## External Relations

- Act as an ambassador for the cause and the charity
- Maintain close relationships with key influences
- Act as a spokesperson for the organisation when appropriate
- Represent the charity at external functions, meetings and events
- Facilitate change and address any potential conflict with external stakeholders



# Chair Person's Responsibilities

## Relationship with the Theatre Director

- Establish and build a strong, effective and a constructive working relationship with the Theatre Director, ensuring they are held to account for achieving agreed strategic objectives
- Support the Theatre Director, whilst respecting the boundaries which exist between the two roles
- Ensure regular contact with the Theatre Director and develop and maintain an open and supportive relationship within which each can speak openly about concerns, worries and challenges
- Liaise with the Theatre Director to maintain an overview of the charity's affairs, providing support as necessary
- Conduct an annual appraisal and remuneration review for the Theatre Director in consultation with other Trustees
- Ensure that the Theatre Director has the opportunity for professional development and has appropriate external professional support

## Additional Information

The Vice-Chair acts for the Chair when the Chair is not available and takes a lead on aspects of support and oversight in agreement with the Chair. This trustee will also shadow the current Chair to ensure there is capability in skills and understanding of the processes of the Charity to ensure regular succession planning.

The above list is indicative only and not exhaustive. The Chair will be expected to perform all such additional duties as are reasonably commensurate with the role.

In addition to chairing the main Board meetings, the Chair and Vice-Chair have the right to attend any additional sub-committees and working group as appropriate.



# Chair Person's Personal Qualities

In addition to the qualities required of a Trustee of the charity, the Chair must also meet the following requirements:

- Demonstrate a strong and visible passion and commitment to the charity, its strategic objectives and cause
- Personal gravitas to lead a significant national organisation
- Exhibit strong inter-personal and relationship building abilities and be comfortable in an ambassadorial role
- Demonstrate tact and diplomacy, with the ability to listen and engage effectively
- Strong networking capabilities that can be utilised for the benefit of the charity
- Ability to foster and promote a collaborative team environment
- Ability to commit time to conduct the role well, including travel and attending events in and out of office hours

## Experience

- Experience of operating at a senior strategic leadership level within an organisation
- Successful track record of achievement through their career
- Experience of charity governance and working with or as part of a Board of Trustees
- Experience of external representation, delivering presentations and managing stakeholders
- Significant experience of chiring meetings and events

## Knowledge and Skills

- Broad knowledge and understanding of the Civil Society sector and current issues affecting it
- Strong leadership skills, ability to motivate staff and volunteers and bring people together
- Financial management expertise and a broad understanding of charity finance issues
- Good understanding of charity governance issues



## The Process

Applications are invited by letter via email to the current but Retiring Chair, Nic Hopkins, [nichopkins@puppettheatre.co.uk](mailto:nichopkins@puppettheatre.co.uk) by **Monday 31 October 2022**.

A small but representative panel, including the Theatre Director and an independent voice will review these. Further information is available to help you prepare your application: please contact Nic by email for an information pack.

Subsequently, the sifting process will then be undertaken by a selection panel of trustees and the Theatre Director.

Candidates on the resulting shortlist will be invited for further discussions. All applicants will be advised within 28 days of the deadline above.

Our aim is to appoint by the new year with a period of handover and induction up to 3 months from the Retiring Chair and Theatre Director.

## Terms

The charity's Chair (and board members) are elected by the Members of the Company and expected to serve a three-year term. Subject to review and the readiness of other candidates to stand in an election process, all Officers shall be eligible for re-confirmation for one or more additional terms.

On Appointment, and if not already a member of NPT, the new Chair and Vice Chair will need to take the following formal steps to become:

- A trustee and be registered with Charity Commission
- A Member of the Company on our Register of Members
- A Director of the Company registered with Companies House
- A Board member
- Party to our trustee role description and committed to our trustee code and values (also attached)
- Familiar with our constitution (Memorandum and Articles of Association and with our recent Annual Reports and Accounts (on Charity Commission website for charity 271041)
- Subject to DBS clearance





[www.puppettheatre.co.uk](http://www.puppettheatre.co.uk)

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