



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



**SUSTAINABLE
FUTURES**



Animal &
Plant Health
Agency

Animal and Plant Health Agency Non-Executive Director



Why Join APHA?

Welcome Message from the Animal and Plant Health Agency Chief Executive:

Hi I'm Richard Lewis the CEO of APHA and if you're reading this then I'm hoping you apply to become part of our world leading organisation and that we will be working together in the not too distant future!

More than ever before the health of our environment, plants, animals and bees matters. If you join us, you will become part of an amazing, diverse team on the frontline in researching, investigating, and acting to protect the UK's animal, plant and bee health.

Your work won't just make a difference to the UK but contribute to global efforts to control and eradicate disease in plants, animals and protect global biodiversity.



Richard Lewis

Our key priorities are:

- Control and eradication of animal and plant diseases and pests, reducing the risks from new and emerging threats.
- Provide services for animal health and welfare, plant, and bee health.
- Rapidly control pest and disease outbreaks; while continuing to maintain and develop the skills and capabilities required to deliver core business and services and provide an efficient outbreak response.
- Continue to adapt and implement outbreak response plans and identify lessons from outbreaks, implementing any improvements needed.
- Provide science-based evidence and advice to inform policy makers.
- Maintain national and international specialist veterinary and scientific capability and reputation

Come join us and be part of something special making a difference everyday!

Thank you for your interest in this role.

APHA plays a crucial role in protecting the UK's biosecurity. It delivers functions that are critical to animal and plant health, and which in turn secures human health and confidence in the food supply chain. The regulatory underpinning provided by the Agency is also integral to our ability to be a successful food trading nation.

You will find APHA staff at the border, on farms and in world-leading laboratories. All of them are delivering on our mission to safeguard animal and plant health for the benefit of everyone in society, the environment and the economy.

Elizabeth Buchanan CVO
APHA Lead Non-Executive Director



Our APHA Strategy



Our mission: To protect animal and plant health to benefit people, the economy, and the environment.

Protect	Innovate	Promote
<p>We protect the UK from animal and plant-related threats to human health, the economy and the environment.</p>	<p>We are an innovative organisation that enables industry to innovate and thrive.</p>	<p>We promote and assure animal health, plant health and animal welfare to support the UK's productivity and trade.</p>
<p>We will do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stopping disease and pests arriving in the country • Preparing for and responding to emergencies, pest and disease outbreaks • Robustly regulating animal welfare • Minimising the impact of animal and plant-related threats on the nation's health, food security and environment • Proactively identifying and mitigating threats to the nation's animal health, plant health, human health, food security and the environment, including those increased by climate change. 	<p>We will do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering excellent services that are simple and easy to use for our customers and our people • Driving data and evidence-based regulation and policy that enables the UK sector to thrive • Exploiting opportunities to use our innovations to drive up standards and create value for the taxpayer • Driving and supporting innovation through our research and development, regulatory activities and work with industry and other partners. 	<p>We will do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educating and incentivising people to protect our animal and plant health • Ensuring trust and confidence in UK animals, plants and products • Sharing our expertise to shape global standards that drive sustainable economic growth and trade • Growing global capability to address threats to animal and plant health at source by sharing our expertise • Working in partnership with industry, stakeholders and others to drive better bio security and welfare.

To deliver our mission we work as One APHA, following our principles of People and Place:

People	Place
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We value our people, develop their skills and expertise, enhance their health, safety and wellbeing, and provide an inclusive environment in which everyone can thrive • We provide our people with the right tools to do the job • We deliver change well and enable our people to continuously improve. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We act locally to deliver nationally, maximising the benefits of our links with the local communities we are embedded in across the UK • We minimise our environmental impact and make APHA's operations sustainable and net zero • We future-proof the high-tech infrastructure that underpins our ability to deliver through our Science Capability for Animal Health and change programmes.

The Role

The Animal and Plant Health Agency are seeking a Non-Executive Director with experience and working knowledge in the plant health sector to join the Steering Board.

