Briefing pack for applicants
Closing Date 3 January 2017
Contents

Ministerial message to candidates ........................................................................................................ 2
Defra mission statement ........................................................................................................................ 3
Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew mission statement ..................................................................................... 4
The role and person specification ........................................................................................................ 5
Time commitment and term of office .................................................................................................. 6
Remuneration and expenses ................................................................................................................ 6
The recruitment process ...................................................................................................................... 6
How to apply and submit your application .......................................................................................... 7
What is the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew? ......................................................................................... 8
The Commissioner for Public Appointments ....................................................................................... 9
Data protection ................................................................................................................................... 9
Annex A – The seven principles of public life ...................................................................................... 10
Annex B – Current membership of the Board .................................................................................... 11
Ministerial message to candidates

Dear Candidate

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Trustee of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.

As I am sure you already know, Kew’s collections, science facilities and gardens are world-class. Kew Gardens is one of London’s top visitor attractions and is home to over 40 listed buildings and other structures, including the Palm House, Temperate House, iconic Pagoda and the Millennium Seed Bank at Wakehurst Place.

This year has been remarkable for Kew and has seen the announcement of the Prince of Wales as Patron, the installation of The Hive, a unique structure inspired by scientific research into the health of bees; and the grand unveiling of the Great Broad Walk Borders, the world’s longest double herbaceous borders.

We are looking for applications from candidates with expertise in horticulture who can help to design large, complex projects and help maximise the potential of the gardens.

A world-class institution also needs world-class people. If you have the skills and experience to help lead and support RBG Kew, whatever your background, we very much look forward to hearing from you.

Lord Gardiner of Kimble
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Rural Affairs and Biosecurity
Defra mission statement

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

Defra will be operating an interview access scheme for disabled people (as defined by the Equalities Act 2010) who meet the minimum criteria for this appointment as published in these notes. If you wish to apply for consideration under this scheme, please notify the Department when you return your application. In addition, if you require any special arrangements at interview stage, please give details in a covering letter to enable us to make the appropriate arrangements if necessary. Furthermore, adjustments will be made in the event of a successful application.
Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew mission statement

Unlocking why plants and fungi matter

Kew’s mission is to be the global resource for plant and fungal knowledge, building an understanding of the world’s plants and fungi upon which all our lives depend.

We use the power of our science and the rich diversity of our gardens and collections to provide knowledge, inspiration and understanding of why plants and fungi matter to everyone.

We want a world where plants and fungi are understood, valued and conserved – because all our lives depend on them.

Objectives

In support of its mission Kew has set the following five strategic objectives:

- Our **collections** are curated to excellent standards and are widely used for the benefit of humankind
- Our **science** makes a demonstrable contribution to solving the critical challenges facing humanity today
- We are the world’s leading **botanic gardens** where our large and diverse audiences develop their understanding of why plants and fungi matter
- We are valued as the pre-eminent provider of **public education** on plant and fungal science, conservation and horticulture
- We are a **sustainable and dynamic organisation**, making positive global impacts in partnership with others.

Achieving impact

We are embarking on an ambitious period in our history. In order to ensure we keep on track, we will focus on ten priority initiatives:

1. Delivering the Science Strategy
2. Maximising the potential of the gardens
3. Improving the contribution from paid-for events
4. Creating an outstanding outreach proposition
5. Creating an inspirational education programme
6. Engaging stakeholders and partners in RBG Kew’s importance and impact
7. Growing philanthropic support and membership income
8. Growing other commercial income
9. Enabling its people to perform to their full potential
10. Improving the built and technological infrastructure
The role and person specification

The Role

To complement its existing skills and knowledge the Board of Trustees of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew is seeking a new member with expertise in horticulture, landscape and/or architecture.

Members of the Board have corporate responsibility for ensuring that RBG Kew has appropriate practices, procedures and policies to meet its statutory and administrative requirements for the use of public funds. Important responsibilities of Board members include:

- ensuring that high standards of corporate governance are observed at all times;
- establishing the overall strategic direction of the organisation within the policy and resources framework agreed with the Defra Minister;
- hold the Executive to account and support them in the delivery of planned results by monitoring performance against agreed strategic objectives and targets and by ensuring corrective action is taken when necessary;
- ensuring that the Board operates within the limits of its statutory authority; within the limits of the Board’s delegated authority agreed with Defra and in line with all relevant agreements with Defra, including any conditions relating to the use of public funds; and, notwithstanding the above, complying with the relevant obligations incumbent on trustees of an exempt charity, including independence of decision-making;
- Representing the purpose and strategic direction of the organisation to the public and specific stakeholders.

The successful candidate must abide by the Nolan principles of public service (attached at Annex A).

