

PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

## Candidate Brief



Arboricultural  
ASSOCIATION

[trees.org.uk](http://trees.org.uk)

Arboricultural Association

Chief Executive Officer

U0301

March 2021

**Managing Director**

Sarah Thewlis

[sat@thewlisgraham.com](mailto:sat@thewlisgraham.com)

## Contents

1. Welcome letter from Michelle Ryan, Chair of AA
2. About the Arboricultural Association
3. Job Description and Person Specification
4. Salary and Benefits
5. Timeline, Application Process and How to apply
6. Diversity and Inclusion Monitoring
7. Advert





## Welcome letter from Michelle Ryan, Chair of AA

Dear Candidate

I am delighted that you are interested in applying for the position of Chief Executive with the Arboricultural Association. Please see our website for further information about us [www.trees.org.uk](http://www.trees.org.uk).

We were founded in 1964 to bring together the civic and the commercial sectors to deliver a united voice for tree-care, and with 3200 members we are the UK's largest professional body for the amenity tree-care professional. We have set our mission to be the UK's undisputed voice on arboriculture, and we hold to the five values of Influence, Impact, Inspiration, Integrity and Independence.

The arrival of Covid 19 has meant major changes to how we deliver services to our members. I am delighted to say that the staff team did an excellent job. We increased membership, delivered on-line learning, changed the arb show into a virtual event with 19,000 attendees, and continued to raise the profile of our members' work with the public.

Working with the Board, the next CEO will have both challenges and opportunities. They will include continuing support to our members in a post-covid world, building on what we have learned over the past year, continuing to raise our profile with both government and the public, and setting a new 3-year strategy starting in 2022.

We are looking for an outstanding candidate who will build on the excellent work of our retiring Chief Executive and work with the Board to maximise current and future opportunities.

If you believe you have what it takes to fill this exceptional role, we would very much like to hear from you.

For a confidential conversation with Thewlis Graham Associates, our recruitment partners for this role, please contact their managing director Sarah Thewlis on 0207 850 4781 or email [applications@thewlisgraham.com](mailto:applications@thewlisgraham.com). Sarah will be very happy to have a discussion with you and answer any questions you may have.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M. Ryan".

Michelle Ryan  
Chair

## 2. About the Arboricultural Association

With over 3200 members the Arboricultural Association (The Association) is the largest and most established membership organisation for arboriculturists in the UK.

The Association can trace its roots back to 1964. Ten years later, the two groups of local government tree officers and commercial tree surgeons amalgamated to form the Arboricultural Association of today. The aims were to provide comprehensive representation of local government, commercial and lay interests.

The Association has influenced government and the establishment of education courses in both tree surgery and arboriculture. Through membership and publications, the Association creates and promotes professional standards of conduct and good practice.

The Association's membership grade structure is linked to the Qualifications and Credit Framework. Members can progress through the membership grade structure as their career progresses in either civic or commercial employment at craft, technical, supervisory, managerial or consultancy level.



To meet the objective “to advance the science of Arboriculture for the public benefit” the Association holds seminars, conferences and produces a range of publications dealing with all aspects of tree care, from booklets, leaflets, guidance notes and including – The Arb Magazine and the Arboricultural Journal.

The Association provides a directory on its website for Registered Consultants and Approved Contractors.

The Summary Objectives of the Association are:

- 1 Facilitating the provision of relevant and up to date information in relation to the management of trees.
- 2 To advance the study of arboriculture and raise the standards of its practice through the provision of training and workshops to all levels of the profession and to the general public.
- 3 To raise governmental and public awareness of issues relating to arboriculture.

- 4 To foster and promote an interest in trees through publications, exhibitions and the stimulation of research or experiments, and to grow society's appreciation of trees and engagement with tree professionals.
- 5 To be the voice of arboriculture to the public and other external organisations.

### **An overview of the structure**

The Association's business is governed by a Board of Non-executive Directors who are also Trustees of the charity. The Directors are democratically elected by the members. The Directors are supported by a number of committees and working groups.

10 regional branches provide a more local focus for members in England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland. Each branch is governed by democratically elected branch members. The branches are run by volunteer members.

