

## ELECTION OF BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND OFFICE BEARERS; APPOINTMENT OF PRESIDENT AND HONORARY FELLOWS

### 1. Election of Trustees

Each year 1/3 of Elected Trustees (or nearest number downward) is required to retire by rotation. Arina Russell stepped down from LINK Board in July 2025. Aedan Smith is required to retire by rotation.

Aedan Smith is eligible for re-election and is willing to stand again. Arina's space on the Board has been vacant from July 2025.

This leaves three spaces for a representative from our member organisations and nominations have been invited from the membership. As of 24 October, two nominations had been received:

- Karen Blackport, who is standing for election since Bright Green Nature, of which she is CEO, became a LINK member in 2025.
- David Fleetwood, Director of Policy at John Muir Trust.

Please see the nominee statements below.

LINK has in addition two co-optee Trustee spaces. Karen Blackport is standing for election (above), which leaves a co-opted space on LINK Board. LINK Board are recommending Catherine Gee for appointment from 20 November 2025. Catherine was Deputy Director at Keep Scotland Beautiful until a year ago and now works as Head of ESG Operations at DWP LLP. See her Linked in Profile [here](#). LINK's other current co-optee is James Woodhouse, who is willing to be co-opted again.

In 2025, LINK appointed James Curran, a LINK's Honorary Fellow, to the position of Chair under Section 46(d) of LINK Constitution. James has indicated he is willing to stand again as co-opted Chair for a limited time. Susan Davies, former CEO at Scottish Seabird Centre, has indicated that she would be willing to be co-opted to LINK Chair from April 2026.

LINK Board recommend that James is co-opted as Chair until April 2026 and Susan Davies from April 2026. The 2026 AGM will then look to appoint Susan for a further 12 months under Section 46(d) if approved by both Board and the membership at that point.

| Elected Trustees during 2024/25    | Trustees retiring by rotation at 2025 | <b>Trustees eligible for re-election at AGM 2025</b> | Elected Trustees serving until at least 2026 |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| <i>1. Aedan Smith (Vice Chair)</i> | <i>Aedan Smith</i>                    | <i>Aedan Smith</i>                                   | <i>Aedan Smith</i>                           |

|                              |  |                              |                |
|------------------------------|--|------------------------------|----------------|
| 2. Helen Senn                |  |                              | Helen Senn     |
| 3. Kathy Wormald             |  |                              | Kathy Wormald  |
| 4. Alan McDonnell            |  |                              | Alan McDonnell |
| 5. Eric Baird                |  |                              | Eric Baird     |
| 6. Bruce Wilson              |  |                              | Bruce Wilson   |
| 7. vacant                    |  |                              |                |
| 8. vacant                    |  |                              |                |
| 8. vacant                    |  |                              |                |
| Co-opted Trustees 2024/25    |  | Proposed Co-options 2025/26  |                |
| James Woodhouse (Treasurer)  |  | James Woodhouse              |                |
| Karen Blackport              |  | Catherine Gee                |                |
| James Curran (Article 46(d)) |  | James Curran (Article 46(d)) |                |
|                              |  | Susan Davies (Article 46(d)) |                |

#### Nominee statements:

#### **Karen Blackport, CEO Bright Green Nature says:**

Dr Karen Blackport brings to the Board of LINK a unique combination of scientific expertise, business leadership, and a deep commitment to nature recovery. As CEO of Bright Green Nature, she leads innovative programmes that connect communities, landowners, and organisations with practical, evidence-based approaches to restoring biodiversity and building resilience in Scotland's landscapes. With a Masters in Ecosystem Health, an MBA, and over two decades in the life-sciences and environmental sectors, she combines analytical insight with strong organisational and strategic skills. Her governance experience as a long serving Trustee of the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland further strengthens her understanding of how science, policy, and people intersect. Karen is passionate about fostering collaboration across disciplines and sectors, translating research into action, and championing inclusive approaches to environmental leadership—qualities that align strongly with LINK's mission to secure a sustainable, nature-rich future for Scotland.

