

Board of Trustees

Information Pack
Spring/Summer 2025



Welcome!



I'm Amanda Nobbs and I've been Chair of the Marine Conservation Society since 2020. For more than 30 years, we've been the voice of the sea, defending our coastal habitats and species. We work towards a cleaner, better-protected, healthier ocean. One we can all enjoy. Together, we can achieve our vision of seas full of life, where nature flourishes and people thrive.

The Marine Conservation Society fights for the future of our ocean bringing people and science together to achieve action. Today, our ocean is in poor health because of human activity. We're determined to change this, working with communities, businesses and governments. We have the staying power to see through campaigns, such as progress on marine protected areas, and we're at the forefront of innovation, like the work we're doing with investors to drive change.

The time to act is now – our ocean can do much more to tackle the effects of climate change but only if they are properly protected, kept clean of litter and waste, and restored to health. Our determination is stronger than ever – to take our aims further, and to reach wider audiences so that their voices can be added to ours.

Giving everyone a voice and the opportunity to make a difference works. It creates support that joins with us as we campaign for tangible, positive outcomes for our ocean – and it achieves results! The recent announcement of a ban on wet wipes containing plastic highlights how public opinion makes change happen. We know we must, and will, get stronger and inspire more change to come. I invite you to join us as a Trustee at this exciting time, to ensure the Marine Conservation Society continues to be a loud and active voice for our seas.

This is a small but experienced team with just over 100 staff and, currently, 13 trustees. As part of the succession planning for the Board, we are looking to welcome new Trustees who represent our society and for you to offer your insight and views that can enrich our work. We are looking for you to help shape the Charity's future, and for you to spend some time with us, sharing our passion for the Marine Conservation Society to grow and be even more impactful. We hope you will want to join us and help us transform the marine environment for the benefit of everyone. We look forward to receiving your application.

Thank you for your support.

Amanda Nobbs OBE, Chair (she/her)

Our goals

Our goal is to recover the health of our ocean. For the sake of our wildlife, our climate and our own wellbeing, by 2030 we're calling for:



Ocean pollution levels to show a clear downward trend

A third of our seas to be truly protected, so nature can recover

Our fish stocks to be at sustainable levels.

What we do

For a cleaner ocean

we find ways to prevent and clean up marine litter and pollution. And we use science to track the health of our waters.

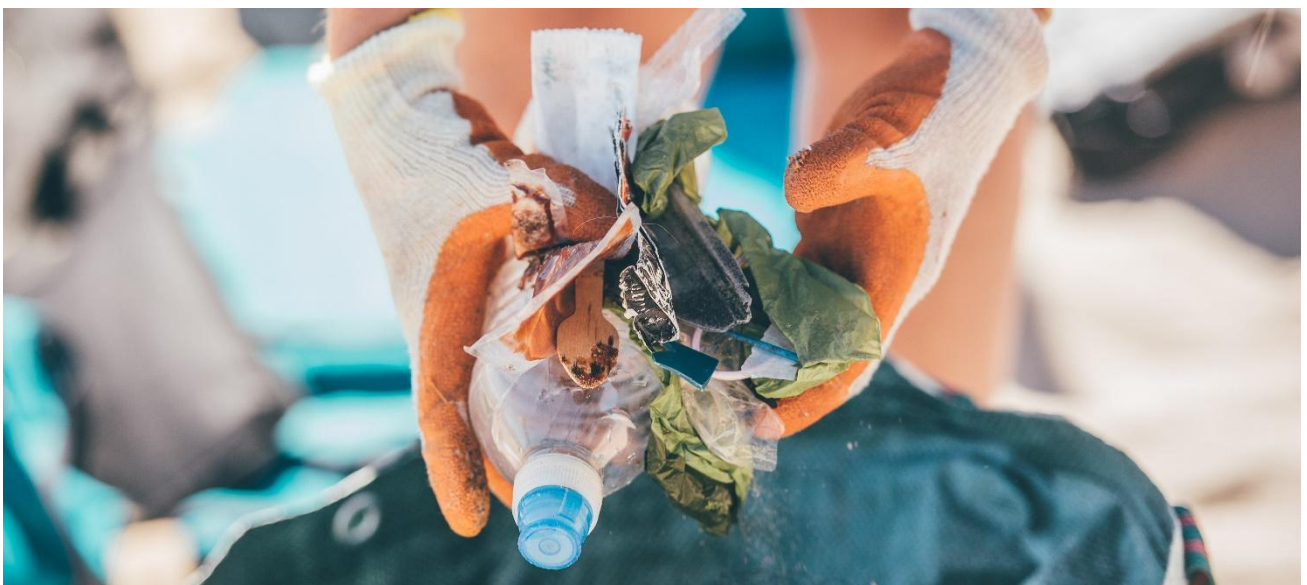
For a better-protected ocean

we secure spaces where species and habitats can recover. Only a sea full of life can absorb carbon and tackle climate change.

