

CHAIR - SOLDIERS OF OXFORDSHIRE TRUST

The Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum, Park Road, Woodstock, Oxfordshire, OX20 1SN.

The Soldiers of Oxfordshire Trust and Museum. The Trust's role is to tell the story of 'Conflict in the County', through the archives, oral histories and artefacts of combatants, civilians, prisoners of war and refugees, with an Oxfordshire perspective. The Trust, which is privately funded, operates its museum in Woodstock (co-located with, but separate from the County Council's The Oxfordshire Museum) and, in addition to its pods and galleries, has a vibrant programme of on and off-site talks, on and off-site events and community outreach. Now in its 12th year, amongst SOFO's core collection of artefacts are those from the Oxfordshire regiments (The Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry and the Queens Own Oxfordshire Hussars) and, amongst others, the Fleming family. The museum also holds an extensive document archive, and has a wide-ranging oral history archive. SOFO takes a broad view of how conflict has affected the County and, amongst many other things, it highlights the role of women in the military and how this has changed over the years, the plight of refugees from various conflict zones, and the very personal accounts from the liberation of Bergen-Belsen in April 1945. SOFO has extensive external networks into other military and non-military museums, academia and local communities. We seek to educate and inspire our visitors with stories that resonate in today's world.

Permanent Staff and Trustees. SOFO has a small permanent staff, led by our museum director, who are responsible for day-to-day operations. The trustees provide strategic direction and oversight of operations and activities, while hosting and curating specific events, and nurturing external relationships. Our trustees include a senior academic, local Woodstock residents, former senior military officers and business people and bring a wide range of experience, connections and capabilities to the trust.

The Role of the Chair. SOFO is seeking a replacement for its current chair, on completion of his 5-year term. The incoming Chair will be expected to lead SOFO through its next evolutionary phase, setting clear strategic objectives and guiding the collective trustee efforts in achieving them. The focus is on developing and honing SOFO's 'offer' to the public, implementing its fundraising strategy and associated revenue generation efforts, and deepening and broadening its external relationships. Trustees have individual portfolios such as external engagement and fundraising, with the chair responsible for providing the oversight, direction and coordination of the overall trustee effort. A summary of responsibilities includes:

- **Strategic Leadership:** to the board, the trust and museum, to ensure the museum continues to evolve and broaden its offer to the public in accordance with its charitable objectives, and is financially sustainable

- **Governance:** ensuring that the board of trustees exercises governance of the trust in compliance with Charity Commission and other statutory requirements and ensuring the board composition reflects the appropriate range of experience and competence to exercise effective governance
- **External Relations:** act as the principal ambassador in the trust's external stakeholder engagement, which covers local government, heritage and academic partners, donors and supporters and media
- **Efficiency and Effectiveness:** ensure the board of trustees operates efficiently and effectively, with clarity of responsibility and tasks for each trustee and clear direction and guidance to the museum director and her team
- **Line Manager for the Museum Director:** execute the role of line manager for the museum director, agreeing annual objectives, carrying out an annual salary review and providing direction, guidance and support as appropriate.

The role is not remunerated.

The role would suit an individual with an interest in military history and of how society is affected by conflict, recognising the importance of the stories of individuals and their personal experiences.

Time Commitment. The time commitment for the Chair is a quarterly Trustees meeting either in-person at SOFO in Woodstock or via video, with additional quarterly and ad hoc sub-committee meetings. Additional commitments are variable but comprise ad hoc external engagements with key stakeholders and the hosting of events at SOFO and externally, in conjunction with other trustees.

An interim chair from amongst the trustees is pending appointment (6-month maximum duration) and, together with the current chair, will be available for a hand over.

Those interested in finding out more about the role please contact Heather Carter at heather.carter@sofo.org.uk

Closing date: May 8th 2026