Scottish Land&Estates

Help shape the future of rural Scotland

Join the Board of Scottish Land & Estates

Board Director and Vice Chair opportunities 2027



Scottish Land&Estates

Rural Scotland needs successful businesses, good ideas and people prepared to get involved.

We are looking for new Directors to join the Scottish Land & Estates Board and bring their experience, perspective and ideas to our organisation.

You might run or advise a rural business, manage land, work in technology, finance, communications or tourism, or have other skills or experience that you think would be useful.

You don't need to be a landowner to be a Board member, and you don't need to have served on a Board before.

What matters is that you care about the future of rural Scotland, have experience to contribute and are prepared to question, listen and get involved.

In return, Board membership offers the opportunity to broaden your own experience, develop new relationships and gain a much wider understanding of the businesses and issues shaping rural Scotland.



Winners of the 10th Helping it Happen Awards Ceremony, 2026

Message from **PATRICK COLQUHOUN, CHAIRMAN**



Rural Scotland is changing, and the businesses that operate within it are having to change too. For Scottish Land & Estates to represent those businesses well, we need to understand what is happening on the ground, anticipate what is coming next and make sure the experience of our members is heard in the decisions that affect them.

Our Board has a big part to play in that, and we are looking for new people to join us. I came to SLE through the Central Regional Committee before joining the Board and, more recently, becoming Chairman. One of the things I value most about being involved is the breadth of people, businesses and ideas you encounter. You hear directly from people running businesses across Scotland, learn about sectors and issues beyond your own experience and get the opportunity to contribute to where SLE goes next.

I want us to continue building a Board that reflects the breadth of modern rural Scotland and isn't afraid to bring different perspectives to the table.

That means we want to hear from people with a wide range of experience. You might run or manage a rural business, advise them, or bring expertise from another sector that could help us. You don't need to have served on a Board before, and you don't need to fit a particular mould. What matters is that you care about the future of rural Scotland, have experience and ideas to contribute, are prepared to listen and question, and can look beyond your own business or area of interest.

Being an SLE Director does require a commitment of time and energy, and our Board Director positions are voluntary but offer unique experience and sectoral access. You will work with people from different backgrounds, build relationships across rural Scotland, gain a much broader understanding of the issues affecting rural businesses and develop your own experience around a Board table. You will also have the opportunity to help shape the future of a part of the national economy which is going to become even more significant in the years ahead.

We are also recruiting a Vice Chair, a separate, remunerated position for a landowning member who is interested in taking on a greater leadership role within SLE. The Vice Chair is our Chair Designate.

If reading this pack makes you think you might have something to contribute, I hope you will consider applying. And if you're interested but aren't quite sure whether it's for you, please get in touch with me, Sarah-Jane or one of our existing Directors for a conversation. Our contact details can be found in the How to Apply section.

Patrick Colquhoun
Chairman

WHO WE ARE

Scottish Land & Estates Board members 2026



Patrick Colquhoun
Chairman & Director



Sarah-Jane Laing
Chief Executive & Director



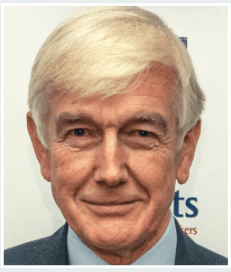
Lucy Laidlaw
Director



Angus Cheape
Director



Dee Ward
Director



Derek Lewis
Director



Laura Warrender
Director



Evelyn Channing
Director



Michael Home
Director



Michael Upton
Director



Alastair Orr Ewing
Director

OUR AMBITION FOR RURAL SCOTLAND

Our vision is a prosperous and sustainable future for rural Scotland, delivering benefits for all.

Our members represent a diverse cross-section of rural Scotland. We've acted as their voice for over a century, helping rural Scotland thrive. We help our members prosper through the knowledge, advice and relationships we provide. Together, we are an association of people and enterprises committed to promoting a healthy and vibrant rural sector.

We are here to represent members' views to politicians and other decision-makers, to identify future opportunities and risks for land-based businesses, to celebrate rural successes, and to provide support to those with a stake in land and property in rural Scotland. Our member network is a great way to share knowledge and good practice.

