RSPCA. North West London and South Hertfordshire Branch
Registered Charity No. 1209372

Honorary Secretary

The RSPCA Middlesex North West London & South West Hertfordshire Branch CIO operates as a small, independently registered charity within the national RSPCA structure, promoting animal welfare in our local area. We are responsible for raising our own funds to support a range of branch activities, including rehoming small animals, supporting local pet owners and providing animal welfare education to schools and community groups.

We are looking for someone with a passion for animal welfare to take on the role of Honorary Secretary.

Purpose of the Role:

The Honorary Secretary is a trustee and officer of the Branch, helping the board conduct its business effectively, keep accurate records and meet its governance obligations. The role works closely with the Chair, CEO, Treasurer and Branch Administration Manager.

All trustees share responsibility for the charity. The Secretary coordinates governance processes, with administrative support and tasks shared by agreement. Day-to-day management is delegated to the CEO and staff within agreed limits.

- Facilitate the smooth running of the trustee committee's business and maintain accurate records.
- Ensure that the branch complies with the requirements of the branch constitution and Branch Partnership Agreement, and that the Charity Commission's trustee records are accurate.
- Support the trustee committee in reaching decisions on all branch-related matters.

<u>Responsibilities as a trustee</u>

- Act in the Branch's best interests and help ensure that its resources are used responsibly to further its charitable purposes.
- Contribute to strategy, financial oversight, risk management and scrutiny of the Branch's performance, including safeguarding responsibilities.
- Prepare for and attend board meetings, exercise independent judgement, offer constructive challenge and make decisions collectively.
- Declare and manage conflicts of interest, respect confidentiality and undertake relevant trustee induction and training.

<u>Board meetings and decisions</u>

- Arrange trustee meetings and, with the Chair and CEO, prepare and circulate agendas and supporting papers in good time. Coordinate invitations to relevant RSPCA colleagues and other attendees, as appropriate.
- Support the Chair in applying the constitution's rules on notice periods, quorum, voting and decision-making, including decisions taken between meetings.

- Ensure accurate minutes record attendance, conflicts and how they were managed, decisions, resolutions, significant reasons and agreed actions. Circulate drafts promptly and arrange formal approval and authentication.
- Maintain an action log with named owners and deadlines and report progress and outstanding actions to the board.

Governance and records

- Become familiar with the Branch constitution and Branch Partnership Agreement; support the board in meeting their requirements and flag concerns to the Chair.
- Maintain the statutory trustee and membership registers, coordinating membership records with the Branch Administration Manager and relevant national RSPCA records.
- Coordinate trustee appointment and retirement records, eligibility declarations and required Charity Commission updates. Maintain the register of interests and arrange regular updates.
- Keep governance records organised and secure on the Branch's agreed systems, including Google Drive, with appropriate access and retention arrangements. Retain trustee and general meeting minutes for at least six years and support lawful access to records.
- Maintain a governance calendar covering meetings, reporting deadlines, trustee terms and scheduled reviews of governance policies and delegated authority.
- Work with the Treasurer, CEO and administration team to track approval and timely submission of the annual return, accounts and trustees' annual report.
- Review relevant national RSPCA communications, refer requirements and significant updates to the appropriate trustee or manager, and track agreed actions.
- Coordinate updates to the risk register with the CEO and relevant trustees and ensure regular board review. Risk assessment and action remain shared responsibilities.
- Coordinate induction of new trustees and support continuing training, succession planning and an orderly handover of the Secretary's responsibilities.

Annual General Meeting and membership

- Arrange the AGM and any other required general meetings, working with the Chair and Branch Administration Manager to circulate notices, papers and proposed resolutions in line with the constitution.
- Support checks on voting eligibility, quorum and election or appointment procedures; ensure attendance, decisions and minutes are recorded and outcomes followed up.

Skills and qualities

Essential: commitment to animal welfare; strong organisational and communication skills; attention to detail; sound, independent judgement; confidence using digital systems; discretion; and the ability to work collaboratively and raise concerns constructively.

Desirable: experience in charity governance, committee administration or minute-taking, and knowledge of charity law. Training and support will be provided.

Practical arrangements and support

This is an unpaid volunteer trustee role. Reasonable expenses are reimbursed in line with Branch policy. Appointment is subject to trustee eligibility checks and the requirements of the Branch constitution and applicable RSPCA rules, including any membership requirements.

Time commitment, meeting frequency and location, and the term of appointment will be confirmed with applicants before appointment. We offer Branch induction, mentoring, access to RSPCA Link resources and training, and support from trustees and staff. Please let us know if you need adjustments to the recruitment process or role.