The day to day running of the Association is managed by the staff, a team of 9 FT and 3 PT based at the Malthouse, near Stonehouse in Gloucestershire. They are responsible for a wide range of membership support and more details can be found on the website: [www.trees.org.uk/](http://www.trees.org.uk/)

### **Arboricultural Association (AA) – Overview of Activities – March 2021**

The AA is regarded by many as being the focal point for world class best practice in arboriculture and is the home for all sectors of arboriculture, civic, commercial and academic and the home for all levels of tree care professional, craft, technical, supervisory, managerial or consultancy. Our professional members are increasingly employed and consulted, wherever there are trees, all over the world, to deliver specialist advice and operations.

Our purpose is to promote the sustainable management of trees for the benefit of society, in areas where people live, work and play. The Association is a registered UK charity.

### **Association Key Values & Vision:**

**Our vision is that:** We will raise the profile of our industry through promotion of the associations activities to such an extent that our expertise and resources are increasingly valued, understood and where appropriate utilised or specified as part of common practice.

#### **Influence**

- We will work with partners to raise the profile of the industry, inform the public and persuade those with influence and decision-making authority that amenity trees must become a publicly supported priority in the UK's environmental planning and policy.



### Impact

- We will publicise and promote our achievements in the sector so that they are noticed by our peers, the public and government; we will identify, share and promote best practice wherever benefit can be delivered.

### Inspiration

- We will be at the cutting edge of tree knowledge, set the agenda for trees in the built environment and show leadership on how best to care for and manage amenity trees.

### Integrity

- We will provide a pool of expertise, with access to information and knowledge, monitored to ensure standards are upheld. We will measure our performance, evaluate how we work, where we need to improve and how we may achieve that.



### Independence

- As a self-funding group of professionals, we retain an independent voice. Free to influence decision makers and challenge actions and policy that falls short.

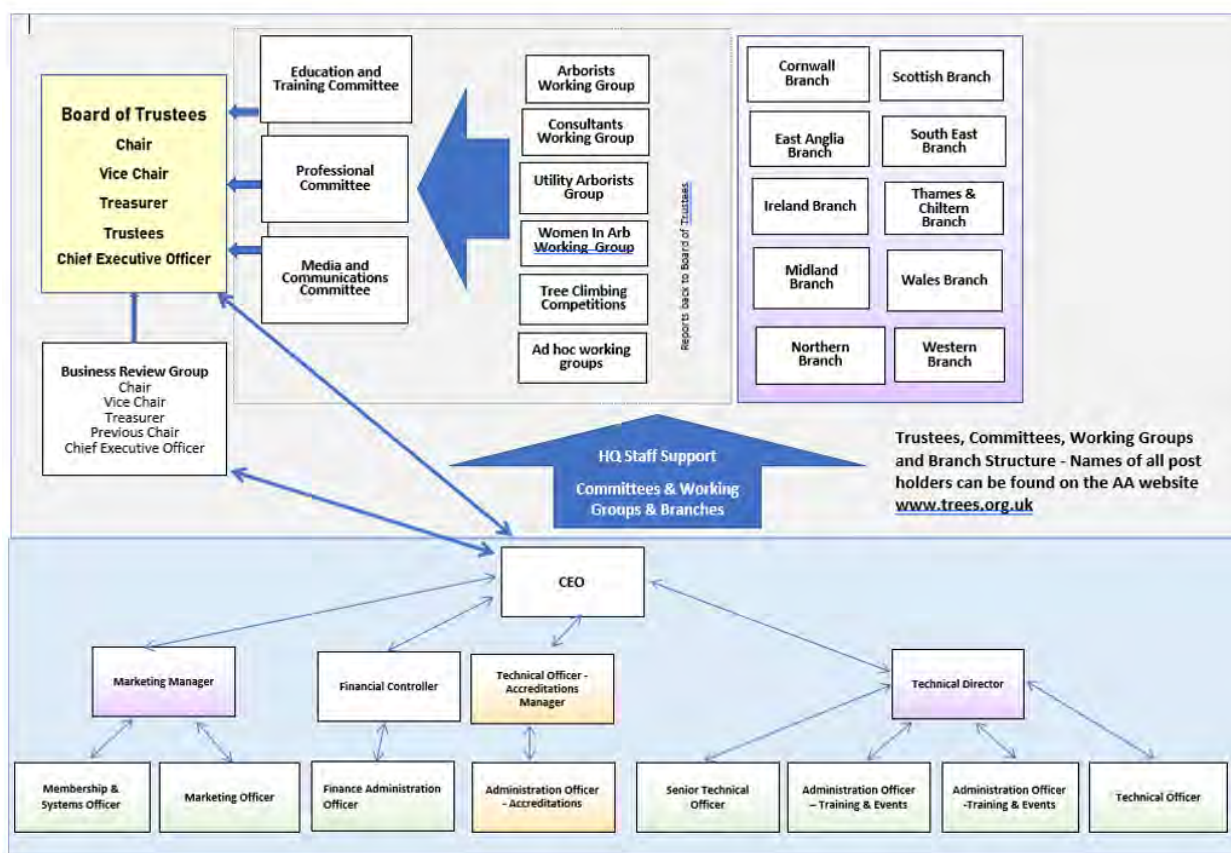
## The AA “structure”

