



The Commissioner for  
Public Appointments



Department  
for Transport



# Network Rail

Chair appointment  
Summer 2025

Application Deadline: 17.00 Wednesday 23 July 2025



Gatenby  
Sanderson

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# Welcome Note from Heidi Alexander, Secretary of State for Transport

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the role of Chair to the Board of Network Rail.

This is an important time for our country. We are focused on improving performance on the railways, driving forward rail reform, transforming infrastructure to work for the whole country, delivering greener transport and better integrating transport networks. All of which are fundamental to the Government's mission to kickstart economic growth.

We will deliver the biggest overhaul to the railways in a generation. A new organisation - Great British Railways (GBR) - will be established, which will deliver our railway services. This will mean a unified and simplified rail sector with a relentless focus on customers, communities and value for the taxpayer and passengers. Network Rail needs strong leadership to ensure that it is operationally and culturally ready to move to GBR.

We are recruiting for a Chair to lead the current Board of Network Rail. This is a time limited role, to lead the organisation as it prepares for the creation of GBR. Network Rail currently owns, maintains and develops the railway infrastructure in England, Scotland and Wales with the broad objectives of rail infrastructure owner, operator and developer to provide safe, reliable and growing infrastructure in an efficient manner.

I expect the Chair to work across the sector from day 1 to ensure the British public get a better-performing railway before, during and after the creation of GBR. The successful candidate will oversee Network Rail's preparation for transition to GBR.

The Chair will maintain a close and transparent relationship with the Secretary of State and the Scottish Ministers, advising them on matters relating to Network Rail. The Chair will ensure the policies and actions of Network Rail have a customer and commercial focus and support my wider strategic policies and those of Scottish Ministers.

We strongly welcome applications from an array of sectors and all backgrounds. We are fully committed to diversity and believe our public appointments should reflect our customers - the travelling public - who come from all walks of life and have different experiences. We very much welcome fresh talent, expertise, and perspectives, to help us better understand the needs of the communities we serve and support better decision making for all. This includes people who may never have applied for a public appointment - but could bring new ideas, insights and energy.

If you are interested in the role, I would like to encourage you to apply.

GatenbySanderson are happy to talk through the process and answer your questions.

Heidi Alexander  
Secretary of State for Transport



# About Network Rail

Network Rail is an executive non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Department for Transport.

Network Rail's purpose is to get people and goods to where they need to be, and in turn to support the UK's economic prosperity. Its role is to run a safe, reliable and efficient railway, serving our customers and communities, overseeing the running of the railway as an entire system.

Network Rail own, operate and develop railway infrastructure in England, Scotland and Wales. This covers approximately 20,000 miles of track; 30,000 bridges, tunnels and viaducts; and thousands of signals, level crossings and stations.

The rail network spans the country, providing a service for passengers and freight users that underpins daily life and economic growth.

The rail network consists of five highspeed main lines (the West Coast, East Coast, Midland, Great Western and Great Eastern), which radiate from London to the rest of the country, plus regional rail lines and dense commuter networks within the major cities. Network Rail also operate High Speed 1, the line from London St Pancras to the Channel Tunnel.

Network Rail work closely with train operators to deliver train services as safely, reliably and punctually as possible. Network Rail lead the industry's planning for the future of the railway, and are committed to a running a sustainable railway. Network Rail plays a vital role in the UK's transport infrastructure and will be key to delivering a greener transport system.



Network Rail's income is a mix of grants from the UK and Scottish Governments; payments from train and freight operators that use the railway; and income from its real estate portfolio, e.g., rental income from shops at stations. Network Rail also work closely with organisations willing to pay for projects that benefit them, passengers and freight users.

Network Rail's operation, maintenance and renewal of its railway infrastructure is funded via 5-year Control Periods. The current Control Period, CP7, began on 1 April 2024. The process to reach the settlement and finalise Network Rail's objectives and funding for the control period is known as the Periodic Review and is run by the independent regulator, the Office of Rail and Road.

The Periodic Review process allows Government to set out what it wants to achieve from the day-to-day operation of railway infrastructure and sets expectations and funding for key issues that matter for passengers and freight customers – significantly impacting on

train reliability, safety and the use of existing capacity. It is also important for taxpayer value for money and for jobs in the rail supply chain, given that it establishes much of the forward pipeline in the coming years.

The UK and Scottish governments are making a significant investment of over £45bn in CP7.

[Network Rail's Delivery Plan](#) details how this funding will be spent to benefit their customers and the communities across the country.

# Network Rail Board

Network Rail's board of directors is responsible to the Secretary of State for Transport, and the Chair aims to ensure Network Rail's policies and actions support the wider strategic policies of the Secretary of State and the Scottish Ministers.



