



Briefing pack for the appointment of

Chair of the Dartmoor Steering Group

CLOSING DATE: 20th August 2026

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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 Dartmoor Steering Group.

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.

The Dartmoor Steering Group brings together the Ministry of Defence and the key statutory and landowning bodies with an interest in Dartmoor Training Area. Its purpose is to keep under review the best possible reconciliation between conservation and public access and military training.

The Chair will need independence of thought, strong facilitation skills and the ability to help senior partners work through differing positions and reach practical consensus.

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



WELCOME TO CANDIDATES



Dartmoor is a special place where humans and wildlife have co-existed for millennia. Every inch of the Moor has a story to tell, from the burial places of our Bronze Age ancestors to the initiatives being undertaken by our present-day farmers and land managers. It is a powerful landscape, combining myth and legend with contemporary vision.

Dartmoor was designated as a National Park in 1951. Its purposes are to conserve and enhance natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage; and to promote opportunities for people to understand and enjoy its special qualities.

Dartmoor National Park Authority was established under the Environment Act 1995. In carrying out National Park purposes, the Authority also has a duty to seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities.

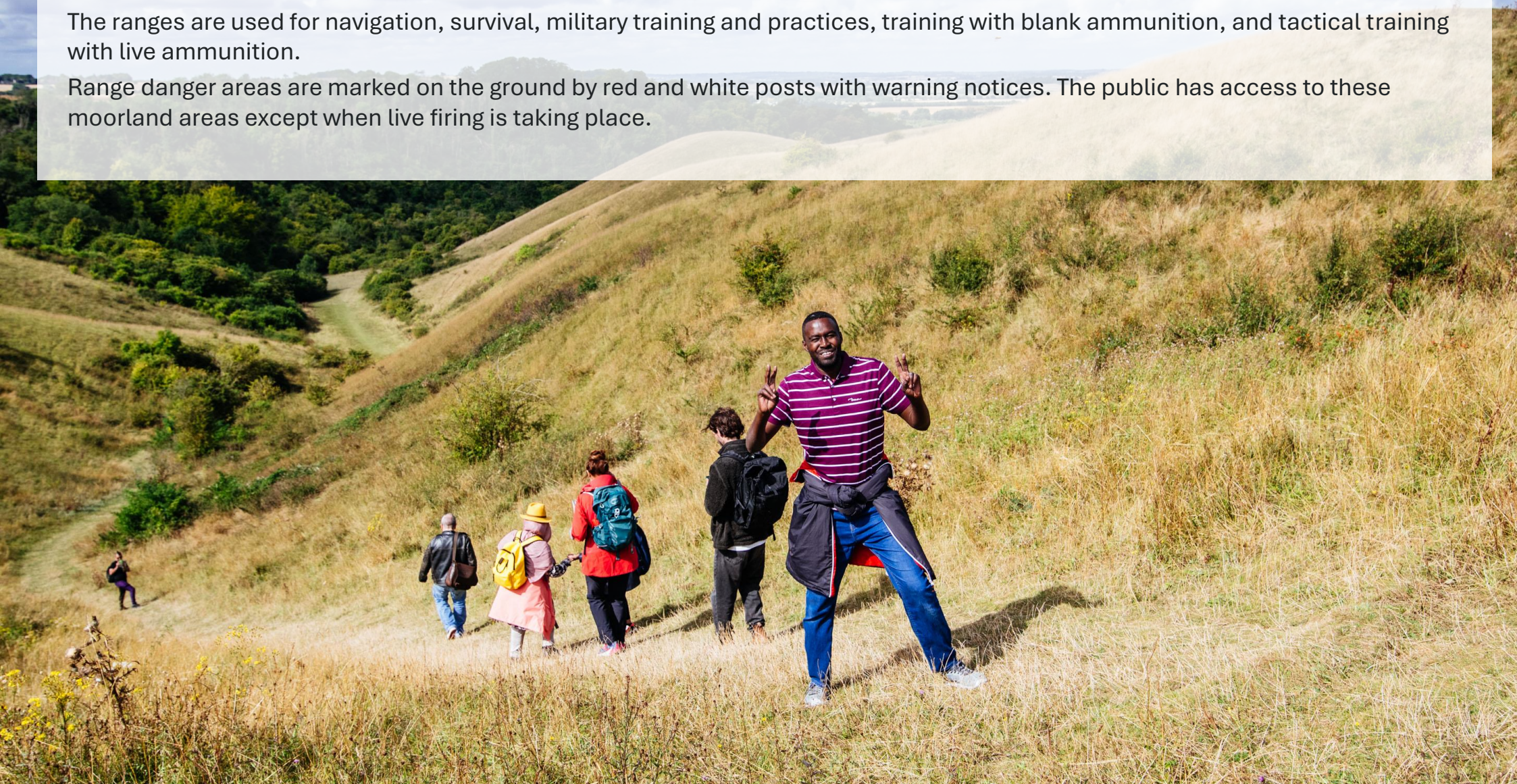
Image: Haytor, Dartmoor

DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK

Dartmoor has been used for military training since the early 1800s. The Ministry Of Defence trains under licences from landowners, including the Duchy of Cornwall, on Okehampton, Merrivale and Willsworthy ranges and the Ringmoor dry training area on the south moor.

The ranges are used for navigation, survival, military training and practices, training with blank ammunition, and tactical training with live ammunition.

Range danger areas are marked on the ground by red and white posts with warning notices. The public has access to these moorland areas except when live firing is taking place.



DARTMOOR TRAINING AREA

Dartmoor Steering Group was established in 1978 following Baroness Sharp's non-statutory public inquiry into the military use of Dartmoor.

The Group brings together the Ministry of Defence and the key statutory and landowning bodies with responsibilities or interests in Dartmoor Training Area.

