

Council Members 2021-22



Judith Annett, Chair, Committee for Northern Ireland (Oct 2020-25)

Judith has provided consultancy services on countryside access, recreation and tourism development and management for the past 27 years following an early career in outdoor recreation provision and policy. She is based in the Mourne Mountains in Northern Ireland.

She has chaired two ministerial committees, the Northern Ireland Biodiversity Group, and the Irish Deer Management Forum, setting strategic directions with Government and stakeholders and coordinating programmes of action. Within the RSPB Advisory Committee for Northern Ireland and as chair of the Search and Rescue Dogs Association Ireland North she has had a close involvement in the voluntary sector and understands the financial challenges and the need to stay relevant and prepared for change. She holds an MBA and has research interests in environmental economics.

Judith is a keen participant in walking, climbing, sailing and kayaking in the outdoors and in observing wildlife. She has long been an advocate for sustainable agriculture, effective landscape partnerships and the retention of vibrant rural communities



Helen Browning OBE (Oct 2017-22)

Helen Browning runs a tenanted 1,350-acre organic livestock and arable farm in Wiltshire, which supplies branded pork products to multiple retailers, independent outlets and export, and runs the village pub too! Helen became Chief Executive of the Soil Association in March 2011, having been its Chair in the late 90s, and prior to that was Director of External Affairs at the National Trust. Helen is a member of the Food Farming and Countryside Commission and has been involved in several similar initiatives over the years, including the 'Curry' Commission on the Future of Farming and Food; the Agriculture and Environment Biotechnology Commission; the Meat and Livestock Commission, and was Chair of the England Implementation Group for the Animal Health and Welfare Strategy. She was awarded an OBE in 1998 for services to organic farming.



John Bullock, Chair, Fundraising & Communications Committee (Oct 2018-23, 2nd term)

John has headed multi-national businesses and been a Board member in several countries. Originally trained as an engineering research scientist, John spent most of his career in a mix of technical and commercial roles up to CEO level. He has a wealth of experience of strategic business management, finance and audit, the successful development of all manner of business partnerships, and brand development. Having worked in several different countries and cultures John is well practised in handling challenging issues and crisis management and has a deep belief in the value of diversity to organisations. With a lifelong passion and appreciation of all wildlife and the countryside, he regularly visits nature reserves on the north Norfolk coast. John shares his wife's passion for helping children appreciate art, nature and wildlife, through education. He is a member of NT and Norfolk and Surrey Wildlife Trusts.



Kevin Cox, Chair of Council (Oct 2017-22)

Kevin served on RSPB Council from 2011-2016 and was appointed Chair of Council in 2017. He was actively involved in magazine publishing and was Chairman and Chief Executive of Origin Publishing, a company he founded in 1996 and subsequently sold to BBC Magazines. His interest in international conservation led to his involvement with the World Land Trust where he is a Council member and Chair of its trading company. He is a former Chair of Devon Birds and a member of the BTO, WWT and Devon Wildlife Trust amongst other conservation organisations. He lives in Devon on the edge of Dartmoor where he and his wife manage 130 acres of woodland and meadows as a nature reserve.



Robert Cubbage, Treasurer (Oct 2018-23)

Robert was an Audit Partner in Ernst & Young (EY) for 25 years, latterly he was the Global lead advisor to one of the largest banking organisations in the world. He held various leadership roles within EY, including responsibility for Banking on the EMEIA and UK leadership teams. He has strong financial, risk, governance, advisory and strategic experience. He is Chairman of Mohara, a technology provider, and provides executive coaching.

A keen birder all his life, he is determined to visit many of the Reserves across the UK that he does not know.



Linda Grant (Oct 2020-25)

Linda has over 30 years of business experience in media and communications. Key past roles include Strategic Marketing Director at Capital Radio Group; Group Commercial Development Director at DMGT; Managing Director of Metro UK. She has extensive experience of strategy development and execution, engaging audiences, digital transformation, forging partnerships and achieving commercial balance. She now has a portfolio career centred on positively impacting the economy, society and the environment.

With the impact that human activity has on wildlife Linda wants to use her experience to support the RSPB in every way she can. She is a member of WACL, WWF, the National Trust and Sussex Wildlife Trust. Originally from Glasgow and with a life-long passion for the natural world she lives in West Sussex with her partner and 2 dogs near Pulborough Brooks.



Professor Rosie Hails MBE (Oct 2017-22)

Rosie is an ecologist and Nature and Science Director at the National Trust, holding a visiting chair at the University of Exeter. Her role is to develop the Trust's research portfolio and develop the science evidence base upon which decisions are made. She leads teams focusing on Nature Conservation, Soils & Farming, Conservation Information Systems and Public Benefits delivered by Nature.

