



Chief Executive Officer Recruitment Information and Application Pack



Thank you for your interest in this role. We are looking to recruit a new Chief Executive Officer, as the current post-holder is retiring.

This pack provides information about the role, its context and an outline of the work you could be involved in.

Application deadline: Monday 18th August 2025, 5:00 p.m.



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About Blackwell Adventure

Blackwell Adventure is a leading outdoor activity, camping, and residential education centre based in rural Worcestershire, on the outskirts of Bromsgrove. Operating as a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee, the organisation is governed by a dedicated Board of Trustees that provides strategic oversight and leadership. The centre is situated on land and within buildings owned by Birmingham Scout County and is delivered as an independent charitable enterprise with a strong ethos of inclusivity, education, and youth development.

Today, Blackwell Adventure operates across two distinct sites — Blackwell Court and Pikes Pool — spanning over 100 acres of woodland, open fields, and purpose-built facilities. Over the past 20 years, we have grown into one of the region's most respected outdoor education providers, welcoming more than 30,000 visitors each year. Our primary audiences include Scouts, Guides, schools, colleges, youth organisations, and other voluntary and charitable groups, as well as an increasing number of corporate clients engaging in outdoor learning, leadership development, and team-building programmes.

Our charitable mission is to inspire and develop young people through outdoor adventure, offering high-quality residential experiences and day visits in a safe, well-managed environment. Blackwell Adventure holds a strong reputation for safeguarding, quality assurance, all underpinned by nationally recognised accreditations and a highly experienced team.

In recent years, we have embarked on a programme of continuous improvement, expanding and diversifying our activities, investing in infrastructure and sustainability initiatives, and embedding a culture of environmental responsibility. We continue to respond to the evolving needs of schools, youth services, and families, particularly in the post-pandemic context, where the value of time spent outdoors is more widely recognised than ever. Fundraising and philanthropic support now play a key role in sustaining our work and enabling access for disadvantaged young people.

Our location remains a significant asset, situated just minutes from Junction 1 of the M42, which puts us ideally placed to serve communities across the West Midlands and beyond. Within a 30-mile radius are the Malvern Hills, the Cotswolds, the Lickey Hills, Birmingham, Warwickshire, and parts of Shropshire. Bromsgrove itself offers excellent local amenities including schools, healthcare, leisure facilities, and transport links.



To find out more about our work, our impact, and how to get involved, please visit our website:
www.blackwelladventure.co.uk

Charity details, including the last annual report and accounts, are available at: BLACKWELL ADVENTURE - 1121161

Welcome from our Chairman

Thank you for your interest in the role of Chief Executive Officer for Blackwell Adventure.

You will be an outgoing person who engages well with people of all ages and is enthusiastic about helping young people develop life skills through outdoor and adventurous activities. However, you may not necessarily be directly involved with Scouting or Guiding yourself. If selected, you will lead a fantastic team, enjoy a wide variety in your daily work and enjoy meeting many people, including some of the best Scouting and Guiding “event managers” in the region.

We are looking forward to welcoming an experienced manager with a good grasp of all aspects of business, a strategic approach, but hard-wired to be hands-on if necessary, and who will relish every new challenge. The Directors, with the help of the management team, have prepared a refreshed strategic framework to guide the new CEO’s early endeavours with clear direction. The business is in good shape with robust budgeting and reporting and a history of generating cash surpluses.

If you believe you could be this person, then your application is very welcome. The process is designed to be two-way; you wish to know about us, and we wish to get to know you. If you would like a brief, informal discussion before applying, please email me to arrange a phone call.
Paul Fennell

Chair

Blackwell Adventure

paul.fennell@blackwelladventure.co.uk

Our Vision

By offering a range of high-quality outdoor adventure activities, we aim to challenge each individual in an inclusive environment and enrich their lives with new and enjoyable experiences.

Our Mission

The mission of Blackwell Adventure is to actively engage and support young people in their personal development, empowering them to make a positive contribution to society.

We will continuously develop our provision of outdoor adventure activities at Blackwell Court and Pikes Pool by:

- Increasing our accommodation offering to further the opportunities for visitors
- Achieving consistent annual surpluses for the resource development of our centres
- Increasing revenues from team building and corporate events for adults to help offset costs for the benefit of our young visitors
- Having modern, attractive, energy-efficient and varied facilities across both centres
- Encouraging all staff and volunteers in their personal development to achieve their full potential.

We aim to provide practical support to The Scout Association in the County of Birmingham.



Our Values

At Blackwell Adventure, our culture is rooted in our values. The following values guide our charities' decisions, behaviours, communication and actions.

- We are friendly and open.
- We are honest, and we listen.
- We hold ourselves to the highest standards.
- We respect individuals.
- We are supportive and inclusive.
- We love developing people
- We are enthusiastically committed to delivering safe, fun and memorable experiences for all.

