

WEST
Horsley
Place

Saxton Bampfylde



Appointment of Chair

October 2024

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Introduction

Thank you for your interest in the role of Chair of West Horsley Place Trust. This is a truly exciting time to join as Chair of a wonderful charity now in its 9th year. Bamber & Christina Gascoigne left an amazing legacy of an historic Grade I listed house and 380-acre estate, owned twice by King Henry VIII, for the benefit of many.

Since 1425, as a private house and estate there has been very little public access and we are just starting the journey of changing that. Last year we had over 26,000 visitors to the house and estate enjoying filming tours through to hedgerow festivals, and this year launched our free to access Sensory Garden supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. We are proud to have over 400 committed and engaged volunteers, who are passionate about our plans, direction and purpose as a Charity.

Since inception our focus has been on establishing the charity, stabilising the foundations of the charity, and market testing what our audiences are looking for from West Horsley Place. This has included ensuring the house, barn and other buildings of historic importance are shored up and suitable for public access. We have run a variety of large and small scale events to gain feedback from the public as to what they are looking for, as well as generate income and grant funding.

Having established a young and thriving charity, we are now about to embark on the next exciting phase of the journey. This will involve a major capital campaign to restore the house and estate, develop the West Horsley

Place Trust to be able to welcome more visitors, offer greater access, and a wider programme of events and activities in line with our vision and mission focussed on culture, heritage and nature.

As Chair, you will play a crucial role in shaping the strategic direction of the Trust. Your leadership will be instrumental in driving initiatives forward through the next phase, securing funding, and fostering relationships with key stakeholders. West Horsley Place Trust is seeking a visionary Chair who can build on the Trust's achievements and navigate the challenges ahead with creativity and resilience.

As the ideal candidate, you will have a strong appreciation for heritage, the environment, a track record of effective leadership and fundraising, and the ability to engage and inspire diverse supporters and stakeholders.

We look forward to receiving your application.

Giles Reid & Marilyn Scott
Chair & Deputy Chair
West Horsley Place Trust

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Our Story

West Horsley Place was privately owned and occupied by Mary, Duchess of Roxburghe until her death in 2014. Much to his surprise, she left the property to her great-nephew, author and presenter Bamber Gascoigne, formerly of University Challenge.

Bamber and his wife Christina understood the historic and architectural significance of the manor house, but over and above this, they felt it had a very special spirit of place. Their vision was that West Horsley Place should be conserved for the future and open for everyone to enjoy with culture, heritage and nature at its heart.

To this end, they created a charitable trust in 2015 giving ownership of West Horsley Place and all its assets to the charity. They also gifted the proceeds of three auctions of Mary, Duchess of Roxburghe's possessions to the Trust to provide initial funding. The Trust plays a vital role in both conserving a piece of British heritage and fostering community engagement through the arts. It aims

to create a lasting legacy by ensuring that West Horsley Place remains a space where history, nature, and culture thrive together.

The Trust Today

Bamber Gascoigne died in February 2022. His wife Christina is still committed to the charity, and our team of staff, trustees and volunteers and community supporters are making Bamber's vision a reality.

West Horsley Place Trust is governed by a board of trustees. Now in our 8th year, our turnover is growing and last year we welcomed 26,000 visitors to West Horsley Place. Our small team of 11 staff works hard to conserve and celebrate our landscape and buildings, and build a programme of culture, heritage and nature opportunities that will enrich peoples' lives.

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“Our idea was to encourage performances of all kinds, concerts in the house or in a restored barn, and summer music or drama in a beautiful corner of the garden with excellent acoustics. Our vision also derives from Christina’s profession. She is an artist in several fields, but particularly nowadays a potter, so we came to imagine West Horsley Place as a centre for crafts of all kinds in the restored stables and the large barn. The range of people interested in learning to use their hands in a creative activity is wide – children of all ages, working-age adults wanting a satisfying evening or weekend relaxation, and the increasingly large number of retired but very active people who like to enjoy the pleasure of working with their hands and ending up with a beautiful object. It is an inspiring vision. And I believe it will be an exciting adventure.”

