



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Appointment of Independent Members of the Joint Nature Conservation Committee

Briefing pack for applicants

Closing date: 12 noon on 7 September 2017



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**



The Scottish
Government



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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.



About the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC)

The Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) is the public body that advises the UK Government and Devolved Administrations of Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales on UK-wide and international nature conservation. It is the forum through which the four UK Country Nature Conservation Bodies discharge their statutory responsibilities for nature conservation across the United Kingdom as a whole and internationally.

The JNCC undertakes a diverse range of work that contributes to conserving biodiversity and sustaining ecosystem services in the UK and internationally. Its focus is on providing evidence-based advice to support decision-making at appropriate levels.

- The JNCC works in partnership with other organisations to co-ordinate the collection and analysis of data to enable it to provide information on biodiversity status and trends across the UK. It helps to provide access to biodiversity data through mechanisms such as the National Biodiversity Network.
- The JNCC works with the country conservation bodies in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales to develop UK-wide common standards (for example for site identification) and to act as an interface with EU and global bodies.
- The JNCC plays a key role in providing scientific advice to Defra on major international environmental agreements, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species. It also advises on biodiversity conservation in the UK's Overseas Territories.

- In the marine environment major work areas include advising on the identification and management of offshore protected areas, developing approaches for monitoring marine biodiversity, and advising on the impacts on biodiversity of activities such as renewables and fisheries.

The JNCC is made up of a non-executive Joint Committee responsible for strategic direction and high-level decision-making, and the JNCC Support Company, a company limited by guarantee which employs the staff of the JNCC and delivers the JNCC's work programmes. The Joint Committee has two members from each of the country conservation bodies for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and five independent members appointed by the Secretary of State under an independent Chair.

The JNCC's core Government funding for 2017/18 is approximately £9.8 million. It employs around 170 staff, mostly based in offices in Peterborough and Aberdeen, with some based in other locations around the UK. Further details about the JNCC can be found on their website at: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/>. The JNCC has recently revised its strategic plan: http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/pdf/JNCC_Strategy_2017-2020_final.pdf

The role specification

Independent members of the Joint Committee contribute to the Committee's work in providing UK Government and the Devolved Administrations with effective support for their evidence needs and policies for nature conservation across the UK and internationally. Independent members need to understand the natural environment and its vital importance to everyone including its contribution to improving outcomes for the economy and for society on a sustainable basis. This will include an understanding on the latest thinking and implementation around natural capital and natural resource management.

In light of the UK's decision to leave the European Union independent members will need to develop, or have, an understanding of the key EU institutions in relation to nature conservation and the relevant EU conservation legislation, as well as the ability to identify the opportunities exiting the EU will provide the JNCC.

Independent members need to promote a positive and constructive relationship with a wide range of stakeholders including Defra, Devolved Administrations, the UK Country Nature Conservation Bodies and other public bodies operating in the environmental field, other Government Departments and EU and international institutions, in addition to the UK Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies, and a wide range of non-government organisations and other interest groups both within the UK and internationally.

The JNCC was established in the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) as a non-departmental public body. Independent members are expected to take a full and active role in the governance of JNCC, appropriate to a non-executive board. This involves providing support to the Chair of the JNCC in holding the

executive to account for achieving work programmes agreed in annual business plans and delivering good value for money. Independent members will also assist the Chair in overseeing the executive's delivery of the [2016 JNCC Review](#) in effecting operational changes to the way JNCC delivers advice and evidence to customers. A part of this work will involve independent members being able to identify new opportunities for JNCC to diversify its income while continuing to deliver on its core evidence and advisory functions for the UK Government and Devolved Administrations.

Independent members also provide a valuable source of expertise to ensure that the scientific methods and approaches underpinning JNCC's advice and evidence are robust and appropriate for the needs of customers. Members also take a longer term strategic view to position the organisation to make optimal use of modern technological, computational and scientific advances including the social sciences. Given the breadth of JNCC's work in the terrestrial, freshwater and marine environments, these include but are not restricted to advances in data and IT, modelling and statistics, earth observation and remote sensing. An understanding on the latest thinking and implementation around natural capital, ecosystem services and natural resource management is important.

The JNCC is accountable to the four government administrations in the UK. It is important for independent members, together with country conservation body representatives, to develop an understanding of legislative and policy changes associated with EU exit and the associated opportunities and challenges these bring to nature conservation for the UK.

Committee members must abide by the Nolan principles of public service (attached at [Annex A](#)).

Essential criteria

Generic criteria: you should demonstrate all of the following criteria:

- Knowledge and expertise in a field relevant to the work of JNCC (e.g. natural, environmental, social, terrestrial and marine sciences);
- Strong analytical skills with the ability to provide strategic oversight, impartial advice and constructive challenge to ensure that JNCC provides high-quality, cost-effective evidence and advice to government and other customers;
- A collaborative style, able to command the confidence of Ministers in the UK and Devolved Administrations, fellow Board members, Executive Directors and other employees of JNCC and stakeholders across a range of sectors; and
- Knowledge of organisational transformation, change management and financial governance in the private, public or voluntary sector.

