



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



Forestry Commission



Forestry Commission

Appointment of 1 Commissioner

Briefing pack for applicants

The closing date for the receipt of applications for this role
is midday on 06/05/2025

Ref: APPT14-24

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Ministerial message to candidates

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for applying for the role of member of the Forestry Commission (FC) Board of Commissioners, which has a key role in protecting, expanding and promoting the sustainable management of woodlands.

Established a century ago as a body serving Great Britain, the departure of Wales from the Commission in 2013 and Scotland in 2019 means that the FC's work is now primarily focused in England. It is headed by a Board of Commissioners, comprising a Chair and up to 10 other Forestry Commissioners, made up of non-executive and executive appointments. The FC's significant contribution to the government's missions to kickstart economic growth and accelerate to net zero, means you will be joining as a Commissioner at an exciting and pivotal time.

The nation's forests are among the most popular natural spaces in the country, visited by millions of people, and are the largest supplier of Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) and Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) timber in England. They increase rural job creation—boosting both financial and environmental resilience and driving economic growth. As the world's third-largest importer of timber, the UK benefits greatly from FC's work, which is instrumental in supporting Britain's clean energy efforts. Sustainable forestry provides a renewable source of biomass for energy production, furthering our environmental agenda.

FC are committed to breaking down barriers and creating opportunities for workers transitioning from declining industries, supporting the rural economy, healthier futures for all and a more resilient NHS. As a Commissioner, you will play a pivotal role in guiding the country toward a nature-positive, net-zero future. You will collaborate across sectors to manage more land and trees than any other organisation in England. You will help shape landscapes that benefit people, wildlife, and timber production, fostering resilience in the face of climate change.

I am seeking someone with extensive knowledge and experience in the timber and forestry products trade, including sustainability, UK timber markets, and their global context. Good communication skills are crucial, as is enthusiasm for the mission and goals of the Forestry Commission, Forestry England, and Forest Research. The ideal candidate will have a strategic mindset, capable of analysing complex issues with impartiality and creativity to develop practical solutions. Experience in guiding organisations through operational and cultural change is key, as well as a commitment to support the Chair and existing Commissioners in the work of the Forestry Commission.

I am particularly keen to hear from candidates who can bring diverse perspectives, lived experiences, and innovative ideas to our work. Reflecting the full breadth of our society's diversity is essential to achieving our mission of a sustainable and equitable future. Boards of public bodies like the Forestry Commission are most effective when they mirror the communities they serve.

MARY CREAGH CBE MP

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State

(Minister for Nature)

Defra mission statement

The Defra group is here to make our air purer, our water cleaner, our land greener, and our food more sustainable. Our mission is to restore and enhance the environment for future generations, and to leave the environment in a better state.

This matters because enhancing nature and green spaces enhances lives and livelihoods, contributing to a strong economy. Our wellbeing, our physical and mental health, our love of place and landscape, and our intrinsic need for beauty, awe and wonder, are all closely interconnected with a thriving natural environment.

Appointing high-calibre people from diverse backgrounds with relevant skills, knowledge and experience to the boards of our public bodies will help us to ensure that our work is more effective, resilient and accountable.

Equal Opportunities

The UK government has a policy of equality of opportunity. We aim to promote equal opportunity policies whereby no one suffers unfair discrimination either directly or indirectly, or harassment, on grounds such as race, colour, ethnic or national origin, sex, gender identity, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, religious beliefs or age.

Diversity

We positively welcome applicants from all backgrounds. All public appointments are made on merit following a fair and open competition as regulated by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

Disability

We guarantee to interview anyone with a disability whose application meets the minimum criteria for the post. 'Minimum criteria' means you must provide sufficient evidence in your application, demonstrating that you meet the minimum level of competence required for each essential criterion, as well as meeting any of the qualifications, skills or experience required.