Its purpose is to keep under review the best possible reconciliation between:

- requirements of military training
- conservation of Dartmoor's special qualities
- public access and enjoyment

Senior representatives of the Group are drawn from the organisations below:

- Defence Infrastructure Organisation
- Duchy of Cornwall
- Dartmoor National Park Authority
- Dartmoor Commoners' Council
- Historic England and Natural England
- Commando Training Centre Royal Marines and Army – Ten Tors

The Chair works across these interests to support constructive discussion, clarity of outcome and shared confidence in the Group's work.



The Chair facilitates the work of the Dartmoor Steering Group and helps partners maintain a balanced, constructive focus on military training, conservation and public access.

Key functions of the Chair:

- chair senior-level meetings and ensure all relevant views are heard
- summarise differing positions clearly and help the Group identify practical consensus
- support strategic discussion and clear follow-up between meetings
- represent the Group appropriately and maintain confidence in its independence

**Remuneration and Time Commitment**

The role is non-remunerated. Travel and incidental expenses are paid by the Ministry of Defence.

Time commitment: Approx 2 days per month

We are looking for candidates who can demonstrate the below essential criteria:

- independence of thought and deed, while representing different views fairly
- experience of chairing senior-level meetings
- strategic thinking, analysis of differing positions and clear summarising
- a track record of partnership working, consensus-building and conflict management
- strong communication skills and ability to represent the Dartmoor Steering Group

Desirable: familiarity with Dartmoor, National Park purposes and Group issues; understanding of military structures and processes



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 20th August 2026**. 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 20th August 2026

For an informal discussion, contact Tom Surrey via Penny Bailey: pbailey@dartmoor.gov.uk or 01626 831059.



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

The panel will comprise the following:

- **Organisation representatives:**
 - Tom Surrey – Dartmoor National Park Authority Chief Executive
 - Crispin d'Apice – Ministry of Defence
- **An independent member:** An independent panel member must be independent of both Defra and MOD. The independent will provide an external perspective.

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



Ministry
of Defence