



# Director, Planning and Performance

**Vacancy Reference: GSe104364**

**Contract Type: Permanent**

**Locations: National**

**Closing date: 23:55pm Friday 17 November 2023**



Natural England



The Role



Selection Process



A Great Place to Work



Contact Us





# Natural England

# Welcome to Natural England

Thank you for your interest in joining Natural England at such an exciting time. We are the Government's adviser on the natural environment with a central role to play in delivering the Government's [25 Year Environment Plan](#) and [Environmental Improvement Plan 2023](#). The plan sets out an ambitious programme of changes to restore and protect nature and deliver new policies established in the [Environment Act 2021](#).

While we are a well-established organisation, we have been through a significant period of change in recent years. This has been in both the scope and scale of our mission, and within the organisation itself. As we look ahead, we can see that there is still more for us to do. My group is critical for ensuring an efficient and effective organisation and supports the business through provision of expert and professional business management advice and guidance. The Director Planning and Performance is a key role in supporting the success of Natural England's delivery and effective use of business resources.

This role is a significant leadership role, supporting me and working closely with senior leadership across the organisation. You will be responsible for day-to-day business management to support the running of the organisation; providing an extensive range of critical enabling services; influencing best practice planning and performance management; servicing our major governance committees; and leading our work to implement a Natural England business Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system. Working alongside our Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) colleagues, this role will lead for Natural England in our relationship on financial, commercial and property services.

We need someone who can provide inspiring, collaborative, and inclusive leadership to their team and who can also be a significant change agent, involving and enthusing our people, as they bring innovation to bear across this broad portfolio. Leading a team of c.70 people, including subject matter experts across business management, planning and corporate reporting, procurement, property and corporate sustainability. You will be a skilled, committed and enthusiastic people person.

At the same time as continuing to support the organisation to deliver stretching in-year delivery targets, you will be able to optimise efficiencies and improvements and lead the implementation of significant change projects across the whole organisation. The ideal candidate will be committed to enabling others to doing well, who can instill order and structure but who is also forward looking, innovative, curious about how things can be done differently and who can instill those traits in others at all levels. If that sounds like you, I hope you will apply to join our group.



**Dr Kirsty Carter-Brown**  
**Chief Officer,**  
**Business Management**

**Kirsty will be hosting a virtual Candidate Briefing Call to discuss the role on Monday 6 November from 13.00 - 14.00pm.**

**Please email [mary.dempsey@gate.nb.ysanderson.com](mailto:mary.dempsey@gate.nb.ysanderson.com) to register your interest.**

# Natural England

**Natural England is the Government's adviser on the natural environment. We are a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) responsible to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. Created by the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act in 2006, Natural England's general purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.**

Natural England has the following statutory duties:

- Promoting nature conservation and protecting biodiversity,
- Conserving and enhancing the landscape,
- Securing the provision and improvement of facilities for the study, understanding and enjoyment of the natural environment,
- Promoting access to the countryside and open spaces and encouraging open-air recreation, and
- Contributing in other ways to social and economic wellbeing through management of the natural environment.

## What drives our work?

The policy framework for these duties is the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan and is encapsulated in Natural England's new vision to advance the cause of '**Thriving Nature for People and Planet**' and our Natural England mission of '**Building Partnerships for Nature's Recovery**'.

We achieve this through six portfolio areas:

- **Creating resilient landscapes and seas** – we are moving beyond sites to think about ecological networks, landscapes and ecosystems, and to become more integrated in our delivery.
- **Connecting people with nature** – we are helping people recognise the relevance of the natural environment to their day to day lives, enabling more people to benefit from nature's contribution to wellbeing.
- **Greener farming and fisheries**– we are assisting with new policies that will incentivise farmers in the delivery of public goods and continuing in the transition to sustainable fisheries. All while contributing to long-term food security and livelihoods in these sectors.
- **Sustainable development** - conservation and nature's recovery must effectively align with development and wider economic activity. As the Government's adviser, we seek to achieve the best possible integration between the needs of people and those of nature, including in relation to planning decisions and the licensing of wildlife management.
- **Science, evidence and evaluation** – as an evidence-led organisation, we are recognised, respected and trusted for our expertise and the provision of evidence-based advice on the natural environment, both locally and nationally.
- **Managing the Organisation** - enables us to be a values-led organisation which delivers excellent service standards to all partners, organisations and communities engaged in achieving nature's recovery. Continuous learning and development for our people maintain high levels of skill and expertise.

