

[New Board Members appointed to the Joint Nature Conservation Committee](#)



Defra Ministers have appointed Catherine Denholm and Tom Meagher as Board Members of the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC).

The appointments were made in conjunction with the devolved administrations, and are for a three-year term from 4 April 2022 to 3 April 2025.

The new appointments have all been made in accordance with the Ministerial Governance Code on Public Appointments published by the Cabinet Office. Appointments are made on merit and political activity plays no part in the selection process.

Remuneration is £9,836 per annum based on a time commitment of 2.5 days per month.

The JNCC was established in 1991 and reconstituted in the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) as a non-departmental public body. The JNCC advises the UK Government and Devolved Administrations of Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales on UK-wide and international nature conservation.

Biographical details

Catherine Denholm

Catherine Denholm is the Chief Operating Officer for the Equality and Human Rights Commission. She also served as Deputy Chair of NatureScot from 2019 to March 2022. She was awarded honorary membership of the Faculty of Public Health in 2020 and is Vice Chair of Impact Arts.

Tom Meagher

Tom Meagher is a botanist and Professor and Chair of Plant Biology at the University of St Andrews. Tom is a former Trustee of the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh and was previously a member of the Natural Environment Research Council and the Defra Science Advisory Committee.

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1. 25 April 2022

Edited as Rosie Hails is no longer taking up the role of Board Member for the JNCC.

2. 28 March 2022

First published.

[Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space \(COPUOS\): UK statement at the 61st Legal Sub-committee](#)

Chair, Distinguished Delegates

Space has a way of bringing us all together around a common goal and we're proud of our collective achievements through the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) in the advancement of the peaceful use and exploration of outer space.

The United Kingdom appreciates that whilst we are here to talk about the peaceful uses of space, we cannot and should not ignore violations of international law when they occur on Earth.

Russia's assault on Ukraine is an unprovoked, premeditated attack against a sovereign democratic state. The UK and our international partners stand united in condemning the Russian government's reprehensible actions, which are an egregious violation of international law including the UN Charter.

We call on Russia to urgently de-escalate and withdraw its troops. It must be held accountable and stop undermining democracy, global stability, and international law.

The UK also expresses our serious concern at the proposed establishment of a new regional centre for space science and technology education in the Russian Federation, which was referred to in UN General Assembly resolution 76/76 and which is supposedly meant to build partnerships across the Eurasian region.

Russia's actions in recent weeks have demonstrated that it is not 'peaceful' and that it no longer holds the respect or endorsement of its Eurasian partners. We cannot ignore Russia's aggression against Ukraine. These troublesome times show that it is not business as usual, and in this regard, we reiterate our serious concern at the proposed new regional centre.

Chair,

It is within this context, that I would like to provide an update to COPUOS on the progress taken by the UK to implement and operationalise our domestic regulations and strategies since the last Legal Sub-Committee.

In September 2021 the UK released its [National Space Strategy](#). This first ever National Space Strategy brings together the UK's strengths in science and technology, defence, regulation and diplomacy to pursue a bold national vision.

The Strategy highlights the UK's commitment to work with industry and internationally to ensure we have the safest and most effective regulation of space activities. We will continually improve safety standards, implement relevant consents, and mitigate the negative environmental impacts of our space activities.

The [UK's Space Industry Act](#) was enacted in 2018 and created an enabling framework for regulating space launch from the United Kingdom. In July 2021, the UK Space Industry Regulations which underpin the Space Industry Act were signed into law, enabling both horizontal and vertical launch from the UK.

These regulations also enabled the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) to take on the role of the UK's independent Spaceflight Regulator. The CAA will be providing a technical presentation tomorrow, 29 March in the morning session, on the approach to the regulation of UK activities, which you are all invited to.

