



WILDLIFE ESTATES SCOTLAND CHAIR RECRUITMENT PACK



June 2026



MISSION

Wildlife Estates Scotland (WES) recognises and promotes exemplary sustainable land management that delivers demonstrable and lasting benefits for Scotland's natural heritage, rural economy and communities.

2030 VISION

By 2030, Wildlife Estates Scotland should be recognised by decision makers and communities across Scotland as the authoritative accreditation scheme for demonstrating sustainable land management that supports and enhances biodiversity.

WES will be working closely with government and other stakeholders to promote exemplary stewardship of Scotland's natural heritage in balance with other objectives. Trusted by all, transparent and member driven, WES will foster collaboration and deliver tangible value to a diverse range of landholdings.

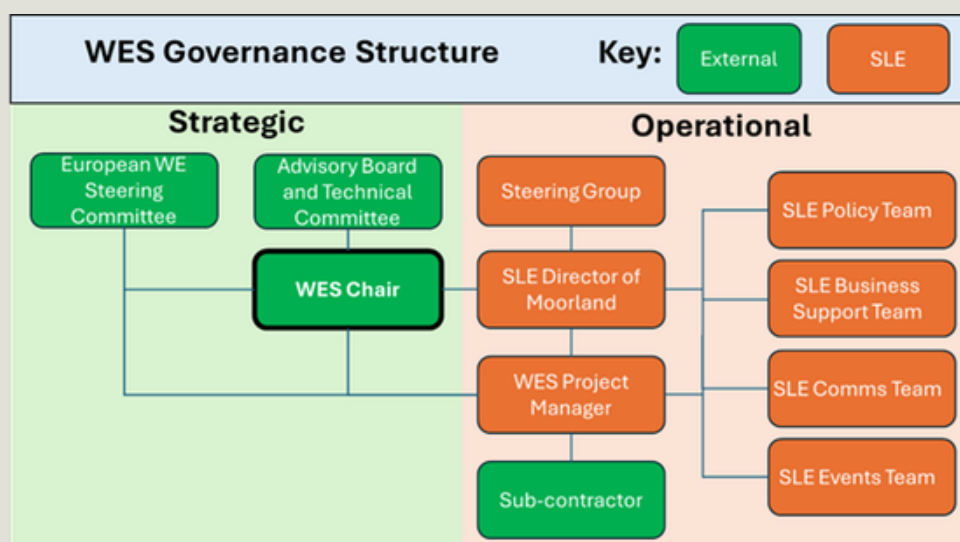


GOVERNANCE

The European Landowner's Organisation (ELO) is the ex-officio coordinator of the Wildlife Estates (WE) Label, which operates across 19 countries. It retains rights over branding, the mandatory accreditation requirements and is responsible for the ratification of accreditations. Scientific and Steering Committees guide the development of the accreditation process and the wider aims of the Label respectively.

WES, Scotland's national version of the WE Label, is administered and funded by Scottish Land and Estates (SLE), which therefore retains operational control over the scheme. The WES Project Manager is employed by SLE to manage the accreditation pipeline and manage the day to day running of the scheme. What this means is that any decision relating to branding, changes to the accreditation process and questionnaire, or the commitments that Level 1 WES members sign up to, must be approved by both SLE and the ELO.

The independent WES Advisory Board and Technical Committee includes the Scottish Government, Cairngorms National Park Authority, GWCT, NatureScot, Scotland's Rural College and WES Level 2 members. It is responsible for setting the medium to long term direction for the scheme, informed by the European WE Label Steering Committee. The WES Steering Group incorporates the WES Chair, Project Manager and the SLE management team. It is responsible for making operational decisions.



ABOUT THE ROLE



Message from Miles Montgomerie, WES Chair, 2023-2026

The role of the WES chair gives the incumbent a voice within the community of Scottish agencies and government associated with the management of the Scottish countryside.

I see WES as the influential and pragmatic voice within the competing, and often polarised, views on how to manage our countryside.

The high bar and transparency of the WES accreditation allows the chair to legitimately push on any doors, no matter how open, and influence policies and outcomes.

WES is managed by a fantastic team within SLE. WES has the ability to be at the heart of Nature30.

I see the next Chair's role as one of embedding the progress made to date within the policies of the Scottish Government who will now be in power for the next four years.