Our mission is to lead and support rural businesses to deliver publicly and politically recognised measurable benefits for society, the economy and the environment, with a focus on people, jobs, and nature.

Our values and our actions match our beliefs:

- We are open and transparent in our approach
- We are inclusive and encourage collaboration
- We enable and empower members and colleagues to be and to achieve the best they can
- We lead by example and promote high standards of professional integrity and responsibility amongst our membership
- We value facts and sharing knowledge
- We are future-focused, working towards the Scotland of tomorrow
- We strive to increase the public understanding of the benefits delivered to Scotland by our members
- We are passionate about the work we do.

Find out more about our Board on the SLE website.
https://www.scottishlandandestates.co.uk/about-us/our-board

Scottish Land&Estates

WHY GET INVOLVED

"Being on the Board gives you a fantastic insight into all the excellent things the land and rural sector is doing in Scotland. You meet outstanding members and learn from a hugely impressive SLE team. Playing a small part in setting the direction of the organisation really is a very great privilege."

Michael Home

"Joining the Scottish Land & Estates' Board has been an incredibly positive first Non-Exec role for me; working alongside fellow Directors with vast experience in governance, strategy development and financial reporting has provided me with an array of new skills to take forward into future activities. I would encourage anyone interested in rural Scotland to consider applying."

Lucy Laidlaw

"I bring to it my own experience of running a diversified hill farm and sporting estate, and succession, whilst also juggling a young family of my own. Though still fairly new to this role, I have already gained an enormous amount of knowledge on a broad range of issues and have had the chance to meet some fascinating people."

Laura Warrender

"It was my first appointment to an external Board, and I was apprehensive given the calibre of the other board members. I was also female and not a landowner. That mattered not a jot, and I was immediately embraced into a hardworking, dynamic and responsible forum.

Evelyn Channing

ABOUT THE ROLES
Vice Chair

As part of this recruitment process, we are seeking applications for the role of Vice Chair.

This remunerated appointment offers a unique opportunity to help shape the future of Scotland's rural economy and one of the country's leading membership organisation. The Vice Chair works closely with the Chair, Chief Executive and Board to support effective governance, organisational performance, policy development, member engagement, external relationships and help guide the future direction of SLE.

Alongside policy and political engagement, the Vice Chair will contribute across the full breadth of the organisation's activities, helping ensure Scottish Land & Estates continues to deliver effectively for members, maintain strong external influence and remain well positioned for future opportunities and challenges.

What We Are Looking For

For this role, we are seeking someone who:

- Is passionate about rural Scotland and the future success of the rural economy
- Is an owner of land in Scotland
- Demonstrates strategic vision, strong leadership capability and sound judgement
- Has experience in leading businesses, organisations or significant projects
- Can support and constructively challenge the Chair, fellow Board members and the Executive Team
- Has the credibility and confidence to engage with members, politicians, stakeholders and partners
- Understands good governance, organisational performance and risk management
- Can build consensus and effective relationships across a wide range of interests and perspectives
- Is an effective communicator and ambassador
- Has the commitment and capability to progress to the role of the Chair.

Key elements of the role

Governance and Leadership

- Support the Chair in delivering effective governance and Board leadership.
- Deputise for the Chair when required.
- Help drive Board development, succession planning and recruitment.
- Support effective oversight of organisational performance, risk and governance.

Strategy and Organisational Development

- Contribute to organisational strategy and long-term priorities.
- Provide strategic advice and support to the Chief Executive and senior leadership team.
- Help ensure the organisation remains effective, resilient and future-focused.

Policy and External Engagement

- Chair the National Policy Group.
- Act as one of the principal external representatives of Scottish Land & Estates.
- Build relationships with members, politicians, stakeholders and partners.
- Act as an ambassador for the organisation across Scotland and beyond.

Chair Designate Responsibilities

- Work closely with the Chair to ensure continuity of leadership.
- Develop a comprehensive understanding of all aspects of the organisation.
- Prepare for succession to the Chairmanship through active involvement in governance, strategy and external representation, subject to performance, Board and membership approval.