She is a member of Defra's Science Advisory Council and bovine TB eradication group, Council member of the RSPB and Trustee of the John Innes Foundation. Formerly she was the Director of Biodiversity & Ecosystem Science at the Centre for Ecology & Hydrology.



Kerry ten Kate (Oct 2018-25) Chair of the Conservation Committee

Kerry is an independent consultant, advising governments, companies and civil society organisations on how best to integrate the natural environment into economic decision-making. She is a non-executive board member of Natural England and was on the Natural Capital Committee from 2012-2015. Kerry is a member of the Aldersgate Group, Conservation Fellow at the Zoological Society of London and a member of IUCN's Commission on Ecosystems Management. Formerly a barrister, Kerry served on the Secretariat of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992 (the 'Rio Earth Summit'). She was policy adviser at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew and Director of Investor Responsibility at asset manager Insight Investment. She founded and directed the international Business and Biodiversity Offsets Programme (BBOP) at Forest Trends, in which 100 organisations worked over fifteen years towards 'Biodiversity Net Gain'.



John Mason CBE (co-opted Nov 2021-22)

John was a senior civil servant in both Whitehall and Scotland for over 25 years. During his time with the Scottish Government, John held a range of policy and delivery senior posts including Private Secretary to the First Minister and the environment/sustainability portfolio during which he delivered the then world leading Scottish Climate Change Act and attended COP15 in Copenhagen. He has a wealth of experience in dealing with private, public and voluntary organisations and was widely involved in delivering many Scottish major sporting events including the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow and the Ryder Cup at Gleneagles, both in 2014. John was awarded the CBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours list in 2015 for public service to Business and Major Events. John has held many voluntary board level posts in the environmental, sporting, heritage and arts sectors in Scotland. He has been a member of the RSPB Advisory Committee for Scotland since 2017 and currently is a Trustee of the Scottish Civic Trust and Chair of the Linlithgow Burgh Trust.



Viscount Chris Mills (Oct 2017-22)

Chris started his career with the Salmon Research Trust of Ireland and the National Rivers Authority from 1980 to 1995 before moving to the Environment Agency where he was influential in shaping the Environment Bill, establishing the role and powers of the Environment Agency. Chris went on, in 2003, to become Head of Wildlife, Recreation and Marine and set up the EA's first Marine Policy Unit which produced the EA's first Marine Strategy and State of the Marine Environment Report. Chris became Director Wales for EA in 2006, where he helped to manage the transition from the Environment Agency Wales' to Natural Resources Wales (NRW). In 2014, he was appointed Director of Resource Efficiency, Northern Ireland EA where he led the regulation of major industry, waste and water in Northern Ireland.

Chris is currently Chairman of Afonydd Cymru (Association of Welsh Rivers Trusts), President of the Institute Of Fisheries Management, and a member of the RSPB Country Advisory Committee for Wales.



Dr Vicki Nash, Chair Committee for Scotland (Oct 2019-24)

Vicki has worked in senior management roles in the public sector in Scotland for 30 years, including local government Chief Executive posts, water regulation and latterly, as Director for Scotland of the UK communications regulator, Ofcom. She also has seventeen years' experience in non-executive roles in the health service and performing arts organisations and has been a member of the RSPB Committee for Scotland since 2017. Vicki's degrees include a BSc in Psychology and Anthropology and a PhD in Animal Behaviour. She is a member of the Scottish Wildlife Trust, and the BTO, and a volunteer at RSPB Loch Lomond and Argaty Red Kite Centre. She is also a JP in the Sheriffdom of Tayside, Central and Fife.



Prof Debbie Pain (Oct 2019-24)

Debbie has a lifelong passion for birdwatching and nature conservation. She has a degree in Environmental Chemistry from London University and a DPhil on the biochemistry of lead poisoning in birds from Oxford University. After four years post-doctoral research at the Tour du Valat Biological Research Station (France) she spent sixteen years at RSPB where she set up and managed the International Research Unit. In 2008 she became Director of Conservation at the Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust running their UK and international science and conservation delivery work until 2018. She is currently an independent consultant, undertakes research and teaching, and is an Honorary Research Fellow in Zoology at Cambridge University and an Honorary Professor in Biological Sciences at the University of East Anglia. She is Deputy President of the Tour du Valat Science Council, sits on the Cambridge Conservation Initiative (CCI) Collaborative Fund Selection Panel and the Lead Ammunition Group and is a WWT Ambassador and Fellow of WWF-UK.



