

Honorary Solicitor and Secretary

Role Description

(A) The role

The Honorary Solicitor and Secretary is part of the Board of Trustees, and as a Trustee you are responsible for the management of the affairs of the Institute and promoting the Institute's charitable objectives. The RTPI is a registered Charity and its Trustees must follow the rules and regulations as mentioned in the RTPI's governing documents; act responsibly and only in the interests of the Institute; use reasonable care and skill and make well-informed decisions, taking advice when needed.

As an Honorary Solicitor and Secretary, you will have the additional responsibilities of applying your:

- Knowledge and experience of current legal practice relating to registered charities.
- Knowledge of legal governance.
- Good legal analysis skills,

(B) What's involved?

The Board of Trustees are responsible for making decisions in the following areas.

Leadership

- Shaping the RTPI's corporate planning processes – including the corporate strategy, the business plan, and the annual budget and supporting documents such as committee work plans.
Ensuring the RTPI has appropriate policies in place on key matters such as the health and safety, risk management, data protection and financial management.

Statutory responsibilities

- Ensuring that the Institute is carrying out its purposes for the public benefit.
- Complying with the Institute's governing document and the law
- Acting in the Institute's best interests
- Managing the Institute's resources responsibly
- Acting with reasonable care and skill

Governance

- Approving the RTPI's annual report and accounts.
- Reviewing the auditors' report on the annual accounts.
- Agreeing the subscription structure for the following year, subject to consultation with the General Assembly.

Building relationships

- Receiving reports from the Institute's standing committees, subcommittees, panels and groups (if any).
- Receiving reports from the President, Chief Executive, volunteers, and senior staff.
- Fostering and maintaining good relationships with Trustees, committee members, volunteers, and staff.

This list is indicative and other appropriate matters may arise.

In addition to the above, Trustees are required to follow:

- [Trustee's Responsibilities, Behaviours and Competencies](#)
- The guidance published by the Charity Commission: [The essential trustee: what you need to know, what you need to do](#)
- [The RTPI Trustees Code of Conduct](#)

The RTPI Trustee role is a voluntary role. All RTPI volunteers:

- Act in the interests of the RTPI, irrespective of any commitments to other organisations or groups or any personal interests.
- Declare any potential conflicts of interest and seek advice from the governance manager, if necessary.
- Adhere to relevant RTPI policies, procedures, and behaviours.

(C) What's expected of you?

Expected Time Commitments & Term of Office:

- This role is for a three -year term from 1st January 2024 until 31st December 2026.
- In total there are six Trustees Meetings and four General Assembly meetings a year plus preparation work and follow up actions.
- Members of the Board of Trustees are also members of the General Assembly,
- Trustees are expected to attend and contribute to the discussions and decisions at the Board of Trustees meetings. This will involve reading the papers for each meeting, which are sent out at least ten days in advance of the meeting. Trustees can raise questions about the papers with officers as necessary.
- Papers may be circulated electronically between meetings for consideration by the Board of Trustees. On average, this is likely to take place once every couple of months.
- Trustees may also be asked to serve as Chair, Vice-Chair, or as a member of the Institute's committees/subcommittees/panels or on a task and finish group.
- Trustees may also be asked to represent the RTPI at a conference/events as required.
- Trustees will be required to attend the following key meetings for 2024,.
 - Dates to be confirmed for 2024
- In addition to the above meetings in 2024 induction training will take place in January 2024.
- The role will require an average time commitment of 1-2 days a month.

(D) What support can you expect?

- Support from RTPI officers.
- Well planned induction programme.
- Training, briefings or guidance documents on relevant topics.
- Expenses covered in line with our [policy](#).

(E) What's in it for you?

The chance to be part of an enthusiastic team of professionals and make a real difference to the planning profession and communities in which we live and work.

The opportunity to:

- gain board level experience and transferable skills in strategy, business planning, investment and risk management.
- help shape the future development of the RTPI.
- help steer the delivery of the objectives set out in the Institute's [Corporate Strategy](#) 2020-30.
- access professional networking.

- expand your Continuing Professional Development (CPD) portfolio.
- gain an understanding of the role of governance in a membership organisation.
- learn about areas of planning outside of your expertise.

(F) About you

The Honorary Solicitor and Secretary will have the following attributes:

- Knowledge and experience of current legal practice relating to registered charities
- Knowledge of legal governance
- Good legal analysis skills
- Credibility within the profession and among external stakeholders and the wider community.
- The ability to work as a member of a team and a willingness to accept a majority decision and be tolerant of the views of other people.
- A commitment to be well informed about the work of the Institute and to devote the necessary time to the requirements of the role.
- A strong commitment to planning and the RTPi's strategic objectives and vision.
- Active involvement within the Institute.
- Availability to attend the General Assembly, the Board of Trustees and other relevant meetings as scheduled.
- Good communication and interpersonal skills.
- Impartiality, fairness and the ability to treat sensitive information confidentially.
- Good understanding of the Institute's work and the key stakeholders with which it engages.

(G) How to get involved

Elections to appoint Honorary Solicitor and Secretary are held once every three years. The Honorary Solicitor and Secretary is elected by the General Assembly for a term of three years.

(H) Eligibility

Candidates must be:

- A Legal Member or Legal Associate; and
- Supported by at least four General Assembly members.

Elections take place based on a single transferable vote (voters rank the candidates in order of preference: 1 for their first preference, 2 for their second preference, and so forth).

(I) Key Contact

The Governance Team at governance@rtpi.org.uk

This is a voluntary role. The duties outlined above reflect our shared hopes and expectations but do not create any contractual obligations.