Furthermore, our national legislation provides us with a mechanism to implement the commitments set out in the 21 agreed Long Term Sustainability (LTS) of space guidelines. The UK is playing a leading role in supporting an inclusive approach to capacity building and implementation of the LTS guidelines. The UK was pleased to fund our first project with UNOOSA which included publishing the LTS guidelines in all 6 official UN languages, convening international expert events and interviews with Member States on implementing the guidelines.

The UK also became the first country to annually submit a conference room paper setting out our national implementation of the guidelines.

The UK has significant experience in developing a new regulatory framework, and we are very happy to discuss our experiences with Member States considering doing the same.

As well as UK launch, the UK National Space Strategy highlights the commitment to position the UK at the forefront of modern regulation for novel space activities whilst keeping space sustainable, safe and secure.

This includes advancing UK missions involving in-orbit debris removal, servicing, refuelling and assembly technologies – what we refer to under the umbrella term of proximity missions. We aim to bring together industry, academia, and government to ensure the UK is ready to grasp the opportunities of the future space economy. The UK sees the importance of these activities

to contribute to the sustainability of space, utilising technology to extend the life of satellites in orbit and by removing hazardous debris. For such missions to be successful, close international collaboration is vital as well as transparency about activities within the international community.

It is our view that a cohesive international approach to the registration of space objects will provide a key foundation for developing international approaches to proximity missions as well as constellations and the utilisation of space resources.

The future use of space resources impacts us all. It will help us unlock deep space exploration, ensure the sustainability of human life on celestial bodies and will allow us to unlock new tools and technologies that were only previously considered stuff of fiction.

By signing the Artemis Accords, the UK is joining international partners to agree a common set of principles which will guide space exploration for years to come. The Artemis Accords will ensure a shared understanding of safe operations, use of space resources, minimising space debris and sharing scientific data.

We welcome the formation of a working group on space resources and look forward to beginning our work in this area. We wish to thank the Chair Andrzej Misztal and the Vice Chair Steven Freeland, for all their hard work on the terms of reference and work plan for the group. We will provide a further statement under the dedicated agenda item.

Chair, we look forward to a productive legal sub-committee. Thank you.

[Career Insight: Jack, Legal Trainee, Government Legal Department](#)

“Douglas Trumbull died recently. A filmmaker and mastermind of visual effects, his pioneering work supervising the dazzling sequences in Stanley Kubrick’s 2001: A Space Odyssey earned him critical acclaim. In some ways, the mysterious world of pupillage is like 2001. Initially, you wonder, what on earth is going on? Then, the journey begins in earnest. So much stuff is thrown at you. At the end, you look back and wonder what you just experienced in the knowledge that, as arduous as it could be, it was worth it.

My own journey to the Bar was a frustrating one; lots of HAL-like responses from recruiters along the lines of, “I’m sorry Jack, I’m afraid you can’t do that.” Hailing from modest means in Northern Ireland, the first in my family to go to university, and subsequently moving from the wee island to the big island to forge my career, it took 6 years of around 100 applications and perhaps a score of interviews before I was offered pupillage.

I commenced my training with the [Government Legal Department \(GLD\)](#) in September 2020. Government trains all its prospective lawyers – solicitors and barristers – over 2 years. Pupillage constitutes the first 12 months – which also make up the litigation year of GLD’s training scheme – in which barristers tend to work in immigration litigation before being seconded to a private set of chambers. I completed my second 6 months at [Selborne Chambers](#), a commercial/chancery set, and qualified as a barrister in September 2021. I then commenced the first of 2 advisory seats at the Cabinet Office Europe Legal Advisers, where I worked on issues concerning the post-Brexit landscape. At the time of writing, I have recently begun my final training seat in GLD’s Commercial Law Group, sitting in the [Home Office](#).

