



Trustee Recruitment Prospectus

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Preserving history, inspiring the future

www.johnraesociety.com



An introduction

The John Rae Society 'JRS' is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation seeking Trustees to help lead our charity in the next, exciting phase of our Orkney-based Hall of Clestrain project - a project of national and international importance.

JRS purchased the Hall in 2016, subsequently installing a temporary visitor centre, employing a part-time Project Officer, holding numerous events and activities and undertaking outreach with schools.

With a conservation architect and a business consultant we are devising a redevelopment scheme to preserve the Hall and develop it into an internationally renowned visitor attraction and community resource to share the story and ethos of Dr John Rae and Orkney's key role in Scotland's past.

Our Board of Trustees is at a pivotal point in its development.

We currently have 6 Trustees out of a possible 12. We are therefore seeking up to 6 new Trustees to join our Board to lead the further development of the charity and plans for the Hall.

We're looking for people with a passion for our mission of public education and heritage preservation centred on the life and achievements of John Rae, one of the greatest Arctic explorers. We need people who bring energy and commitment, take a proactive part in our Board discussions, engage in healthy debate, respect others' viewpoints and then gather around to support and oversee delivery.

If you think you've got the skills, experience and personal qualities to support us in taking our next vital step, we would love to hear from you.

Role descriptions are available on request.

We are particularly seeking applications from people with the following skills and experience:

- Charity governance
- Finance
- Fundraising/income generation
- Historic buildings conservation
- Construction project management
- Volunteer management and support.

We are also looking for Trustees to fulfil the following roles:

- **Treasurer**, to provide assurance to the Board on our finances
- **Charity Secretary**, to provide leadership for the Society's governance
- **Lead Fundraising Trustee**, to provide Board-level leadership in this area
- **Lead Marketing and Communications Trustee**, to provide leadership across all platforms and media.



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The John Rae Society

The John Rae Society was launched in December 2013 by a passionate group of people keen to see the extraordinary life and achievements of John Rae rightly acknowledged, and his childhood home, Hall of Clestrain, preserved. We want to see John Rae take his place in world history as a ‘Great Scot’ and for his life to inspire generations to come.

The Society’s vision is for Hall of Clestrain to be an internationally renowned visitor attraction and community resource, sharing the true story and ethos of John Rae and Orkney’s key role in Scotland’s past, present and future connection with Arctic exploration and discovery.

To achieve this vision our aims are:

- Investigate, record, conserve, repair, manage and maintain Hall of Clestrain for generations to come
- Provide a fitting international legacy for John Rae, the Arctic explorer who discovered the Northwest Passage
- Be at the forefront of improving and strengthening Scotland’s Arctic and Canadian connections
- Work in partnership to grow and share an understanding of the Arctic through education, research, knowledge transfer and cultural awareness
- Enhance community pride, wellbeing and facilities
- Increase and improve the economic impact of tourism.

Since we began in 2013, we have built a dedicated and knowledgeable membership of almost 500 people from around the globe, keen to see us achieve our aims and to be a part of the story.

We are working hard on our plans to save Hall of Clestrain and restore it as an international visitor attraction.

This ambitious undertaking to preserve this highly significant building will be progressed through two projects:

Project 1 (short term)

Save Hall of Clestrain – an urgent repairs project to restore the building structure and exterior, making it wind and watertight and enabling it to dry out ahead of any further work.

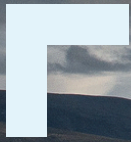
Project 2 (medium term)

Capital Project – a project to secure the long-term sustainable future of Hall of Clestrain through a mixed-use development combining heritage attraction, engagement, learning, community and commercial activities.

We have already secured a £500k Repair Grant offer from Historic Environment Scotland towards Project 1 and are working to secure match funds during 2026-27.

In parallel, we secured a £248k National Lottery Heritage Fund grant to refresh our plans and develop the resilience and capacity of our charity to deliver the Hall of Clestrain projects.

We plan to submit a National Lottery Heritage Fund Development Stage application in 2026.



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What does being a Trustee involve?

Trustees of the JRS have a shared responsibility for the strategy and effective governance of the charity.

Being a Trustee is about helping to make sure that the charity is managed and run responsibly, in line with the charity's objectives and for the benefit of Orkney and the public at large.

