

# News story: Natural England Deputy Chair appointed

Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Michael Gove, has appointed The Rt Hon the Lord Blencathra as Deputy Chair of Natural England (NE) until the end of his term as an NE Board Member on 11 March 2021. This follows the announcement of his [appointment to the NE Board](#) in March 2018.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body, set up under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. Its remit is to ensure the natural environment is conserved, enhanced and managed for the benefit of present and future generations.

Non-executive board members of Natural England have collective responsibility for the strategic direction and overall performance of the organisation. They make sure that Natural England is properly and effectively managed and provide stewardship for the public funds entrusted to the organisation.

Lord Blencathra will continue to receive remuneration at the rate of £328 per day although there will be an increase to his current time commitment of 36 days per annum.

Lord Blencathra is a Member of the House of Lords where he chairs a Select Committee and has been appointed to the Council of Europe. He was formerly Minister of State at the Home Office and a Minister at the Department of the Environment in the 1990s. At the Earth Summit in Rio in 1992 he led for the UK and launched the Darwin Initiative. He formerly represented England's largest rural constituency as the Member of Parliament for Penrith and The Border. He joined the Natural England Board in March 2018. Lord Blencathra has multiple sclerosis and uses a wheelchair.