# Natural England

## Working in Partnership

Our broad remit is reflected in the huge range of customers and partners we work with, including farmers and landowners, businesses and local authorities, charities and local communities.

Some highlights of our work include:

- Increasing opportunities for everyone to enjoy the wonders of England's natural environment through greater access and education;
- Assisting with the recovery of nature, including by helping to protect England's most vulnerable species and habitats;
- Using our environmental and local expertise, provide technical advice and recommendations on agri-environment scheme design and delivery to help farmers manage their land sustainably for nature;
- Managing National Nature Reserves, notifying Sites of Special Scientific Interest and ensuring they are effectively looked after;
- Working with business, planning authorities, other Government departments and NDPBs and a wide range of stakeholders to ensure that we have a resilient natural environment that contributes positively to the well-being of England's people and to the development of the wider economy;
- Managing wildlife licensing to protect species while helping planners, developers and the public get a fair deal;

- Ensuring that any decisions affecting the natural environment are based on the best possible scientific evidence and advice; and
- We are committed to capitalising on the local knowledge and expertise of our staff, for the benefit of decision-makers and ultimately the natural world around us.

Natural England is a national organisation with [offices across England](#) and we have around 2900 people working for us.

Useful links:

[Natural England on GOV.UK](#)

[25 Year Environment Plan](#)

[Environment Act 2021](#)

[Natural England Defra Framework Agreement](#)

[Natural England Action Plan](#)

[Latest Natural England Annual Report](#)

[Natural England blog on Twitter](#)

[Tony Juniper on Twitter](#)

[Marian Spain on Twitter](#)



# The Role

# Vacancy information

## Job Title

Director of Planning and Performance

## Vacancy reference

GSe104364

## Location

The main Natural England office is in London (SW1P) but Natural England staff can work from a flexible range of locations, encompassing home, offices (ours and partners) and relevant sites. This role can be based in any one of our [25 designated sites](#) which are located across England, but the appointee should expect to be in London routinely (circa 1 day each week) and, as we are a national organisation, to undertake regular travel to engage with colleagues and stakeholders in locations around the country. The post holder will be expected to be in an office for a minimum of one day a week.

The successful candidate is required to carry out all their duties working in this way and cannot do so from an overseas location at any time.

Natural England operates a flexible working policy. Employees can request a flexible working pattern from day one. The overall model that all Natural England staff will continue to operate to some form of hybrid working pattern (although full office-based patterns will also be available). Adjustments can and will be made for specific needs (for example long-term caring or health needs). These specific needs can be captured in a Workplace Passport.

## Security Clearance

The security clearance for this role is Baseline Personnel Security Standard, which may be increased to Counter Terrorist Check / Security Check level vetting in the future.

## Salary

The successful candidate will be appointed on a starting salary of £75,000 and on Natural England's own terms and conditions.

**Please note: Natural England staff are NOT Civil Servants but do have access to the [Civil Service Pension Scheme](#). Civil Service pay rules on transfer or promotion do not apply.**