Specific criteria: you should also demonstrate one or more of the following criteria:

- **Marine conservation and management:** the ability to make substantial contributions to JNCC work related to nature conservation in marine environments.
- **UK, EU and international legislation:** the ability to provide advice on the opportunities and challenges for UK and international nature conservation presented by EU exit.
- **Data management and information technology:** the ability to provide advice on the integration, analysis, curation and communication of data related to nature conservation including making use of modern methods.
- **Business development:** the ability to advise on identifying and managing diversification of income for JNCC while continuing to maintain a high quality service to the UK Government and Devolved Administrations.

Time commitment and term of office

The time commitment is 2.5 days per month to attend Committee meetings and associated activities. The JNCC's main office is in Peterborough, with a smaller office in Aberdeen. The time commitment includes time preparing for meetings and travelling time.

We expect the appointment to start before the end of 2017. Appointments are normally for up to three years. Exceptionally re-appointments may be made subject to satisfactory performance assessment at the discretion of Ministers. An appointee cannot serve more than a total of ten years.

Remuneration and expenses

JNCC members are currently paid £9,836 per annum on the basis of a time input of 2.5 days per month. Reasonable travel and dependent

care expenses are also paid. The roles are non-pensionable.

The recruitment process

The closing date for applications is 12 noon on 7 September. We expect to have shortlisted by 14 September, with panel interviews on 31 October and 2 November.

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](#). You must also demonstrate how you meet at least one of the additional criteria.

The Advisory Assessment Panel will consist of Dr Robert Bradburne (Defra, Head of Environment

and Analysis Unit) as chair, Professor Chris Gilligan (JNCC Chair) and Professor Lynda Warren (Aberystwyth University) 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 Nobel House, Smith Square, Westminster and will last for approximately 45 minutes. Further details about the format will be provided to you in advance.

How to apply and submit your application

To apply, please email the following to publicappts@defra.gsi.gov.uk by the deadline of 12 noon on 7 September 2017:

- 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
- Diversity monitoring form
- Conflicts of interest and political activity monitoring form
- Contact details (including email addresses) for two referees.

If you have any questions about the appointments process please contact Andrew Morris, Public Appointments Team on 020 8026 6562; publicappts@defra.gsi.gov.uk

For an informal discussion about the role please contact Marcus Yeo, JNCC Chief Executive Officer on 01733 866 897; marcus.yeo@jncc.gov.uk

Email applications to:
publicappts@defra.gsi.gov.uk

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Please quote reference:
APT01-17

Ineligibility criteria

Members of the Joint Committee also serve as Members and Directors of JNCC Support Company. Applicants who are ineligible to act as Directors or are unwilling to fulfil such a role will be deemed ineligible for appointment.

Individuals who are currently serving on the councils or boards of the UK country conservation agencies cannot be appointed to these vacancies for independent members.

What is the Joint Committee?

The Joint Committee is specifically responsible for:

- establishing and taking forward the **strategic aims and objectives of the JNCC** consistent with its overall strategic direction and within the policy and resources framework determined by Defra and the Devolved Administrations;
- ensuring that **Defra and the Devolved Administrations** are kept **informed of any changes** which are likely to impact on the strategic direction of the Joint Committee or on the attainability of its targets, and determining the steps needed to deal with such changes;
- ensuring that any **statutory or administrative requirements for the use of public funds are complied with**; that the Joint Committee operates within the limits of its statutory authority and any delegated authority agreed with Defra and the Devolved Administrations, and in accordance with any other conditions relating to the use of public funds; and that, in reaching decisions, the Joint Committee takes into account guidance issued by Defra and Devolved Administrations;
- ensuring that it **receives and reviews regular financial information** concerning the management of the JNCC; is informed in a timely manner about any concerns about the activities of the JNCC; and provides positive assurance to Defra and the Devolved Administrations that appropriate action has been taken on such concerns;
- demonstrating **high standards of corporate governance** at all times, including by establishing an audit and risk assurance committee to help the Joint Committee to address key financial and other risks; and
- **appointing a Chief Executive** and, in consultation with Defra and the Devolved Administrations, setting performance objectives and remuneration terms linked to these objectives for the Chief Executive which give due weight to the proper management and use and utilisation of public resources.

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 the Governance Code on Public Appointments can be seen at:

<http://publicappointmentscommissioner.independent.gov.uk/>

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/578498/governance_code_on_public_appointments_16_12_2016.pdf

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 Committee

Professor Chris Gilligan	<i>Independent (Chair)*</i>
Dr Hilary Kirkpatrick	<i>Chair, Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside</i>
Diane McCrea	<i>Chair, Natural Resources Wales</i>
Dr Madeleine Havard	<i>Deputy Chair, Natural Resources Wales</i>
Dr Mike Cantlay	<i>Chair, Scottish Natural Heritage</i>
Dr Susan Walker	<i>Deputy Chair, Scottish Natural Heritage</i>
Dr Joe Horwood	<i>Natural England</i>
Professor Howard Platt	<i>Deputy Chair, Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside</i>
Professor Colin Galbraith	<i>Independent*</i>
Professor Ian Bateman	<i>Independent*</i>

* *Secretary of State appointees*



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