The Association’s business is governed by a Board of Non-executive Directors who are also Trustees of the charity. The board consists of a maximum of 12 Trustees, 9 of which are democratically elected by the members, 3 other Trustees can be co-opted to serve one-year terms. The Association Treasurer is a co-opted position. The Directors are supported by several committees and working groups.

10 regional branches provide a more local focus for members in England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland. Each branch is managed by democratically elected branch members. The branches are run by volunteer members supported by the HQ team and its resources.

The day to day running of the Association is managed by the staff, led by the CEO. The team is based at the Malthouse, near Stonehouse in Gloucestershire. The Association own the Malthouse premises.

A summary of these activities can be found below -



## Arboricultural Association – Services provided

- **Membership**  
The Association offers a wide range of membership levels ranging from Student (free) through to Fellow. Technician, Professional and Fellow levels are all qualified grades and allow the use of post nominals.  
Organisations can join the Association via Corporate membership.  
Membership currently stands at over 3200 and from 32 different countries.
- **Accreditation Schemes**  
The Association manages two accreditation schemes namely –
  - Approved Contractor Scheme (Amenity & Utility (Road/Rail/Power/Water/Telecoms) variations) - with over 300 accredited companies, employing over 7000 staff. The scheme has driven the improvement in operational standards through regular assessment of company competences against a published standard. Rigorous auditing takes place on an annual cycle to ensure members compliance with the standards.
  - Registered Consultants Scheme – with nearly 50 members the scheme represents the most rigorous examination of the skills and knowledge required of arboricultural consultants. In addition to CPD requirements a QA process, on a 5-year cycle, ensures standards are maintained at the highest level.

- **Technical Resources**

With its team of Technical Officers, the Association provides a focal contact point for its members, partner groups and government. With representation on many industry groups the association helps advise, inform, and develop technical advice, guidance, and policy.

Through its international network of contacts and partners, the impact, reach and scope of the Associations activity and influence is far reaching.

- **Training**

The Association delivers over 100 training events per annum: covering the whole science and range of Arboricultural activity. The Association designs and produces its own training content as well as offering bespoke training activities all of which can be delivered virtually or face to face. The Association also has produced and continues to develop eLearning material.

Due to the impact of coronavirus the Association has delivered regular “free to

access” webinar content. The winter series of webinars has been viewed by over 10,000 people from over 100 different countries.



- **Events**

The Association hosts and manages a wide range and size of industry and public facing events. The largest being the annual “arb show” with over

100 trade exhibitors and attendance around 8000 over two days. Smaller regional events are held throughout the year; our UK & Eire network of 10 branches is especially active and vibrant.

- **Technical Publications (print and online)**

A wide range of publications are commissioned and published by the association. Covering both scientific and practical aspects of arboriculture. Industry facing technical guides and guidance notes are the industry standard reference documents, production of which has been supported by the HSE.



- **Journal (print and online)**

We publish a quarterly membership magazine called “The Arb Mag” openly recognised as the preeminent membership publication for our sector, with an increasing international reach.