**Contract Type** This role is being offered on a permanent basis.

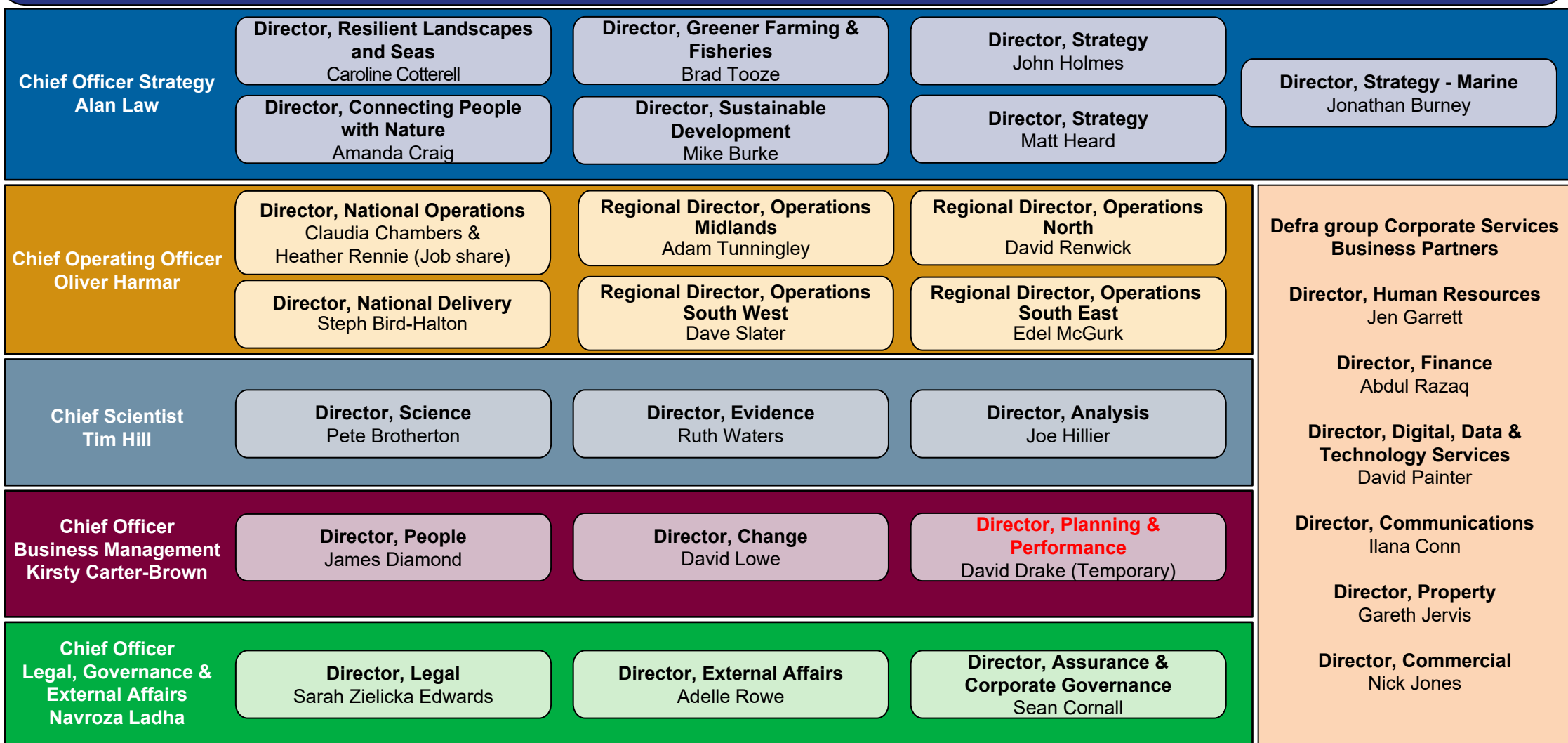


# Natural England Organisation Chart

October 2023



## Chief Executive Officer Marian Spain



# Planning & Performance Organisation Chart

October 2023

**Chief Executive Officer Marian Spain**

**Chief Officer  
Business Management  
Kirsty Carter-Brown**

**Director, People  
James Diamond**

**Director, Change  
David Lowe**

**Director, Planning &  
Performance  
David Drake (Temporary)**

**Synergy Team**

**Business Planning and  
Reporting Team**

**Business Management Team**

**Property and Corporate  
Sustainability Team**

**Procurement Team**

**Defra group Corporate Services  
Business Partners**

**Director, Finance  
Abdul Razaq**

**Director, Property  
Gareth Jervis**

**Director, Commercial  
Nick Jones**

# Role context

Natural England has high ambitions for nature - capitalising on a stronger policy framework, increased resources, and new initiatives to achieve our vision of thriving nature for people and planet.