Bamber Gascoigne, 2017

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About the estate

West Horsley Place is an estate of 380 acres. At its centre is the Grade I listed manor house, which dates from 1425 and is currently on Historic England's Heritage At Risk Register. The house is framed by a five-acre walled garden, and the estate features a further eight listed outbuildings.

Restoration

The restoration of West Horsley Place is a remarkable story of heritage preservation, bringing new life to an historic estate that had suffered significant deterioration. The initial focus of the restoration was to stabilise the structure to prevent further decay, and subsequently we have been working to preserve the charm and history of the manor while also transforming it into a space enjoyed by our community.

The restoration team has worked meticulously to conserve original features, such as the intricate plasterwork, oak panelling, and Tudor-era windows, using traditional craftsmanship techniques to maintain the authenticity of the interiors while bringing them back to their former glory. The project also includes rejuvenating the surrounding estate:

preserving ancient woodland, renovating formal gardens and maintaining the heritage landscape that complements the historic house. The revival of West Horsley Place is a shining example of how a historic property can be preserved and reimagined for a new era, enabling it to inspire and delight for generations to come.

While there is still restoration to be completed, we are hopeful that in around five years we will have achieved our aim of restoring the house to structural soundness. The future of West Horsley Place is brimming with promise, offering endless possibilities and opportunities, and the Trust is absolutely committed to bringing that potential to fruition.

Events and Partnerships

Grange Park Opera

In 2017, the West Horsley Place Trust developed a partnership with Grange Park Opera. We now have a 700-seat opera house on the estate, which has established West Horsley Place as a vibrant cultural centre.

Educational Workshops and Community Events

We host workshops, talks and community events throughout the year, focused on history, conservation and the arts, and include seasonal events, such as holiday celebrations, garden tours and craft fairs. These activities are designed for people of all ages and often include topics such as traditional building techniques, gardening, local history and storytelling. The events provide an opportunity to learn about the estate's ongoing restoration work and its cultural heritage, and to celebrate the community spirit of the place.

Private Hire

The estate is available as a venue for private events, including weddings, corporate functions and

special gatherings. Its historic charm and beautiful gardens, and the elegant backdrop of the manor house, make it a sought-after location for those looking for a unique venue.

Filming

The house and estate have been used as sets for films and series on a number of occasions, including for *BBC Ghosts*, *Enola Holmes*, *Vanity Fair*, *My Cousin Rachel*, *Mothering Sunday*, *Howard's End* and many more. We offer filming tours where visitors can discover more about the films and TV series filmed here.

Volunteering

We offer volunteering opportunities in several areas, including garden maintenance, assisting with events and helping with tours and educational programmes. We have over 400 volunteers who play an important role in supporting the Trust's mission and contributing to the upkeep and revitalisation of the estate.

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Governance

West Horsley Place Trust is an independent charity. We receive no direct government funding. Conservation works, the planning and development of arts and crafts programmes and other projects must therefore be primarily funded through donations, grants, earned income and any other income sources available to the Charity.

The Charity has a board of trustees who are responsible for the overall direction and leadership of the Charity. The directors of the charitable company are its trustees for the purpose of charity law. As set out in the Articles of Association, the trustees select the Chair of the Charity. The board appoints the Director who is responsible for the executive management of the Charity and, with the trustee board, for the long-term strategic management of the organisation.

The Charity's policy is to appoint trustees who have expertise in particular aspects of the Charity's work, who might have significant relevant local experience of the third sector or who have general management or finance experience at a senior level.

Current Trustees

GILES REID (CHAIR)

MARCUS COOPER

YOLYNDA DELUGAR

REBECCA LABRAM

MARILYN SCOTT

JOHN SIMPSON

BEKKI STOVELL

Read more about our Board of Trustees [here](#).

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The Role

The Chair is responsible for leading the Board of Trustees, providing strategic vision, effective governance, and support to the executive team. The Chair will work closely with the Trust's leadership, including the CEO and fellow trustees, to advance the Trust's mission, oversee the restoration and conservation projects, and ensure that the Trust is a thriving cultural, educational and community resource. The Chair will act as a key ambassador for the Trust, fostering relationships with stakeholders, donors and the broader community.