Looking back on my training to date, I do truly believe that GLD’s offer provides superlative opportunities to work at the forefront of incredibly interesting and varied practice areas. Although barristers in government cannot expect regular courtroom-based advocacy, we are exposed to headline-making, complex work at the dawn of our legal careers. In the litigation sphere, prospective applicants might expect to provide written advice, draft pleadings, instruct Counsel, conduct settlement negotiations, manage appeals and observe hearings. In Chambers, I was afforded a great degree of independence to provide comprehensive legal opinions, draft statements of case, carry out discreet research tasks and (on a limited basis) appear in the Upper Tribunal as an advocate in my own right upon receiving GLD instructions. In the advisory world, prospective applicants might anticipate providing concise advice on legal issues related to policy proposals, coordinating with other government departments, and potentially getting involved with bills and statutory instruments.

More generally, GLD offers an encouraging and inclusive environment, with plenty of opportunities to become involved with worthwhile corporate initiatives. I have also appreciated GLD’s support of the outside work I do as a Bar Council “I Am the Bar” Social Mobility Advocate for 2021/2022, a Lincoln’s Inn mentor, and occasional blogger (this profile piece being a case in point).

In closing, I say simply this: you can be rewarded in this profession, regardless of background, if you have the ability, know where to look, and do not give up. If you opt for GLD, you will be rewarded with excellent training and fascinating work.

Finally, apropos of Doug Trumball, if you can, honour his memory by checking out his feature film debut as director, *Silent Running*, especially if you fancy an outing at [DEFRA](#).”

Career Insight: Jake, Legal Trainee, HM Revenue & Customs

"I took the long way round to pursuing a legal career. I graduated from Lancaster University in 2013 having first studied Physics for a year before deciding to change to Politics and Philosophy. After graduating I had absolutely no idea what I wanted to do except for a rough idea that I enjoyed a good argument. A year later in 2014 I had finally decided to pursue a career in law and began studying for a Graduate Diploma in Law (GDL) part-time while working full-time. I managed to secure a scholarship from [Inner Temple](#) which covered half of the cost of the GDL and just about made it financially viable.

Somewhere along the way I decided I enjoyed the idea of [being a barrister](#) more than being a solicitor, it might have been the outfit which finally sold it. I decided to apply for a job working for the [Bar Standards Board \(BSB\)](#), the regulator of barristers, and eventually became a Project Manager and stayed at the BSB for five and a half years. While I was working for the BSB I finished the GDL and applied for the part-time Bar Professional Training Course (BPTC). I was fortunate enough to be able to pay for the cost of the course with scholarships from Inner Temple and BPP. I graduated from the BPTC in 2018 and I was called to the Bar.

I had been applying for criminal pupillages during the BPTC, but I decided to apply for a pupillage with the [Government Legal Profession \(GLP\)](#) in the 2018 pupillage gateway window. During the assessment centre interview, I was asked to give a preference on department, I selected [HM Revenue & Customs \(HMRC\)](#) despite it having a start date of 2020 rather than the other departments which had 2019 start dates. I was fortunate enough to secure the pupillage with HMRC and started in September 2020, seven years after graduating from university. As I say, I took the long way round.

I picked the GLP because I saw an opportunity to make use of my degree as well as my experience in project management. That might seem unintuitive, but government legal advice is risk-based. Making risk-based calculations about prospects of success, legal risk and reputational risk is natural to someone with a project management background, risk analysis being one of the key elements of that profession. I picked HMRC specifically because I had an interest in financial crime and financial technologies, and I was willing to wait an extra year to join the department that interested me most.

As a HMRC pupil your pupillage lasts 12 months but you remain a "legal trainee" for a further 12 months, in order to gain a breadth of experience in the department's work. The first 12 months are spent in two litigation seats and the second 12 months are spent in two advisory seats. My first litigation seat was "Enforcement and Insolvency". This focused on [Proceeds of Crime Act \(POCA\)](#) cases, which includes account freezing and forfeiture orders, and insolvency cases, which includes matters relating to liquidators and the winding-up of companies.

Things are then a bit different for pupils in the second seat. During your second seat you are seconded to Chambers, I was seconded to [1 Crown Office Row](#). I had the opportunity to work on various tax and clinical negligence cases for my supervisors. I also acted in several tax cases for HMRC in the [Tribunal and Courts](#) – this is something you can choose to do as a barrister at HMRC, though the frequency of such cases is much lower than the Independent Bar.

