



ANIMAL WELFARE COMMITTEE

Appointment of 3 new members

Information pack for applicants

The closing date for the receipt of applications is:

12 Midday, 7 May 2025

AWC Secretariat
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Email: awcsecretariat@defra.gov.uk



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

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The Animal Welfare Committee

What is the Animal Welfare Committee?

The Animal Welfare Committee (AWC) is an expert committee of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and the Scottish and Welsh Governments.

The Committee's Terms of Reference are:

(i) To provide independent, authoritative, impartial and timely advice, to Defra and the Scottish and Welsh Governments:

- on the welfare of farmed animals, including farmed animals on agricultural land, at market, in transit and at the place of killing
- on any other matters that might be considered necessary to improve standards of animal welfare

(ii) To provide independent, authoritative, impartial, and timely advice, to Defra and the Welsh Government:

- on the welfare of companion animals and wild animals kept by people
- on any other matters that might be considered necessary to improve standards of animal welfare

(iii) To provide independent scientific support and advice on the protection of animals at the time of killing, as requested, in line with Article 20 of assimilated Council Regulation (EC) No.1099/2009 (with respect to England, Wales and Scotland) and Council Regulation (EC) No.1099/2009 (with respect to Northern Ireland).

Further information

For further information about the work of the Animal Welfare Committee and current members you may wish to visit the AWC website at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/animal-welfare-committee-awc> or contact the AWC Secretariat at the following address:

AWC Secretariat
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Email: awcsecretariat@defra.gov.uk

Being a member of the Animal Welfare Committee

Description of role

AWC is appointing three new members to provide expert advice to government on animal welfare. We are specifically seeking individuals with specialised knowledge and experience in related to slaughter and killing practices.

Responsibilities

Members of the AWC have collective responsibility for the operation of the Committee. Typical responsibilities will include working with Government policy teams, Committee members and external stakeholders to produce expert scientific and veterinary advice in a wide range of formats, contributing to Committee meetings and representing the Committee at external events. They must:

- Engage fully in collective consideration of the issues, taking account of the full range of relevant evidence, including any guidance issued by the sponsor departments.
- Ensure that the Committee works within its terms of reference.
- Ensure that the Committee's policy on openness is adhered to and that the Committee's advice is comprehensible to members of the public.

Qualities and experience required

Essential criteria:

- Extensive expertise and experience in the science and practice of animal welfare.
- Specialised knowledge and experience in animal welfare related to slaughter and killing, including relevant academic qualifications or significant current work in the practical field.
- Excellent oral communication skills, with the ability to clearly and convincingly present views in discussion, while considering and valuing alternative perspectives.
- Excellent written communication skills, including the ability to write reports and present complex findings to a generalist audience.
- Ability to work to an agreed brief and meet deadlines.
- Strong analytical and creative thinking skills.
- Ability to build productive working relationships.
- Ability to work collaboratively as part of a diverse committee of independent experts.

Desirable criteria:

- A solid understanding of animal welfare legislation and legislative processes.
- Knowledge of current relevant research and development programmes.

- Understanding of wider livestock supply chain issues.

Terms and conditions of appointment

Period of appointment

Successful applicants will commence with induction in July 2025 and workload adaptable from then. Appointments will be made, in consultation with Scottish, Welsh, and Northern Irish colleagues, by the Defra Director, Animal and Plant Health and Welfare, who is the designated Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) for these appointments.

Appointments will be for four years. Members may be considered for reappointment after this period, subject to satisfactory performance, attendance, and business needs.

Committee working methods and requirements

This is not a full-time role; members will be expected to contribute approximately 10 to 15 days a year on AWC work. This will include attending meetings, visits, drafting or preparation work. Members will be called upon to work on specific tasks and projects as they arise. Projects are allocated to working groups of 3-6 members from the committee, depending on the expertise required. As well as working on projects, members will be required to attend two plenary meetings per year, the location of which alternates between the offices of Defra (London), the Scottish Government (Edinburgh), and the Welsh Government (Cardiff).