The Cabinet Office and Defra is committed to the employment and career development of disabled people. To show this we proudly display the Disability Confident Leader logo. More information about Disability Confident Leaders is available by clicking the logo above. More information about Disability Confident Leaders is available by clicking this [link](#). If an applicant with a disability considers that they may be put at a substantial disadvantage compared to a person without a disability, we have a duty to make reasonable changes to our processes where possible. If you need a change to be made so that you can make your application, please refer to the '[How to submit your application](#)' section below.



About the Forestry Commission

The Forestry Commission (FC) is a non-Ministerial Government department that has a vital role to play in helping the Government achieve its objectives. It is headed by a Board of Commissioners, comprising a Chair and up to 10 other Forestry Commissioners, made up of non-executive and executive appointments.

The FC was established a century ago as a body serving Great Britain (GB), but the departure of Wales from the Commission in 2013 and Scotland in 2019, means that the FC's work will be primarily in England.

Forestry England uses its scale and expertise to grow and care for the nation's forests for this generation and the next. It is busy adapting these landscapes for tomorrow and getting stuff done today, like creating amazing places and experiences for people to enjoy. Its actions are providing vital homes for wildlife, making our air cleaner to breathe and producing sustainable timber. Forestry England manages more land and trees than any other organisation in England and its work is made possible by the support of many, from individuals through to government. In short, Forestry England is growing forests, for all, for life.

Forest Services are the part of the FC that provides expertise and support in order to expand, protect, improve and connect England's woodlands. Forest Services regulate and incentivise landowners to encourage new tree planting and to help keep

private forests, trees and woodlands under sustainable management. The plant health team inspects imports and exports on wood, as well as our forests, and manage outbreaks to minimise the impacts of pests and diseases.

Forest Research provide the evidence base for UK forestry policy, practice and innovation. They are internationally renowned for the delivery of applied forest science, by providing research, evidence, data and services in support of sustainable forestry. Forest Research's work informs the development and delivery of UK Government and devolved administration policies for sustainable management and protection of trees, woods, forests and natural resources sectors.



About the Board

The Forestry Commission (FC) Board of Commissioners plays an important role in the delivery of the FC's objectives. It sets the strategic direction, provides leadership for FC activities, directs the executive in the conduct of business and allocates resources to meet the FC's objectives.

The Board has an important role in overseeing, monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the FC's strategy, [Thriving for the Future](#), and objectives, building effective strategic partnerships to support the organisation and its aims. It promotes good governance and sound decision making across the organisation.

Board members are expected to work collaboratively, contributing effectively and constructively challenging group discussions involving a wide range of subject matter and people, including technical specialists and professionals. The Board needs to formulate and discuss strategic subjects in a coherent

and structured way and ensure that communication with stakeholders is transparent and effective.

Board members are expected to represent the FC and its values at external events and engage with local teams to help support and promote the work of the FC at an operational level.

Commissioners are appointed to the Forestry Commission Board by HM King on the recommendation of Defra Ministers and are required to promote the interests of forestry, the development of afforestation and the production and supply of timber. In doing this, they must seek a reasonable balance between the production and supply of timber and the interests of conservation.

The Commissioners on the Forestry Commission Board are listed at [Annex A](#).



Essential Criteria

The successful candidate will need to demonstrate the following **essential criteria**:

1. Significant knowledge and experience of the timber and forestry products trade, including sustainability, UK timber markets and their position globally.
2. An ability to analyse issues at a strategic level in ways which are impartial, creative and focused on finding solutions.
3. Strong communication skills, along with the ability to influence, engage, and inspire confidence across a diverse

network of stakeholders.

4. Demonstrable ability to support an organisation through a period of significant operational and cultural change.
5. An appreciation and enthusiasm for the objectives and work of Forestry Commission, and its agencies Forestry England and Forest Research.

The successful candidate must abide by the Nolan principles of public service and the 12 Principles of Governance for all Public Body NEDs (attached at [Annex A](#) and [Annex B](#)) and the [Code of Conduct for Board members](#)

Diversity and inclusion

Given our commitment to diversity we would encourage applications from individuals with experience of improving access for people from underrepresented groups and expertise in identifying and improving inclusive communications.