PURPOSE AND REMIT OF THE CHAIR

The WES Chair provides strategic leadership and sets direction for the WES scheme. In consultation with the ELO and SLE, they play a key role in governance. They chair the independent WES Advisory Board and Technical Committee, and acting as the national representative for Scotland on the European WE Label Steering Committee.

The Chair acts as an ambassador for the WES scheme and the wider WE Label in Scotland. This involves periodic engagement with stakeholders represented on the WES Advisory Board, politicians, and organisations and individuals identified as important for WES to build or maintain a relationship with.

The Chair also acts as the convener of the WES Breach Committee, which is a subgroup of the Advisory Board. This committee has the responsibility of deciding on any issue of suspected non-compliance or breach by a WES member, in accordance with the relevant policy.





CORE RESPONSIBILITIES

PROVIDE STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

- Chair the WES Advisory Board and Technical Committee that meets quarterly. The Advisory Board has a medium to long-term focus.
- Sit on the WES Steering Group that meets quarterly. The Steering Group has an operational focus.
- Act as national representative on the European WE Label Steering Committee that meets biannually.
- Liaise directly with the WES Project Manager and SLE's Director of Moorland and Strategic Projects, identifying and agreeing priorities for the scheme and monitoring progress towards these.



REPRESENT AND PROMOTE THE SCHEME AND THE MEMBERSHIP EXTERNALLY

- Speak at the annual WES Assembly, the WES awards at the Scottish Game Fair, and attend other events as applicable.
- Act as an ambassador for the scheme and the wider WE Label in Scotland, promoting the scheme and the work members undertake to key stakeholders.
- Encourage other landholdings to join WES.
- Work with the WES Project Manager and the Director of Moorland and Strategic Projects to identify and capitalize on opportunities to expand 'Trusted Operator' status for accredited WES members.
- Act as the representative of the scheme in correspondence with politicians and other high-level stakeholders.

SUSTAIN AND ENHANCE THE CREDIBILITY OF THE SCHEME

- Oversee the WES Breach Committee if required. The details of this committee and the breach process are contained in the WES breach and non-compliance policy.
- Review and sign off on the content and format of formal WES communications, including annual subscription letters, renewal reminder letters, and quarterly newsletters.
- Review quarterly WES webinar proposals and WES Land Business magazine content.



TIME COMMITMENT

14 DAYS PER ANNUM

This includes 10 formal meetings, alongside external engagement and correspondence with the SLE team.

- 4 Advisory Board meetings (3 virtual, 1 in person)
- 4 Steering Group meetings (all virtual)
- 2 Steering Committee meetings (1 online, 1 in person)
- Attendance at SLE Board Meetings (when required)

The overall term to be served as Chair is fixed at 3 years, with opportunity for reappointment.

LOCATION

The in-person WES Advisory Board meeting is typically held either at the Gillespie MacAndrew office in Perth, or the SLE office in Musselburgh. The WES Assembly location varies, but at least 6 months notice of the location will be given. The Scottish Game Fair is held at Scone Palace, just outside Perth.

EXPENSES AND RENUMERATION

All travel expenses incurred in relation to the above expectations will be covered by SLE.

An honorarium of £3,000 will be paid per annum.





ABOUT YOU

WE ARE LOOKING FOR SOMEONE WHO:

- Is committed to managing land sustainably to an exemplary standard, balancing wildlife and habitat management objectives with other activities. Either owns or manages a WES Level 2 accredited holding.
- Is objective and fair. Acts with integrity, wisdom, discretion and good judgement.
- Is solution focused, with experience of setting strategic direction.
- Is tactful and proactive in building relationships with stakeholders across the land management sector.
- Has strong communication skills, with the ability to challenge constructively.
- Has a clear understanding of the issues affecting WES members.
- Will act in the best interests of WES and its membership, without regard to personal interest or benefit.
- Has the necessary time to be an effective chair.



HOW TO APPLY

Applications can be submitted from Monday 06 July 2026. Please email a CV and personal statement to Neil Gunn, WES Project Manager, at: neil.gunn@scottishlandandestates.co.uk

Applications will close at noon Wednesday 29 July 2026.

In person and online discussions will take place w/c Monday 10 August.

QUERIES

Please direct any queries to: Neil Gunn, Wildlife Estates Scotland Project Manager,
Scottish Land and Estates
E: neil.gunn@scottishlandandestates.co.uk
M: +44 (0) 7436 562 227

