

# Ministers appoint new Trustees to Kew board

Professor Christopher Gilligan, Sir Paul Nurse, David Richardson, Judith Batchelar and Professor Ian Graham have all been appointed for terms of three years.

Professor Christopher Gilligan, Sir Paul Nurse and David Richardson's terms commenced on 8 March 2021, Judith Batchelar on 1 April 2021, and Professor Ian Graham's term on 1 November 2021. RBG Kew became an Executive Non-Departmental Public Body under the National Heritage Act 1983 with exempt charitable status and is sponsored by Defra. The Board of Trustees comprises a Chairman and 11 other members.

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

Dame Amelia Fawcett, Chair of the Board of Trustees, says:

I am delighted to welcome these talented individuals to the Board of Trustees. Each one brings significant expertise and experience that will add a great deal to an already strong Board. This is an important time for Kew, as we launch our 10-year strategy, and each of these new Trustees will have an important role to play in our mission to end the extinction crisis and to help create a world where nature is protected and managed sustainably, for the benefit of humanity and our planet.

## **Biographical details of the new trustees:**

### **Professor Christopher Gilligan**

Professor Gilligan is currently a Director of Research at the University of Cambridge, where he has previously held the posts of Head of the School of Biological Sciences and Professor of Mathematical Biology. He has chaired a number of complex bodies, including the Joint Nature Conservation Committee, the Science Advisory Council for Defra and the UK Tree Health and Plant Security Taskforce. He is also a former Trustee of the Natural History Museum. He was awarded the CBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours in 2015 for services to plant health in the field of epidemiology. He continues to lead research programmes in epidemiological modelling to manage disease of staple crops and the natural environment.

### **Sir Paul Nurse**

Sir Paul Nurse is a geneticist and cell biologist whose discoveries have helped to explain how the cell controls its cycle of growth and division. He

is currently Chief Executive and Director of the Francis Crick Institute, and a Howard Hughes Medical Institute Board Member. He was previously President of Rockefeller University New York, and was President of the Royal Society. Paul received a knighthood in 1999, the Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine in 2001, the Legion d'Honneur from France in 2002, and the Order of the Rising Sun from Japan in 2018.

### **David Richardson**

David Richardson grew up in Northern Ireland and Director of Horticulture at Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) which has a global historic estate which spans over 150 countries and is one of the world's largest gardening organisations. He has worked predominantly within the horticultural discipline for the CWGC for over 30 years, in all its major geographies and has recently led initiatives on performance management and chemical reduction. He is a Chartered Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Horticulture, has served on the Institute's Council and is a Liveryman of Worshipful Company of Gardeners.

### **Judith Batchelar**

Judith Batchelar is Director of Corporate Responsibility and Public Affairs at J Sainsbury plc, where she has worked since 2004. She previously worked for Safeway, Marks and Spencer, Mars Confectionary and Bass plc. Judith is also a Non-Executive Board Member of the Environment Agency, Chair of the Innovation Working Group for the Food and Drink Sector Council and an Ambassador for the Woodland Trust. Judith was appointed OBE in 2015 for services to farming and the food industry.

### **Professor Ian Graham**

Professor Ian Graham graduated with a degree in Botany and Genetics from The Queen's University of Belfast in 1986 and a PhD in Plant Molecular Biology from the University of Edinburgh in 1989. Postdoctoral research at the Universities of Oxford and Stanford were followed by faculty positions at the Universities of Glasgow and then York, where he has been based in the Centre for Novel Agricultural Products since 1999 and holds the Weston Chair in Biochemical Genetics. His research interests now focus on plant natural products such as noscapine (anti-cancer), codeine (analgesic), and artemisinin (antimalarial). Ian was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 2016 and won the Biochemical Society's 2017 Heatley Medal and Prize for 'exceptional work in applying advances in biochemistry, and especially for developing practical uses that have created widespread benefits and value for society'.

### **Notes**

Trustees do not receive any direct remuneration for their services, although reasonable travel and subsistence expenses can be reimbursed. There is a requirement for appointees' political activity (if significant) to be declared. The appointees have declared that they have not taken part in any significant political activity in the past five years.

The new Trustees will join current RBG Kew Board of Trustees: Dame Amelia Fawcett, Nick Baird, Catherine Dugmore, Professor Liam Dolan, Sarah Flannigan, Val Gooding (term ends 31 March 2021), Professor Sue Hartley, Krishnan Guru-Murthy and Jantiene Klein Roseboom.

Defra and RBG Kew would like to record their gratitude for the outstanding services and commitment providing by the departing Trustees: Val Gooding, Ian Karet, Michael Lear and Sir Derek Myers.

## **About Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew**

The [Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew](#) is a world-famous scientific organisation, internationally respected for its outstanding collections as well as its scientific expertise in plant and fungal diversity, conservation and sustainable development in the UK and around the world.