**Nominated by:** David Field, CEO, Royal Zoological Society of Scotland

**Seconded by:** Lisa McLeish, Biodiversity Officer, Bright Green Nature.

#### **David Fleetwood, Director of Policy, John Muir Trust says:**

David Fleetwood brings extensive experience in **Scottish public policy and digital innovation** relevant to LINK's mission. Having worked at the centre of the **Scottish Government** on policy development and now as **Director of Policy at the John Muir Trust**, David has influenced national debates on land reform, heritage, and environmental governance — including giving evidence to the Scottish Parliament. He understands how policy is shaped and how to build effective advocacy coalitions across government, NGOs, and communities.

Alongside this, David has strong **IT and digital strategy skills**, using data and technology to improve policy analysis, communication, and organisational effectiveness. He is passionate about helping environmental organisations modernise their systems to become more evidence-driven and collaborative.

With his combination of **policy insight, influencing experience, and digital capability**, David would bring strategic value to Scottish Environment LINK's Board, strengthening its voice and impact across Scotland's policy landscape.

**Nominated by:** Thomas Widrow – Head of Campaigns, John Muir Trust

**Seconded by:** Alan McDonnell, Head of Nature Restoration, Trees for Life.

**A vote to elect the nominees will be taken at the meeting**

2. Office Bearers for 2026/27

Subject to decision on the above, the Board is pleased to recommend Aedan Smith for election as Vice Chair. The Board recommends James Woodhouse as LINK's Treasurer.

The Board also recommends James Curran as Chair until April 2026 and Susan Davies thereafter until the LINK AGM in Autumn 2026. Karen, David: James to chair

James Curran has been LINK's Chair for the last 12 months and is well known as one of LINK's active Honorary Fellows. James is willing to stand again for a time limited period and LINK's Board is extremely grateful to him for his leadership to date and moving into 2026.

Susan Davies is also well known amongst members, having been CEO at Scottish Seabird Centre for six years until January 2025. Before that she was Director of Conservation at Scottish Wildlife Trust for almost 3 years. Susan is currently Chair at James Hutton Institute, a position she has held for 2 years and from which she will be retiring having fulfilled the maximum 9 years on the Hutton's Board in November 2026. Susan is an experienced Chair, trustee and with experience of working in environmental NGOs and environment agencies, she is extremely well placed to offer the level of leadership that is needed in these times of change. Prior to recent roles at the SSC/SWT Susan worked for 25 years for JNCC and SNH at senior levels.

These time limited appointments will run sequentially through 2026, if approved, and will be revisited at LINK's 2026 AGM.

**A vote to elect the Office Bearers will be taken at the meeting:**

**Elect Aedan Smith as vice chair**

**Elect James Woodhouse as Treasurer**

**Elect James Curran as Chair for 6 months under Article 46(d)**

**Elect Susan Davies as Chair for 6 months under Article 46(d)**

3. Proposed Co-options

We propose to re-co-opt James Woodhouse, who has agreed to serve for another year. We also propose to co-opt Catherine Gee, who brings experience of working at a senior level in a LINK member organisation and also experience of working with businesses, particularly around ESG and implementing SDGs.

**A vote to elect the nominee will be taken at the meeting**

4. Appointment of President

The position of LINK President is currently vacant.

## 5. Appointment of Honorary Fellows

Fellowship is open to individuals who share an interest and commitment to environmental issues and are interested in and able to support LINK's work.

This year, LINK Board has pleasure in recommending the following as Honorary Fellows:

| <b>Proposed by LINK Board 2024</b> | <b>Reason for proposal</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Susan Davies                       | Former CEO at Scottish Seabird Centre for six years until January 2025. Before that, Director of Conservation at Scottish Wildlife Trust for almost 3 years. Susan is currently Chair at James Hutton Institute. She is also a trustee at the Venture Trust. |
| Francesca Osowska                  | Francesca was CEO of Naturescot for just over 7 years from 2017 before joining Scottish Funding Council as their CEO. Francesca has close personal links to nature and access, starting her time as CEO by cycling to all Naturescot offices.                |

A vote to appoint Honorary Fellows will be taken at the meeting.