



Appointment of Secretary of State Members to National Park Authorities, AONB Conservation Boards and Broads Authority

Briefing pack for applicants

Closing Date: Noon on 12 February 2021

Ref: **APPT10/20**



Contents

Ministerial message to candidates	2
Defra mission statement	3
Introduction to NPA and AONBs	4
Statutory Purposes of the NPAs and AONBs.....	5
The role and person specification	6
Essential criteria and skills	7
Remuneration and time commitment	8
The recruitment process	9
Interviews and panels	10
How to apply and submit your application.....	11
Ineligibility criteria.....	12
Conflicts of interest and due diligence	13
The Commissioner for Public Appointments	13
Data protection.....	14
Annex A - The seven principles of public life.....	15
Annex B – Current Secretary of State Members	16

Ministerial message to candidates

Dear Candidate

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Secretary of State appointed member of a National Park Authority or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Conservation Board.

I am looking for a diverse group of passionate and committed individuals who want to help shape the strategic direction of our National Park Authorities and AONB Conservation Boards. As a Secretary of State appointed member, you will have the opportunity to help conserve and enhance our most treasured landscapes now and for future generations.

We seek applicants who are sensitive to the needs of the local communities, whilst having an ability to respond to the challenge of widening access to more diverse groups in society. I particularly encourage applications from disabled and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic and younger candidates as currently the Boards of National Parks and AONBs are not fully reflective of our diverse society.

This is a pivotal time for Protected Landscapes with the review of England's National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, led by Julian Glover, published in 2019. The review considered how to build on the existing plan for AONBs and National Parks, how to connect more people with the natural environment and improve health and wellbeing, helping to deliver the aspirations of the [25 Year Plan for the Environment](#).

Protected Landscapes will play a key role in delivering the Prime Minister's recent commitment to protect 30% of UK land by 2030 for biodiversity. We must look to Protected Landscapes to be extra special places for nature. This goes to the heart of the primary purpose of National Parks and AONBs: to conserve and enhance the rich tapestry of flora, fauna, geological and human heritage we call natural beauty.

Julian Glover and his team have set out a compelling vision for more beautiful, and biodiverse National Parks and AONBs, and more accessible for everyone in the country to enjoy. We are in the process of considering all the [recommendations](#). Board members will have an important role to play in delivery of the Government's response to the review, helping to oversee the implementation of practical steps for improvements.

If you have the knowledge, skills and experience required to contribute to the life of the nation's National Parks and AONBs and would derive satisfaction from public service, we very much look forward to receiving an application from you.

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



Defra mission statement

The Defra group is here to make our air purer, our water cleaner, our land greener, and our food more sustainable. Our mission is to restore and enhance the environment for future generations, and to leave the environment in a better state.

This matters because enhancing nature and green spaces enhances lives and livelihoods, contributing to a strong economy. Our wellbeing, our physical and mental health, our love of place and landscape, and our intrinsic need for beauty, awe and wonder, are all closely interconnected with a thriving natural environment.

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

The 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

We guarantee to interview anyone with a disability whose application meets the minimum criteria for the post. 'Minimum criteria' means you must provide sufficient evidence in your application, demonstrating that you meet the minimum level of competence required for each essential criterion, as well as meeting any of the qualifications, skills or experience required. The Cabinet Office and Defra is committed to the employment and career development of disabled people. To show this we proudly display the Disability Confident Leader logo. More information about Disability Confident Leaders is available by clicking the logo above. If a person with disabilities is put at a substantial disadvantage compared to a nondisabled person, we have a duty to make reasonable changes to our processes where possible. If you need a change to be made so that you can make your application, please refer to the '[How to submit your application](#)' section below.



Introduction to NPA and AONBs

There are ten National Parks (including the Broads Authority), and thirty-four Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, including two Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Conservation Boards in England. **The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act (1949)** enabled the designation of National Parks and AONBs in England and Wales. The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 permitted AONBs to form Conservation Boards to aid management, particularly in cases where AONBs cross several administrative boundaries. In 2004, Conservation Boards were created for the Chilterns AONB and Cotswolds AONB.

