



Kent Downs National Landscape

Joint Advisory Committee Chair Recruitment pack

The Kent Downs National Landscape and aspiring UNESCO Cross Channel Global Geopark is looking to appoint a new independent Chair for our Joint Advisory Committee. This high-profile role needs to work closely with the Joint Advisory Committee, Director and Team to contribute an important role in the advocacy, influence, support and strategic direction for the Kent Downs National Landscape internationally, nationally, regionally and locally.

The Kent Downs National Landscape stretches from the White Cliffs of Dover to the Surrey and London borders, covering around a quarter of the county of Kent, and is equivalent in landscape status and quality to a National Park. Although the purpose of the designation is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area, this needs to be balanced with a need to enhance the public's enjoyment of the area, and the social and economic well-being of its land managers and communities both those within the landscape and those beyond.

The Kent Downs National Landscape partnership is at a very exciting stage in its journey; we are hoping to submit an application to become a cross border UNESCO Global Geopark in partnership with the Parc Natural Regional des Caps et Marias d'Opale in November 2025; the Kent Downs team is taking a leadership role in the sub national Big Chalk programme; we have several new projects and partnerships commencing – including Putting Downs Routes, which seeks to overcome barriers to access and enjoyment of the landscape; we are also about to commence the statutory National Landscape Management Plan review which is set in a new national context for Protected Landscapes.

A committed, enthusiastic and informed individual will need outstanding qualities and a passion for the Kent Downs landscape. The time requirement is estimated to be about 2 days per month including chairing at least 2 Joint Advisory Committee meetings a year. This is an unsalaried position but with an annual allowance plus expenses. The current annual allowance £3,000 but this will be reviewed in the hand over period for the new Chair. **The intended outcome of this review is that the opportunity to be our Chair is open to anyone, not only those who can afford to do so.**



Our vision for the Kent Downs in 2041...

The Kent Downs Management Plan sets out a long-term vision, it is that:

The qualities and distinctive features of the Kent Downs National Landscape, the dramatic south-facing scarp, far-reaching views, secluded dry valleys, network of tiny lanes, isolated farmsteads, churches and oasts, orchards, dramatic cliffs, the ancient woodlands and delicate chalk grassland along with the ancient, remote and tranquil qualities, are valued, secured and strengthened.

The Kent Downs has become a landscape where change supports the National Landscape's distinctive and valued features. Nature recovery, responses to development pressures and climate change have enhanced the Kent Downs landscape.

The Kent Downs is greener, healthier, wilder and more beautiful, it is recognised and valued, enjoyed and cherished and its future conservation and enhancement is a certainty.

Strong, assertive leadership from the National Landscape partnership along with positive partnerships with organisations, civil society, local people and land managers act together with wider publics to recover, conserve, enhance, enjoy and promote a nationally and internationally recognised and valued landscape.

The Kent Downs National Landscape partnership is seeking to become a leader in protected landscape management and in driving a diverse and inclusive approach to this nationally important work.

The Joint Advisory Committee in context of the Kent Downs National Landscape partnership

Within an area as large and varied as the Kent Downs, there are many hundreds of individuals and organisations which have a role in managing the landscape, supporting local business and communities and enabling quiet recreation. Together the Kent Downs National Landscape partnership plays a central, pivotal and convening role in realising the strategic vision for the Kent Downs and overseeing the Management Plan.

The Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) for the Kent Downs (then) AONB was established in July 1997 and is at the heart of the partnership. JAC membership includes the twelve local authorities who have joint responsibility to prepare and review the Management Plan, Additional advisory members are the Environment Agency, Country Land and Business Association (CLA), the National Farmers Union (NFU), Visit Kent, and The Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC).

Full details of the Kent Downs National Landscape JAC can be found here: [Kent Downs Joint Advisory Committee](#).



Kent Downs
National
Landscape

PART OF THE GLOBAL



CROSS-CHANNEL
GEO PARK
TRANSMANCHE

At a much larger scale, an occasional Kent Downs Forum has been held for a wider audience, to discuss current issues and gain input and advice.

The Kent Downs Team is employed through and hosted by Kent County Council and works on behalf of Government and the JAC to carry out the preparation and review of the Management Plan, to advocate its vision, aims and principles and work in collaborative partnerships to deliver a range of actions described in the Action Plan.

The objective of the JAC is to ensure that the National Landscape Unit is effective, efficient and authoritative, recognised and valued by partners and policy makers as a professional body securing the purposes of the designation, delivering significant added value and enabling action on the ground.

Full details of the management arrangements of the Kent Downs National Landscape can be found in Section 2 of the Kent Downs AONB Management Plan.

It is anticipated that a review of the partnership model, working of the JAC and membership will be initiated as part of the Kent Downs National Landscape Management Plan Review (Commencing in November 2024) and during the hand over period for our new Chair.

Main Purpose of the Role

To work closely with the Joint Advisory Committee, Director and Team to contribute an important role in the advocacy, influence, support and strategic direction for the Kent Downs internationally, nationally, regionally and locally. Being a great ambassador for the National Landscape and partnership, promoting good relationships ensuring all feel that the Kent Downs partnership and mission is something they are welcome and want to be part of.