Essential criteria

- A knowledge of and commitment to the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew and support of its purpose, values and strategic direction;
- The ability to think strategically, deliver change and improvements and develop a long term organisational vision;
- The ability to build collaborative relationships and command the confidence of Ministers, fellow Board members, Executive Directors, employees and stakeholders.
- Expertise in horticulture, landscape and/or architecture.
Time commitment and term of office

The time commitment is 10-12 days each year to attend Board and Committee meetings and associated activities.

Board meetings will be mainly held at Kew Gardens, with some meetings each year at Wakehurst Place.

Remuneration and expenses

The role is unremunerated, but essential expenses comprising of travel, accommodation, if required, and subsistence are payable based on Kew’s expenses arrangements, which are set out in Kew’s Guidance on Financial Policy and Practice.

The recruitment process

The closing date for applications is noon on 3rd January 2017. We expect to have shortlisted by 12 January, with panel interviews on 2 February.

It is essential that your statement of suitability gives full but concise information relevant to the appointment, clearly demonstrating how you meet each of the essential criteria.

The Selection Panel will consist of a Defra Deputy Director as chair, Marcus Agius (RBG Kew Chairman) and Margaret Paren (South Downs National Park Authority Chair) as the independent panel member. At the Shortlist meeting the Panel will assess each application against the essential criteria and decide who to invite for final interview.

Interviews are expected to take place at Kew Gardens and will last for approximately 45 minutes. Further details about the format will be provided to you in advance.

These are Ministerial appointments and all candidates deemed appointable by the Panel will meet with Lord Gardiner before a final decision is made.
How to apply and submit your application

To apply, please send:

• a CV of no more than two sides of A4

• a supporting statement of not more than two sides of A4, setting out how you meet the essential criteria – make sure you refer to the contents of this document

• Monitoring forms relating to political activity, diversity, conflicts of interest and advertising.

If you have any questions about the appointments process or would like an informal discussion about the role please contact Andrew Morris, Defra Public Appointments Team on 020 802 66562; publicappts@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Completed applications should be emailed to publicappts@defra.gsi.gov.uk – please quote reference “PAPPT 023-16”
What is the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew?

The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew was founded in 1759. Under the National Heritage Act 1983 the Board of Trustees of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew (RBG Kew) was established as a corporate body. RBG Kew is an Executive Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) and exempt charity, sponsored and regulated by Defra. Eleven Trustees are appointed by the Defra Secretary of State and one by HM the Queen.

RBG Kew has an international reputation for its scientific research into plants and fungi, and for its living and preserved collections which are unique in their global scope and coverage. Its gardens at Kew (Crown land, managed under Ministerial Direction from the Secretary of State) and Wakehurst Place, West Sussex (the latter leased from the National Trust) are enjoyed by almost two million visitors a year.

As an extensive botanical garden with a large number of nationally important heritage buildings, RBG Kew faces a significant financial challenge in ensuring it can operate as a world class visitor attraction and site of scientific expertise, whilst maintaining and developing these assets.

RBG Kew’s purposes are for the public at large. However as well as Defra’s interests, RBG Kew’s activities are relevant to a wide range of national and international organisations, institutions and public bodies including the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Department for International Development, Department for Education and the Department of Culture, Media and Sport and academic and research bodies.

For further information about the current role of RBG Kew you may wish to visit the Kew website.

The Board

RBG Kew’s functions and powers as a statutory body are derived from the National Heritage Act. As an Executive NDPB, RBG Kew operates at arm’s length from Defra, its sponsor department. The Trustees are accountable through Ministers to Parliament for the public money that they spend. Defra’s role is one of stewardship, enabling the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to account properly to Parliament for RBG Kew’s efficiency and effectiveness, ensuring that RBG Kew is properly managed and that its grant-in-aid is used appropriately and effectively. Each year RBG Kew produces a Corporate Plan and its formal Annual Report and Accounts are laid before Parliament.

Board members are Trustees of both an exempt charity and a Non-departmental Public Body, both regulated and sponsored by Defra. All new Board members will be given appropriate induction.
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 their Code of Practice is available at:


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

http://publicappointmentscommissioner.independent.gov.uk/contact-us/

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

Data protection

Defra is committed to protect your privacy and to process your personal information in a manner which meets the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.
Annex A – 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.
Annex B – Current membership of the Board

Marcus Agius (Chairman)
Nick Baird
Professor Liam Dolan
Catherine Dugmore
Sarah Flannigan
Valerie Gooding
Professor Sue Hartley
Ian Karet
Sir Henry Keswick (Queen's Trustee)
Sir Derek Myers
Professor Malcolm Press