



Briefing pack for the appointment of


Chair of the Protected Landscapes Partnership

CLOSING DATE:

Thursday 18th September 2025

CONTENTS	PAGE
Defra Mission Statement	3
Equal Opportunities and Diversity	4
Ministerial Message to Candidates	5
Protected Landscapes	6
National Trails	7
The Protected Landscapes Partnership	8
Role Description	10
Essential Criteria	11
How to Apply	12
Recruitment Process	13
Panel	14
Conflict of Interest, Data Protection and Ineligibility criteria	15
Annex A – Seven Principles of Public Life	16
Annex B – 12 Principles of Governance for all Public Body NEDs	17

CONTENTS



Defra Group leads on the fundamentals: the food we eat, the water we drink, the air we breathe. It encompasses food, environment, biosecurity, trade and more. Defra is a policy, growth, science, delivery and international department.

Defra's work is fundamental to delivering the government's five missions – by building economic resilience through better flood defences, protecting against biosecurity risk, climate adaptation and nature-based solutions; creating jobs and attracting investment in our water and waste sectors; working with our sectors, such as food and drink; and ensuring that all missions are rural-proofed.

To achieve these goals, we are committed to appointing high-calibre individuals from diverse backgrounds. By drawing on a wide range of skills, knowledge, and experiences, we can make our work more effective, resilient, and accountable to the public.

Image: North York Moors

DEFRA MISSION STATEMENT

Equal Opportunities and Diversity

The UK government is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and ensuring that no one experiences unfair discrimination or harassment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, national origin, colour, sex, gender identity, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, or age.

We actively encourage applications from individuals of all backgrounds and are committed to fostering diversity in public appointments. All appointments are made on merit, following a fair and open competition process.

Disability Commitment

We are dedicated to supporting candidates with disabilities and are proud to hold Disability Confident Leader status. We guarantee an interview for any applicant with a disability whose application meets the minimum criteria for the post.

To ensure an inclusive process, we are committed to making reasonable adjustments where possible for candidates with disabilities. If you require any adjustments to support your application, please refer to the 'How to Apply and Submit Your Application' section below. Further information about the Disability Confident Leader scheme is available on <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/information/disability-confident-guidance-for-applicants/>.

Image: Chilterns

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in serving as the Independent Chair of the Protected Landscapes Partnership.

National Landscapes, National Parks and National Trails are our most iconic and inspiring places. They were created from 1949 onwards, with post-war Britain recognising that everyone has a right to access the countryside – from Northumberland’s dark skies to the South Downs’ Seven Sisters and the South West Coast Path. 75 years on, the needs are greater than ever, with nature underpinning our health, economy and climate. That’s why this government will empower Protected Landscapes to become greener, wilder and more accessible.

Covering 25% of England, and over half of our most important sites for nature, Protected Landscapes are essential to nature’s recovery. They also lead the way on many other priorities and provide valuable opportunities for people to access nature. To work on Protected Landscapes is to work on flood prevention, affordable house building, water quality, health inequalities, sustainable food production, green jobs and so much more.

In recognising their importance to the nation, we have committed to reinvigorating Protected Landscapes with new legislation, targets and tools. The Protected Landscapes Partnership will help shape this bold new deal, so by applying you could be part of something huge.

As Chair of the Protected Landscapes Partnership, your vision will help shape the future of these landscapes, and therefore the country. We need a dynamic person, with diverse skills and experiences, to fill the post and lead the way.

You’ll accelerate delivery of our statutory biodiversity targets and international commitment to protect 30% of nature by 2030. You’ll do this by amplifying the voices of the partner organisations to ensure that these living landscapes thrive cohesively for people and nature.

Government is committed to building conditions for success, innovation and collaboration that create new opportunities and resources for Protected Landscapes. You’ll deliver on this commitment by taking innovative approaches to opportunities and challenges, including identifying opportunities to diversify funding streams and amplify the Protected Landscapes brand.

You will also play a vital role in promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion by finding ways to connect people with diverse skills from all walks of life with nature. These landscapes belong to everyone, and it is crucial that Protected Landscapes reflect the diversity of our nation.