How we work

Blackwell Adventure is a small organisation with a dedicated team of committed and enthusiastic staff, working under the overall management of the CEO.

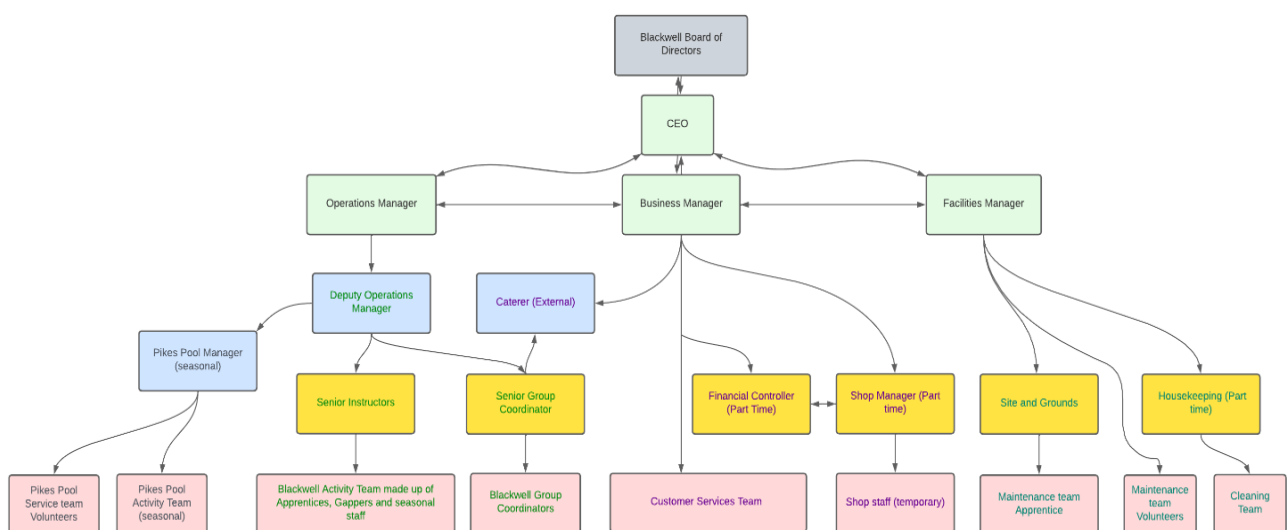
The CEO formally reports to the Board six times a year, and the Chair provides regular informal support to the CEO. Meanwhile, the other Directors have specialisms supplied to the organisation as required.

There is also a team of volunteers who work closely with the staff throughout the year to support the business and the range of activities available on site.

Our full-time/part-time staff numbers are 15. However, during the summer months, this can rise to 75, including seasonal campsite and group coordinators, seasonal instructors, freelance instructors, Apprentices, volunteers and a group of 'gappers' who provide additional support with activities across the site.

Staff structure

Blackwell Adventure Organisation Chart





The Role

This role offers an exceptional opportunity for an experienced leader who is passionate about the transformative power of outdoor learning. The next CEO of Blackwell Adventure will shape the future of one of the UK's most respected outdoor centres, building on a proud legacy while leading ambitious development for future generations.

Job Title: Chief Executive Officer

Reporting to: Chair of the Board of Blackwell Adventure

Location: Based at Blackwell Adventure, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, B60 1PX

Responsible for: All staff employed or engaged under ad hoc arrangements (e.g., occasional instructors), together with all volunteers working with Blackwell Adventure

Primary Purpose of the Role:

To provide visionary, strategic, and operational leadership for Blackwell Adventure, ensuring it continues to thrive as a financially sustainable, safe, and inspirational outdoor education charity. The CEO will be an experienced and dynamic leader with a deep knowledge of the outdoor education sector, strong financial acumen, and a proven track record of generating income through diverse fundraising approaches, partnerships, and commercial activities.

Key Responsibilities:

Strategic Leadership and Governance

- Lead the development, implementation, and monitoring of a bold and sustainable strategy aligned with the charity's mission, values, and the priorities of The Scout Association (County of Birmingham).
- Advise and support the Board of Trustees to ensure strong governance, strategic focus, and effective oversight.
- Carry out horizon scanning and stakeholder consultation to anticipate emerging challenges and opportunities in the outdoor education and youth development landscape.

Operational Leadership

- Oversee the safe, effective, and high-quality delivery of programmes, services, and activities across Blackwell Court and Pikes Pool.
- Ensure robust operational systems are in place for safeguarding, health & safety, site maintenance, HR, IT, and compliance with all legal and regulatory requirements.



- Develop and embed a culture of continuous improvement, customer excellence, and staff empowerment.