Successful candidates must abide by the Nolan principles of public service (attached at [Annex A](#)), the [Code of Conduct for Board Members](#) and demonstrate the [12 Principles of Governance for all Public Body NEDs](#).

Terms of appointment

Appointments to the Forestry Commission are made by the King following recommendations by the Secretary of State.

- The draft **terms and conditions** for the appointment can be supplied on request. Key points to be aware of are set out below.
- The **time commitment** is expected to be up to 30 days per year, which will include preparation for and participation in Board meetings.
- The **daily rate** for each Commissioner will be £409. Reasonable travel expenses are also paid. The roles are non-pensionable.
- It is anticipated that the successful candidate will **take up appointment in October 2025**. The appointment will be initially for three years.

- A further appointment of up to 3 years may be made subject to satisfactory performance assessment and will be at the discretion of ministers.
- The **location** is flexible. Meetings will be held at locations around the country including the Forestry Commission's principal office in Bristol.
- An **annual appraisal** will be carried out by the Chair of the Board.

You must inform the Chair of the Board if you have any **conflict of interest** that might affect your ability to undertake this role. You should disclose information on any relevant business interest, public appointment or position of authority, including other connection with commercial, public or voluntary bodies.

Overview of the recruitment process

The **closing date** for applications is 06 May 2025 at midday. We expect to have shortlisted by 6th May with panel interviews on 9th and 16th June.

It is essential that your statement of suitability gives full but concise information relevant to the appointment, clearly demonstrating how you meet each of the [essential criteria](#).

The Advisory Assessment Panel will consist of Edward Barker as Chair and Sir William Worsley (Chair of Forestry Commission), with Alison Munro as the Independent Panel Member.

At the Shortlist meeting the Panel will assess each application against the essential criteria and decide who to invite for final interview.

Interviews are expected to take place in person in London and will last for approximately 45 minutes. Further details about the format will be provided to you in advance, should you be successful.

These are Ministerial appointments and all candidates deemed to be appointable by the Panel may meet with Ministers before a final decision is made.

How to apply and submit your application

To apply you will need to:

- In order to apply you will need to visit <https://apply-for-public-appointment.service.gov.uk/roles> and either [create an account](#) or [sign in](#).

Once logged onto your account, click on “Apply for this role” and follow the on-screen instructions

To apply, all candidates are required to provide:

- A CV of no more than two sides of A4 with the e-mail addresses of two referees
- A supporting statement of no more than 1,000 words (approx. two sides of A4), setting out how you meet the essential criteria. Make sure you refer to the contents of this document and provide specific examples
- Equality information
- Information relating to any outside interests or reputational issues.

You will also have the opportunity to make a reasonable adjustment request or apply under the disability confident scheme before you submit your application.

The Advisory Assessment Panel reserves the right to only consider applications that contain all of the elements listed above, and that arrive before the published deadline for applications.

If you have any questions about the appointments process, please contact the Public Appointments Team at: publicappts@defra.gov.uk

If you would like an informal discussion about the role, please contact commissioners@forestrycommission.gov.uk and someone from the FC will contact you.

Completed applications should be submitted online at <https://apply-for-public-appointment.service.gov.uk/roles> by the closing date of 11:59am on 06/05/2025

Ineligibility criteria

You cannot be considered for a public appointment if:

- you become bankrupt or make an arrangement with creditors;
- your estate has been sequestrated in Scotland or you enter into a debt arrangement programme under Part 1 of the Debt Arrangement and Attachment (Scotland) Act 2002 (asp 17) as the debtor or have, under Scots law, granted a trust deed for creditors;
- you are disqualified from acting as a company director under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986;
- you have been convicted of a criminal offence, the conviction not being spent for the purposes of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (c. 53);
- you become subject to a debt relief order or a bankruptcy restrictions order;
- you fail to declare any conflict of interest

Conflicts of interest and due diligence

If you have any interests that might be relevant to the work of the Forestry Commission, and which could lead to a real or perceived conflict of interest if you were to be appointed, please provide details in your application. If you have queries about this and would like to discuss further, please contact the Public Appointments Team.

