



THE NATIONAL
FOREST

Appointment of Director of Finance & Resources





Welcome to the National Forest

Dear Candidate

We're delighted that you're interested in applying for the role of Director of Finance & Resources with the National Forest Company (NFC).

The National Forest is about so much more than trees. It's a nationally inspiring place, working in partnership to mitigate and adapt to the urgency of climate change and demonstrate sustainable living in a real place. The last three decades have seen the NFC drive forward the vision for the National Forest, taking it from a leap of faith to the success story we see today: a restored forest landscape; an emerging visitor destination; and a national exemplar for sustainability. But there is so much more to do.

The NFC is well placed to meet the challenges ahead, with highly experienced and dedicated Trustees, a small but exceptionally committed staff team and immensely supportive partners.

We're looking for a new Director of Finance & Resources to join us as we deliver an ambitious programme with government, business, partners and communities.

Now is a time of growth, influence and impact; locally within the National Forest, regionally as we develop the Midlands Forest Network, and nationally as we work with government on new National Forests.

If you share our vision of hope, are passionate about driving change, and feel excited by the prospect of helping to lead one of the most inspiring initiatives in the country, we would love to hear from you.

The opportunity



The National Forest Company is now seeking to appoint a Director of Finance & Resources to join the Senior Leadership Team.

This is a crucial moment in the development of both the National Forest and the National Forest Company, with a renewed purpose in light of the urgency of climate change.

The coming decade will see a step change in ambition. Having restored a former industrial landscape from black to green, the National Forest is now looking to extend its reach, engagement and impact to highlight the transformative power of trees; accelerating tree planting within the boundary, expanding outwards as part of a Midlands Forest Network, creating a world-class visitor facility to inspire the next generation, and replicating our approach to help meet the government's commitment to new National Forests.

The new Director of Finance & Resources will be critical to this success, driving forward the finance and resources functions that underpin the organisation with robust systems, policies and practice. This is an opportunity for the individual to shape the direction, enhance business support, upgrade current ways of working and improve value for money.

The role would suit an experienced financial leader, whether a senior executive looking for a new challenge or a talented individual taking the next step in their career.

The National Forest Company relies on the experience and commitment of people of all ages and backgrounds. We are keen to attract a diverse pool of candidates and welcome applications from all.





**We are the
National Forest.**

**We're growing the
future together.
Here. Now.**





About the Forest

The National Forest is one of the country's most ambitious and highly regarded environmental projects, transforming 200 square miles across parts of Derbyshire, Leicestershire and Staffordshire.

Established by government in the early nineties, it was the first new broadleaved forest to be created in England for over 900 years. As a growing environmental, economic and social asset, the National Forest is enhancing the landscape, growing low carbon businesses and improving the quality of life.

The Forest provides a national demonstration of the value of the natural environment to drive regeneration and showcase policy and practice, research and development in the heart of the country.

The National Forest links the two ancient Forests of Needwood in the west and Charnwood in the east, restoring a landscape scarred by coal mining and heavy industry, providing opportunities for everyone to engage with woodlands near to where they live and work.

This is a dynamic and vibrant area, with some of the oldest rocks in the world and former royal hunting forests set alongside rolling farmland and newly planted woodlands. It is also home to some 220,000 people, supports four main towns with a history of brewing, coal and clay, as well as hosting the National Football Centre at St George's Park.

A lot has been achieved since 1991. More than nine and a half million trees have already been planted, with forest cover increasing from around 6 per cent to more than 25 per cent across the area. Thousands of hectares of land have been converted to woods and other habitats, using a range of grants for farm diversification and urban greening, restoration of former coalfield and mineral sites, and community planting schemes. The result is a dramatic transformation where trees frame the landscape, wildlife is returning, and a woodland culture is emerging.





About the Forest

Social and economic regeneration of the area has been as rapid as the landscape change, with former industrial towns and villages becoming increasingly attractive to residents with accessible natural greenspace on their doorstep.

Major visitor centres, such as Conkers and the National Memorial Arboretum have matured, and new attractions including the Hicks Lodge Cycle Centre and the National Forest Way are providing facilities for residents as well as contributing to a vibrant visitor economy now supporting more than 5,000 jobs.