Remuneration and expenses

Members are entitled to a fee of £300 per day, or £37.50 per hour, spent on AWC business. Members will be reimbursed for all reasonable expenditure incurred in connection with attendance at AWC meetings, site visits and for time spent researching and drafting AWC advice.

Code of conduct

Expert Committee members must abide by the Seven Principles of Public Life:

1. Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

2. Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

3. Objectivity

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

4. Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

5. Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

6. Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

7. Leadership

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour and treat others with respect. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

For further information on the seven principles and the work of the Committee on Standards in Public Life, visit the Committee's:

- Website (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/the-committee-on-standards-in-public-life>), and
- Blogsite (<https://cspl.blog.gov.uk/>)

Expert Committee members must adhere to the Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies published by the Cabinet Office. This is available at the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/code-of-conduct-for-board-members-of-public-bodies>

Expert Committee members must adhere to the Code of Practice for Scientific Advisory Committees and Councils published by the Government Office for science. This is available at the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/scientific-advisory-committees-code-of-practice>

Conflicts of interest

You must inform the AWC Secretariat if you have any conflict of interest that might affect your ability to undertake this role. You should disclose information on any relevant business interest, public appointment or position of authority, including other connections with commercial, public or voluntary bodies. A form is provided for this purpose.

Due diligence

As part of our due diligence checks we will consider anything in the public domain related to your conduct or professional capacity. This will include us undertaking searches of previous public statements and social media, blogs or any other publicly available information. This information may be made available to the Advisory Assessment Panel, and they may wish to explore issues with you should you be invited to interview. The information may also be shared with ministers and Cabinet Office.

Applying for a role

How to apply

Candidates should submit their CV with education, professional qualifications and employment history plus the names and contact details of two referees, together with a statement of suitability. The statement of suitability of not more than 750 words should provide evidence of your ability to meet essential criteria for this role. Please provide specific examples to demonstrate how you meet each of the criteria. Applications from individuals at any stage in their career will be considered.

In addition, all candidates are required to complete and return the following forms:

- Political activity questionnaire (Annex A)
- Conflicts of interest (Annex B)
- Declaration under the Data Protection Act (Annex C)

Completed applications should be returned by 12 Midday on 7 May 2025 to the following address:

By email to awcsecretariat@defra.gov.uk or by post to:

AWC Secretariat
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Candidates are encouraged to complete a diversity monitoring questionnaire at the following link: <https://forms.office.com/e/x2RKTNyC3n>. Please note that data is collected anonymously, candidates are not required to provide their name or contact details on this form.

Application and selection process

Application

We will acknowledge receipt of all applications received, via email. Candidates will be notified in writing if they have been selected for an interview.

Interviews

Interviews will take place during May. Interviews will last approximately 1 hour. References will be contacted if candidates are selected for interview. All interviewees will be advised in writing, of the outcome of their interview. For any queries about your application or the recruitment process, please email awcsecretariat@defra.gov.uk.

Equal opportunities

Diversity and inclusion

The UK government has a policy of equality of opportunity. We aim to promote equal opportunity policies whereby no one suffers unfair discrimination either directly or indirectly, or harassment, on grounds such as race, colour, ethnic or national origin, sex, gender identity, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, religious beliefs or age.

To ensure our public bodies better represent the communities we serve, we positively welcome applicants from all walks of life. All public appointments are made on merit following a fair, open and transparent process

Disability

Defra embraces diversity and promotes equality of opportunity. There is a guaranteed interview scheme (GIS) for candidates with disabilities (as defined by the Equalities Act 2010) who meet the minimum selection criteria. If you wish to apply for consideration under this scheme, please notify us when you return your application.

If you require any special arrangements at interview stage, please give details in a covering letter to enable us to make the appropriate arrangements if necessary. Furthermore, reasonable adjustments will be made in the event of a successful application.

Data protection

Defra is committed to protect your privacy and to process your personal information in a manner which meets the requirements of the GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. For further information, please see our Privacy Statement at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-environment-food-rural-affairs/about/personal-information-charter>