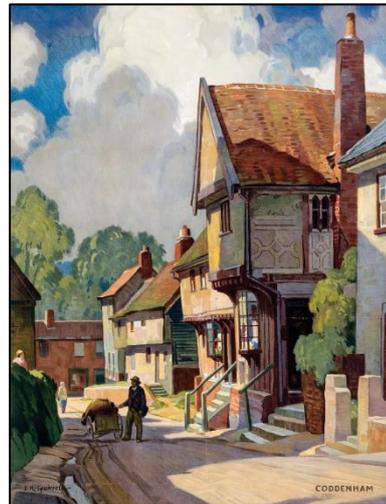


SUFFOLK

PRESERVATION SOCIETY

Trustee Recruitment Pack

*We care about Suffolk – our communities, our landscapes, our buildings.
We champion the county's unique heritage, and we work together
to protect and conserve what makes Suffolk special.*



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Suffolk Preservation Society

Little Hall, Market Place, Lavenham, Suffolk CO10 9QZ

CIO Number: 1154806

suffolksociety.org

1. A Message from the Chair

Thank you for your interest in the Suffolk Preservation Society (SPS).

It is an exciting time to join SPS. In 2029, we will celebrate our centenary. We have ambitious plans to mark our hundredth year of existence with a range of events and activities – both to grow awareness of our work and to mark our achievements over the past century.

The Society is a registered charity dedicated to protecting and enhancing the countryside, towns, and villages of Suffolk. We care about our county – our communities, our landscapes, our buildings. We champion Suffolk’s unique heritage, and we work together to protect and conserve what makes Suffolk special.

We are entering a dynamic period of transition and purposeful regeneration as we launch our vision for 2029. In December 2025, we appointed a new Director for the Society, who is tasked with reframing the charity in order to build awareness of its

charitable purpose and impact - with the ambition to grow income and engagement to ensure the Society’s long-term sustainability.

We see a future for the Society that is community-focused, optimistic, and inclusive. And we are seeking Trustees with the enthusiasm and commitment to support us in realising our vision. To find out more please access our [website](#).

I look forward to learning more about you and what you will bring to SPS. Thank you again for your interest and all best wishes for your application.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert". The script is cursive and elegant.

Robert Townshend
Chair of the Board of Trustees
Suffolk Preservation Society

2. About the Suffolk Preservation Society



The Suffolk Preservation Society promotes all that is special about our county's heritage. We recognise the benefits for communities and individuals that are gained from positive engagement with their surrounding environment. In Suffolk, we are fortunate to have an abundance of historic towns, villages, and protected landscapes.

We understand why our unique sense of place is important. We seek to celebrate our county, the people and crafts that sustain it, and how contemporary design and architecture can enhance the landscapes and buildings that make our county so special.

We are community-focused, inclusive, and optimistic for the future of our county. We are the only countywide amenity society dedicated to protecting and promoting the special historic and landscape qualities of Suffolk. We take a strategic position on major infrastructure projects affecting our county, and we also represent CPRE, the Countryside Charity on specific issues. In future, we will be building collaborative partnerships with funders to support training and apprenticeships in heritage building crafts, like pargeting, thatching, and flint knapping – all of which are prevalent in Suffolk's historic architecture. We also aim to empower communities to have a greater say in the future of their area through events and activities and by supporting Neighbourhood Planning. We seek to honour our history in preservation, while remaining relevant to Suffolk in the 21st century.

We are a member organisation. We currently have c. 600 members, including individuals, heritage societies, parish councils, and commercial businesses. We have a



diverse public programme of events including lectures, visits, talks and tours, which are open to members and non-members alike. We also have corporate partners and we seek to grow these areas of activity and support, in order to build more sustainable income streams.

Find out more about our history, current work, news, membership and events on our [website](#).

3. Our People

We are a small and committed team. As an independent charity, our Trustees ensure good governance oversight, through regular meetings and through supporting the staff in day-to-day operations and strategy. We are all connected with Suffolk, living in the county and embedded in our communities.