These are hugely valued positions, and Trustees will play a crucial part in the success and development of the JRS.

In line with the Scottish Third Sector Governance Code, the Trustee role is primarily focused on strategy, oversight and supportive challenge, providing leadership for the organisation and being positive ambassadors to drive its future direction. There will be volunteers and paid staff within the organisation to manage day-to-day operations and to report to the Board of Trustees.

JRS Trustees will receive plenty of support including a structured induction programme, availability of relevant training and wider Board development activities.

All Trustees will be required to sign a Code of Conduct. Trustees are not remunerated, but reasonable expenses will be paid.

The Office of the Scottish Charity regulator document, '[Trustee Duties](#)' sets out the key duties of Trustees in more detail.



If you have relevant skills and time to offer JRS as a volunteer, but you are unable to commit to a Trustee role, please do get in touch to explore the opportunities we have available.





What are the benefits of being a Trustee?

Trustees are vital for charities like ours to flourish – making sure we are well managed and delivering what we are set up for. You get a great deal in return.

What's in it for you?

Personal benefits include:

- A sense of fulfilment: Contributing to a worthy cause can be incredibly rewarding and give you a sense of purpose
- Community impact: You'll have the opportunity to make a tangible difference in your community, supporting a cause that matters to you
- Personal growth: The role can help you develop new perspectives and grow personally by facing new challenges and responsibilities
- Socialising: Meeting and networking with like-minded people.

Professional benefits can include:

- Skills development: Trusteeship can help you develop a wide range of skills, including governance, strategic planning, financial oversight, and leadership
- Networking: Serving on a Board allows you to connect with like-minded professionals, expanding your professional network
- Career advancement: The experience and skills gained can enhance your CV and make you more attractive to potential employers
- Leadership experience: You'll gain valuable experience in leadership and decision-making, which can be beneficial in your professional life.

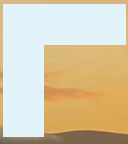
As well as sharing with you the benefits of being a Trustee, we are also realistic. You should

understand the responsibilities too:

- It's a voluntary role - you won't be paid
- It can be challenging – you'll need to commit time and effort.

People from all walks of life are working behind the scenes as Trustees for their favourite causes, quietly helping their communities thrive and succeed. Why not join them?





What are we looking for in our Trustees?

We need passionate advocates for public education and heritage preservation, in particular centred on the life and achievements of the great Arctic explorer John Rae.

We are looking for people who have the energy and enthusiasm to help us grasp opportunities, connect us with even more partners and help shape the future of the JRS. We need strategic thinkers – able to see the ‘big picture’, but equally happy to drill down into the detail when it’s needed.

We need Trustees who can commit time to support us at this critical juncture. JRS Trustees will typically commit 1-2 days per month to the role including attending monthly online/hybrid Board meetings plus an annual strategy awayday held in person in Orkney.

As well as putting in the time to prepare for, and follow up actions from meetings, Trustees are asked to support the work of the charity between meetings by providing advice, support and constructive challenge for volunteers and staff, as advocates for the charity and, in some cases, through additional volunteering.

There are also opportunities to participate in working groups.

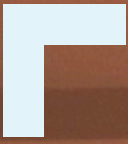
We need people who will work well as part of our team; people who communicate effectively, listen well, will respect others’ input, and who are able to compromise and get behind a joint decision.

We are committed to seeking broad perspectives on our Board.

As a charity focussed on public education and heritage preservation, we need a Board that represents the diversity of our audiences. Therefore, we encourage applications from people across a wide range of different backgrounds and ages.

We are hoping to appoint a mixture of candidates from across the UK and beyond and are particularly keen to improve the diversity of our Board in the areas of: age, disability, ethnic/cultural background (e.g. to include people from Canadian First Nations or Metis communities) and sexual orientation.





Application requirements

If you are interested in being considered as a Trustee, please apply with the following:

1. A supporting statement (no more than 2 sides of A4) setting out:
 - Why you would like to be a Trustee of The John Rae Society
 - What you will bring to the role with particular reference to our requirements
 - What you would hope to get from the role
 - Please indicate if you wish to be considered for a specific Trustee role.
2. Your CV if available.
3. Contact details for two referees to support your application.