Fundraising and Income Generation

- Develop and deliver a fundraising strategy that secures sustainable income from diverse sources, including grants, major donors, corporate sponsorships, community fundraising, and legacy giving.
- Lead the development of commercial opportunities (e.g., corporate team building, holiday provision, venue hire), ensuring alignment with the charity's values.
- Identify and bid for capital funding to improve infrastructure and enhance service delivery.

Financial and Risk Management

- Prepare and manage annual and multi-year budgets, ensuring financial sustainability and stewardship of charitable resources.
- Maintain effective financial reporting and control systems.
- Proactively identify and mitigate risks across operations, reputation, and finance.

Partnerships and Representation

- Represent Blackwell Adventure at local, regional, and national levels to influence policy, secure funding, and raise the profile of the organisation.
- Build and maintain productive relationships with schools, youth organisations, funders, local authorities, regulatory bodies, and other key stakeholders.

Leadership and Culture

- Inspire and lead a committed team of permanent and seasonal staff, apprentices, volunteers, and instructors.
- Promote an inclusive, respectful, and supportive workplace culture that reflects the values of the organisation.
- Champion personal development, wellbeing, and performance across the staff and volunteer team.



The person

Person Specification - Chief Executive Officer

Criteria	Key	Desirable
Qualifications:		
Level 4 or above Business Management or leadership qualification	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Degree or equivalent		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Higher level outdoor NGB qualification(s) (one is essential, more are desirable)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Proven Experience:		
Extensive experience of working in and/or managing operations within the outdoor activity industry in several contexts (different centres or different operational models)		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Experience and track record in developing and successfully delivering business plans and strategies	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Experience of working closely with boards of directors/trustees, advising and guiding robust decision-making	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Experience in financial management, including forecasting, budget setting and monitoring income and expenditure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Experience in risk strategy and management in a charity, not-for-profit or commercial setting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Significant management experience in a charity, not-for-profit setting, or commercial organisation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Experience of representing an organisation at a senior level with key stakeholders, including public, business and funders	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Experience in securing funding for capital projects	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	



Experience in estate management/planning/compliance		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Knowledge, skills and abilities:		
Knowledge and understanding of the needs of young people and the role that Outdoor Education can play in shaping young lives and positive futures.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Excellent communications skills - written and verbal, including presentation and public speaking skills	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
A clear and nuanced understanding of health and Safety as it relates to adventurous activities and our place within the sector.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Proven ability to develop effective working relationships with a range of individuals, customers, and organisations (voluntary and statutory)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
A full driving licence and access to a car for work	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Knowledge of the Scout Association		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other Attributes:		
Strong interpersonal skills	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Proven leadership skills	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Strong team player with proven team-building skills	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Ability to work under own initiative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Confidential, trustworthy, tactful and diplomatic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Committed to working within Blackwell Adventure's agreed-upon values	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Ability to follow directions from the Board		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



Benefits

Salary starting at £57000 + bonus scheme

Salaries are paid monthly by direct transfer on 23rd of the month. Overtime is not typically paid.

Contracted hours of work: 40 per week, to include weekend/evening working as required. Time off in lieu will be available.

Tenure: This is a permanent, full-time position

Location: Blackwell Court, Agmore Road, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, B60 1PX

Optional on Site accommodation: entitled to live in Blackwell Lodge, a two-bedroom cottage on the Blackwell Court Estate on the terms of an assured tenancy agreement – further details available.

Holiday entitlement: 25 days plus statutory bank holidays

Notice Period: 3 months on both sides, following a 6-month probationary period, when the notice period will be one month either way

Contributory Pension scheme, 10% from employer

Life assurance: all permanent staff are covered by a scheme which pays 3 times the basic salary in the event of death in service

Relocation expenses considered

Blackwell Adventure is an equal opportunity employer and welcomes applications from all suitably qualified persons regardless of their race, sex, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation or age

This post is subject to:

- a satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check before the post can be confirmed.
- satisfactory background checks which will be carried out by Experian.
- satisfactory references, one of which will be from your current and at least one previous employer.

Please note that this information is indicative only and does not form part of the terms and conditions of employment for this role.

How to apply

Please complete and submit both the Application Form and the Equality and Diversity monitoring form when applying for the role.

All applications should be submitted by email to: paul.fennell@blackwelladventure.co.uk.

Applications must be received by 5:00 p.m. on Monday 18th August 2025.

If you would like to discuss the role in more detail, please contact Paul Fennell, Chair, at paul.fennell@blackwelladventure.co.uk to arrange a telephone call.



Key dates

- **Application deadline:** Monday 18th August 2025, 5:00 p.m.
- **Shortlist notification:** Friday 22nd August 2025
- **Interviews + Facility tours (2.5 hrs, in-person at Blackwell Court):** Up to the 4th of September 2025
- **Proposed start date:** Monday 5th January 2026