Given the nature of public appointments, it is important that those appointed as members of public bodies maintain the confidence of Parliament and the public.

If there are any issues in your personal or professional history that could, if you were appointed, be misconstrued, cause embarrassment, or cause public confidence in the appointment to be jeopardised, it is important that you bring them to the attention

of the Advisory Assessment Panel and provide details of the issue(s) in your application. In considering whether you wish to declare any issues, you should also reflect on any public statements you have made, including through social media.

As part of our due diligence checks we will consider anything in the public domain related to your conduct or professional capacity. This will include us undertaking searches of previous public statements and social media, blogs or any other publicly available information. This information may be made available to the Advisory Assessment Panel and they may wish to explore issues with you should you be invited to interview. The information may also be shared with ministers and Cabinet Office.

The Commissioner for Public Appointments

This appointment is regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments, to ensure that it is made on merit after fair and open competition. More information about the role of the Commissioner and the Governance Code on Public Appointments can be seen at:

<http://publicappointmentscommissioner.independent.gov.uk/>

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/578498/gov

[ernance code on public appointments 16 12 2016.pdf](#)

For full details of the complaints process for public appointments, please click on the following link which will take you to the Commissioner for Public Appointments website

<https://publicappointmentscommissioner.independent.gov.uk/complaints/>

Data protection

Defra is committed to protecting the privacy and security of your personal information and does so in accordance with data protection law including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). All the information you provide will be used to proceed with the public appointment listed in this information pack and in the case of diversity monitoring information

may be anonymised and used solely for monitoring purposes. For more information about the way we collect and hold your information, please read our Privacy Notice, accessible through the Cabinet Office website (<https://publicappointments.cabinetoffice.gov.uk>) or by requesting a copy from publicappts@defra.gov.uk.

Annex A – Forestry Commission Board

Sir William Worsley (Chair) owns and manages woodland in North Yorkshire. He was the Government's National Tree Champion from 2018-2020 and was Chairman of the National Forest Company from 2016-2020. He is Chairman of Hovingham Estate. He has also previously held senior positions in the financial services and property sectors.

Richard Stanford (Chief Executive) joined the Forestry Commission as Chief Executive in August 2021. Richard has a longstanding passion for the environment and the countryside. His leadership skills, ambition and expertise are forefront as he steers the organisation at this pivotal time for nature, people, the environment and the economy.

Neil Sachdev joined HM Land Registry in 2022 as the Chair of the HM Land Registry Board. He is also currently Chair of the East West Railway Company, overseeing the delivery of a new direct rail link between Oxford and Cambridge, as well as Chairman of the Defence Infrastructure Organisation Board for the Ministry of Defence. Neil has also previously held a variety of senior leadership positions in the energy, property and retail sectors.

Jo Bradwell is owner and director of Norbury Park. He has been instrumental in setting up the Birmingham Institute of Forest Research (BIFoR), increasing woodland cover and transforming the farmland from crops to mob grazing with cattle. Jo is also winner of the 2018 RFS Sylva trophy and the 2018 Peter Savill award.

Hilary Allison is an environmental consultant currently working for the UN Environment Programme. She was Head of Ecosystem Assessment and Policy Support at UN Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre until 2021 and Director of Policy at the Woodland Trust for 17 years until

2014. Over the years she has participated in several government-led processes on forest and tree health policy as well as leading advocacy work on woodland conservation. She is a former chair of Wildlife and Countryside Link.

Hilary Allison was Head of Ecosystem Assessment and Policy Support at UN Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre. She was Director of Policy at the Woodland Trust for 17 years and has participated in several government-led processes on forest and tree health policy as well as leading advocacy work to enhance policy on woodland conservation. She is a former chair of Wildlife and Countryside Link, and also worked briefly for the National Trust and the Nature Conservancy Council.