Expected Commitment is an average of 8 days per month including Board meetings, National Policy Group meetings, member engagement activities, reading and meeting preparation, and external representation commitments, as well as spending time with the team in Musselburgh.

Remuneration for the Vice Chair role is £21,200 per annum plus travel and substinence.

ABOUT THE ROLES
Board Directors

As a membership organisation, our Board of Directors is vital to good governance. It sets the organisation's long-term strategic direction and monitors how we deliver our objectives. The Board reviews the delivery of our vision and strategic goals, ensuring that our organisation's positions represent the broader interests of our membership, and oversees the financial stability and accountability of the company. Our Board acts as a team, accepting collective responsibility for decision making.

Experience we would particularly like to add
You do not need to fit one of these categories to apply. SLE regularly reviews the balance of skills and experience around its Board. Our latest review has identified several areas where additional expertise would complement what is already there.

Communications, reputation and stakeholder engagement
SLE operates in a complex public, political and business environment. We would welcome people who understand reputation, communications, stakeholder relationships, public engagement and how organisations build trust. Your experience could have been gained in rural business, professional services, membership organisations, public bodies, community organisations or another sector.

Technology, Data and Digital
Technology is changing how organisations operate, communicate with customers and members, manage information and make decisions. We are interested in people who understand the opportunities and risks associated with data, digital systems, cyber security, artificial intelligence, CRM, digital transformation and organisational change.

Membership and Customer Experience
Our members are the reason SLE exists. We would welcome experience of growing membership or customer organisations, improving customer experience, developing services, understanding audiences and building long-term relationships.

Green Finance and Natural Capital
New markets and investment models around carbon, biodiversity and natural capital are creating both opportunities and questions for rural businesses. We would welcome commercial, investment, financial or practical experience in this area.

Governance, Risk and Assurance
We are interested in people with experience of organisational governance, financial oversight, audit, assurance, regulation, risk or internal controls.



MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES



Setting direction

- Shape and approve SLE's plans and priorities
- Consider the longer-term development of the organisation in light of the political, economic, business and social environment
- Contribute to significant organisational and policy decisions
- Approve the annual budget and consider SLE's longer-term financial position.



Supporting effective leadership

- Appoint the Chief Executive and review their performance
- Agree appropriate delegation to the Senior Management Team
- Contribute their own experience and expertise
- Support and advise the Chief Executive and senior team while maintaining appropriate non-executive oversight
- Act as advocates for SLE.

Monitoring performance and risk

- Ensure appropriate arrangements exist for risk management, internal control and the information needed to understand SLE's performance.



Accountability

- Report appropriately to SLE's membership
- Monitor organisational and executive performance
- Approve SLE's Annual Report and Accounts
- Review the effectiveness of the Board itself
- Maintain appropriate standards of conduct, integrity and accountability.

Board members are expected to uphold the principles and standards set out in SLE's Board Member Code of Conduct.

Scottish Land&Estates

ABOUT YOU

We are looking for people who:

- Care about rural Scotland and the future of its businesses and communities
- Bring experience, knowledge or perspectives that will add to Board discussions
- Listen to others and are prepared to challenge and be challenged constructively
- Can think beyond their own business, profession or particular interests
- Exercise sound judgement
- Are comfortable taking collective responsibility for decisions
- Can commit the time required to participate properly.

We want to hear both from people with board-level experience and from those looking for their first Board role.

"The decisions being made today on land use, rural business, housing, environment and economic growth will shape rural Scotland for years to come. As a Director of Scottish Land & Estates, you have the opportunity to contribute to those conversations, influence the direction of a leading national organisation and help ensure rural perspectives are at the heart of decision-making. We are looking for people who want to make that difference, those with experience in leadership and board-level decision making and those seeking their first experience of Board involvement."

Sarah-Jane Laing, CEO SLE



Diversity of thought, experience and membership representation

Scottish Land & Estates represents a broad and evolving membership, including landowners, farmers, estate managers, foresters, sporting businesses, tourism operators, renewable energy interests, natural capital projects and professional advisers from across rural Scotland.