The publication of the Environmental Improvement Plan (EIP) reaffirmed those ambitions and confirmed Natural England's part in delivering Government's commitments to nature recovery. Our remit has expanded as set out in the Environment Act to include implementation of Biodiversity Net Gain, Local Nature Recovery Strategies and stronger roles around landscapes. Our increased budget enabled us to boost capacity over the last 2 years and provide the capability for new work through training and development.

To deliver our ambitious agenda, we need a strong business infrastructure that supports and enables those delivering more directly on the 'front line' to achieve the organisation's objectives as effectively, efficiently and safely as possible. The current business support model has developed rapidly and is now undergoing a period of stabilisation, improvement, and professionalisation while driving efficiencies.

We need reform and improvement of our business management capability to enhance our operating model, ways of working and culture. The Director Planning and Performance will work as part of the Business Management and Natural England Senior Leadership teams to optimise efficiencies and drive improvements across the whole organisation which are essential to supporting the delivery of our ambitious agenda. All while continuing to support the organisation to deliver stretching in-year delivery outcomes.



# Role responsibilities

**The Director of Planning and Performance is a critical leadership role in Natural England. Reporting to the Chief Officer, Business Management you will work across the organisation, supporting the wider leadership team and working closely with Defra group colleagues.**

The role directly supports the leadership of several key functions within Natural England but also works collaboratively to support and enable the organisation to deliver its strategic aims. Pivotal to our success are our people and so a major part of this role is to ensure that our people have the right tools, resources, ways of working and support to enable them to do what they do best – achieving great outcomes for nature.

Specific responsibilities are:

- Day-to-day business management to support the efficient and effective running of the organisation; providing an extensive range of critical enabling services; delivering transactional business functions; influencing best practice resource management across the organisation; and supporting senior decision-making.
- Servicing the major governance committees, including Natural England's Executive Committee, Delivery, Investment and Portfolio Committees, ensuring that there is effective business planning, performance management and monitoring; and providing timely, comprehensive, and insightful performance and corporate reporting to inform governance and assurance.
- Commissioning and accountability for the delivery of a programme of projects and initiatives. Work with Defra on the Natural England implementation of a proposed government-wide business transformation initiative to replace existing HR, finance, and procurement systems with an integrated Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system.
- As well as the organisation wide accountabilities, responsibility for leading and developing the performance of a team of approximately 70 FTEs. Ensuring effective leadership, business and risk management, workforce planning, budget, health and safety and improved equality, diversity and inclusion and learning and development culture.



## Role responsibilities (continued)

- Relationship management with Defra group Corporate Services for Partnership Functions of Finance, Commercial and Property. Challenging and collaborating with partners to ensure service delivery matches Natural England's needs, driving the development and delivery of transformation and efficiency initiatives and ensuring the prioritised allocation of resources.
- Driving improvement in Natural England's business management services, working collaboratively with Defra group Corporate Services, and managing, developing, and improving Natural England's complementary corporate service functions in the areas of finance, business management, procurement, property, sustainability, planning and corporate reporting. Overseeing and signing off service levels, Key Performance Indicators and outcome delivery for each function agreed jointly with Corporate Service partners.
- Provision of inspiring, collaborative, and inclusive leadership across Natural England and being a significant change agent. This includes reviewing and improving our leadership capability and role modelling leadership culture. The role will be able to involve and enthuse managers and teams around all aspects of business management.
- As a highly visible and influential member of the Natural England Director cadre, encouraging innovation and enabling colleagues to have a clear view of organisational performance across all aspects of Natural England's work; and encourage strong collaboration and collective working between the Natural England Chief Officer groups. The postholder will also make an important contribution to the wider corporate leadership of the organisation including organisational change leadership.
- Be a credible external ambassador for Natural England at Director level – engaging across Defra, Government and a huge range of customers and partners we work with, including farmers and landowners, businesses and local authorities, charities and local communities.