Mike Putnam  
Interim Chair



Ismail Amla  
Non-Executive Director



Mark Bayley  
Non-Executive Director



Carolyn Battersby  
Non-Executive Director



Stephen Duckworth  
Non-Executive Director



Stuart Harvey  
Non-Executive Director



Dyan Perry  
Non-Executive Director



David Noyes  
Non-Executive Director



Fiona Ross  
Non-Executive Director



Steve Scrimshaw  
Non-Executive Director



Sir Andrew Haines  
Chief Executive Officer



Jeremy Westlake  
Chief Financial Officer

## The Future of Rail

We are creating a unified and simplified rail sector under the leadership of Great British Railways – with a relentless focus on customers, communities and value for the taxpayer and passengers.

The Passenger Railway Services (Public Ownership) Act was the first step towards fixing our railways, enabling the majority of services to be owned by and run for the public, but we need further fundamental reform to fix the underlying structural problems and put passengers and freight customers back at the heart of the railway.

The Railways Reform Bill will enable the biggest overhaul of the rail sector in a generation. It will create stronger leadership by establishing GBR as a new ‘directing mind’ for the industry, unifying track and train under a single public body to deliver better services for passengers and freight customers, and better value for money for taxpayers.

These changes form a critical part of the Government’s wider Plan for Change - delivering growth, putting more money in people’s pockets, and rebuilding Britain.



## What are the Government doing now?

The Chair will work with Network Rail's CEO to ensure Network Rail maintains a safe and efficient rail network and works with Train Operating Companies to help them deliver good services for passengers.

The Government doesn't want to wait for the Rail Reform Bill to start delivering a better railway. Work has already begun with three train operating companies moving back into public ownership by the end of 2025 and the remaining seven by 2028. DfT is working with Network Rail and the DfT Operator to design GBR, working collaboratively to lay the foundations for it.

In parallel, the Chair will also support the transition to GBR, which will eventually bring together over 80,000 people into a single organisation. The Chair will play a key role in bringing together track and train and facilitating joint working across the sector, driving the necessary operational preparation and cultural change in Network Rail, which will be central to the transition to GBR.



## About the role

Post	Chair
Reports to	Secretary of State
Duration	2 years, or until Great British Railways is established, whichever is sooner.
Remuneration	£250,000-300,000 per annum for a minimum of 2.5 days per week attendance.

### Chair Role

Your function is to provide external advice and expertise to inform the Ministers decision-making process. You will add value by offering independent constructive challenge to the operation of the Board, contributing towards the Board's primary aims, which include:

- Providing oversight and scrutiny of the performance and financial position of the body.
- Advising on body policies, projects, and programmes.
- Agreeing the bodies annual report and accounts and governance statement.
- Monitoring progress against Business Plan commitments and corporate planning objectives.
- Reviewing key risks and effectiveness of risk management processes.
- Readyng Network Rail for, and driving it into, Great British Railways.

You will assist the Chief Executive in taking forward the strategic direction of Network Rail and provide expertise. You will be responsible for:

- Guiding, advising, and providing scrutiny on strategy and supporting the CEO in delivering Network Rail's strategic plan.
- Report to Ministers.
- Setting the Board agenda and chairing the Board.
- Carrying out annual performance reviews of the Non-Executive Directors.
- Acting as an ambassador for Network Rail to promote its work.

You will chair the meetings of the Network Rail Board, held in person.

# Person specification

## Essential Criteria:

1. Experience of leading complex organisations and major programmes at Board or equivalent level and the ability to prepare an organisation for major change.
2. Experience of operating in a safety-critical environment, ensuring that the safety of workforce and service users is paramount.
3. Understanding of the importance of driving revenues and reducing costs, driving efficiencies and long-term whole-system thinking.
4. The ability to support the rail reform agenda confidently in the context of ensuring infrastructure and services work together.
5. Excellent stakeholder management and communication skills with the ability to manage complex partnerships, secure confidence of Ministers, Mayors and nations and build consensus around high priority interventions.
6. Experience of building and maintaining a workforce with an inclusive and diverse culture, breaking down barriers to opportunity, improving productivity, engaging with employees and their trade unions to foster a productive relationship, in which they are valued and respected as partners for the positive changes required.

Candidates' suitability for the role will be assessed against criteria 1- 6 above.



# How to apply

If you wish to apply for this position, please apply through [www.gatenbysanderson.com/job/GSe116362](http://www.gatenbysanderson.com/job/GSe116362) by 17.00 Wednesday 23 July 2025.

Any applications submitted after the closing date, or that are missing any of the following documents, will not be accepted.