The National Forest model is held up as an example of best practice, establishing ground-breaking planning policies, demonstrating landscape scale change, pioneering successful grant mechanisms and delivering improvements in biodiversity, economic impact and quality of life.

- Over 8,000 hectares of habitat have been transformed since 1991
- 80% of new forest sites provide access to the public
- 90% of primary schools in the Forest now enjoy regular outdoor learning sessions
- More than 320km of promoted walks provide opportunities for everyone
- Over 8 million visitors enjoy the Forest each year





What we do

Since 1995, the National Forest Company (NFC) has driven forward the vision for the National Forest. The NFC operates as a small, highly successful organisation that secured charitable status in 2016, whilst also being an Arm's Length Body of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra).

With around 45 staff, a Chair, an eight strong Board of Trustees and a wide range of delivery partners, the NFC is well placed to steer the National Forest into the future. Our approach is based on collaboration; to support and enable landowners, businesses, public, private and voluntary organisations and communities to deliver. The Company has a dynamic, multifunctional team, a culture of partnership, and an annual turnover of around £6 million.

The NFC works with partners to:

- Lead and champion a shared vision for the Forest
- Enable others through advice, facilitation, demonstration and sharing of best practice
- Invest directly through grant giving, income generation and leveraging other support
- Demonstrate new ways of working through policy, evidence, research and innovation
- Promote success through marketing, advocacy and communications

To find out more about the NFC's work, please visit: <https://www.nationalforest.org/about>



What we believe in



The Government's 25 Year Environment Plan and Environmental Improvement Plan set out the ambition to protect and enhance nature and describe the vital role this plays in increasing economic prosperity and improving quality of life. The NFC is at the forefront of this approach with a 25 Year Vision that positions the National Forest as a model and beacon for sustainable living, to mitigate and adapt to the urgency of climate change.

The NFC's Vision is focused on growing a future that is high in nature, low in carbon and positive for the wellbeing of communities.

It is centred on five strategic priorities to:

- **Create** – Accelerate planting in urban and rural areas to achieve 33% Forest cover
- **Manage** – Secure 30% of land managed for biodiversity by 2030
- **Inspire** – Deliver regular outdoor learning in a woodland setting to 100% of schools
- **Engage** – Provide accessible woodlands within 15 minutes for 80% of households
- **Grow** – Develop a green economy that is net zero for carbon by 2045

In the coming decades, the UK faces unprecedented pressures, from energy security to the cost of living, housing growth to agricultural change and biodiversity loss to the rising costs of healthcare.

The National Forest offers solutions to such challenges, bringing benefits to businesses, communities and visitors through new ways of working.

The NFC is already making rapid progress, working with Defra to double its annual forest creation targets and expanding delivery beyond its boundary with new initiatives like the Midlands Forest Network and new National Forests.

Ambitious projects such as the revitalisation of the Conkers visitor centre or creation of the Charnwood Forest Global Geopark will continue to drive forward these aspirations and our belief that life is better with trees.

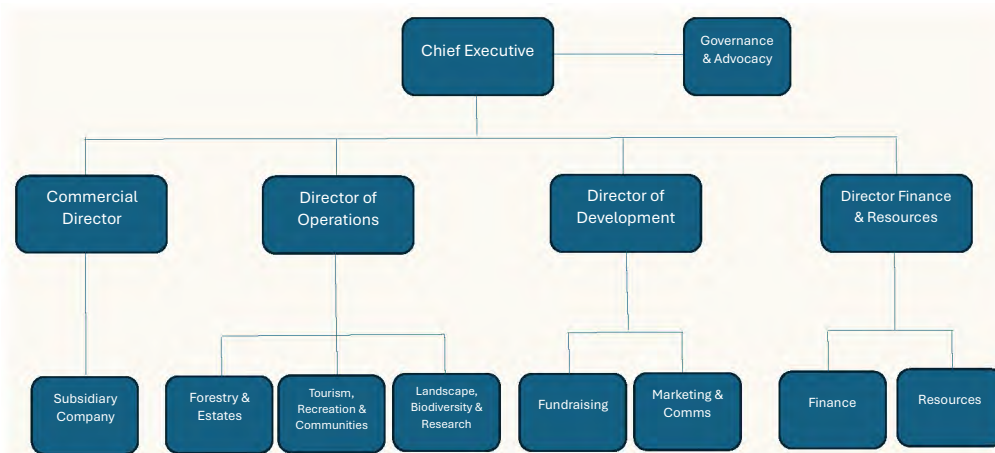
For further details please visit:
nationalforest.org/about/our-vision



The NFC structure



The National Forest Company is structured into four functions comprising Finance & Resources, Operations, Commercial and Development. The wholly owned subsidiary company, National Forest Enterprises Limited, oversees trading activity including the Conkers Visitor Centre which is run by Planning Solutions Limited. This sits under the Commercial function.