To represent our members well, we believe our Board should reflect this breadth of experience and perspective.

We are therefore keen to hear from candidates who can bring different viewpoints, professional expertise, lived experiences and insights to Board discussions. This may include experience gained through rural business, land management, professional practice, public service, entrepreneurship, community leadership or other fields relevant to the future of rural Scotland.

We welcome applications from individuals at different stages of their careers, from different parts of Scotland and from across our landowner, land manager and professional membership. We are also interested in hearing from those considering membership for the first time who can demonstrate a commitment to our vision and values.

Our aim is to build a Board that combines strong governance with diverse thinking, constructive challenge and a shared commitment to helping rural Scotland thrive.



Scottish Land&Estates

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

To apply to our Board, you must be a member of Scottish Land & Estates or intend to join the organisation before your appointment.

Frequency

The Board meets quarterly. In addition, Board members are asked to attend two or three key SLE events during the year, such as our annual conference in May, the Helping It Happen Awards in October or the SLE Regional receptions in their area during November.

Time commitment

Four whole-day meetings per year plus preparation of around 0.5 days per meeting and attendance at two to three SLE events per year. Occasional emails and papers between meetings but no more than the equivalent of 0.5 days per month. The Vice Chair role has a time commitment of one day per week for meetings/time in our Musselburgh office with the staff team, plus the equivalent of one day per week for admin and development.

Location

Board meetings are usually held at our easily accessible offices in Musselburgh or occasionally at the office of one of our professional members in Edinburgh. SLE events are held throughout Scotland, with our main national events taking place in Edinburgh and Perth.

Remuneration

The Vice Chair receives an annual remuneration plus travel and subsistence expenses.

For other Board members, reasonable expenses are paid for attending meetings and events.

Tenure

Board members are appointed for an initial term of four years, with the option to be reappointed for a further two-year period. At the end of the second term, Board members must step down unless they are appointed as the Chair or Vice Chair. If a Board member possesses an essential skill or experience, there is an option to reappoint for an additional year at the end of the second term.

The Vice- Chair's tenure follows the same timeline with a possibility after the second term to stay on for an additional year as a Non-Executive Director to help with the leadership transition and organisational continuity. All appointments and reappointments are subject to Board and wider membership approval at the AGM.

HOW TO APPLY

Please send us your CV along with a short covering letter or email outlining what skills and expertise you could bring to our Board and why you are interested in being a Board member. You may include any other information that you consider appropriate to your application and confirm which role you'd like to apply for.

Email your letter and CV to Ania Rytel-Dunn, EA, to the Chairman and Chief Executive at: ania.rytel-dunn@scottishlandandestates.co.uk. The deadline for applications is 30th of November 2026 with the interviews for

Vice Chair being held early December and Board member's in January 2027.

For an informal chat, please contact our Chairman, Patrick Colquhoun on chairman@scottishlandandestates.co.uk or Chief Executive, Sarah-Jane Laing on sarah-jane.laing@scottishlandandestates.co.uk, or any member of our Board directly or via Ania Rytel-Dunn.

By submitting your application, you agree that we can process your data for recruitment purposes in line with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. We only collect what is necessary to assess your application, store it securely for 6 months, and never share it with unauthorised third parties.

Scottish Landd & Estates Annual Conference, 2026



Scottish Land&Estates

RECRUITMENT PROCESS

End of November 2026
Application Deadline

December 2026
SLE Board Nominations sub-group meets to review Vice Chair applications for wider Board consideration with the interview processes taking place in early December

December 2026
New Vice Chair to be formally co-opted

January 2027
SLE Board nominations sub-group meets to shortlist Board member candidates

February 2027
SLE Board approves the sub-group's recommendations at the first Board meeting of the year
Offers made

Spring 2027
AGM notice to be issued with proposed recommendation for wider membership approval

AGM 2027

Formal appointment of Vice Chair and Board member at AGM 2027

For more information about SLE visit out website https://www.scottishlandandestates.co.uk/



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scottishlandandestates.co.uk