- A CV or equivalent biographical information (maximum two sides A4, minimum 12 font) setting out your career history and including details of any professional qualifications.
- Provide a summary of why you are interested in the role and how you meet the specification and essential criteria. This can be in a form that allows you most ably to present your interest and credentials, for example a short, bullet-point slide presentation, a short video (no more than 2 mins) or supporting letter (no more than two A4 pages, minimum 12 font). Make sure you refer to the contents of this document and provide specific examples.
- You will also be asked to provide diversity data, and to declare any potential conflicts of interest or reputational issues.

For a confidential conversation about this role, please contact our recruitment partners at GatenbySanderson:

Principal Researcher, Zoe Bennett  
[zoe.bennett@gatenbysanderson.com](mailto:zoe.bennett@gatenbysanderson.com)

Consultant, Olivia Robinson  
[olivia.robinson@gatenbysanderson.com](mailto:olivia.robinson@gatenbysanderson.com)

Partner, Julie Myers  
[julie.myers@gatenbysanderson.com](mailto:julie.myers@gatenbysanderson.com)



# Indicative Timetable

Please note that these dates are only indicative at this stage and could be subject to change.

If you are unable to meet these timeframes, please advise in your application. We will try and offer as much flexibility as we can, but it may not be possible to offer alternative dates for interviews. Please ensure you quote the job title and reference number in your e-mail.

Action	Date
Campaign launches	Wednesday 25 June 2025
Campaign closes	17.00 Wednesday 23 July 2025
Shortlist meeting	Thursday 7 August 2025
Final panel interviews	Tuesday 9 September and/or Thursday 11 September 2025
Appointment Confirmed	w/c 20 October 2025



# Selection process

This role is being competed in accordance with the Governance Code on Public Appointments (February 2024), which sets out the regulatory framework for public appointments processes. The Code is based on three core principles – merit, openness, and fairness.

GatenbySanderson will acknowledge your application and keep you updated on the progress of the competition.

The process may include a longlist meeting where the selection panel will assess each application against the essential criteria and decide who to invite for a virtual preliminary interview with GatenbySanderson.

At the shortlist meeting the selection panel will assess each application against the essential criteria and decide who to seek Ministers agreement to invite for interview.

Interviews are expected to take place in central London and to last for between 45 and 60 minutes. Further details about the format will be provided to you in advance.

The decision to appoint to this role rests with the Secretary of State. Appointable candidates may be invited to meet with the Secretary of State, or another Department for Transport Minister, before they make a final decision.

Please note: Expenses incurred by candidates during the recruitment process will not be reimbursed except in exceptional circumstances and only when agreed in advance with GatenbySanderson.

You can expect the recruitment process to take approximately 6 months, however, applicants will be kept informed of progress.

# Additional information

## Appointment Term

Your appointment as Chair of Network Rail will be made by the Secretary of State.

The appointment will be for a term of 2 years, or until Great British Railways is established, whichever is sooner.

It should be noted that this post is a public appointment; Chairs/ Non-Executive Board members are neither employees of the Crown nor the Department for Transport. Such appointments are not normally subject to the provisions of employment law.

Appointments may be ended prior to the conclusion of the period of appointment.

## Time Commitment

The anticipated time commitment is a minimum of 2.5 days a week per annum. The role involves attendance at Board meetings either in person or remotely, providing specialised advice as required, preparation time, travel, and work outside of meetings.

## Remuneration

- £250,000-£300,00 per annum for a minimum of 2.5 days per week attendance,
- Remuneration is taxable through payroll, but the appointment is not pensionable.
- Members can claim reimbursement for reasonable travel and subsistence costs necessarily incurred at rates set centrally by the Department for Transport.
- Applicants should note that the successful candidates cannot be remunerated for this role if they are being paid for an existing full-time role from the public purse.

## Location

The role will be based in London (but with an expectation of a national presence across Great Britain, and regular travel including to attend and chair board meetings).

## Availability

The successful candidate is expected to commence the role as soon as the successful candidate is able to, subject to the successful completion of pre-appointment checks and security clearance.

## Security clearance

The successful candidate will be required to have or be willing to obtain security clearance to Security Check (SC). Pre-appointment checks will also be undertaken on immigration and criminal convictions. It usually takes between 4-6 weeks to obtain the security clearance. The role will be offered on a conditional basis until the successful candidate has passed all checks.

## Equal Opportunities Monitoring

We believe that by being a diverse and inclusive workplace, where everyone is valued, we are more motivated, higher performing and more committed to our team. We welcome all applicants, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, social background, religious beliefs, ethnicity, or age.

As part of the application process, we ask candidates to complete equal opportunities monitoring information in the application portal. This will help us to monitor selection decisions to assess whether equality of opportunity is being achieved. This part of the form will be treated as confidential and used for statistical purposes only. The form will not be treated as part of your application.