Principal Duties and Responsibilities

- Chair meetings of the National Landscape Joint Advisory Committee working closely with the Kent Downs National Landscape Director to agree the agenda, meeting conduct and desired meeting outcomes. The Chair shall engender diversity and inclusion in the partnership and our meetings and secure engagement and views from members in a way that is inclusive, welcoming and provides sound advice and guidance for the effective future operation and management of the national landscape and the Kent Downs Team. Please note that JAC meetings are currently held twice a year, they are in person and on week days.
- Work with the JAC partnership and other National Landscapes to review the membership, operation and Terms of Reference of the Committee in the light of the Landscape Review recommendations and in line with best practice, current guidance, the Nolan Principles and the vision, aims and principles of the Management Plan.
- Provide general advice and guidance to the Director and Team to ensure that the National Landscape Management Plan outcomes and objectives are delivered across the landscape and by all relevant organisations and individuals.
- Champion the interests of the Kent Downs National Landscape and partnership and gain wide ranging support for the aims, priorities, and delivery of the statutory Management Plan and the work of the Kent Downs team.
- Foster supportive, diverse and inclusive partnerships in support of the work of the National Landscape building mutually beneficial relationships with all interested bodies, including partnerships with organisations representing those underrepresented in the countryside.
- Assist in maintaining and promoting our positive relationship with our host local authority, the Kent Downs JAC, and constituent partner organisations at a local and national level and engage with the wider National Landscapes family.
- Represent the Kent Downs National Landscape on a variety of networks (local, regional, national and international); participate in activities of the Protected Landscapes Association to help champion a more consistent approach across the family of landscape designations and the landscapes themselves.



Kent Downs
National
Landscape

PART OF THE GLOBAL



CROSS-CHANNEL
GEO PARK
TRANSMANCHE

- Support and initiate innovation and forward thinking for the National Landscape partnership and Team to ensure maximum impact.

You are encouraged to apply.

Everyone will be treated in the same way. We are committed to building a Team and partnership which reflects the diversity of the county's residents, encouraging applications from people of all ages, abilities, genders, sexual orientations, ethnic backgrounds, faiths and those with caring responsibilities, we aspire to be inclusive, a partnership where everyone can be themselves at work. People of colour and disabled people are currently underrepresented across our service. If you identify as a person of colour and/or are disabled, we are particularly interested in receiving your application.

Person Specification:

| ATTRIBUTES | ESSENTIAL | DESIRABLE |
|--|--|---|
| <p>Key skills attained from work, voluntary roles and personal experience</p> | <p>Ability to provide effective diplomatic advocacy and effectively and inclusively chair a Joint Advisory Committee or similar Board.</p> <p>Ability to promote, engage and encourage involvement and active partnership by member organisations in an umbrella organisation.</p> <p>Ability to carefully balance a wide range of interests from a number of organisations.</p> <p>Extensive presentation and hosting skills.</p> <p>Diplomacy and advocacy skills.</p> <p>Analytical skills.</p> <p>Confidence in working with a wide remit and a range of stakeholders.</p> | |
| <p>Experience</p> | <p>Experience of leading committees and Boards in an inclusive and effective way.</p> <p>Experience of working with the public, private and voluntary sectors on a wide range of issues, specifically to further the aims of an organisation.</p> | <p>Experience of funding programmes and grant aid schemes.</p> <p>Experience of developing small organisations.</p> <p>Experience of building and maintaining relationships with communities excluded and under-represented in the countryside.</p> |
| <p>Knowledge and interests</p> | <p>Interest in linking social, environmental and economic issues and opportunities facing rural communities through</p> | <p>Thorough understanding of landscape conservation and environmental issues.</p> |

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| | <p>sustainable development approaches.</p> <p>Knowledge of planning, policy, strategy, delivery structures and initiatives relevant to rural areas in England.</p> <p>Knowledge of land management practice including farming, forestry and nature recovery.</p> <p>Knowledge of nature-based solutions to climate and biodiversity loss.</p> | <p>Knowledge/understanding of planning policy and decision making.</p> <p>Specialist knowledge on topics related to the National Landscape's remit.</p> <p>Knowledge of and contacts within relevant regional structures.</p> <p>Knowledge of the Kent Downs area and relevant contacts.</p> <p>Knowledge of Green Finance.</p> |
|--|---|---|

Recruitment Process

To apply please send a CV and application letter explaining your motivation for taking on this role and your fit with the person specification. All applications will be anonymised before a short-listing process takes place.

Applications close at midday on the 30th of September 2024 and should be submitted to mail@kentdowns.org.uk.

In person interviews are expected to take place on the 16th and/or 18th of October 2024.

We hope that our new Chair will be able to join our next JAC meeting (all day on the 20th of November). This will be to introduce you to the partnership.

Between November 2024 and June 2025 we will conduct a JAC and partnership review, this will involve our current Chair (Chris Reynolds) and the new Chair working with the Team and partnership. The JAC meeting in June 2025 will be the formal hand over and discussion/ adoption of the review findings.

The role is expected to be reviewed at 3 yearly intervals.

If you wish to discuss this role, please contact nick.johannsen@kentdowns.org.uk



Kent Downs
National
Landscape

PART OF THE GLOBAL



CROSS-CHANNEL
GEO PARK
TRANSMANCHE