Kew Gardens is a major international and a top London visitor attraction. Kew Gardens' 132 hectares of landscaped gardens, and Wakehurst, Kew's wild botanic garden in Sussex, attract over 2.5 million visits every year. Kew Gardens was made a UNESCO World Heritage site in July 2003 and celebrated its 260th anniversary in 2019. Wakehurst is home to Kew's Millennium Seed Bank, the largest wild plant seed bank in the world, as well as over 500 acres of designed landscapes, wild woodlands, ornamental gardens and a nature reserve.

The Kew Madagascar Conservation Centre is Kew's third research centre and only overseas office. RBG Kew receives approximately one third of its funding from Government through the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and research councils. Further funding needed to support RBG Kew's vital work comes from donors, membership and commercial activity including ticket sales.

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## **[UK and Canadian Trade Ministers celebrate trade deal ratification](#)**

Press release

International Trade Secretary Liz Truss and Canadian Minister for Small Business, Export Promotion and International Trade Mg speak to welcome ratification.



UK International Trade Secretary Liz Truss and Canadian Minister for Small Business, Export Promotion and International Trade Mary Ng have today (Friday 19 March) spoken to welcome the ratification of the UK-Canada trade continuity agreement and to commit to bringing it into force next month.

In December the UK and Canada agreed a Memorandum of Understanding to ensure exporters could continue to benefit from preferential tariff rates until the deal is brought into force.

The agreement, which supports total trade between Canada and the UK worth £22.4bn in 2019, will help both countries build back better from the Covid-19 pandemic by supporting high-quality jobs in industries such as automotive and food and drink.

It saves an estimated £42 million tariff burden on UK exports including through eventual zero tariffs on cars, and zero tariffs on beef, fish, chocolate bars and soft drinks. British consumers will continue to benefit from zero tariffs on Canadian maple syrup, biscuits and salmon.

During the call, the Ministers reaffirmed their shared commitment to pursuing a new trade deal this year which would look to go further and faster in a number of areas including digital, data, the environment and women's economic empowerment.

Ms Ng welcomed the UK's interest in joining the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP).

Both Ministers agreed to work together to promote free and fair trade globally, including at the upcoming G7 Trade Ministers' meeting.

We have an exciting year ahead working with Canada to advance our shared priorities for free and fair trade and I look forward to building further momentum through our G7 Presidency this year.

Later this year, we will take our trading relationship to new heights by starting negotiations on a new trade deal that will help us set the bar for 21st Century trade, bringing jobs opportunity, and prosperity for our people.

## [UK Government Covid testing site opens in Glasgow Cranhill](#)

The UK Government has today, Friday 19 March, opened a new walk-through coronavirus testing centre at Cranhill Community Centre in Glasgow (G33 3HE).

The test centre is part of the largest network of diagnostic testing facilities created in British history. In Scotland, this comprises 8 drive through sites, 35 walk-through sites, 42 mobile units, plus the Glasgow Lighthouse Lab which is working round the clock to process samples.

In Scotland, the UK Government is providing all COVID testing and test processing outside of the NHS. Around two thirds of all daily tests are provided by the UK Government, in support of Scotland's health services.

Tests must be booked in advance at: [NHS Inform](#) or by calling 0800 028 2816. People should only book a test if they have coronavirus symptoms (a high temperature, a new and continuous cough, or a loss or change to their sense of smell or taste).

Health Minister Lord Bethell said:

To respond to the coronavirus, we have built a major testing and tracing system from scratch. We are constantly working to expand and improve it with new technologies and innovations so everyone with symptoms can get a test.

New walk-in sites like this one makes it even easier to get a test no matter where you live. If you have symptoms of coronavirus, I urge you to book a test today and follow the advice of NHS Test and Protect if you are contacted to protect others and stop the spread of the virus.

Baroness Dido Harding, Interim Executive Chair of the National Institute for Health Protection, said:

Walk-through sites offer communities better access to coronavirus testing, so everyone with symptoms can get a test. This new site is part of our ongoing work to expand our testing network across the UK which now has the capacity to process more than 700,000 tests a day. We will continue to expand capacity to improve test turnaround times and push forward testing innovations to make sure anyone who

needs a test can get one.

Please book a test if you have coronavirus symptoms: a new continuous cough, a high temperature and a loss or change in sense of smell or taste, and follow the advice of NHS Test and Protect if you are contacted.

UK Government Minister for Scotland, Iain Stewart said

The UK Government is doing everything it can to support people in all parts of the UK through the pandemic.

Testing continues to play an important role how we manage the virus alongside the roll out of vaccines, helping to identify local outbreaks, slow down the rate of transmission and protect communities. I would like to thank the public for continuing to do the right thing and come forward to be tested when they display symptoms.

The UK Government continues to provide the bulk of testing in Scotland, with this new walk-through centre in Glasgow just the latest in our extensive network. We have also secured and paid for millions of doses of the Pfizer and Oxford vaccines for all parts of the UK.

Hope is on the horizon, but we can't let up on our efforts to contain the virus.