We also publish, in conjunction with Taylor & Francis a scientific journal on a quarterly basis.

- **Conference (annual) & Student Conference**

A 3-day event hosted at a UK university (Loughborough in 2021) each year the scientific conference attracts approximately 500 attendees from all over the world.

Speakers come from both the UK and Internationally. We also host, at a UK college, a one-day student conference.

- **Advice – Members and Public**

We provide a large amount of free to access advice to the public primarily through our website and social media resources. All members can gain access to the headquarters technical expertise. Non-members are encouraged to support the association via our ‘Tree Care Supporter’ activity and resources.

As a result of the coronavirus impact upon our sector activities and confusing governmental messaging, the association produced industry facing guidance for its members.

- **Social Media & Marketing**

The Association has invested considerably in its Marketing and Social media activity and resources with activity growing by over 40% per annum for the last 3years. Web page views exceed 1.5million per annum and we have very active social media activity across all platforms.



- **Governmental Liaison**

The Association has representation on various governmental bodies and working groups, typically through strong links with DEFRA.

The AA is a very active member of the OHRG (Ornamental Roundtable Table Group) and the APPGHG (All party parliamentary Gardening and Horticulture Group). The Association has arranged specific parliamentary events to support its

activities and regularly provides specialists to contribute to advise and inform government. Through our working groups and committees, we regularly contribute and critique governmental consultations.

### Further Information

The Arboricultural Association influences and leads the sector not only within the UK & Eire but increasingly overseas.

Should you wish to further explore the activities of the Association more details can be found here – [www.trees.org.uk](http://www.trees.org.uk)



### 3. Job Description and Person Specification

#### The Role

To work with the Board to ensure the Association's strategic and financial objectives are achieved whilst enhancing and ensuring the Association's position as the lead on arboriculture throughout the UK.

#### Key Deliverables

- Ensure the AA achieves its overall strategic and charitable objectives, by developing the strategy in partnership with the Board and the effective delivery of agreed annual Business plans.
- Responsible for delivering the organisation's business plan and ensuring that the Arboricultural Association has the resources and profile to be successful in the present environment.
- Ensure the Arboricultural Association's staff and volunteers are focused on achieving its mission and aims.
- Ensure long term sustainability, through effective governance, sound finance and delivery of services.

#### Location

Primarily based at the HQ in Gloucestershire, work will involve travel to London and throughout the UK. The Board expects candidates to live within easy travel distance of the HQ.

#### MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

- 01** To ensure the AA achieves its overall strategic and charitable objectives, by developing the strategy in partnership with the Board and the effective delivery of agreed annual business plans.
- 02** Overall leadership and management of the organisation including staff, finances and premises, from HQ located at the Malthouse in Gloucestershire.
- 03** To prepare an annual budget for agreement by the Board and keep the Board updated throughout the year
- 04** Preparation of the annual accounts and preparation of the annual report working alongside the treasurer and the finance team.
- 05** Demonstrate good governance in decision making and ensure that the Board and the organisation carry out all their legal, financial and other responsibilities, in

accordance with Charity Commission regulations and current legislation.

- 06** To review the external environment for changes and opportunities that may affect or benefit the organisation, to advise the trustees accordingly and to take necessary actions.
- 07** To work in partnership with the Board to develop the external focus and standing of the Association, and to ensure that the board receives timely advice and appropriate information on all relevant matters to enable it to make high quality decisions.
- 08** Membership engagement. Ongoing development of the Association membership proposal; ensuring as a membership body that the Association understands and meets member needs. To both retain and attract members.
- 09** Ongoing development and promotion of Approved Contractor and Registered Consultant schemes to enhance growth and consumer recognition.
- 10** Develop and grow suitable business partnership /sponsorship opportunities within the organisation's governance framework.
- 11** Building the profile and brand; with an awareness and understanding of effective marketing and communications and the utilisation of the CRM IT system, web and all other communication channel.
- 12** To maintain and develop the Associations engagement with its politically focused partners through the Associations membership of the APPGHG (The All-Party Parliamentary Gardening and Horticulture Group) and OHRG (The Ornamental Horticulture Roundtable Group).
- 13** To promote diversity and inclusion in all Arboricultural Association's work and practices.
- 14** To manage the Associations engagement with its current and future potential partners through identifying the important relationships and developing them.