National Parks and Cotswolds and Chilterns AONBs are protected because of their natural beauty and the wealth of opportunities provided for outdoor recreation, being designated nationally and internationally important landscapes. This high-quality environment supports vibrant local economies and communities.

National Parks are administered by individual National Park Authorities. The Chilterns and Cotswolds AONBs are each administered by a Conservation Board. Each National Park Authority/AONB Conservation Board is managed by an executive of permanent staff with oversight from members. Members make decisions about the actions that each National Park Authority/AONB Conservation Board should take to deliver its purposes. There are typically between 18 and 30 members, either appointed by Defra's Secretary of State, or elected by local authorities or parish councils. The executive carries out the necessary work to run the National Parks/AONBs and support and advise the members. Staff include professionals such as ecologists, rangers, planners and education specialists. Defra encourages National Park Authorities/AONB Conservation Boards to maximise funding from a range of sources to supplement the grant they receive from Government.

Statutory Purposes of the NPAs and AONBs

The statutory purposes of National Park Authorities are to:

- Conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage.
- Promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of National Parks by the public.
- When National Park authorities carry out these purposes, they also have the duty to seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the National Parks.
- The Broads Authority has an additional purpose of protecting the interests of navigation, and in discharging its functions regard is to be had to the needs of agriculture and forestry and the economic and social interests of those who live or work in the Broads.

The statutory purposes of AONB Conservation Boards are to:

- Conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB.
- AONB Conservation Boards have a further responsibility to increase the public understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the area of outstanding natural beauty.
- When AONBs carry out these purposes they also have the duty to seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the AONB.

The Sandford Principle

- If there is conflict between the purposes for National Parks and AONBs they are both required by statute to place greater weight to conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the park, a concept known as the 'Sandford principle'.

The role and person specification

We are looking to make Secretary of State appointments to North York Moors National Park Authority, the Chilterns and Cotswolds AONB Conservation Boards and the Broads Authority. The vacancies are shown in the table below:

	Confirmed appointment vacancies
North York Moors NPA	1
Chilterns AONB CB	1
Cotswolds AONB CB	2
Broads Authority	2
Total	6

The overall role of a member is to contribute to the leadership, scrutiny and direction of the National Park Authority/ Conservation Board and further the [statutory purposes](#). Members are not representative of any organisation or group and have a duty to act in the best interest of the Authority/ Conservation Board on which they serve. Certain [ineligibility criteria](#) apply to these posts.

The key functions of a member are to:

- Ensure the National Park Authority/ AONB Conservation Board furthers its statutory purposes
- Agree plans that ensure the Park/AONB is available to everyone, is relevant and is valued as a national asset for its special qualities
- Represent the Authority/ Board with external stakeholders as ambassador
- Agree appropriate policies to meet statutory duties and participate in collective decision making
- Encourage a creative, experimental and innovative culture, where risks are appropriately managed
- Guide the development of policy and business plans by participating in activities as required including meetings, committees and working groups
- Scrutinise and monitor performance, including providing constructive challenge and oversight of governance
- Ensure there is effective and efficient governance and management in place
- Provide leadership and strategic direction
- Utilise broad knowledge and skills, to manage local and national interests, ensuring the national interest is taken fully into account.

Essential criteria

- Enthusiasm and a genuine interest in protected landscapes and a commitment to ensuring that the Authority/ AONB furthers its statutory purposes.
- Ability to represent an organisation or issue to a broad range of stakeholders in an ambassador role.
- A commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.
- An understanding of 'groupthink' and the courage to challenge in order to improve innovation and progression. Clarity of thought and objectivity in reviewing performance.
- Ability to think strategically, contribute and scrutinise complex plans and policies. High standards of integrity and impartiality to ensure transparency and good governance.

Diversity and inclusion

Given our commitment to diversity we would encourage applications from individuals with experience of improving access for people from underrepresented groups and expertise in identifying and improving inclusive communications.

Successful candidates must abide by the Nolan principles of public service (attached at [Annex A](#)) and the [Code of Conduct for Board Members](#).

Remuneration and time commitment

Appointments are made for a period of up to four years for the Broads Authority and National Park Authorities and three years for AONB Conservation Boards. The appointments are expected to commence in July 2021. Secretary of State members are unpaid but may qualify for specific allowances. An appointee may resign at any time by giving notice in writing to the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State may terminate an appointment under certain conditions; these will be notified to the successful candidate on appointment. The three/four-year term may be extended by the Secretary of State.