# Person specification

**It is important that, through your CV and Statement of Suitability, you provide evidence and examples of proven experience for each of the selection criteria listed. A proven track record of:**

## Essential Criteria

- A track record of leading delivery of organisational planning, performance monitoring, corporate reporting and analysis functions equipping a complex delivery organisation with the data and insight needed to drive budget and resource planning.
- Sufficient confidence with finance, commercial and property functions to lead the partnership relationship with Defra.
- A visible and inclusive leader, who can be a credible trusted advisor and inspire and motivate at team and organisation and partner level, with an emphasis on embedding culture change and a continuous improvement mindset.
- Experience leading a broad portfolio of corporate functions, including working with senior leadership teams, and senior governance structures (executive and non-executive) to enable the successful delivery of strategic outcomes within an organisation.
- A confident and credible relationship builder, able to inspire trust and confidence, and to influence strategic and risk-based decision-making at all levels across a complex organisation and its partner community.
- A creative and strategic thinker, able to identify innovative and practical solutions to improve value for money and overall effectiveness and efficiency across the enabling services of an organisation.

## Desirable Criteria

- An accountancy qualification would be an advantage but is not essential.
- Experience of shared services implementation would be an advantage but is not essential.



A scenic landscape at sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm, golden glow over the sky and the land. The sky is filled with soft, wispy clouds. In the foreground, a cow with white and black patches is grazing in a green field. The background shows rolling hills and a winding road.

# Selection Process

Selection for recruitment into Natural England is through fair and open competition, and is based on merit

# The application process

To apply for this post, you will need to complete the online application process no later than 23:55pm on Friday 17 November 2023.

All applications must be submitted using the link [www.gatenbysanderson.com/job/GSe104364](http://www.gatenbysanderson.com/job/GSe104364)

You will be asked to submit the following:

1. Some basic personal information
2. A CV setting out your career history, with key responsibilities and achievements. Please ensure you have provided reasons for any gaps within the last two years
3. A Statement of Suitability, (max 2 pages, minimum font size 11) explaining how you consider your personal skills, qualities and experience provide evidence of your suitability for the role, with reference to the **essential criteria** in the person specification.

As part of the online application process, you will be asked several diversity-related questions. If you do not wish to provide a declaration on any of the characteristics, you will have the option to select 'prefer not to say'.

If you are unable to apply online, or have any issues with the online application process, please contact:

[mary.dempsey@gatenbysanderson.com](mailto:mary.dempsey@gatenbysanderson.com)

Failure to submit both documents will mean the panel only has limited information on which to assess your application against the criteria in the person specification.

Your application will be acknowledged by GatenbySanderson.

Please ensure that both documents contain your full name.

For a confidential discussion please contact our recruitment advisers at GatenbySanderson:

- James Tidswell

[james.tidswell@gatenbysanderson.com](mailto:james.tidswell@gatenbysanderson.com)

- Julie Myers

[julie.myers@gatenbysanderson.com](mailto:julie.myers@gatenbysanderson.com)

The timeline later in this pack indicates the date by which decisions are expected to be made, and all candidates will be advised of the outcome as soon as possible thereafter.

We will be holding an online Candidate Briefing Call on Monday 6 November from 13.00 - 14.00 where you can hear more about this role from Dr Kirsty Carter-Brown

Please email [mary.dempsey@gatenbysanderson.com](mailto:mary.dempsey@gatenbysanderson.com) to register your interest.



# The application process

## How we decide whom to invite for interview

### Longlist

The panel will assess your application to select those demonstrating the best fit with the role by considering the evidence you have provided against the essential criteria set out in the 'Person Specification' section. Failure to address any or all of these may affect your application.

The panel will be chaired by Kirsty Carter-Brown, Chief Officer Business Management, and will be supported by senior Natural England and Defra colleagues.

Candidates selected for longlisting will be invited for a preliminary discussion with GatenbySanderson to further explore their skills and experience.