For a healthier ocean

we promote sustainable fishing to minimise harm caused by harvesting resources. And we educate the public so consumers can make better seafood buying choices.

We believe in fair, open and accountable democratic institutions, in an inspired and engaged society that values the sea and in businesses that are sustainable. We are committed to being inclusive and promoting diversity.



What does a Trustee look like?

Look in the mirror!

Right now, less than 3% of charity Trustees are under 30, 8% are people of colour and 36% are women. We are looking for people from across the UK and are keen to recruit trustees from all nations in the UK.

We value the many skills and experiences that you can bring to the Marine Conservation Society. We are committed to a Board culture that enables everyone to be their authentic selves and to enjoy the Trustee experience.

We believe that becoming a Trustee with us will be a rewarding journey for you – we want you to share your experience, your fresh perspectives, and we will listen to your views.

It's a critical time for our ocean. There is not a moment to waste. Our goal is to recover the health of our ocean so it can help with healing our climate; to make seas protected in law to be protected in practice; and to stop the tide of plastic that's getting into our waters.

Our Board needs people with a range of backgrounds, life stages, experiences, and skills who come together as a team to offer challenge and energy to one another, and to boost our ability to deliver for our ocean.

By joining as a Trustee, you will help navigate us through the risks and opportunities that we meet.

We want our organisation and Board to be reflective of our society. We recognise that we should all have the opportunity to take responsibility to protect our ocean for the future, so we are particularly interested in applications from groups which are typically under-represented on Boards. [You can read our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Statement here.](#)

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion are essential to achieving ocean recovery, creating an environment where everyone feels valued, respected and treated with fairness, free to contribute and thrive together.



What we're looking for

We're looking for people to join our Board with expertise in one or more of the following areas – click on the links for a fuller description:

- [Governance/Legal](#) – expected to be a legal professional with experience in charity, company or regulatory law.
- [Marine Conservation](#) – knowledge of the marine environment, with policy and/or practical experience of conservation. A network of contacts across the marine sector, particularly with business or government, would be an advantage.

What you can bring to our Board can be just as interesting as where you've been working. Ideally, you will have the relevant skills and experience set out in the profile but you should not feel prevented from applying if you do not have experience across all criteria. You do not need to have previous charity trustee experience, but you will need to be comfortable participating at a senior level with complex discussions and the need to be comfortable making pragmatic but key decisions.

Why join our board?

Being a Trustee can be a challenge, but it's also a brilliant opportunity for you to develop your skills, work as part of a team that shapes the direction of our charity in making tangible changes for the future of our ocean and planet. If you're passionate about what we do, then you'll feel the same excitement we have in making those changes happen.

You don't need to understand everything that we do or know the Latin names of fish, or in most cases, even to have experience of the charity sector. As a Trustee, you'll develop your personal and professional knowledge, work on strategy and develop an approach to managing risk and broaden your influencing and negotiation skills in a new context.

You'll also gain insight and knowledge from your fellow Trustees, with everyone's skills being recognised and valued. After a thorough induction to the Marine Conservation Society and your role as Trustee with us, including:

- An introduction to Directors, Heads of departments and other key team members to help you put together a whole-organisation view.
- Giving you the opportunities to get involved in our events and courses to understand fully the work we do on the ground.
- Ongoing support from the CEO, Company Secretary/Director of Finance & Operations and other senior managers as needed.
- Support and networking more regularly online and on occasions in person with the rest of the Trustees to share knowledge and experience.

Trustees are volunteers, so the role is not paid but we will cover your costs for travelling and any overnight stays to attend meetings or events.

Application and selection process

We value the knowledge and experiences that you will bring to Marine Conservation Society, and they may have been developed in a range of ways, and by many routes.

We understand that the application process can be difficult if you have a condition or disability that you live with. We want to make it as easy as possible for you to shine during your application process, so please let us know what we can do to accommodate you.

[Make your application here.](#)

We will manage your application through our applicant tracking system which means the shortlisting process will be done without your personal information being included. The software can remove it from your CV but it can disrupt the formatting so it's more effective if you don't include any personal information in any documents that you upload.

A sub-committee from our existing Trustees will consider your application and hold the first interviews. From there, the final shortlist will be invited to a second interview and if all parties are happy to go ahead, we will invite you to observe a Board of Trustees meeting which will be in July. Appointments will be confirmed in November with a letter from the Chair and then the final step will be to have this formalised at our Annual General Meeting which takes place in December.

Key dates

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis, so you may be contacted before the closing date, and we reserve the right to close this recruitment if we have sufficient, quality candidates.

| | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1st Interviews | End of June 2025 |
| 2nd Interviews | End of June/Early July 2025 |

If you have any questions, or need further information please contact

Joanne O'Hagan (she/her)

Head of People & Places

Email: hr@mcsuk.org

Phone: 01989 566017 Ext 200

What it means to be a trustee

Our Board of Trustees act together as a group to make sure that we are working in line with our governing document, that we work within the laws which are set for charities, as well as those for companies.

