

# Moths and Butterflies of New Zealand Trust

## The Role of a Trustee

The **Trustees** (sometimes referred to as the **Board**) are responsible for the governance of a trust, putting in place strategies to enable the organisation to meet the aims and objectives for which it was formed.

This can involve:

- reviewing the purpose,
- analysing the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities associated with the purpose,
- analysing the environment in which the organisation will operate (including the political, economic and social environment),
- analysing any competitors and/or potential partners and,
- identifying appropriate strategies.

Trustees do not generally manage the trust. Those who carry out the **management** of the trust (officers such as the secretary and treasurer) need to set the timeframes and the reporting back processes and then monitor the implementation of the strategies.

Monitoring includes checking budget and financial performance, legal compliance and management performance. It also includes setting up key indicators to give a picture of progress and against which to measure performance.

Members and other stakeholders (such as the funders and authorities with whom we work) are entitled to expect high standards of accountability from both trustees and management. Those in charge need to provide a clear and accurate view of what our organisation is doing, how it is performing and the assurance that it is operating in the best interests of the stakeholders.

**Strategic plans** include foreseeing potential obstacles and putting in place plans to minimise the impact of events or changes that would have a negative effect. Obstacles come in many forms and can include key staff leaving, misuse of funds, technology failures, exchange rate variations and civil emergencies. Plans to counter obstacles can include ongoing training within the workplace, audit requirements in dealing with funds, and monetary restrictions on cheque signatories, cash flow forecasting, policies for legal compliance and policies for dealing with civil emergencies.

The Moths and Butterflies of New Zealand Trust (formerly the Monarch Butterfly New Zealand Trust) was incorporated under the Charitable Trusts Act 1957 as a registered charitable trust, No. 1679763, with donee status. It was established to increase biodiversity within NZ, to benefit present and future New Zealanders - and of course the monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*).

We require any candidate for the position of a trustee to be of high moral standards, with a clear vision for our objects, which are:

- i. to raise public awareness and increase biodiversity within New Zealand for the benefit of present and future New Zealanders;
- ii. to maintain, protect and increase biodiversity within New Zealand, so that the natural habitat of the monarch butterfly and other Lepidoptera species are protected and enhanced;
- iii. to increase opportunities for members of communities and visitors to New Zealand to enjoy and experience the monarch butterfly and other Lepidoptera species as part of the natural environment;
- iv. to encourage members of the public within New Zealand to protect and enhance other habitats of the monarch butterfly;
- v. to enable research groups and individuals to carry out research and education projects relevant to the trust's objects;
- vi. to liaise with groups with similar objectives;
- vii. to seek funding support for any of the objectives of the trust.

Trustees are invited onto the Board by the trustees, and confirmed by the members at an Annual or Special General Meeting.

To be registered as a charitable trust, charities must ensure that each of their officers qualifies as an officer under the Charities Act 2005. The disqualifying factors are set out in Section 16 of the Charities Act, i.e. an officer must not be:

- an undischarged bankrupt
- younger than 16
- subject to a property order under the Protection of Personal and Property Rights Act 1988, or have their property managed by a trustee corporation under section 32 of that Act
- prohibited from being involved with the management of a company under sections 382, 383 or 385 of the Companies Act 1993
- convicted of a crime of dishonesty and sentenced within the last seven years
- disqualified from being an officer by the Commission under section 31(4) of the Charities Act
- a body corporate that is being wound up, in liquidation or receivership or subject to statutory management under the Corporations (Investigation and Management) Act 1989
- disqualified from being an officer under the rules of their organisation.

Our trust deed states that a trustee will cease to be a trustee if he or she:

- dies; or
- resigns; or
- is absent from New Zealand for a period of six months without obtaining leave of absence from the board; or
- fails without prior leave of absence from the board to attend three consecutive board meetings; or
- becomes mentally incapable as certified by an independent medical practitioner; or
- ceases to be a financial member of the trust; or
- is deemed by a majority vote of the board to have failed to have fulfilled the duties of trusteeship.

The name, position held and date of appointment of all officers since our charity first registered is available on the public register. However, the Charities Commission may restrict public access to certain information and documents if it considers it is in the public interest to do so. We can ask for information about our officers to be restricted from public access and the Commission will make its decision on public interest grounds.

The Charities Commission provides information about the Charities Act and their work; or they can be reached on 0508 242 748.

## The Role of Management

### Management (Officers)

Management – that is the Secretary and Treasurer – carries out the day-to-day implication of the aims of our organisation. Quite often boards not having a separate management team form Committees to enhance the effectiveness in key areas.

### Secretary

The Secretary is the chief administration officer of the Trust. This person provides the coordinating link between members, the management committee and outside agencies.

The Secretary is directly responsible to the Trust Board and the members of the Trust.

The Secretary should:

- Prepare the agenda for meetings in consultation with the Chairperson.
- Make arrangements including venue, date, times and hospitality for meetings.
- Send adequate notice of the meetings.
- Collect and collate reports from office-bearers.
- Call for and receive nominations for Committees and other positions for the Annual General Meeting.
- Take the minutes of meetings.
- Write up the minutes as soon as possible after the meeting.
- Read, reply and file correspondence promptly.
- Collate and arrange for the printing of the Annual Report.
- Maintain registers of members' names and addresses, life members and sponsors.
- Maintain files of legal documents such as constitutions, leases and titles.
- Act as the public officer of the Trust, liaising with members of the public, affiliated bodies and government agencies.
- Respond to general duties as required.

Ideally the secretary is someone who:

- Can communicate effectively.
- Is well organised and can delegate tasks.
- Can maintain confidentiality on relevant matters.
- Has a good working knowledge of the constitution.

**Treasurer**

The Treasurer is the chief financial management officer for the Trust. The treasurer is directly responsible to the trustees and members of the Moths and Butterflies of New Zealand Trust.

The Treasurer should:

- Prepare a budget and monitor it carefully.
- Keep the club's books up-to-date.
- Keep a proper record of all payments and monies received.
- Make sure financial reports are available and understood at all Board meetings.
- Show evidence that money received is banked and documentation provided for all money paid out.
- Ensure that information for an audit is prepared each year.
- Arrange the audit.
- Provide the Treasurer's report at meetings and when required.
- Produce an Annual Financial Report.
- Send out accounts.
- Bank funds received.
- Liaise with the bank
- Pay accounts receivable.

Ideally the treasurer is someone who is:

- Well organised.
- Able to allocate regular time periods to maintain the books.
- Able to keep good records.
- Able to work in a logical orderly manner.