Jennie Price was until recently the CEO of Sport England. Jennie is a qualified lawyer and has previously been the CEO of WRAP, a Defra-supported environmental organisation specialising in recycling and resources management. She retains an active interest in sport and is Chair of the recently formed international supervisory board on integrity in tennis. She is also a trustee of the Canal and River Trust. Jennie brings considerable expertise in engaging wide sectors of the community in outdoor activities and has an excellent understanding of the links to health and wellbeing.

Peter Latham was Chair of the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification International (PEFC), is a Director of Association Technique Internationale des Bois Tropicaux (ATIBT) and a trustee of the Commonwealth Forestry Association. He was previously CEO and Chairman of the timber distributor James Latham Plc. Peter brings extensive knowledge of the timber industry and experience of successful stakeholder engagement on an international level

Annex A – Forestry Commission Board (continued)

Ross Murray is a Trustee owner of woodland in South Wales, and also oversees management of family woodland in Herefordshire and Scotland. He is a Chartered Surveyor and a Trustee of the Bradford Estate in Shropshire. Formerly a Secretary of State appointed member of the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority and of the Forestry Commission's Advisory Committee for Wales. He was also National President of CLA (Country Land and Business Association) 2015-2017.

Sandy Storie in his 35 years in the British Army led the "Desert Rats" in Iraq, served as

an Assistant Chief of the Defence Staff, taught at the Royal College of Defence Studies, and was deputy head of the NATO mission in Afghanistan. In retirement, he works as a strategy consultant, company director and NATO senior mentor, advising the current generation of coalition commanders on crisis management and Board development. An Oxford graduate, he holds the IOD's Diploma in Company Direction, and is a Fellow of the Chartered Management Institute. He brings an external perspective, broad experience of strategic and operational planning, and a strong track record of leadership and management in the public sector.



Annex B – The seven principles of public life

Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

Objectivity

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

Leadership

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

Annex C – 12 Principles of Governance for all Public Body NEDs

1. Expertise

- Consider and act in the best interests of your organisation and its objectives; delivering the outcomes expected by your sponsor department, ministers and ultimately the public.
- Consider the broader mission and duties of your sponsoring Secretary of State, his or her Department and the Government.
- Ensure compliance with statutory duties and the organisation's Framework Document and act within its powers.
- Exercise reasonable care, skill and diligence in the exercise of their authority and judgement.

2. Scrutiny and challenge

- Maintain independence from the executive to allow scrutiny of management and in meetings agree goals and objectives and monitor performance and the reporting of performance so that the public who use your organisation receive a high quality service.
- Satisfy yourself on the integrity of budget setting to deliver objectives and financial information and reporting against budgets, and that financial controls and systems of risk management are robust and defensible. Meet the requirements of [Managing Public Money](#), including supporting the Accounting Officer in fulfilling their duties to provide propriety and value for money in the use of public funds.
- Champion high standards of risk management by ensuring your organisation has effective risk reporting, controls and governance, risk expertise and risk tolerances to effectively manage risk.
- Represent your organisation to the department and to Ministers, as well as ensuring Ministers' views are considered by the executive team of the organisation, as appropriate.

3. Support

- Support the board in succession planning and be prepared to put yourself up for re-appointment, as well as promoting the need for a diverse board.
- Participate in and promote regular reviews of your organisation, as well as the board's own effectiveness, with particular focus on the organisation's purposes and its efficiency in meeting these purposes. Engage in the appraisal process, including self-reflection on your own abilities.
- Listen carefully to, ask appropriate questions of and support management to encourage discussion in a manner that promotes a culture where all perspectives are listened to, while fulfilling the individual Director's duties and responsibilities and respecting and valuing the expertise of the executive team.
- Promote the success of the entity having regard to the interests of all members and stakeholders, and all risks.