APHA Steering Board

The Steering Board is an advisory body to the Agency's Accounting Officer and has no executive powers or responsibilities - its role is to challenge and support the Executive in delivering strategy and customer objectives and achieving value for money. Critical to the effectiveness of the Steering Board is its ability to influence its stakeholders and to bring its collective wisdom to help to constantly improve the work and reputation of the Agency.

The Steering Board is chaired by Elizabeth Buchanan CVO, APHA's Lead Non-Executive Director. The Steering Board comprises of four other Non-Execs, the APHA Chief Executive, the APHA Directors and a range of Defra advisors and representation from the Welsh and Scottish Government.

All our non-executives contribute to the Board's work and the achievement of its objectives through Board meetings, and other tasks assigned by the Chair.

We are looking for a candidate who will bring diversity of thought to the work of the Steering Board, who can demonstrate a passion for our work while bringing real expertise in plant health.

The role you will be doing

All our non-executives contribute to the Steering Board's work and the achievement of its objectives through Board and committee meetings, and other tasks assigned by you by our Lead Non-Executive Director.

As a Non-Executive Board member, you will:

- attend all Steering Board meetings and maintain a high level of discussion and debate;
- provide advice about strategy and delivery to the Agency's customers;
- ensure issues are explored from a range of viewpoints, promoting inclusion and engaging with stakeholders when necessary;
- review and provide advice about performance, respecting the principles of good governance, supporting and holding the Executive to account without becoming involved in the running of the business;
- make well informed contributions to debate and discussion at Board meetings to aid collective decision-making;
- maintain high personal standards in relation to personal behaviour and uphold the Nolan principles of public life.

Vacancy Information

Job Title and organisation

APHA Non-Executive Director

Vacancy reference

APHA-NED-0126

Location

APHA's Headquarters, Weybridge, Surrey
(The APHA Steering Board as a combination of physical and virtual meetings across Great Britain.)

We want to support your wellbeing by ensuring that flexible working is at the heart of our people offer. Our flexible working policies create an environment in which managers and employees are happy and comfortable talking about flexible working options. These include where you work, when you work and how you work. These discussions help to balance the freedom to choose with the responsibility to meet business needs.

Remuneration

The salary for this role is £500 per day (fee based)

Up to 20 days per year

Reasonable expenses payable

Contract Type

Fixed-term*

*The appointment is for a fixed term of up to three years. Thereafter, whilst not automatic, an extension period of up to three years may be granted.



Essential criteria:

Plant Health expertise

We are looking for someone with a good grounding in plant health regulation blending technical expertise in plant science and biosecurity along with strong communication, problem-solving, and regulatory compliance skills. These skills are essential for identifying threats, enforcing legislation, and collaborating with various stakeholders to protect plant health.

You would have a distinct advantage if you could demonstrate a working knowledge of trade or a comprehensive understanding of international trade in the plant sector.

Technical and Knowledge-Based Skills required:

- **Plant Biology & Pathology:** A deep understanding of plant life cycles, health, and how to identify various pests (invertebrates, nematodes) and pathogens (bacteria, viruses, fungi).
- **Biosecurity Principles:** Knowledge of biosecurity best practices, the continuum of pre-border, border, and post-border activities, and how to implement effective control strategies to prevent the introduction and spread of harmful organisms.
- **Legislation and Regulation:** Familiarity with national and international plant health legislation, such as the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) standards, the UK Plant Health Service structure, and the legal powers for inspection, enforcement, and certification.
- **Risk Assessment:** The ability to explain and apply principles of risk assessment (hazard x likelihood), use the national risk register for "horizon scanning" of emerging problems, and apply appropriate mitigation measures.
- **Inspection and Diagnostics:** Proficiency in inspection techniques for various commodities, collecting samples, using diagnostic tools, and making preliminary identification of pests and diseases in the field or lab.

Seven Principles of Public Life

Selflessness: Holders of public office should take decisions 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 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 wider 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.