The Director of Finance & Resources will report to the Chief Executive and work closely with the Board and Committees, in particular the Audit and Risk Committee and the Remuneration Committee.

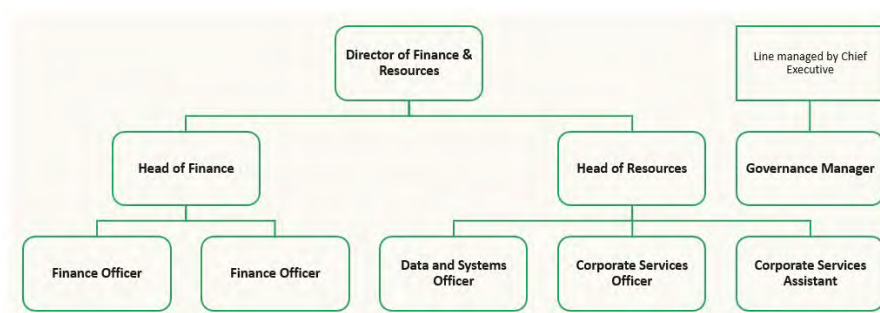
Finance and Resources team



The Director of Finance & Resources will lead a multi-functional team supporting delivery of the strategic objectives of the National Forest, the charity and its subsidiary. This will cover a range of disciplines including finance and audit, compliance and risk, and human resources, facilities and systems.

The role includes oversight of the NFC Group budget of c£6m, direct responsibility for the staffing and running costs budget of c£2.5m, management of a team of seven individuals, and direct responsibility for the following roles:

- Head of Finance
- Head of Resources



The role of Director of Finance & Resources will be challenging and stimulating, as well as being hugely rewarding, knowing that you are contributing to one of the most innovative sustainability initiatives in the country.



What we're looking for

The main responsibilities of the Director of Finance & Resources include:

Finance and audit

- Providing financial leadership for the NFC and its subsidiary, ensuring timely and accurate reporting for the Chief Executive, Senior Leadership Team, Audit & Risk Committee (ARC) and the Board.
- Leading on producing the NFC Annual Report and Accounts in compliance with the Charity SORP and IFRS 102.
- Responsibility for the preparation and analysis of financial reports, budgets, forecasts, and long-term financial plans.
- Responsibility for cashflow forecasting, restricted projects support, treasury and banking arrangements, including liaison with external providers.
- Responsibility for compliance with financial policies, processes, reporting and controls, including reporting to Defra under the Framework Document.
- Responsibility for investment and reserves policy in conjunction with the Chief Executive, ARC and the Board.
- Responsibility for procurement and contract management policies and procedures to ensure value for money.
- Responsibility for assets including management of the NFC's buildings in conjunction with the Commercial Director.
- Managing the Head of Finance to ensure effective delivery of all aspects of Finance within the delegated duties.

Compliance and risk

- Acting as Company Secretary for the NFC and its subsidiaries, ensuring compliance with all legal, regulatory and reporting requirements in conjunction with the Chief Executive.
- Coordinating the internal audit programme, liaising with auditors and internal staff.
- Working with the Chief Executive on risk including risk policy, risk register and Business Continuity Planning with direct responsibility for risks within the Finance and Resources portfolio.

Human Resources, facilities and systems

- Managing the Head of Resources to ensure effective delivery of all aspects of HR, facilities and systems for the NFC, including policy and practice.

Corporate development

- Being a member of the Senior Leadership Team, contributing to strategic plans, corporate objectives, decision making and reporting, with particular responsibility for Finance and Resources.
- Working with the Chief Executive and the Senior Leadership Team to set the values, culture and leadership for the organisation as a whole.
- Leading the facilitation of ARC and the Remuneration Committee, liaising with the committee chairs and members and reporting to the Board.
- Managing and developing the Finance and Resources Team.