Broads Authority

The Board formally meets six times a year including two workshops/site visits per year for all members to attend. Most business meetings are held at Yare House, Norwich, however meetings are currently being held remotely. There are many other opportunities for members to become involved in the work of committees and less formal meetings, site visits and briefings, and this can add up to a commitment of 2-3 days per month. All members qualify for a basic allowance of £1,046 per annum, and there are additional allowances for members who take on certain special responsibilities.

Chilterns AONB Conservation Board

The Board meets three times a year, each time at a different location in the Chilterns area and the Executive and Planning Committees meet four times a year at the Board's Chinnor offices. In addition, there are informal meetings and site visits and Board members are expected to act in an 'ambassadorial' role, representing the Chilterns Board to other organisations and media. The time commitment is six days per annum minimum, but ideally this would go up to twelve days. A basic £300 per annum allowance is on offer if a board member needs it. This amount increases for additional responsibilities such as chairing a standing committee. Expenses can also be claimed.

Cotswolds AONB Conservation Board

A basic allowance of £300 per annum is paid to each Board member. Special responsibility allowances are paid to members undertaking additional roles as defined by the Board. Reasonable travel and other expenses incurred on Board business can be reimbursed. Members, excluding those on specific working groups where the commitment might be slightly more, are asked to commit approximately 1-3 days a month to the Board's work. Those on Working or Steering groups have a degree of flexibility on how they achieve the outcome but there is great value in face-to-face meetings when current restrictions allow. Full Board meetings are held three times a year and in addition, one day a year is set aside for strategic workshops and site visits.

North York Moors NPA

A basic allowance of £2,255 per annum is paid to each member. A Special Responsibility Allowance is paid to members undertaking additional roles as defined by the Authority. Members are asked to commit 2-3 days a month to the Authority's work. Most meetings are held at their office in Helmsley, with a few distributed around other venues in the Park. Travel costs and subsistence allowances can be claimed for the 'authorised duties' of Members of the Board.

The recruitment process

The closing date for applications is **noon on 12 February 2021**. We expect to have shortlisted by 26 February, with panel interviews at the end of March/early April. 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](#). Please also specify for which National Park Authority and/or AONB Conservation Board you are applying.

At the shortlist meetings the advisory assessment panels will assess each application against the essential criteria and decide who to invite for final interview. Candidates will be advised by email if they are invited to interview. The panels' composition along with interview dates is outlined in the table overleaf.

As this is a national campaign to recruit to four separate NPAs/AONB Conservation Boards, interviews will be carried out by multiple panels. We would normally expect interviews to be held at regional hubs in Defra

main offices in Bristol, London and York. Due to restrictions imposed by Covid-19 it is likely that interviews will instead be conducted via videoconference. We will discuss arrangements with candidates as necessary. Interviews are expected to last for approximately 45 minutes. Candidates will be advised by email of the outcome of the interview.

In the unlikely event of interviews being held in person, you will be able to claim reasonable travel expenses incurred travelling to and from the interview (please note you may be asked to justify travelling costs if Defra considers the claims excessive). Please let Defra know beforehand if you are likely to claim, along with the approximate costs by contacting publicappts@defra.gov.uk and quoting reference number: **APPT10/20**.

Ministers will be made aware of all candidates deemed appointable by the panel. They will then decide who to appoint to the roles advertised.

Interviews and panels

Panel A

Interview dates	Defra panel chair	Organisation chair	Independent panel member
Broads: 29 March 2021	Rebecca Leete Head of Governance and Public Appointments	Bill Dickson Broads Authority	Professor Gurch Randhawa
Chilterns: 7 April 2021		Ian Reay Chilterns AONB	Professor of Diversity in Public Health and Director of the Institute for Health Research at the University of Bedfordshire.

Panel B

Interview dates	Defra panel chair	Organisation chair	Independent panel member
Cotswolds: 12 April 2021	Sion McGeever Deputy Director for Landscapes, Peatlands and Soil	Brendan McCarthy Cotswolds AONB	Kate Cairns
North York Moors: 15 April 2021		Jim Bailey North York Moors NPA	Chartered Engineer and elected Member of Nominations Committee at the Institution of Civil Engineers.