Dr Linda De Caestecker, Director for Public Health at NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, said:

We'd like to thank all of the staff involved in setting up and operating testing sites across NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde. We welcome the addition of more testing centres to support this existing network. Making testing centres local and easy to access is a very important part of helping us to control and minimise the spread of the virus across our communities.

Simon Venn, Mitie Chief Government & Strategy Officer, said:

Our priority during the pandemic is to support the nation's efforts to fight COVID-19 and help keep the country running. Testing is a critical part of the UK's strategy to combat coronavirus and we're proud to support the UK Government with this vital task. A big thank you to all the NHS staff, Mitie employees and other frontline heroes in Glasgow, who are working tirelessly to keep us all safe.

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## **Barriers to research beyond cannabinoids: call for evidence**

Further to the [call for evidence issued in February 2020 regarding barriers to legitimate research on 3rd generation synthetic cannabinoids](#), the ACMD Barriers to Research working group would like to issue a second call to researchers to help in their formulation of advice to government. This time the ACMD would like researchers to look beyond synthetic cannabinoids, and provide evidence on barriers to legitimate research on all controlled drugs.

The deadline, which has been extended, to provide written feedback using the attached questionnaire is now 31 May 2021. Please return your submission to [acmd@homeoffice.gov.uk](mailto:acmd@homeoffice.gov.uk).

We are extending the deadline for the call for evidence.

This questionnaire is not in an accessible format. If you need help completing it or are unable to use Microsoft Word please email [acmd@homeoffice.gov.uk](mailto:acmd@homeoffice.gov.uk).

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## **Regulator takes action against 5 trustees after finding over £1m of charity funds not properly accounted for**

A Charity Commission inquiry has found that over £1m in the Orphan Relief Fund and Charitable Trust's funds could not be properly accounted for. The funds were claimed to have been sent to Iraq.

Five trustees have been removed or disqualified for their actions and the charity has been wound-up by Order of the Commission and removed from the register.

The charity was established to support young people suffering after the loss of one or more of their parents. It operated exclusively in Iraq.

In 2017 the Commission opened a statutory inquiry into the charity after it identified several serious regulatory concerns about its governance and financial management. This includes £998,746.13 being transferred from the

charity's bank account purportedly for use in Iraq, but without the trustees being able to provide the Commission with evidence of how this was spent.

Further concerns included that payments had been made from the charity to the chair of trustees for personal expenditure.

After the inquiry opened, the Commission learnt that the charity had transferred a further £88,515.63 purportedly to Iraq for its charitable work. The regulator immediately froze the charity's bank accounts to protect its remaining funds. Action was also taken to suspend and then remove the chair of trustees from the charity.

The inquiry found failings by five of the charity's trustees, including failing to:

- provide any records that demonstrated how over £1m had been expended, purportedly in Iraq, in response to a Commission direction requiring information
- demonstrate proper financial controls and accountability over the charity's funds
- set up sufficiently robust governance measures to prevent decision-making being controlled by its chair
- protect over £10,315.15 of the charity's funds which were paid to the chair of trustees for his own personal expenditure. Despite assertions that this money had been repaid to the Iraqi based charity, no evidence was offered to support this claim

Four trustees resigned after the inquiry opened and were disqualified by Orders of the Commission for a period of 8 years. Four trustees were appointed during the inquiry but three left before its conclusion.

Since January 2019, there was one trustee left at the charity. The inquiry ordered this trustee to wind up and dissolve the charity and it was removed from the charity register on 16 September 2020.

Tim Hopkins, Assistant Director of Investigations and Inquiries at the Charity Commission, said:

"The public expect charities to make a real positive difference for the people they help or the cause they pursue. Charities must use their resources efficiently and effectively and be accountable to those that support them and to the Commission as regulator. Former trustees of this charity failed to meet these expectations.

"I hope other trustees consider this case carefully and note particularly their shared responsibilities to ensure that their charity's funds are applied solely for its charitable purposes and are fully accounted for."

#### **Notes to Editors:**

1. Read [the inquiry report](#) into the charity
2. The charity had 9 trustees during the Commission's engagement with the charity, of which 1 (the chair) was removed from the charity and 4 were



disqualified from being trustees for their actions.

3. The chair of trustees, Wathib Salman Al-Amood, was removed under section 79(4) of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act') as a trustee at the charity. The consequence of removal is automatic disqualification from being a trustee in any other charity unless given a waiver by the Commission. Ahmed Al-Amood, Husham Al-Amood, Bushra Al Neama and Sulieman Adam were disqualified under section 181A of the Act from being a charity trustee or trustee for a charity for a period of 8 years. These trustees are also prevented from holding any office or employment with senior management functions in any charity in England and Wales throughout the period of their disqualification.
4. The charity wound up and dissolved following the Commission's use of its power directing it to do so under section 84B of the Act.
5. The Charity Commission is the independent, non-ministerial government department that registers and regulates charities in England and Wales. Its purpose is to ensure charity can thrive and inspire trust so that people can improve lives and strengthen society.