**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER – PERSON SPECIFICATION**

**Essential /  
Desirable**

<b>QUALS</b>	<b>01</b> Bachelor's Degree	<b>D</b>
	<b>02</b> MBA	<b>D</b>
<b>EXPERIENCE</b>	<b>01</b> Recent and extensive experience of operating at a senior management level in an organisation/business.	<b>E</b>
	<b>02</b> Clear understanding of statutory governance responsibilities at senior level	<b>E</b>
	<b>03</b> An understanding of working within the charitable sector.	<b>E</b>
	<b>04</b> Evidence of the capacity and resilience to lead and grow an organisation through challenging circumstances.	<b>E</b>
	<b>05</b> Commercial awareness and substantial experience of successful financial management.	<b>E</b>
	<b>06</b> Ability to know when to make autonomous decisions and when to involve others to escalate decisions.	<b>E</b>
	<b>07</b> Able to build productive relationships with Board members.	<b>E</b>
	<b>08</b> Ability to propose options to the Board for consideration and allow them and the Committees to make informed decisions and ensure the delivery of outcomes.	<b>E</b>
	<b>09</b> An appreciation of the context of Arboriculture throughout the UK and an appreciation for the profession.	<b>E</b>
	<b>10</b> An awareness of current environmental issues.	<b>E</b>
<b>LEADERSHIP</b>	<b>01</b> Skills and competence to provide leadership to enable, develop and motivate staff and to proactively manage performance.	<b>E</b>
	<b>02</b> Ability to encourage innovative solutions, balanced against commercial and financial awareness.	<b>E</b>
	<b>03</b> Demonstrate well developed interpersonal and negotiating skills and an ability to influence and persuade others using high level communication skills to build strong alliances.	<b>E</b>
	<b>04</b> Ability to promote political engagement and to deal with influential figures at all levels, and to speak publicly on industry issues with discretion and judgment.	<b>E</b>
	<b>05</b> Ambassadorial and previous experience of dealing with people across a broad spectrum.	<b>E</b>
<b>SKILLS / QUALITIES</b>	<b>01</b> IT literate and has an understanding of digital delivery of education and training	<b>E</b>
	<b>02</b> Excellent organisational skills with the ability to work both strategically and operationally.	<b>E</b>
	<b>03</b> Excellent diplomacy skills and an established networker keeping abreast of all that is going on in the industry.	<b>E</b>
	<b>04</b> Enthusiastic, confident and approachable.	<b>E</b>

**05** Passionate, with energy and drive and the ability to grasp the vision and deliver. **E**

#### 4. Salary and Benefits

**Salary: £65K per annum** (reviewed 1<sup>st</sup> April each year – any increase dependant upon performance of the association and is not guaranteed).

**Benefits:**

**Car allowance** - £4200/annum (£350/month)

**Pension** – company contributes 10% of salary (money purchase scheme – Aviva)

**Death in service benefit** – after probation period – 3 x annual salary



## 5. Timeline, Application Process and How to apply

### Timeline

Dates	Activity
26 April 5pm	Applications close
WC 4 May	Thewlis Graham consultant interviewing of interested candidates
WC 24 May	Client Interviews: London
WC 31 May	Final Client Interviews: Gloucestershire HQ

### Application Process

Thewlis Graham Associates will acknowledge all applications. These will be assessed against the criteria in the Role and Responsibilities section and the people who best meet these will be invited for Covid-Secure interview with Thewlis Graham Associates online.

Those candidates not invited to interview will be advised by email by end-May.

Longlisted candidates will be advised by email. After a consultation between the Arboricultural Association and Thewlis Graham Associates a Shortlist will be drawn up and Shortlisted candidates invited for interview with the Client.

