ROLE DESCRIPTION FOR THE PRESIDENT OF THE BRITISH ECOLOGICAL SOCIETY

The President of the British Ecological Society is the Chair of the charity. The President holds the Board of Trustees and Executive Team to account for the Society’s mission and vision. They provide inclusive leadership to the Board, ensuring each trustee fulfils their duties and responsibilities for the effective governance of the BES. The President also supports, and, where appropriate, challenges the Chief Executive. They ensure that the Board of Trustees functions as a unit and works closely with the entire Executive of the BES to achieve agreed objectives. The President acts as an ambassador and the public face of the BES in partnership with the Chief Executive.

In addition to the general responsibilities of a trustee, duties of the President include the following:

- Providing leadership to the BES and the Board of Trustees by ensuring that everyone remains focused on the delivery of the Society’s charitable purposes in order to provide greater public benefit
- Chairing and facilitating Board of Trustee meetings
- Giving direction to Board policy-making
- Checking that decisions taken at meetings are implemented
- Representing the BES at functions and meetings, and acting as a spokesperson as appropriate
- Bringing impartiality and objectivity to decision-making
- Liaising with the Chief Executive to keep an overview of the organisation’s affairs and to provide support as appropriate
- Leading the process of supporting and appraising the performance of the Chief Executive
- Sitting on appointment and disciplinary panels
- The Vice Presidents act for the President when the President is not available and undertakes assignments at the request of the President

With the Chief Executive:

- Planning the annual cycle of Board of Trustee meetings and other general meetings where required, for example Annual General Meeting
- Setting agendas for Board and other general meetings
- Overseeing the preparation of papers for meetings, production of minutes and completion of actions
- Developing the Board of Trustees including induction, training, appraisal and succession planning
- Addressing conflict within the Board and within the BES, and liaising with the Chief Executive to achieve this

The term of office for the President is 1 year as President Elect, 2 years as President, and 1 year as Past President. The maximum number of terms of office that can be served consecutively is 1 term.

The President is expected to chair 4 meetings of the Board, chair 2 meetings of the Equality and Diversity Working Group, attend 4 meetings of the Finance Committee and attend a joint strategy day and the AGM each year.

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Person specification

In addition to the person specification for a trustee, the chair should have the following qualities:

- Leadership skills
- Experience of being a trustee and/or a chair
- Tact and diplomacy
- Good communication and interpersonal skills
- Impartiality, fairness and the ability to respect confidences
- Knowledge of the type of work undertaken by the BES and a wider involvement with the voluntary sector and other networks