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Our Selection Process

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The Application Process

What you need to do to apply

To apply you will need to create an account or sign in to 'Apply for Public Appointment Service gov.uk' by the deadline of 11:59hrs 4 March 2026 quoting reference **APHA0126**. Once logged onto your account, click on 'apply for this role' and follow the on-screen instructions.

- A copy of your CV of no more than two sides of A4 with education, professional qualifications and employment history and the names and contact details for two referees.
- A statement of suitability giving evidence of the strength and depth of your ability to meet the essential criteria for this role. Please provide specific examples to demonstrate how you meet each of the criteria (max two pages).
- Completed monitoring form 1 (Conflicts of interest conduct and advertising Questionnaire)
- Completed monitoring form 2 (Diversity Questionnaire)

For further information please email: eileen.tottle@apha.gov.uk

How we decide whom to invite for interview

Applications will be considered by the APHA Lead Non-Executive Director, the APHA Chief Executive and an independent panel member.

Short-listing will determine which candidates best demonstrate that they have the specified qualities and experience, who will then be invited for interview. It is therefore essential for your application to include full but concise information/evidence relevant to the appointment based on the personal attributes and experience.

Interview arrangements

Interviews are expected to take place in person at the APHA Headquarters in Weybridge and will last approximately 1 hour. Further details about the format will be provided to you in advance.

References will be taken up prior to interview.

Other information

Please let us know what adjustments we can put in place to help you through the recruitment process if you are disabled.

Timeline

Please note that this timeline is **indicative** at this stage and could be subject to change. The anticipated timetable is as follows:

Application Closing Date	11:59hrs on 4 March 2026
Interviews	w/c 30 March 2026
Potential Start Date	May 2026



SUSTAINABLE FUTURES

Candidates are asked to note the above timetable, exercising flexibility through the recruitment and selection process as it may not be possible to offer any alternative dates for assessments or interviews.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

We passionately believe in equality, diversity & inclusion and we match that belief with action.



Defra is committed to being an organisation in which fairness and inclusion are central to all our working relationships. At Defra we want you to have a respectful, welcoming and engaging working environment, free from discrimination regardless of age, disability, gender identity, marriage and civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, social background, trade union activity, caring responsibilities or working pattern. We encourage applications from neurodiverse people and believe it is only through having a mix of ideas and ways of thinking that we will be able to have a culture which produces high quality work.

We have many active staff networks including Age, Mental health, Cancer, Carers, Disability, EU nationals, Ethnic

Minority, Faith, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Asexual and Transgender (LGBAT+), Social Mobility, Women and Worklife Balance. They are supported by senior champions and encouraged to take an active part in the development of our organisation.

We offer career development through a range of both internal and Civil Service wide talent schemes, mentoring, sponsorship and reverse mentoring. Our senior leaders talk authentically and with passion about what they are doing personally to support equality, diversity and inclusion. We promote and support a range of flexible working patterns to enable staff to balance home and work responsibilities, and we treat people fairly irrespective of their working arrangements. The inclusion of all of our employees is very important.

Things you need to know

Disability Confident Scheme for Disabled Persons

We are committed to making reasonable adjustments for Disability Confident Scheme applicants and will try to remove any barriers so you are not at a disadvantage during the selection/recruitment process/ interview / assessment including; allowing extra time during selection tests; ensuring that information is provided in an accessible format or; by providing training. We are also committed to interviewing all applicants with a disability who meet the minimum criteria for the role applied for.

If you feel that you may need a reasonable adjustment to be made, or you would like to discuss the disability confident scheme in more detail please contact us in the first instance. If you wish to receive a hard copy of the information, or in an alternative format e.g. Audio, Braille or large font then please contact:

defrarecruitment.grs@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

Equal Opportunities

Defra values equality and diversity in employment. We are committed to being an organisation in which fairness and equality of opportunity is central to the approach in business and working relationships and where the organisational culture reflects and supports these values. In Defra you have the right to a working environment free from discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation regardless of race, ethnic or national origin, age, religion, sex, gender identity, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, working hours, trade union membership or trade union activity.





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Candidate Information Pack

