



British Wool

Appointment of two Publicly
Appointed Non-Executive
Board Members



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



Northern Ireland
Executive

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01. Defra's Mission and Diversity Statements

Defra wants Britain to be a great place to live. Our work plays a critical role in the wellbeing of everyone in the country through the creation of healthy environments, a world-leading food and farming industry, a thriving rural economy, and enhanced protection against floods and animal and plant diseases.

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

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. By 'minimum criteria' we mean that you must provide us with evidence in your application which demonstrates that you generally meet the level of competence required for each criterion, as well as meeting any of the qualifications, skills or experience defined as essential. The Governments of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are committed to the employment and career development of disabled people (the minimum criteria means the essential competences as set out in the advertisement for the post). To show this we use the Disability Symbol awarded by Jobcentreplus.



02. British Wool

Sheep have grazed in Britain for thousands of years, providing one of our greatest natural resources – fleece wool. The diversity of British sheep breeds is unsurpassed, and the unique and sustainable characteristics of British wool are therefore valued worldwide and used in many different products.

British Wool (officially known as the British Wool Marketing Board) manages the central marketing system for wool. It operates comprehensive processes for collecting, evaluating, auctioning, marketing, and advocating for fleece wool. It also holds the distinction of being the last agricultural commodity board still active in the United Kingdom. Its remit is set by the [Agricultural Marketing Act 1958](#) and its governing document is the British Wool Marketing Scheme (Approval) Order 1950 (Amended 2024).

British Wool, a farmer-led not-for-profit founded in 1950, aims to drive sustainable demand for British wool and maximize returns for its sheep farmer members. The organisation operates as a cooperative on behalf of around 35,000 sheep farmers. In addition to handling, selling and marketing wool on behalf of its membership British Wool trains 800 to 1000 people annually on sheep shearing and wool handling courses. These courses promote good animal husbandry and welfare whilst also ensuring that its membership can develop skills or access shearing contractors at a reasonable cost.

British Wool's Head Office is in Bradford and the organisation operates a network of eight grading depots and 100 collection sites across the UK. There are British Wool offices in Japan and China, and British Wool has two subsidiaries which perform commercial activities for third parties, including an IWTO accredited laboratory offering wool testing services. Revenues in the 2023 clip year were £17.3 million and the business has around 150 full-time employees.

The last few years have been challenging for the global wool industry with low prices failing to provide attractive returns to British Wool's members and failing to cover the cost of shearing.

Structure of the British Wool Board

The Board is made up of nine non-executive regionally elected board members, representing nine different regions of the UK, and 2 independent non-executive members, jointly appointed by Ministers in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. In addition, British Wool has one Board Appointed Non-Executive Member. The executive management team, CEO and CFO, attend board meetings but are not members of the Board. British Wool also has a network of county representatives to provide a link between the board and its farmer members.



British Wool Mission Statement

British Wool's mission is to drive sustainable demand for British wool in order to maximise returns for its members.

British Wool Vision

British Wool's vision is to provide the best possible return to members through the collective marketing of the UK wool clip.

- for UK sheep farmers to recognize the value it adds by collecting, grading and promoting their wool;
- for its team to provide efficient high-quality service and excellent shearing training to members;
- for the end brands it works with to specify British wool in their products and value its support for innovation;
- for consumers to choose to buy products made from British wool.

This is a challenging period for British sheep farmers. The disruption of COVID was swiftly followed by the global supply chain shock of the Ukraine war and rising cost inflation. British Wool is therefore determined to drive up the wool price in order to support its producer base. It is actively exploring all possible ways of increasing consumer awareness and demand through canny branding, clever communications (including continued growth of its social media presence), targeted campaigns, constructive engagement with processors and manufacturers, and astute licensing of the British Wool kitemark. Efforts to improve productivity and efficiency, and to embrace innovation, are also a big area of focus. Partly with this in mind, British Wool made its first strategic investment in a downstream processor last year, acquiring a minority stake in NexGen Tree Shelters Ltd, a pioneering company specialising in bio and environmentally degradable tree shelters, hedging and vole guards made all made from wool.