If you are ready to contribute towards this important mission, please apply. Together we can protect and improve these remarkable places for generations to come.

I look forward to receiving your application.

Mary Creagh CBE
Minister for Nature



MINISTERIAL MESSAGE TO CANDIDATES



Our 10 National Parks and 34 National Landscapes in England are our most inspiring places and home to internationally important habitats, wildlife, and heritage. Together they welcome over 270 million visitors a year and help build thriving local communities and rural economic growth. The expert Protected Landscape organisations are dedicated to delivering national priorities at a local level, from food production to nature recovery, access to nature, climate mitigation and adaptation, acting as stewards for our cultural heritage and the natural beauty of these treasured landscapes.

Each of our Protected Landscapes is unique, both in the challenges they face and the huge potential they offer to become the type of nature-rich areas we want to see across the country. We know that without Protected Landscapes we will not achieve our Environmental Improvement Plan 2025 targets, including our international commitment to protect 30% of land for nature by 2030.

The statutory purposes of a National Park are to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage, and promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of National Parks by the public.

The statutory purpose of a designated area of outstanding natural beauty (known as a National Landscape) is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area.

Image: South Downs, Jack and Jill Windmills near Hassocks

NATIONAL PARKS AND NATIONAL LANDSCAPES

National Trails are long distance walks through some of the most beautiful landscapes in the UK. Some National Trails can also be ridden on mountain bike or horse. National Trails are designated by the government and are managed to a set of Quality Standards that set them above other routes. National Trails are well waymarked with the distinctive acorn symbol, and each trail is looked after by a dedicated officer, often with teams of volunteers. There are thirteen National Trails, covering over 3,000km of footpaths and bridleways, and the King Charles III England Coast Path will add another 4,000km to this to be the longest National Trail once fully completed. Funding for National Trails in England is provided by national government through Natural England and by local highway authorities and other funding partners.

National Trails UK is the independent champion for the National Trails and is a registered charity. Its mission is to strengthen the Trails so they can sustainably provide greater benefits for people and nature, advocate for the Trails' preservation and enhancement, and inspire more people to use them as a gateway to the great outdoors.

Image credits: Barton Hills, Chilterns – Aleksandra Warchol



NATIONAL TRAILS

The Protected Landscape Partnership brings together the national organisations representing the different types of Protected Landscapes in England – the National Landscapes Association, National Parks England and National Trails UK - with Natural England. The time, passion and expertise of these organisations is fundamental to achieving the full potential of England's Protected Landscapes so that future generations can continue to enjoy all that Protected Landscapes provide for nature, climate, access and community.

As Chair of the Partnership, you will help future generations inherit Protected Landscapes that are greener, wilder and more accessible to all.

The Partnership seeks to:

- develop evidence to demonstrate the value of protected landscapes to the nation
- strengthen Protected Landscapes' voices
- share knowledge and learning across organisations to improve delivery effectiveness and impact
- deliver ambitious, innovative pan-landscape projects

Image: Rockford Common (Credit: Nick Lucas)

The Partnership is committed to delivering national priorities which work for everyone and innovative multi-landscape projects which impact on one or more of the following:

- Accelerating nature recovery
- Mitigating the impacts of climate change
- Addressing the lack of diversity in the sector
- Increasing nature connectedness and equitable access to nature

The structure and governance of the Partnership is geared towards enabling national collaboration at all levels across the following functions:

- Evidence & research
- Innovation & experimentation
- Incubating projects until ready to fledge and scale
- Knowledge exchange and networking

The overall role of the Chair is to provide strategic leadership of the Protected Landscapes Partnership, amplify the Protected Landscapes brand, and drive innovation.

The Chair will not be representative of any organisation or group and will be committed to acting in the best interests of Protected Landscapes.

The key functions of the Chair are to:

- Lead the strategic objectives of the Protected Landscapes Partnership within the policy and resources framework determined by Defra, with a focus on fostering innovative approaches to funding and delivering greener, wilder and more accessible Protected Landscapes.
- Champion the goals of the Protected Landscape Partnership as agreed by partners, amplifying Protected Landscapes' voices and inspiring a wide range of stakeholders including across

Government.