**Candidates applying under the Disability Confident Scheme who meet the minimum selection criteria in the job specification are guaranteed an interview. Please complete the relevant parts in the application system if applying under this scheme.**

### Shortlist

The panel will review reports on those longlisted and will select a shortlist of candidates whose applications best demonstrate suitability for the role, by considering the evidence provided against the essential criteria set out in the Person Specification.

### Assessment

If you are shortlisted, you will be asked to take part in the following additional assessments:

- Staff Engagement Exercise (SEE) – a presentation and Q&A with a representative staff group from across Natural England.

### Informal discussions

Shortlisted candidates will have the opportunity to speak with Kirsty Carter-Brown, Chief Officer, Business Management. This is an informal discussion to learn more about the role and is not part of the assessment process.

### Final panel

You will be asked to attend a panel interview to have a more in-depth discussion of your previous experience and professional competence in relation to the criteria set out in the Person Specification. You may be asked to deliver a presentation at this interview. Full details will be provided to candidates selected to attend final interview.

### Offer

Regardless of the outcome, we will notify all candidates as soon as possible after the final interview.

# Timeline

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

<b>Closing date</b>	23:55pm Friday 17 November 2023
<b>Longlisting meeting</b>	w/c 27 November 2023
<b>Preliminary discussions with GatenbySanderson</b>	w/c 4 December 2023
<b>Shortlisting meeting</b>	w/c 11 December 2023
<b>Staff Engagement Exercise</b>	tbc
<b>Panel Interviews</b>	w/c 8 January 2024

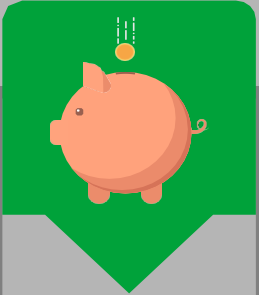
Interview arrangements will be confirmed to shortlisted candidates and are expected to be in person in London.

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.

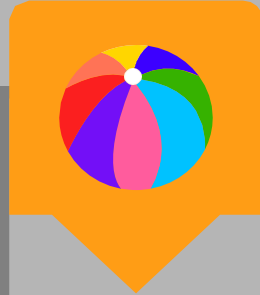
# A Great Place to Work




# Benefits of working for Natural England




A Civil Service pension




33 days Annual Leave



Staff Recognition Schemes




Salary Sacrifice Schemes




Professional Subscriptions




Employee Discounts



Staff Wellbeing



Learning and Development



Give as You Earn



“I believe your pension is the most important benefit after your Salary that you can have when you are employed in the Civil Service. Providing you with financial security when you retire and also providing cover for your family and loved ones should the worst happen”

Dominic Arthur – Director of Civil Service Pensions Operations and Government Recruitment Services

## Great member pension

- ✓ Main Defined Benefit Pension Scheme
- ✓ Providing a secure pension payable for life with no investment uncertainty
- ✓ Choice of a tax free lump sum
- ✓ Generous build rate of 2.32% of your earnings as a pension each year.
- ✓ Choice of entering a Defined Contribution Scheme

## What pension could you get?

- ✓ For example if you earned £80,000 per year and remained in the Defined Benefit Scheme
- ✓ After 10 years you could have a pension of £18,560pa which represents a Lifetime Allowance of circa 35%

## Generous employer contributions

- ✓ Employer contribution towards the main Defined Benefit pension scheme is extremely generous with an average 27% of your pay
- ✓ Employer Contribution towards the Defined Contribution Scheme is between 8% - 14.75% depending on age.

## Main Scheme Death benefits

- ✓ Able to nominate anyone (including charities) for a Tax free lump sum in the event of your death
- ✓ Lump Sum of up to two times your pay
- ✓ Main Scheme provides a Pension for your spouse/partner of around 37.5% of your pension as well as pension for eligible children

For more information on the Civil Service Pension Scheme please visit [www.civilservicepensionscheme.org.uk](http://www.civilservicepensionscheme.org.uk)

# Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

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



We are committed to creating an environment where everyone feels valued and respected and see this as a good place to work. Natural England has a responsibility to ensure that we have an inclusive culture where discrimination, harassment, bullying and prejudice will not be tolerated. Our selection process is determined on ability and regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership

As a Disability Confident employer, we positively welcome applications from disabled people. We are committed to making workplace adjustments wherever possible to ensure that disabled people can participate fully not only in the recruitment and selection process but when they are appointed into their job. We offer a Guaranteed Interview Scheme for all disabled applicants who provide evidence of meeting the essential criteria, as set out in this application pack.