Leadership & governance

- Lead the Board of Trustees in fulfilling its responsibilities for the governance and strategic direction of the West Horsley Place Trust.
- Provide leadership and guidance to ensure that the Trust's objectives and priorities align with its mission and vision.
- Chair board meetings, setting agendas in collaboration with the Director, and ensuring meetings are effective and efficient.
- Oversee the recruitment, induction, and development of Trustees, ensuring a diverse and skilled Board.
- Ensure compliance with legal, regulatory, and financial requirements, maintaining high standards of transparency and accountability.

Strategy & planning

- Work closely with the Director and senior management team to develop and implement a long-term strategic plan for the Trust, encompassing conservation, restoration, community engagement and financial sustainability.
- Monitor the progress of the Trust's strategic goals and support adjustments as needed to meet changing circumstances.

- Support the development of sustainable revenue streams, including partnerships, fundraising campaigns and community engagement initiatives.

Fundraising & advocacy

- Serve as an ambassador for West Horsley Place Trust, representing its mission and values to key stakeholders, including potential donors, partners, government agencies and community groups.
- Lead fundraising efforts, including identifying and cultivating relationships with donors, sponsors and grant-making bodies.
- Support the Trust's communications strategy, raising awareness of the estate's restoration efforts and promoting its cultural and educational activities.

Stakeholder engagement

- Foster positive relationships with key stakeholders, including local community leaders, heritage organisations, arts and cultural institutions and other partners.
- Act as a public spokesperson for the Trust, representing it at events, conferences and media engagements.

Support for the Director

- Provide support and mentorship to the Director, ensuring they have the resources and guidance needed to lead the Trust effectively.
- Conduct regular reviews of the Director's performance, ensuring that their goals align with the strategic objectives of the Trust.
- Act as a sounding board for the Director, offering advice and counsel on key decisions and challenges.

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Person Specification

Essential skills and experience

- Proven leadership experience, ideally at board level, with a track record of guiding strategic planning and organisational development.
- Strong understanding of charity governance and the role of a charity trustee, with a commitment to upholding the highest standards of integrity, accountability and transparency.
- Experience in fundraising and building partnerships, with a strong network of contacts and experience of leading major funding applications.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, with the ability to build relationships and act as an effective ambassador for the Trust.
- Strong financial literacy and exposure across a full business model, and an understanding of financial management and budgeting, preferably in a charitable context.

Desirable skills and experience:

- Knowledge of and interest in the conservation, restoration and heritage sector, particularly related to historic buildings and estates.
- Experience of working with or within arts, cultural or charitable organisations, with a focus on audience engagement and public programming.
- Understanding of the local area and community.

Personal attributes:

- Passion for the mission of West Horsley Place Trust and commitment to preserving its legacy for future generations.
- Collaborative and inclusive leadership style, able to engage effectively with a diverse range of stakeholders, the Director and the Board.
- Resilient and adaptable, with the ability to navigate challenges and drive positive change.
- Strong sense of diplomacy, integrity and professionalism.



Terms of Appointment

The Chair serves a three-year term and is appointable for a further three-year term.

The Trustees meet bi-monthly at West Horsley Place, and the Chair will be expected to attend additional meetings. The time commitment is expected to be 2-3 days per month.

All trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no benefit from the Charity. Reasonable out-of-pocket expenses will however be paid by the Charity.

Due diligence

Due diligence will be carried out as part of the application process, which may include searches carried out via internet search engines and any public social media accounts.

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How to Apply

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to West Horsley Place Trust on this appointment.

Candidates should apply for this role through our website at www.saxbam.com/appointments using code **BBQNB**.

Click on the 'apply' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter and complete the online equal opportunities monitoring* form.

The closing date for applications is noon on **Monday 18th November**.

* The equal opportunities monitoring online form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. Please complete as part of the application process.

GDPR personal data notice

According to GDPR guidelines, we are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent. You will be asked to complete a consent form when you apply and please do not include any Sensitive Personal Data within your CV (although this can be included in your covering letter if you wish to do so), remembering also not to include contact details for referees without their prior agreement.



Saxton Bampfylde

LONDON
The Ministry
79-81 Borough Road
London
SE1 1DN

EDINBURGH
46 Melville Street
Edinburgh
EH3 7HF

saxbam.com

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