For more information on British Wool please visit www.britishwool.org.uk





Current Members of the British Wool Board



Jim Robertson
Chair & Producer Member
(Scottish Southern)



Brendan Kelly
Vice Chair & Producer
Member (Northern Ireland)



Rhys Davies
Publicly Appointed
Non-Executive Member



Jonathan Lea FCMA
Publicly Appointed
Non-Executive Member



Jo Taylor
Board Appointed
Non-Executive Member



Andrew Hogley
Chief Executive Officer



Andy Whelan
Chief Finance Officer



Carl Stephenson
Producer Member
(English Northern)



Kate Drury
Producer Member
(English Central)



Penny Chantler
Producer Member
(English Southern)



Alan Derryman
Producer Member
(English South Western)



Eleanor Mackintosh
Producer Member
(Scottish Northern)



Huw Evans
Producer Member
(Welsh Northern)



John Davies
Producer Member
(Welsh Southern)

03. Role Description

British Wool is seeking to identify two new independent Non-Executive Board Members who will be jointly appointed by Ministers in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. These individuals will work with the rest of the Board to guide the long-term strategic direction of the organisation and also act as a valuable source of outside perspective, advice, and challenge to the executive team.

The new Publicly Appointed Non-Executive Members will be expected to attend Board meetings, Chair and sit on other committees, as required. Together with the rest of the Board, they will monitor the performance of the business and of the Executives, acting as a 'critical friend', a source of advice, insight, expertise, and constructive critique. The expected time commitment is around 2.5 days per month, which includes attendance at meetings, appropriate preparation, and travel time.

Specific Responsibilities

- providing expert advice and guidance as members of the Board;
- ensuring the organisation acts in accordance with its overall goals and objectives;
- helping to develop and enhance the brand image of British Wool as an organisation and a commodity;
- advising and overseeing the development of plans and strategies;
- stakeholder collaboration with the executive team, department heads, and external partner businesses;
- chairing and/or sitting on one or more of the Board's Committees: the Audit Committee, the Pension Committee, the Governance Committee, and/or the Member Engagement Committee.

The Board meets around eight times per year. These meetings are typically held at either the Head Office in Bradford, at British Wool depot sites, or at partner sites across the UK. This is to provide Board members with greater insight into the network operations. In addition, one Board meeting tends to incorporate a customer visit to provide insight and understanding of the markets that British Wool sells into.

The current remuneration for Board Members is £9,679 (gross) per annum. Whilst company law does not apply to British Wool, the general duties of company directors as set out in the Companies Act 2006 are considered to apply to the Board members.

The successful candidates will work with the other non-executive board members to monitor the performance of the business and of the Executive, participate in the long-term strategic goal setting, attend board meetings, chair and sit on such other business steering committees as they may be required to do so from time-to-time.

Both the successful candidates must abide by the Nolan principles of public service.

04. Person Specification

The successful candidates should both possess a track record of thoughtful and strategic decision making, excellent communication and influencing skills, and high levels of personal integrity.

The following essential criteria are required for both roles:

- an ability to provide constructive and independent leadership, challenge and support to the Board of a complex organisation;
- an ability to analyse issues at a strategic level in ways which are impartial, creative, innovative, and focused on finding solutions.

Beyond that, two different sets of expertise are being sought:

Profile No. 1 (Likely Start in July 2025)

This individual will be expected to come from a finance background. They will be asked to Chair the Audit Committee.

Essential criteria:

- financial experience, with understanding of corporate finance, audit, reporting, governance, and commercial business;
- proven experience of operating at Board level or equivalent, preferably in either the private or cooperative sector;
- experience of acting strategically to identify commercial opportunities, to assess their implications, and to make sound financial decisions.

The additional following attributes would be highly desirable:

- previous experience of Chairing or sitting on an Audit Committee;
- knowledge of final salary pension schemes;
- knowledge and experience of appraising investment or divestments in businesses or start-ups.

Profile No. 2 (likely Start in October 2025)

This individual will be expected to come from a commercial or sales background.

Essential criteria:

- an ability to provide broad commercial insight, helping the Board to develop and execute strategies and opportunities in its markets, supply chains, and customer base;
- strong communication skills with proven ability to influence and engage a strong and diverse network of people and organisations, and the ability to inspire confidence in stakeholders at all levels.

The additional following attributes would be highly desirable:

- previous experience as a CEO or similar;
- a track record of developing and growing businesses;
- experience or knowledge of launching new products and services.
- textiles-related experience (or experience of similar markets to those British Wool operates in).
- knowledge of overseas markets and export.

05. Terms of Appointment

We expect the appointments to start on 1st July 2025 and 1st October 2025 respectively. Appointments are for three years. Exceptionally, re-appointments may be considered for a second three-year term subject to good performance, attendance, and business needs, and will be at the discretion of Ministers.