The opportunity to work from Chambers is an invaluable experience. Not only does it let you gain experience in Tribunals and Courts but it also lets you experience the Independent Bar and carry that experience back to HMRC. It is also useful for dispelling the novelty of the Independent Bar and seeing the comparative advantages, and disadvantages, of life at the Employed Bar.

After 12 months I qualified and moved into my first advisory seat, “VAT and Environmental Taxes”. This seat includes providing VAT and Environmental law advice on matters such as the categorisation of supplies, international law (particularly involving the EU), and the drafting of new primary and secondary legislation. It is a technical area of law but one which is incredibly fulfilling to get to grips with, particularly if you are interested in environmental action.

I am writing this summary at the start of my final seat, Corporation Tax Advisory, which I am sure will be as interesting as each of the previous seats.

I hope this summary helps to give you something of a flavour of the HMRC pupillage. If there are three things you take away from reading this, I hope it is:

- There is nothing wrong with coming to the Bar via part-time qualifications and funding is frequently available from the Inns of Court and course providers if you need to make use of it, be sure to apply before considering taking out loans. Departments will currently also offer to pay your Legal Practice Course (LPC) or Bar training course fees where you have not yet (or have just) started the course. HMRC is an excellent option if you are concerned about the cost of legal training.
- The Independent Bar is not the only option, life at the Employed Bar is interesting, fulfilling and filled with meaningful work. You may even find that it is better remunerated once you factor in Chambers costs, pension contributions, annual leave, sick leave, maternity and paternity leave, travel costs, pay rises, promotion opportunities, and stable working hours. Not to detract from the Independent Bar either of course, there are also clear advantages to that lifestyle.
- HMRC has a varied workload that you may not have considered would fall within the department’s portfolio. You can find everything from environmental law to benefits and credits, tax fraud to corporation tax and legislative drafting to trade negotiations. You will get to express a preference on which teams you work in, so there is some scope for directing your own training experience.”

More savers to benefit from new pension provision

Speaking at the Royal Society of Arts (RSA) Collective Defined Contribution (CDC) Forum today about the road ahead for CDC schemes, the Minister highlighted how the regulations will come into force on 1st August, and discussed the ways in which the next phase of CDC schemes might be taken forward with a consultation planned later this year.

Minister for Pensions Guy Opperman said:

CDC schemes have the potential to transform the UK pensions landscape and deliver better retirement outcomes for millions of pension savers.

I firmly believe that we should capitalise on the enthusiasm that is building for extending CDC to other types of pension scheme, such as multi-employer schemes and Master Trusts.

I am keen to move quickly, but we must get this right if it is to work. That is why I am calling on all those who are seeking to deliver the full benefits of CDC to work with us to help make this a reality.

David Pitt-Watson and Hari Mann, co-chairs of the RSA's CDC forum said:

People who save for a pension typically want to secure an income which will last them until they die, not just to be presented with a cheque when they retire. That is what CDC pensions are designed to do. The government is to be congratulated in creating regulations which allow everyone to benefit from well managed CDC plans. The evidence suggests this can transform retirement for millions of people.

CDCs work by employers and employees contributing to a collective fund from which individual retirement incomes will be drawn. These collective funds can be invested in what are called 'higher return seeking assets' over a longer period than traditional DC schemes, benefiting the growth of the fund and its members.

Currently, regulations will provide for single and connected employer CDC schemes. Some parties have already expressed an interest in pursuing multi-employer CDC schemes as an offer for their members, as well as proposals for Master Trust and CDC models which offer 'decumulation only' (when pension savings are converted to retirement income).

Later this year, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) aims to consult on a package of prospective design principles and approaches to accommodate new types of CDC schemes. This will bring the potential benefits to more savers in the UK in an appropriate way, while also capitalising on the enthusiasm industry have shown for innovation in this area.

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