Meet our Board of Trustees

Tim Parker (Chair)

Tim Parker became Chair of the National Trust on 8 November 2014. He has enjoyed a long business career as CEO of several well-known companies. After a spell in the Treasury as an economist, he studied at the London Business School, and soon after was appointed as general manager of a subsidiary of Thorn EMI based in Chicago. In 1989 he led the management buy-out of Kenwood, the kitchen appliances company. Subsequently Tim has been CEO of Clarks, the shoe company, Kwik-Fit, the AA, and until recently, Samsonite, where he remains Chairman. Tim has been Chairman of Channel Nine TV in Australia and the Autobar Group, Europe’s largest vending company. He has also served as a non-executive director on the Boards of Legal & General, Alliance Boots and Compass Group. He is also a director and owner of the British Pathé film archive.

Orna NiChionna (Deputy Chair and Council member)

Orna was appointed to the Council in 2013 by the Soil Association, and appointed to the Board of Trustees in the same year. She was appointed Deputy Chairman in 2014. Orna takes whatever opportunities she can to alert people to the importance and fragility of the complex ecosystems that sustain us, and to the need to stop taking them for granted. She was Chair of the Soil Association from 2007 to 2013 and is still a member of its Council. She studied Electronic Engineering in Dublin and Cork, holds an MBA from Harvard Business School, and became the first female Partner in McKinsey’s London office in 1990. Her focus at McKinsey, where she spent a total of 18 years, was on consumers and retailers. She hopes and believes that her skills and experience in strategy, finance and governance, as well as her passion for protecting the environment, are helpful in her role on Council. She has been a member of the National Trust for many years and has been a Trustee of Sir John Soane’s Museum since 2012. She has served on various corporate boards since leaving McKinsey in 2001 and is currently a non-executive director of Royal Mail plc.

Michael Day CVO

Michael was appointed to the Board of Trustees in September 2016. He was Chief Executive of Historic Royal Palaces from 2003-17 and is widely credited for building one of the most successful conservation charities and visitor businesses in the UK. A curator by background, he oversaw the famous Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red poppies installation at the Tower of London. Other major projects included the re-presentations of Kew Palace and Kensington Palace (including the temporary installation Enchanted Palace) and Hampton Court’s Magic Garden. As chair of the Battersea Arts Centre and the Royal Tennis Court and a former trustee of Alnwick Garden Trust, Michael also has trustee experience. He lectures at universities and other institutions around the world on cultural leadership and historic site interpretation.
David Fursdon

David was appointed to the Board of Trustees in September 2016. He has a range of non-executive and consultancy interests in the environmental and heritage sectors, the common aspects of which have been the successful and sensitive commercialisation of rural and heritage assets. He has advised government on rural affairs, has been President of the Country Land & Business Association and been a Crown Estate and English Heritage Commissioner. He has also been involved in farming on his own account and now chairs Beeswax Dyson Farming Ltd. He has diversified his family estate in Devon. He is currently Lord Lieutenant of Devon.

Caroline Kay (Council member)

Caroline was elected to the Council in 2017 and has been a member of the South West Regional Advisory Board since 2013. She was appointed to the Board of Trustees in September 2018. A National Trust member since her 20s, she is currently Chief Executive of Bath Preservation Trust, an amenity charity and membership organisation promoting the conservation and sustainable development of the World Heritage City of Bath and running 4 accredited museums in the city. Before joining Bath Preservation Trust as CEO in 2007, Caroline’s career has been largely within the public or non-profit sector, with 20 years working with cultural organisations. She started her career as a Clerk in the House of Lords, was Deputy Director of Arts and Business, and spent 12 years as a senior arts consultant including as an expert advisor assessing lottery applications for the Heritage Lottery Fund. She has a 1st Class MA from Oxford University in Psychology and Physiology and an MSc from Bristol University in Organisational Psychology. Previous non-executive roles have included Chair of the Wiltshire Music Centre, Board Member of English Touring Theatre, Aldeburgh Productions and Winchester College, and a non-executive member of the Avon, Gloucester and Wiltshire Strategic Health Authority.