The appointee may resign at any time in writing to Defra's Secretary of State. The Secretary of State, in conjunction with devolved ministers, may terminate the appointment under certain conditions, which will be notified to the successful candidate on appointment.

Remuneration and Expenses

Members will receive £9,679 per annum on the basis of a time input of 2.5 days per month. The time commitment includes time preparing for meetings and travelling time. Reasonable expenses are paid in line with British Wool policy.

The roles are non-pensionable.

Conflict of Interest

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 any connection with commercial, public or voluntary bodies.



07. Conflicts of Interest and Due Diligence

If you have any interests that might be relevant to the work of British Wool, 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 contact Kam Dlay-Lewis on kamdlay-lewis@britishwool.org.uk.

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. The Panel may explore issues with you before they make a recommendation on the appointment.

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 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.

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 agreement programme under Part 1 of the Debt Agreement 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 have become subject to a debt relief order or a bankruptcy restrictions order;
- you fail to declare a conflict of interest.

08. 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/governance_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/publications/complaints/>

Alternatively please contact the Commissioner's office on 020 7271 0831 for a printed copy.

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 appointments listed in this information pack and in the case of diversity monitoring information may be anonymised and used solely for monitoring purposes. The way we collect and use personal information about you is described in a privacy notice. This notice is available from publicappts@defra.gov.uk.



09. 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

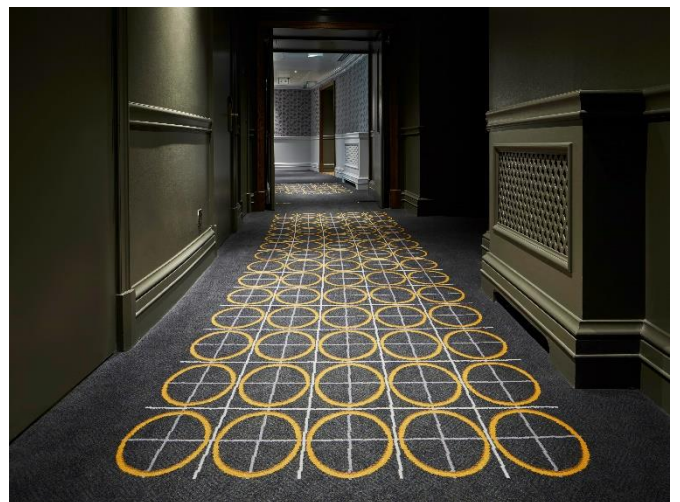
Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

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.



10. The 12 Principles of Governance for all Public Body NEDs

Expertise

1. 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.
2. Consider the broader mission and duties of your sponsoring Secretary of State, his or her Department and the Government.
3. Ensure compliance with statutory duties and the organisation's Framework Document and act within its powers.
4. Exercise reasonable care, skill and diligence in the exercise of their authority and judgement.

Scrutiny and Challenge

5. 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.
6. 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.

7. 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.
8. 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.

Support

9. 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.
10. 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.
11. 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.
12. Promote the success of the entity having regard to the interests of all members and stakeholders, and all risks.

06. The Recruitment Process

The closing date for applications is Friday, 28 March 2025. We expect to have shortlisted by late April, with panel interviews taking place during the week commencing Monday 12 May. It is essential that your statement of suitability gives full but concise information relevant to the appointment, clearly demonstrating which role you are applying for and how you meet each of the essential and desirable criteria.

The Advisory Assessment Panel will consist of:

- Gill Laishley (Defra Deputy Director Farming & Primary Processing Agri-Food Chain)
- Jim Robertson (British Wool Chairman)
- Independent sector representative (TBC)

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

References will be taken for those candidates selected for interview.

How to Apply and Submit Your Application

In order to apply you will need to visit the Apply for a public appointment service on gov.uk and either create an account or sign in. Once logged into your account, click on Apply for this role and follow the on-screen instructions.

All candidates are required to provide:

- a CV of no more than two sides of A4, including the names and e-mail addresses of two referees;
- a statement of suitability of up to 1,000 words (and not more than two sides of A4) clearly demonstrating how you meet each of the essential and desirable criteria for the role – make sure you refer to the contents of this document and provide specific examples; please also include information about your experience;
- diversity and equality information;

- information relating to any outside interests or reputational issues.

If you have any questions about the appointments process please contact Kam Dlay-Lewis, PA to the Board at British Wool:

+44 (0)1274 688 666

kamdlay-lewis@britishwool.org.uk

Completed applications should be submitted online at

<https://apply-for-public-appointment.service.gov.uk/roles>

by midday on 14th February 2025.