Veronica Moraa Pickering (Oct 2019-24)

Veronica was born in Kenya and moved to England in the late 60's. She was appointed as a Deputy Lieutenant for Nottinghamshire in 2013 and as an Honorary Air Commodore for 504 (Nottingham) Squadron in 2018. For more than 25 years Veronica worked with children and families from multi-cultural communities in London as a social worker, a children's guardian and as an international child protection consultant with the UN and other NGOs, working mostly in Africa. She now negotiates for the needs of diverse communities on behalf of multinational and global companies, advising them on corporate social responsibility programmes, networking and community links, and diversity and integration. For the past eight years Veronica has worked as an executive coach and mentor with individuals, universities and companies in the UK. She supports several Nottinghamshire charities and organisations and has for many years been a strong supporter of wildlife conservation and access to the arts.



John Randall (Lord Randall of Uxbridge) (Oct 2020-25)

John's first love has always been wildlife. Birdwatching from his very earliest days. He has been a member of the RSPB for over 55 years and remains a keen birder today. He was a Member of Parliament from 1997 until he stood down in 2015. In Parliament, John put forward the Marine Wildlife Conservation Bill, together with the RSPB. This ultimately led to the Marine and Coastal Access Act of 2009. He was asked to become Theresa May's Special Adviser on the environment in 2017 and had to stand down from RSPB Council owing to potential conflicts of interest.

Now in the House of Lords John is an advocate for wildlife and conservation. He is a Trustee of the UK Overseas Territories Conservation Forum as well as a Vice-President of Fauna and Flora International, and Vice Chair of Trustees of the Human Trafficking Foundation. Prior to entering Parliament, he worked in the family retail business and was also a bird tour leader.



Martin Saunders (Oct 2017-22)

Martin joined international law firm, Clifford Chance as a trainee in 1989, qualified as a solicitor in 1991 and was a partner in the firm from 2001 until 2016. During his career there he advised businesses, public authorities and individuals on commercial litigation, regulatory investigations and risks relating to white collar crime. He set up and led a pro bono relationship providing free legal advice to the RSPB. In that capacity he worked on a range of legal and reputational issues covering the Society's work in the UK and overseas and also supported its fundraising activities.

Martin has always been interested in wildlife and conservation. He first joined the RSPB as a teenager and has continued to support the Society throughout his adult life. Martin now divides his time between London and the wildlife rich High Weald AONB in East Sussex. Over the last year he has volunteered with conservation work parties on the RSPB's reserves at Fore Wood and Tudeley Woods and has completed a training course in bird survey techniques.



Matt Taylor (Oct 2018-23)

Matt leads the engagement with portfolio companies in Generation Investment's Growth Equity group. Generation were founded in 2004 to back sustainable businesses, and in their Growth Equity group they invest in companies which are helping accelerate the move to a smart, low carbon economy. Prior to working with Generation, Matt was a Partner with Bain & Co., the global management consultancy, where he focused on strategy development and organisational design.

Matt has been a lifelong member of the RSPB and the YOC. He is married to Katie, and has two sons, Jamie and Alex.



Jennifer Ullman, Chair Committee for England (Dec 2020-Oct 2021)

Jennifer Ullman's career has focused on the management of landscapes, including parks, commons and historic gardens. Previously Chief Parks Officer for Wandsworth Borough Council, she was responsible for more than 40 public spaces visited by 22 million people a year.

With a strong interest in charity governance, Jennifer has served as a trustee for a number of environmental and heritage bodies, including the RSPB, the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, and as a committee member for the London Committee of the Heritage Lottery Fund. She currently sits on the Regional Advisory Board for London and the South East for the National Trust.

Jennifer divides her time between London and the South Coast where she volunteers for the Chichester Harbour Conservancy and is a member of the RSPB's Guildford Local Group.



Prof Sir Adrian Webb, Chair Committee for Wales (Oct 2017-22)

Adrian has had two contemporaneous careers: academic and public service. He was a lecturer at London School of Economics, Professor and then Deputy Vice Chancellor at Loughborough University, and Vice Chancellor Glamorgan University. He was in public service in Whitehall, including Department for Education, Department of Health and Social Services, the Lord Chancellor's Department, and HM Treasury. He was also NED on Welsh Government Board, Commissioner UK Employment and Skills Board and Welsh Chair, Member Administrative Justice and Tribunals Council, and served on numerous committees/enquiries. Currently, he is a member of Big Lottery Fund UK board and Chair in Wales, and Chair of the Ministerial Advisory Board on the Welsh Economy. Adrian has contributed significantly to the work of the RSPB during his time on the Committee for Wales and his expertise and familiarity with public policy and the Welsh political context will be particularly valuable to Council in this post Brexit period.