### How to Apply

To apply for this role, please email in word format to [applications@thewlisgraham.com](mailto:applications@thewlisgraham.com) the following documents quoting reference **U0301**: -

1. A comprehensive CV
2. A covering letter containing:
  - A comprehensive CV
  - A covering letter which fully addresses your suitability for the role and your motivation for applying
  - Your current remunerations details and notice period, and the name, job title, organisation, email address and mobile number of two professional referees. (Please note referees will not be approached without your prior permission.)

***Please ensure that you include your mobile phone number and email address in your application. Do not hesitate to contact Claire Drummond on 020 7850 4781 if you have any queries.***

***Additionally, if you would prefer to receive this candidate brief in a more accessible format, please contact us.***

## 6. Diversity and Inclusion Monitoring

Diversity and Inclusion Monitoring is independent of the recruitment process but please do complete your completed diversity and inclusion monitoring form as Thewlis Graham Associates is committed to monitoring and analysing diversity information so that we can ensure that our processes are fair, transparent, promote equality of opportunity for all, and do not have an adverse impact on any particular group.

The link to this form is here: [click here](#). If you have any problems with this, please contact Tracey on: [tct@thewlisgraham.com](mailto:tct@thewlisgraham.com).

Any information provided on this form will be treated as strictly confidential and will be used for statistical purposes only. It will not be seen by anybody directly involved in the selection process. No information will be published or used in any way which allows any individual to be identified.

Thank you



## 7. Advert

### Arboricultural Association – Chief Executive Officer

**Gloucestershire, with travel to London and throughout the UK.  
Salary - £65,000**

With around 3200 members, the Arboricultural Association is the largest and most established membership organisation for arboriculturists in the UK.

The Arboricultural Association can trace its roots back to 1964. Ten years on the two groups of local government tree officers and commercial tree surgeons amalgamated to form the Arboricultural Association of today. The aims were to provide comprehensive representation of local government, commercial and lay interests. It is the largest body in the UK for the amenity tree care professional. We have set our mission to be the UK's undisputed voice on arboriculture, and we hold to the five values of Influence, Impact, Inspiration, Integrity and Independence.

Working with the Board, the next CEO will have both challenges and opportunities. They will include continuing support to our members in a post-covid world, building on what we have learned over the past year, continuing to raise our profile with both government and the public, and setting a new 3-year strategy starting in 2022.

We are looking for an outstanding candidate who will build on the excellent work of our retiring Chief Executive and work with the Board to maximize current and future opportunities.

#### The Role and Main Responsibilities:

- Ensure the AA achieves its overall strategic and charitable objectives, by developing the strategy in partnership with the Board and the effective delivery of agreed annual Business plans.
- Responsible for delivering the organisation's business plan and ensuring that the Arboricultural Association has the resources and profile to be successful in the present environment.
- Ensure the Arboricultural Association's staff and volunteers are focused on achieving its mission and aims.
- Ensure long term sustainability, through effective governance, sound finance and delivery of services.
- Prepare an annual budget for agreement by the Board and keep the Board updated throughout the year.
- Preparation of the annual accounts and preparation of the annual report working alongside the treasurer.

#### What we are looking for in interested candidates:

- Recent and extensive experience of operating at a senior management level in an organisation/business.
- An understanding of working within the charitable sector.
- Able to build productive relationships with Board members.
- An awareness of current environmental issues.
- Skills and competence to provide leadership to enable, develop and motivate staff and to proactively manage performance.

**Please apply by visiting [www.thewlisgraham.com/assignment-briefings](http://www.thewlisgraham.com/assignment-briefings) and following the instructions in the candidate brief quoting reference U0301. The closing date is 5pm on 26 April.**

**For a confidential conversation with Sarah Thewlis or for any other information please email [applications@thewlisgraham.com](mailto:applications@thewlisgraham.com)**

T: +44 (0) 20 7850 4781 E: [enquiries@thewlisgraham.com](mailto:enquiries@thewlisgraham.com)  
Thewlis Graham Associates, 16 St. Martin's Le Grand, London EC1A 4EN

[www.thewlisgraham.com](http://www.thewlisgraham.com)

Thewlis Graham Associates Ltd. Registered in England no. 07335827 VAT Reg. 996 6477 39  
Registered office: 16 St. Martin's Le Grand, London EC1A 4EN