Please contact us at any stage of the recruitment process to discuss how we can help you whether you have a physical impairment, a mental health condition or are neurodiverse.

Once you are appointed your line manager will work with you to identify how they can put in place reasonable adjustments to enable you to carry out your work.

# Things you need to know

## Can I apply if I am not currently a public servant?

Yes. This role is open to suitably qualified people in the external market, to Civil Servants and those in accredited Non-Departmental Public Bodies. Please note that Natural England colleagues are not Civil Servants.

## Is this role suitable for part-time working?

This is a full-time role although flexible working arrangements will be considered and job share partnerships are encouraged. Please discuss any flexible working requirements with GatenbySanderson in the first instance before applying.

## Can I claim back any expenses incurred during the recruitment process?

No. Unfortunately we will not be able to reimburse you, except in exceptional circumstances and only when agreed in advance.

## What nationality do I need to hold in order to apply?

The role is open to UK, Commonwealth and European Economic Area (EEA) and certain non EEA nationals. Further information on whether you are able to apply is available here

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nationality-rules>

## Is security clearance required?

The successful candidate will undergo Baseline Personnel Security Standard, and either have or be prepared to undertake Counter Terrorist Check or Security Check clearance. Pre-employment checks aimed to provide an appropriate level of assurance as to the trustworthiness and integrity of prospective employees.

## What reasonable adjustments can be made if I have a disability?

We are committed to making reasonable adjustments to support disabled job applicants and ensure that you are not disadvantaged in the recruitment and assessment process. Reasonable adjustments could include; allowing extra time during selection tests; ensuring that information is provided in an accessible format or; by providing training.

If you feel that you may need a reasonable adjustment to be made, or you would like to discuss your requirements in more detail, please contact us in the first instance.

If you cannot apply online or wish to receive a hard copy of the information, or in an alternative format eg Audio, Braille or large font then please contact: [mary.dempsey@gatenbysanderson.com](mailto:mary.dempsey@gatenbysanderson.com)

## Do you offer a Guaranteed Interview Scheme for Disabled Persons?

Disabled applicants who meet the minimum selection criteria in the job specification are guaranteed an interview. Selection will be on merit. If you wish to claim a guaranteed interview under the Disability Confident Scheme, you should complete the relevant section of the online application. It is not necessary to state the nature of your disability.

## What should I do if I think that I have a conflict of interest?

Candidates must note the requirement to declare any interests that might cause questions to be raised about their approach to the business of the Department.

If you believe that you may have a conflict of interest, please contact [mary.dempsey@gatenbysanderson.com](mailto:mary.dempsey@gatenbysanderson.com) before submitting your application.

### **Will this role be overseen by the Civil Service Commission?**

No. Natural England employees are not Civil Servants. However, the recruitment process will still be governed by the Civil Service Commission's recruitment principles. More detailed information can be found on the Civil Service Commission website: <https://civilservicecommission.independent.gov.uk/>

### **What do I do if I want to make a complaint?**

Natural England is committed to continuously improving its customer service and we welcome and value your compliments, complaints, comments and suggestions about our services, including our recruitment process. For further details please visit our Customer Service Standards web-page:

<https://www.gov.uk/Government/organisations/natural-england/about-our-services>

## Contact us

If you would like to discuss this role before applying, please contact our recruitment advisors at GatenbySanderson:

- James Tidswell – [james.tidswell@gatenbysanderson.com](mailto:james.tidswell@gatenbysanderson.com)
- Julie Myers – [julie.myers@gatenbysanderson.com](mailto:julie.myers@gatenbysanderson.com)