Our Patron

- Clare Fitzroy DL. Countess of Euston

Our President

- Geoffrey Probert DL

Our Board of Trustees

- Robert Townshend *Dip.LA, CMLI, Hon FRBS* (Chair)
- Karl Debenham (Treasurer)
- Sophie Douglas *BA(Hons), Dip Arch, RIBA, RIAS, AABC*
- William Dunn
- Lois Hunt
- Thomas Seymour
- Simon Sturgis *AADip RIBA*
- Jackie Ward *BA (Hons), Dip.TP, MBA, MRTPI*

Our Staff

- Tom Foakes (Director)
- Penny Rush (Office & Events Manager)

Find out more about our people [here](#).



4. About the Role

Main duties

Working with your fellow Trustees, you will contribute actively to the Board by:

- Setting organisational strategy and policy
- Being a strategic sounding board and critical friend to the Director
- Providing advice on the Suffolk Preservation Society's purpose, vision, mission, goals, and activities
- Contributing your specialist skills, experience, interests, and contacts to support the Board and staff team
- Contributing actively to the Board including attending Trustee meetings and scrutinising Board papers
- Ensuring that policies and practices are in keeping with the charity's aims
- Ensuring that the organisation functions within the legal and financial requirements of a charity and strives to achieve best practice
- Ensuring compliance with governing documents, charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulation
- Approving annual budgets and ensuring the financial stability of the charity
- Acting as an ambassador for the Suffolk Preservation Society – supporting the development of external relationships, partnerships, and increasing visibility in the sector



As a small charity, there may be times when you will need to be actively involved beyond Trustee meetings. This may be leading discussions, focusing on key issues, providing advice and guidance on new initiatives, or other areas in which you have special expertise.



What we are looking for

We are looking for candidates with experience in one or more of the following areas: charity management/governance, marketing and communications, fundraising/income generation, or finance. However, if you can bring energy, enthusiasm, and commitment to the role we welcome candidates with other skills and

experience who can add value and broaden the diversity of thinking on our Board. Candidates will also need to be:

- Pro-active, ambitious, and keen to be part of this exciting opportunity, supporting a charity that is both dynamic and transformative
- Used to working collaboratively and effectively with individuals, multiple bodies, and organisations
- Enthusiastic about Suffolk and the preservation of its unique qualities in terms of landscape, buildings, heritage crafts, and communities.

Your commitment

The SPS board of Trustees meets four times a year, in addition to an Annual General Meeting, with an expectation that all Trustees are able to attend each meeting in person. It is anticipated that as the Society grows, Sub-Committees may be formed in specific areas such as fundraising and development. In between meetings, Trustees will receive papers and documents, some of which will require comment, scrutiny and input. The time commitment averages about one day per month.



The Trustee's initial appointment is by the Trustees, for confirmation by the members at the AGM. Trustees retire by rotation, one third every year, but can stand for re-election by the AGM. This means that a trustee serves an initial 3 year term, and then either retires or stands for re-election for a further 3 years. They may serve a maximum of nine years. Trustees are expected to serve out their term, but do have the right to retire at any time on giving notice.

Trustees are also encouraged to support the Society by occasionally attending member events. While the position is unremunerated, reasonable expenses may be reimbursed.



5. How to Apply

Thank you for your interest in being a Trustee of the Suffolk Preservation Society.

Please submit your application to Robert Townshend, Chair of Trustees, in the form of a covering letter of not more than one side of A4, and a CV of not more than two A4 pages, detailing your relevant skills and experience, and your reasons for applying.

Please send your application by email to sps@suffolksociety.org. Early application is encouraged.

We welcome applicants who reflect the diversity of our county, including those from ethnic minority backgrounds, LGBTQ+, and those with disabilities. If you need any adjustments to the application process, please contact sps@suffolksociety.org.

For an informal conversation regarding the role and the Suffolk Preservation Society, please contact Tom Foakes, the Society's Director – director@suffolksociety.org

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