What we're looking for

Qualities required

The National Forest Company is looking to find a candidate with the following essential qualities to support the next phase of the organisation's development:

Experience

- Relevant accounting qualification and at least 10 years' post-qualification experience (ICAEW, ACCA, CIMA)
- Working in a charity, not for profit or public sector, must include hands on production of Annual Report & Accounts
- Preparing Financial Statements using the Charity SORP and IFRS
- Extensive senior leadership experience in a similar role, working with non-executive and executive teams
- Experience of leading and managing change, including changing finance systems

Knowledge

- Broad knowledge of statutory regulations and compliance relating to government bodies, companies and charities, including finance, audit and risk
- Working knowledge of ICT systems, in particular Microsoft Office suite
- Commercial acumen and an understanding of value for money

Skills

- Strong leadership skills, integrity and resilience
- Excellent relationship building skills with external stakeholders, suppliers and partners
- Excellent written and oral communication skills including the ability to work with Boards and external stakeholders
- A customer service approach
- Attention to detail with good analytical skills

Personal qualities

- Flexible, positive outlook and works with drive and initiative
- Team working, enthusiasm, able to motivate others and build consensus
- Bold and prepared to raise important or uncomfortable issues in the best interests of the organisation
- An understanding of the importance of Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Terms of appointment



Length of appointment and Remuneration

This is a full-time permanent post. The successful candidate will be appointed within the Grade 6 salary range of £67,306 to £75,385 per year. The NFC also offers end of year performance awards to all employees.

Location

The principal place of work will be the National Forest Company's offices at Enterprise Glade in Moira, near Swadlincote, South Derbyshire DE12 6BA. We currently operate flexible working arrangements subject to business priorities.

Pension

An important part of the pay and reward package the NFC offers employees is the option to join the Civil Service Pension Schemes arrangements, with an employer contribution of 28.97% of salary.

Hours of work, annual leave and privilege leave

- 37 hours per week
- Annual leave allowance will be 30 days per year
- Public and privilege leave will be 10.5 days per year





How to apply

The National Forest is committed to delivering a forest for everyone; that means building an inclusive and authentic workplace and supporting applications from a diverse range of candidates is important to us. Our ideal candidate will demonstrate the qualities listed as well as bringing their individual background and skills to the role.

To apply please upload your CV together with a supporting statement (of no more than 1,000 words), outlining your interest in the National Forest, the role of Director of Finance & Resources and how you meet the qualities required, onto the Cherry Professional website here: www.cherryprofessional.co.uk/nationalforest

Please ensure that you include a telephone number, as well as any dates when you will not be available or might have difficulty with the recruitment timetable.

If you wish to apply using an alternative format, or have any issues with your application, please contact Sarah Gibson on 0115 9222240 or email: sarah.gibson@cherryprofessional.co.uk

Equal Opportunities

Both Cherry Professional and the NFC believe passionately in building an inclusive workplace. As part of your application, Cherry Professional will ask that you kindly complete a brief equal opportunities questionnaire when you submit your application via the website. Please be assured that responses are kept confidential, separate from your candidate record and are not part of any application you make.



How to apply



Appointment process

The recruitment timetable for candidates is provided below.

- Closing date for applications: **Midnight on Wednesday 19 February 2025**
- Preliminary discussions with Cherry Professional: **W/C 24 February 2025**
- Panel interview at the National Forest Company Offices. This will also include a site tour and an informal meeting with the team, and last approximately 3 hours: **Tuesday 4 March 2025**

The successful candidate will have the opportunity to attend key meetings and events during their notice period.

Further details

Further details of the National Forest Company including copies of the Annual Report and Accounts, staff structure and strategy are available on our website: nationalforest.org

If you have any queries about any aspect of the appointment process, need additional information or wish to have an informal and confidential discussion, please contact Danielle Asano or Ian Machell via email:

Danielle@cherryprofessional.co.uk or Ian.machell@cherryprofessional.co.uk

The National Forest Company will respect the privacy of any initial approach or expression of interest in this role, whether formal or informal.



THE NATIONAL
FOREST

Registered Charity Number 1166563.
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