How to apply and submit your application

To apply, please send the following to publicappts@defra.gov.uk by the deadline of **noon on 12 February 2021**.

- a CV of no more than two sides of A4.
- a supporting statement of not more than 1,000 words (approximately two sides of A4), setting out how you meet the [essential criteria](#) – make sure you refer to the contents of this document and provide specific examples.
- completed diversity and political activity monitoring form.
- completed conflicts of interest, conduct and advertising monitoring form (please note the section on [conflicts of interest and due diligence](#) below).

Broads Authority

Sarah Mullarney: 01603 756063
Sarah.mullarney@broads-authority.gov.uk
<https://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/>

Chilterns AONB Conservation Board

Elaine King: 01844 355505
elaineking@chilternsaonb.org
<https://www.chilternsaonb.org/>

Cotswolds AONB Conservation Board

Andy Parsons: 07703 717986
Andy.parsons@cotswoldsaonb.org.uk
<https://www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/>

North York Moors

Vanessa Burgess: 01439 772700
v.burgess@northyorkmoors.org.uk
<https://www.northyorkmoors.org.uk/>

- If you have any questions or require additional assistance to support you in your application, please email the Public Appointments Team at publicappts@defra.gov.uk
- Please let the Public Appointments Team know if you are applying under the Disability Confident Scheme.
- To find out more about the work of individual protected landscapes and their vision please see weblinks below.
- For an informal discussion about the role please contact the relevant NPA/AONB CB using the contact details below.

Ineligibility criteria

You cannot be considered for Secretary of State appointments to a National Park Authority or the Broads Authority if you are:

- a serving Councillor of a local authority making appointments to that National Park Authority or the Broads Authority in the case of applications to the Broads Authority; or an employee of such a local authority;
- a serving Councillor of a parish council making appointments to the National Park Authority to which you are making an application;
- a serving employee of the National Park Authority or Broads Authority;
- a serving Member of Parliament; or
- the holder of a politically restricted post in a local authority.

You cannot be considered for a Secretary of State appointment to an AONB Conservation Board if you are:

- a member of a local authority for an area wholly or partly within the AONB, or an employee of such an authority;
- a parish Councillor or chair of parish meeting for a parish wholly or partly within the AONB or an employee of such a parish;
- a serving employee of the Conservation Board to which you are making an application;
- the holder of a politically restricted post in any local authority; or

- a person is also disqualified from becoming or remaining a member of the Board if s/he holds any employment in a company which would be under the control of the Board.

Additionally, 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 restrictions order; or
- you fail to declare any conflict of interest.

Conflicts of interest and due diligence

If you have any interests that might be relevant to the work of the National Park Authority/AONB Conservation Board to which you are applying, 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, please contact the Public Appointments Team.

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 and Cabinet Office.

The Commissioner for Public Appointments

This appointment is regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments and in line with the [Governance Code on 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/>

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:

<https://publicappointmentscommissioner.independent.gov.uk/complaints/>

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 our Privacy Notice, accessible through the Cabinet Office website:

publicappointments.cabinetoffice.gov.uk

or by requesting a copy from:

publicappts@defra.gov.uk

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 Secretary of State Members

Broads Authority

Kelvin Allen
Bruce Keith
Simon Roberts
Tristram Hilborn
Timothy Jickells
Matthew Bradbury
Stephen Bolt
Matt Shardlow
Greg Munford
Bill Dickson

Chilterns AONB Conservation Board

Ray Payne
Paul Mainds
John Shaw
Colin Courtney
John Nicolls
Alison Doggett
Elizabeth Wilson
Ian Waller

Cotswolds AONB Conservation Board

Nicholas Bumford
Catherine Le Grice-Mack
Jacqui Fenn
Garry King
Brendan Costelloe
Dominic Morris
Graham Hopkins
Ed Macalister-Smith
Susan Crawford
Benjamin Dent
John Swanton
Brendan McCarthy
George Lambrick

North York Moors NPA

Sarah Oswald
Jeremy Walker
Patrick James
Alison Fisher
Andrew Scott



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