- Promote a culture which champions equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI).
- Chair Protected Landscape Partnership meetings, supporting high-quality discussion where all voices are heard.
- Ensure the Protected Landscapes Partnership's activities are efficiently conducted within a strong governance and accountability framework.
- Promote high standards in the management of public finances and uphold the principles of public life.

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).

Image credits: Bossington Beach, Exmoor – Dave Thackwell

Remuneration and Time Commitment

A basic allowance of £20,000 is paid per year, with a further £3,000 allocated for expenses. The time commitment is one day per week, for an initial term of one calendar year, with the possibility to extend for a further 2-3 years.

We are looking to attract dynamic candidates from a range of diverse backgrounds, who can demonstrate:

- Genuine passion for tackling the climate and nature crises and for empowering England's Protected Landscapes to become greener, wilder and more accessible through innovative and visionary approaches.
- Exceptional communication and networking skills, with an ability to advocate, influence, engage and inspire confidence across a diverse network of stakeholders nationally – and leveraging these relationships to raise the profile and ambition of Protected Landscapes.
- Experience of senior strategic leadership, anticipating emerging issues and developing dynamic strategies to enable the Protected Landscapes Partnership to achieve its objectives.
- Senior level experience negotiating, securing and diversifying funding streams.
- Ability to provide constructive and inclusive leadership with a demonstrable commitment to EDI and a track record of building consensus through collaborative working.

Image credit: Milky Way Dartmoor - Alex Nail



ESSENTIAL CRITERIA

To apply you will need to [create an account](#) or [sign in](#) to “Apply for Public Appointment Service” gov.uk by the deadline of **midday on 18th September 2025**. Once logged onto your account, click on ‘apply for this role’ and follow the on-screen instructions.

All candidates are required to provide

- A CV, no more than two A4 pages long, detailing your previous roles and education
- A completed application form. You will be asked to provide a "statement of suitability" when you apply. Please use the attached application form (available for download on the website)

If you have any questions about the process, criteria, or roles, please contact ProtectedLandscapes@defra.gov.uk

If you require a **reasonable adjustment** or wish to apply under the **Disability Confident Scheme**, you can do so when submitting your application.

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

The closing date for applications to be submitted is midday on Thursday 18th September 2025

Image credits: Cotswolds, Seed Harvest.



HOW TO APPLY



Image credit: Dentdale Sunset, Yorkshire Dales – Lee Beel

RECRUITMENT PROCESS

Advisory Assessment Panels

Ministers are assisted in their decision making by Panels.

The role of the panel is to decide, objectively, who meets the published selection criteria for the role and identify 'appointable' candidates. It is then for Ministers to determine merit and make the final appointment. Through the process the Panel's role is:

- to determine which applicants should be shortlisted based on their application.
- to interview each shortlisted candidate and to assess which are appointable.
- to preserve the confidentiality of candidates throughout the selection process;
- to ensure any personal or familial relationships with candidates is declared within the panel and dealt with appropriately and consistently with the principles of fairness and merit

Campaigns may utilise multiple panels depending on the number of applicants. A panel will comprise the following:

- **A departmental official:** This will be a Defra civil servant who will function as panel chair and represents Ministers' views at every stage of the competition.
- **An independent member:** An independent panel member must be independent of both Defra and the Protected Landscapes Partnership. The independent will provide an external perspective.
- **A representative from each of the partner organisations:** Typically, the Chair, however other representatives may be put forward to meet diversity requirements and aid scheduling.

Image credits: Defra, family enjoying a walk

Conflicts of Interest and Due Diligence

If you have any interests that might be relevant to the work of the Protected Landscapes Partnership, 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 Protected Landscapes team on ProtectedLandscapes@defra.gov.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.

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.

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 the Privacy Notice accessible through the Cabinet Office's Public Appointments Website (<https://publicappointments.cabinetoffice.gov.uk>) or request a copy of Defra's Public Appointments Privacy Notice from publicappts@defra.gov.uk.

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 restriction order;
- you fail to declare any conflict of interest.

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.

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



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs