



## **The William Morris Society: Trustee Job Description**

### **About the William Morris Society**

The William Morris Society is dedicated to promoting the life, work, and ideas of William Morris (1834–1896), one of Britain’s most influential designers, writers, and social thinkers. Through exhibitions, events, publications, education, and care of our collections, we preserve Morris’s legacy and ensure his vision remains relevant today. The Society is a registered charity, governed by a Board of Trustees.

### **Trustee Vacancies**

Our Society requires two new Trustees, one to become the Society’s Honorary Secretary, and one based in Hammersmith & Fulham.

The role of the Hon Secretary is to ensure that the Society’s administrative and related functions are carried out either by the post holder, in collaboration with the Chair, or through the Society’s Director.

The Hon Secretary is an officer of the Society, and as such is a member of the Society’s Finance and General Purposes Committee (F&GP).

We are looking for individuals who share our passion for William Morris, his family, colleagues, and network, and who are committed to furthering their work and ideas through the Society’s activities.

### **Role of a Trustee**

Trustees play a vital role in the governance and leadership of the William Morris Society. Working collectively as the Board, trustees ensure the charity is well managed, financially sustainable, and operating in line with its mission, values, and charitable objectives.

As we are a small, member-led charity, trustees must be willing not only to contribute to setting direction and strategy but also to take responsibility for and carry out practical activities that help deliver the Society’s work.

### **Key responsibilities**

The key responsibilities of the Hon Secretary role relate to the:

- management of Trustees meetings
- management of the AGM, including any election of Trustees
- induction of new Trustees

- supporting with charity governance
- managing the Society's relationship with the President, and WMS USA and Canada.

Work can be delegated to the Society' Director subject to agreement with the Chair, but responsibility for carrying out actions in a timely manner lies with the Hon Secretary.

Key regular activities include:

1. Trustees' meeting

- Liaise with Society Chair and Society Administrator over Minutes of the Trustees' meeting (to be taken and drafted by a member of staff) to ensure that the recorded information is correct, subsequently to ensure that they are circulated to Trustees, staff, and after signing by the Chair at following meeting, to the WMS USA and Canada contacts.
- Ensure that Chair signs the agreed minutes and pass to Librarian for archiving.
- Ensure that the Society President receives minutes and Agenda before each Trustee meeting and any other information he/she may require

2. Between Trustee meetings

- Record all F&GP decisions throughout the year and provide the Chair with details for each Trustee meeting and the Society Director for incorporation in the following Trustees meeting minutes.

3. Before and at the Annual General Meeting

- Check Trustees' terms of office and submit names for re-election, to the Society Director three months in advance to be included in the Society's AGM notification to members
- Ensure that Trustee elections including vacancies are advertised and seek candidates
- Support the Chair in any Trustee recruitment and induction processes
- Provide Chair and circulate Trustees with Trustee attendance record during previous year
- Liaise with Society Chair and Society Director to make sure the previous year's Statement of Accounts, Annual Report and AGM minutes are circulated to Trustees and available to members no less than 14 days in advance of the AGM.
- In the event of a contested election for trustees, act with Chair and Society Administrator as teller for the election.

4. First Trustees' meeting after AGM (May)

- Liaise with the Society Chair and Finance Manager to make sure Trustees' contact details are up to date and are then submitted to the Charity Commission.
- Ensure new Trustees sign Trustee Code of Conduct (copies to be kept by the Director in the office)

- Confirm membership of committees
- Set meeting dates for the following year in consultation with the Chair, Chair of F&GP and Director and circulate to Trustees and President.

#### 5. Charity Governance

- Monitor adherence with the Society's governing documents and update when necessary
- Review compliance with charity governance regulations as administered by the Society's management
- Liaise with the Charity Commission on behalf of the Society as required
- Provide regular charity governance updates to the Trustees

### **Person Specification**

We are seeking individuals who can bring enthusiasm, commitment, and skills that will strengthen the Society. While prior trustee experience is not essential, candidates should demonstrate:

- Knowledge of and enthusiasm for William Morris, his family, and his collaborators.
- Commitment to the mission and values of the William Morris Society.
- Willingness to devote the necessary time and effort (attendance at Board meetings, subcommittees, and events etc).
- Ability to think strategically and contribute to discussions and decision-making.
- Good communication and teamwork skills, with sound judgment and integrity.
- A willingness to take on both governance and hands-on responsibilities within a small charity.

We are particularly interested in candidates with expertise in one or more of the following areas:

- Fundraising and development
- Finance or charity law and governance
- Marketing, communications, or digital engagement

### **Time Commitment**

- Trustees are expected to attend quarterly Board meetings (usually held in London in person) plus quarterly committee meetings (held on-line).
- Additional time may be required for committee work, events, or specific projects.

### **Term**

Trustees are normally appointed for a term of three years, renewable by agreement.

### **How to Apply**

To learn more or to apply, please send your CV and a covering letter to:  
Gabriella Esser, Director: [director@williammorrisociety.org](mailto:director@williammorrisociety.org)

Applications are due by **Friday 12<sup>th</sup> December**.

In your application, please state which role you are applying for, either Hon Secretary or Hammersmith and Fulham based Trustee.

We look forward to hearing from you!