It's a role that has responsibilities to the charity, and you will make decisions that guide us to meet our aims. Our role is to give you the right information and guidance so that you may carry out your duties as described below:

Ensure that we are working to the charitable objectives set out in the articles of association, and that we do so within all the laws that apply to us. Agreeing our annual budgets means checking that our funds are spent on activities that meet our purpose as a charity. We must follow both charity and company law and the Board of Trustees holds us to account. You'll be supported in understanding what these laws mean and how we are expected to work.

Act in our best interests. As a group, Trustees must make balanced and informed decisions that look to the long-term success of the charity. When making decisions about our finances, you and the rest of the Trustees must not put the charity at risk, either with our funding, or our reputation, and to take care when investing or borrowing is on the agenda. It will mean you having good, independent judgement, and having the willingness to offer it in a group setting.

Apply reasonable care and skill. Your knowledge and experiences are important to us, and we appreciate the questions and advice that you as a Trustee will give us. You must give enough time and thought to being a Trustee, preparing for and attending meetings and actively taking part – and must speak up – if you feel more information is needed for the Board to make a reasonably informed decision when asked.

How our meetings work

Being a Trustee requires a time commitment from you for both formal and informal events. You'll act as a Trustee for three years and then you can offer yourself for re-election for another three years. After this, it might be possible to extend for one further year, particularly with honorary officer positions, such as Treasurer.

Board meetings are set at least a year in advance and usually held in April, July, October and February. To help keep travel to a minimum and reduce the impact on you and the planet, attendance is a mix of in-person and remotely via video conferencing and as you can be located anywhere in the UK, the locations of meetings will be as convenient as possible for all.

We like you to be able to come prepared, so we send out papers a week in advance of a meeting. To get the most from your role, we would like you to be at all four Board

meetings each year, plus join at a strategy day each year. Our cause needs highly engaged and passionate Trustees, so we hope these criteria sound reasonable.

We would welcome your involvement in our committees and ad-hoc working groups and all Trustees are members of two of these. We currently have the following committees which meet four times a year before each of the main Board meetings:

- Finance, Resources & Risk Committee
- Fundraising & Partnerships Committee
- Stakeholder Experience Committee
- Conservation Committee
- Governance Committee

The Chair may wish to discuss with you any other help that might suit your specific skills or areas of knowledge which may create relationships and networking opportunities with other organisations and fundraising contacts. You are more than welcome to actively offer your support on subjects of questions we're trying to answer when you can.

We really like you to join us at any of our events – they're all around the coasts and countryside so we'd love to have you at a beach clean, a workshop or a fundraising event. Your family are welcome to join in, too.

Want more information?

We've got it here <https://www.mcsuk.org/useful-information/> as a place you can read our annual reports, or see the latest year as a video: <https://www.mcsuk.org/about-us/impact-reports>

If you want to explore the role of a Trustee further, take a look at our Trustee Guide [Trustee Guide MCS 2021 4OWZuxZ.pdf \(amazonaws.com\)](#) or go here <https://www.gettingonboard.org/free-resources-for-aspiring-trustees>

Our governing document is the memorandum and articles of association and you can read that here: [https://media.mcsuk.org/documents/2.12.21 -
_MCS_Articles_of_Association.pdf](https://media.mcsuk.org/documents/2.12.21_-_MCS_Articles_of_Association.pdf)

| Governance/Legal | Conservation |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide strategic advice and guidance to the Board and senior leadership on matters of governance, compliance, and regulatory risk. • Help ensure the charity operates within the law and complies with relevant legislation, including charity law, company law, and data protection regulations. • Advise on legal aspects of contracts, partnerships, and other formal agreements. • Contribute to managing organisational risk, including reputational, legal, and operational risks. <p>Person specification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualified legal professional with experience in charity, company, or regulatory law. • Strong understanding of governance frameworks and regulatory requirements for charities. • Proven ability to interpret complex legal information and advise at Board level. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide strategic support and direction relating to the current and future priorities for marine conservation. • Provide thought leadership on developments in conservation advocacy and legislation. • Highlight the opportunities and the risks for our conservation work and campaigns. <p>Person Specification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of designing and leading conservation projects including funding initiatives, and monitoring and evaluation processes. • Experience advocating for conservation policies and regulations at the local, national, or international level. • Strong networking skills with the ability to build and maintain relationships with key stakeholders, donors, and partners in the conservation field. |

Ideally, you will have the relevant skills and experience set out in the profile but you should not feel prevented from applying if you do not have experience across all criteria.



**For more information or
to talk through the role,
please contact Joanne O'Hagan
Head of People & Places at hr@mcsuk.org**