Your application should be emailed to:
projectmanager@johnraesociety.com

Prospective candidates may be invited for an initial conversation about the role. Interviews will take place at the end of the application period. All candidates will be contacted whether they are invited for interview or not.

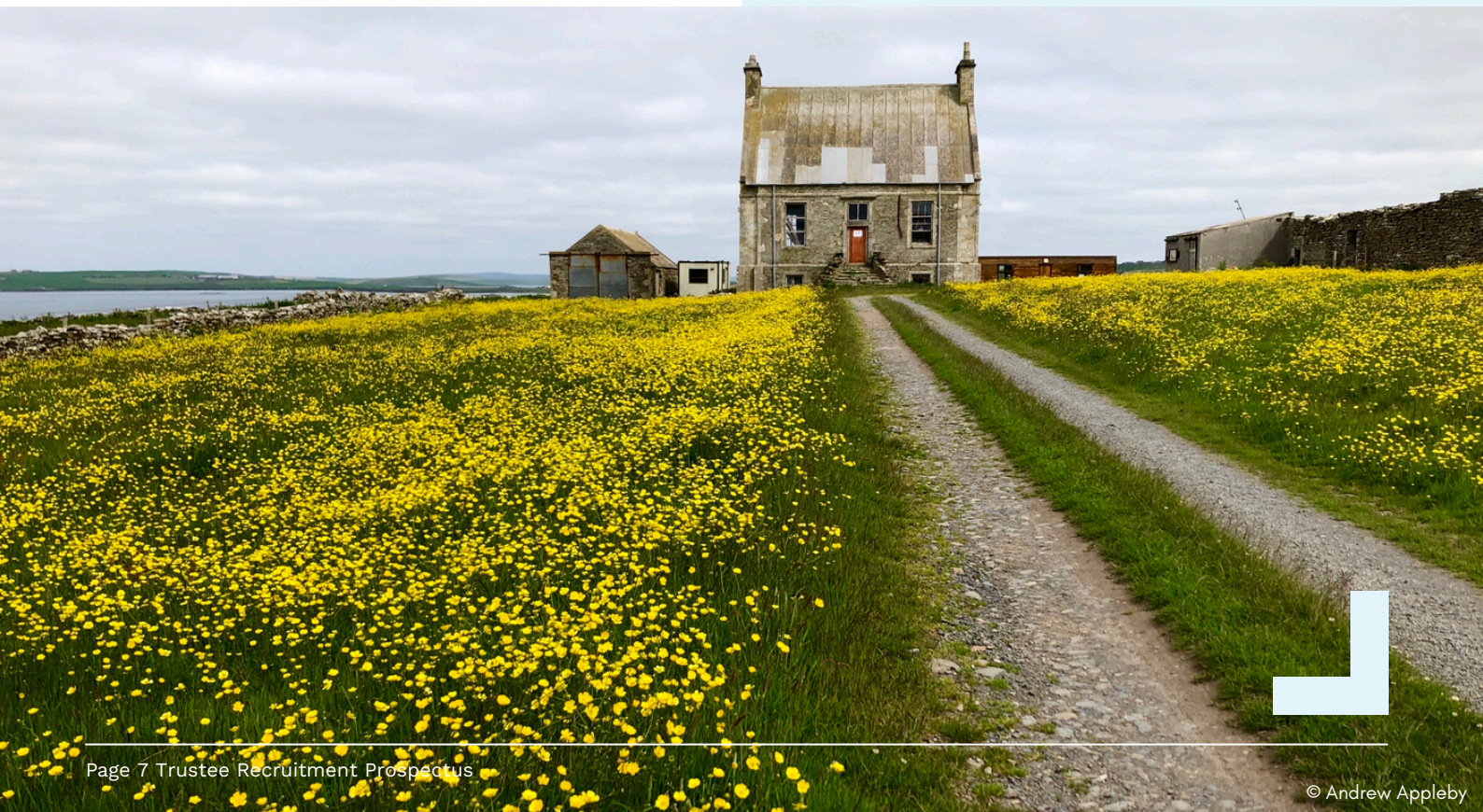
Recruitment timeline:

Closing date: 22 May 2026.

Interview dates: TBC (probably first half of June 2026).

Appointments: July 2026.

If you have any questions, or would like an informal conversation to discuss the role, please contact us at projectmanager@johnraesociety.com






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