

Four new appointments to the Natural England board

Rosamund Blomfield-Smith, Kim Shillinglaw, Kerry ten Kate and Peter Unwin have been appointed for three years commencing 1 June 2020.

Environment Minister Rebecca Pow said:

Natural England has a crucial role to play as we deliver our pledge to leave the environment in a better state for future generations.

The new board members bring a breadth of experience and knowledge that will be invaluable in our mission to protect and restore England's nature and landscapes.

Natural England chair Tony Juniper said:

A healthy natural environment is an essential national asset and the Board of Natural England has a vital role in supporting our organisation as it helps achieve ambitious Government goals, such as those set out in the 25 Year Environment Plan, the agenda for net zero climate emissions and the national woodland expansion target.

I very much look forward to working with our new Board Members, making the most of their experience and skills to drive our new strategy for nature recovery.

Rosamund Blomfield-Smith spent thirty years in the City, latterly as a director of both Rothschilds and ING Barings, but since 2003 has been non-executive. She has served on boards, including Thames Water and Hartpury Agricultural College, and is currently chairman of Museum of London Archaeology, a member of Ofgem's Challenge Group, and chairman of Ofcom's Independent Advisory Group.

Kim Shillinglaw is a senior media executive. She has led the commercial transformation of businesses as Director of Factual at EndemolShine, modernised TV channels as Controller of BBC2 and BBC4, and initiated content from Stargazing Live to Blue Planet II as Head of Science and Natural History Commissioning.

Kerry ten Kate is an independent consultant, advising governments, companies, banks and civil society organisations on how best to integrate the natural

environment into economic decision-making. She is a trustee of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, a member of IUCN's Species Survival Commission and of the Aldersgate Group and Conservation Fellow at the Zoological Society of London. She is a former member of the Natural Capital Committee.

Peter Unwin is an ex-civil servant with ten years Board level experience as Director General at Defra and DCLG and a spell as acting Permanent Secretary at Defra. After leaving the Civil Service in 2015 he spent four years as Chief Executive of the Whitehall & Industry Group, an independent charity promoting leadership development and understanding between government, industry and the not for profit sector.

Board members play an important role in supporting and encouraging the executive team in improving Natural England's delivery for the natural environment by driving forward substantial change to deliver value for money, excellent customer service and better collaboration with key partners while maintaining a clear overview, and ensuring business continuity, across the range of its functions.

Natural England plays a key role in delivering Government's environmental priorities. Its general purpose is to ensure the natural environment is conserved, enhanced and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

Natural England forms part of the Defra Group and as a non-departmental public body it has its own independent powers and statutory duties; exercising advisory and regulatory responsibilities at arm's length from Ministers. Natural England is accountable to Defra's Secretary of State for the delivery of its objectives.

All appointments to the Natural England Board are made on merit and political activity plays no part in the selection process.