Sandy Nairne CBE FSA

Sandy Nairne joined the Board of Trustees in April 2015. Until recently Sandy was Director of the National Portrait Gallery (2002 -15) where he led the transformation of a much loved museum into an even more successful national institution. Among many other achievements as Director, Sandy enhanced the creative partnership between the National Portrait Gallery and the National Trust at Beningbrough Hall and Montacute House. He was previously Director of Programmes at the Tate, and has served on various advisory groups from the Fourth Plinth Selection Committee to the Maggie’s Art Group, and the Fabric Advisory Committee of St Paul’s Cathedral, which he currently chairs. Over the years Sandy has contributed to the governance of several organisations including the Royal College of Art and the British School at Rome. In 2014 he was appointed Chair of the Board of the Clore Leadership Programme, developing creative leadership in the cultural and heritage sectors across the UK. Alongside his enthusiasm and expertise in the arts, architecture and heritage Sandy has a long standing interest in learning and education, and in diversity and issues of identity. A man of varied interests, Sandy cites racing-punting, drawing and competitive croquet as among his many pursuits.
Zarin Patel

Zarin was appointed to the National Trust’s Board of Trustees in September 2018. She was the BBC’s Chief Financial Officer and member of its Board from 2004 to 2013 during which time she helped to transform the BBC into a fully digital broadcaster. Zarin led the BBC’s TV Licensing operation responsible for engaging with 26 million UK households. She also led the Digital Switchover Help Scheme which helped older and vulnerable people to convert to digital TV. Zarin spent 16 years at KPMG working on FTSE quoted conglomerates in a variety of sectors. She is currently a non-executive at John Lewis Partnership plc and HM Treasury where she sits on their respective Audit & Risk Committees. She was previously a Governor at The University of Arts, London and chaired the Audit & Risk Committee. Having worked at the BBC, Zarin understands the unique and important role that an institution like the National Trust plays in the nation’s life. And, personally, the National Trust has played a valuable part in helping her family, as first generation immigrants in the 1970s, to understand and appreciate our adopted home in all its physical beauty and its history.

Ade Rawcliffe

Ade was appointed to the National Trust’s Board of Trustees in September 2018. She is Head of Diversity for ITV Commissioning and is responsible for delivering ITV’s on-going commitment to reflecting the diversity of modern Britain at the heart of mainstream television. Prior to that, Ade led the Creative Diversity team at Channel 4 and spearheaded the delivery of the broadcaster’s 360Diversity Charter. She oversaw the creation of C4’s Commissioning Diversity Guidelines and developed projects through diverse funding vehicle the Alpha Fund, including the BAFTA award winning drama Run. Ade was also part of the team responsible for C4’s coverage of Rio 2016 Paralympics and London 2012 Paralympics, which broke records for employing disabled presenters and production staff. Ade also worked in the Features commissioning team and was a Television Producer at the BBC, ITV and in the independent sector. She sat on the Board of Governors for the National Film and Television School (NFTS), is a co-opted member of BAFTA’s TV Committee, on the Advisory Committee of The Edinburgh International TV Festival, and a board member of Women in Film & Television (WFTV).

John Sell

John joined the Board of Trustees in January 2015. He is an architect specialising in the care and repair of historic buildings. A former chair of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, he is now chair of the Joint Committee of National Amenity Societies and of the Historic Environment Forum. It was as a result of his initiative that the Heritage Alliance was founded. As Executive Vice-President of Europa Nostra he has influenced heritage policy in Europe and has been particularly involved in developing Europa Nostra’s 7 Most Endangered Programme and the Cultural Heritage Counts for Europe programme funded by the European Commission. Aside from his heritage interests, John is a director of a property investment company and chairs a charity devoted to adding enjoyment to the lives of disabled and disadvantaged people.
David Smart (Council member)

David was elected to the Council in 2012 and appointed to the Board of Trustees in January 2015. He has chaired the Trust’s Investment Committee since 2008 and is a member of the Investment Committee. David worked in the investment management field for 34 years for Barings, County NatWest and Fiduciary Trust which was subsequently taken over by Franklin Templeton. He served on a number of the subsidiary boards of the last two and chaired the board of Fiduciary’s Swiss Bank for a number of years. He currently serves on the investment committee of Beazley plc and of UNRWA, the UN agency which looks after Palestinian refugees in the Middle East. David has a particular interest in the maintenance of listed buildings and the improvement of the rural buildings in the Trust’s care, including the use of external finance to achieve these aims.

Nick Stace (Council member)

Nick was appointed to the Board of Trustees in September 2017 and has been an elected member of the Council since 2015. He is the UK CEO of The Prince’s Trust, as well as being a Board member of the Financial Conduct Authority and Chair of Governors at the Royal Agricultural University. Nick has spent many years leading consumer membership organisations in the UK at Which?, Australia at Choice, for European consumer umbrella body BEUC, and global lobbying and campaigning organisation Consumers’ International. Nick spends as much time as possible in the great outdoors with his young family and is passionate about young people reconnecting with nature. Nick has seen the National Trust as a member, visiting Trust properties and countryside and as a partner in creating the Wild Network and the widely acclaimed film, Project Wild Thing.