## Disability Confident

The Department for Transport values and promotes diversity and is committed to equality of opportunity for all and to the appointment of disabled people. As part of the Disability Confident scheme, we guarantee an interview to anyone with a disability whose application meets the essential criteria for the post. 'Best meet' is defined as providing/demonstrating strong examples of all essential criteria.

In order to guarantee an interview to all disabled candidates (as defined by the Equality Act 2010) who satisfy all the essential criteria for the role and wish to be considered under the Disability Confident Scheme, we need candidates to declare a disability and that they wish to be considered under the Scheme.

### What do we mean by a disability?

To be eligible for consideration under the Scheme, you must be considered disabled under the Equality Act 2010. This means that you must have or have had in the last 12 months, a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial long-term adverse effect on your ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. This includes those whose disability has lasted, or is likely to last, for 12 months, or if the disability or condition is likely to progress or recur.

You do not have to be registered as a disabled person to apply under this scheme.

## Nationality

This is a non-reserved post and therefore open to UK Nationals, British Nationals Overseas, British Protected Persons, Commonwealth Citizens, EEA Nationals and certain non-EEA family members and Swiss Nationals under the Swiss EU Agreement. There must be no employment restriction or time limit on your permitted stay in the UK. You will not be asked to produce evidence to confirm your eligibility at the application stage, but you will be required to do so should you be invited to the final panel interview.

## Standards in public life

You will be expected to demonstrate high standards of corporate and personal conduct. All successful candidates will be asked to subscribe to the Review Body's "Codes of Practice". Candidates will be expected to abide by the "Seven Principles of Public Life" set out by the Committee on Standards in Public Life in Annex A.

## Disqualification for appointment

There are circumstances in which an individual will not be considered for appointment. They include:

- people who have received a prison sentence or suspended sentence of three months or more in the last five years.
- people who are the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order.
- in certain circumstances, those who have had an earlier term of appointment terminated.
- anyone who is under a disqualification order under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986.
- anyone who has been removed from trusteeship of a charity; and
- Roles listed under the [House of Commons Disqualification Act 1975](#) or the Devolved Administrations equivalent.

## Registration of interests

The purpose of these provisions is to avoid any danger of Board members being influenced, or appearing to be influenced, by their private interests in the exercise of their public duties. Public appointments require the highest standards of propriety, involving impartiality, integrity, and objectivity, in relation to the stewardship of public funds and the oversight and management of all related activities. This means that any private, voluntary, charitable, or political interest which might be material and relevant to the work of the body concerned should be declared. It is important, therefore, that you consider your circumstances when applying for a public appointment and identify any potential conflicts of interest, whether real or perceived. There is a requirement to declare any actual or potential conflict of interest you may have in being appointed to the Board upon applying. Any actual or perceived conflicts of interest will be fully explored by the Panel at interview stage.

## Political activity

Members will need to show political impartiality during their time on the Board and must declare any party-political activity they undertake in the period of their appointment. Details of the successful candidate's declared political activity must be published by appointing departments when the appointments are publicised.

Your political activity will be kept separate from your application and will only be seen by the Panel prior to interview – the Panel may at that stage explore with candidates any potential for conflict of interest. It is appreciated that political activities may have given you relevant skills, including experience gained from committee work, collective decision making, resolving conflict and public speaking. If, therefore, you have had such experience and you consider it relevant to your application for this post, you may if you choose include it separately in the main body of your application.

## Due diligence

Due diligence will be carried out as part of the application process. As well as checks made regarding the above, searches will be carried out via internet search engines and any public social media accounts. It will be seen by the Panel prior to interview – the Panel may at that stage explore with candidates any findings.

## Data Protection

GatenbySanderson takes your privacy seriously and maintain an Information Security Management System and Privacy Information Management System to fulfil our obligations defined by the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018) and the UK GDPR. Our [privacy statement](#) sets out how we will handle your personal data securely and in accordance with your rights.

## Complaints

If you are not completely satisfied with the way your application is handled at any stage of the competition, please raise any complaint in the first instance with:

Via email: [dftpublicappointments@dft.gov.uk](mailto:dftpublicappointments@dft.gov.uk)

We will reply to your complaint within 20 days.

If you remain unsatisfied, please [contact the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments](#). The Commissioner can only investigate complaints relating to regulated Public Appointments.

# Annex A Seven Principles of Public Life

The principles of public life apply to anyone who works as a public officeholder. This includes all those who are elected or appointed to public office, nationally and locally, and all people appointed to work in the civil service, local government, the police, courts and probation services, NDPBs, and in the health, education, social and care services. All public officeholders are both servants of the public and stewards of public resources. The principles also have application to all those in other sectors delivering public services.

## Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

## Integrity

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

## Objectivity

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

## Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

## Openness

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the public interest clearly demands.

## Honesty

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

## Leadership

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

