Joint Nature Conservation Committee

Turning science into action for nature, people and the planet

JNCC BD 25 03
November 2025

JNCC Support Co.

Annual Report and Accounts for 2024/25

Cover Note by Claire Callaghan

Executive Summary

1. Action required

1.1. The Company Board are asked to:

i. **Review** the paper including the draft 2024/25 Annual Report and Accounts (ARA), and Letter of Representation, noting the progress of the National Audit Office (NAO)'s audit and advice from ARAC at their November intersessional meeting.

ii. **Approve** the ARA and Letter of Representation so that they can be formally submitted to the NAO. The ARA can then be presented for laying in the House of Commons and subsequent publication.

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Annual Report and Accounts for 2024/25

Paper by Claire Callaghan

1. Introduction

1.1. The 2024/25 Annual Report and Accounts (ARA) are presented to the JNCC company board for sign off.

1.2. At the ARAC meeting on 5th November 2025, NAO presented their audit completion report which anticipated recommending to the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) that he should certify the 2024-25 financial statements with an unqualified audit opinion, without modification in respect of both regularity and the true and fair view on the financial statements. They also submitted a letter of representation for the Chief Executive to submit to the C&AG with the ARA.

2. Next steps

2.1. The ARA has been sent to Defra for ministerial clearance. We expect this within the next few weeks. Once this has been received, and we have received the C&AG's final audit certificate, we will lay the accounts before Parliament. The expectation is that we will do that by 30 November.

2.2. Once the accounts have been laid, they will be ready for publication and for submission to Companies House. This needs to be done prior to 31 December 2025.

Joint Nature Conservation Committee and JNCC Support Co

Annual Report and Accounts for year ending 31 March 2025

Report presented to Parliament and Scottish Parliament pursuant to paragraph 18 of Schedule 4 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.ss

Accounts presented to Parliament pursuant to Article 6 of the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000 (Audit of Non-profit-making Companies) Order 2009.

Ordered by the House of Commons to be printed on xx xx 2025.

HC 151

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Table of Contents

Chair's Foreword **4**

List of acronyms **18**

Directors' Report for the year ended 31 March 2025 ..... **21**

Strategic Report for the year ended 31 March 2025 ..... **24**

Governance Statement for the Joint Nature Conservation Committee for the year ending 31 March 2025 ... **48**

JNCC Support Co Remuneration and Staff Report **80**

Parliamentary Accountability and Audit Report **98**

Statement of Comprehensive Income (including the profit and loss account) **109**

Statement of Financial Position **110**

Statement of Cash Flows **111**

Statement of Changes in Equity **112**

JNCC Support Co Notes to the Financial Statements **113**

All pages within this document also serve as the NERC Act submission.

Chair's Foreword

I am pleased to introduce the Annual Report and Accounts for the year ending 31 March 2025 for the Joint Nature Conservation Committee.

As the statutory body for providing advice to UK Government and Devolved Governments on UK-wide and international nature conservation, JNCC work addresses the interrelated challenges of biodiversity loss, climate change and pollution. JNCC has a comprehensive reach across the UK and plays an important role in meeting UK responsibilities to international commitments for nature conservation and recovery.

JNCC works with the four countries of the UK, the UK Overseas Territories, and Crown Dependencies; it negotiates international multilateral environment agreements; and it represents the UK on important UN bodies, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species (CITES). JNCC's advice is evidence-led, rigorous and robust.

As an impressive example of international reach, JNCC played a critical role in UK negotiations regarding metrics underlying the UN Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework at the UN CBD Convention of Parties (CBD COP16), Cali, Colombia, in October 2024. This included playing a direct role in negotiated international agreements on biodiversity indicators. JNCC also promoted emerging statistics, such as the Global Environmental Impacts of Consumption indicator that addresses the relationship between global consumption and biodiversity.

In the lead up to and during my term as Interim Chair, I was able to observe outcomes of JNCC engagement directly, for example with relation to the marine environment. At CBD COP16, JNCC hosted a forum on 'One Ocean, One Challenge: building effective Marine Protected Area networks through trans-national partnerships', highlighting the critical and timely importance of addressing ocean health and showcasing JNCC's work with the Maldives to accomplish this objective. JNCC's work on the marine environment was also celebrated at a Parliamentary Reception hosted by the Speaker of the House of Commons, that showcased our work with the Cayman Islands.

Under the strong leadership of the CEO, Dr Gemma Harper OBE, JNCC is in the process of a refresh, focussing on outcomes that will enhance the effectiveness of JNCC's evidence and advice. Importantly, this will strengthen the visibility of JNCC and enhance its ability to achieve positive outcomes for all of the natural world.

Nature conservation and recovery are not objectives solely for the sake of nature itself; they also play a critical role in energy security and net zero, water and food security, public health, sustainable economic growth, and national security. In other words, nature conservation and recovery are critically important to society and human wellbeing. Based on evidence and analysis, JNCC's advice informs government policy and positive choices to address these societal challenges.

In my view, all of us, not just JNCC, need to change our perception of nature conservation and recovery as a separate challenge to include ourselves within it - to harmonise nature, climate change amelioration and economic growth, coupled with improved wellbeing.

I look forward to seeing what the future holds for JNCC and its evidence-led contribution to nature conservation and recovery.

Professor Thomas R Meagher

Interim Chair, JNCC

Chief Executive's Statement

As we present our work of 2024-25, we continue to implement our strategy, Together for Nature. This sets out our vision for thriving nature for a sustainable future and our mission to turn science into action for nature, people and the planet.

At the heart of Together for Nature, are our values: inclusion, collaboration and innovation. Our people and our values are the foundations of our culture and are key to our success. In recognition of this, our People and Culture Committee agreed a new people strategy this year.

Along with this focus on our people, we have developed our internal systems and processes to support the delivery of our Together for Nature ambitions. We rolled out our new integrated finance and people corporate system, Nautilus, providing a more modern and user-friendly interface for our people to self-service. We also achieved ISO 14001 certification for our Environmental Management System, marking a significant milestone in our sustainability journey.

Learning and development has been a focus with the fourth cohort from our leadership programme graduating this year. This successful programme has supported more than 40 of our future leaders with practical opportunities to develop and test their leadership skills.

For the second year running, we were awarded the Bronze Talent Inclusion and Diversity Evaluation (TIDE) standard from ENEI (Employers Network for Equality and Inclusion). This annual assessment gives a bigger picture indication of how we are progressing year on year in different categories and how we compare to others in our sector. We also published the UK Terrestrial Evidence Partnership of Partnership (TEPoP) Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategy and convened 10 of our partners to publish a joint statement pledging our commitment to DEI in UK species monitoring schemes.

I was pleased to see that we made progress on the gender pay gap: the mean hourly pay gap reduced in 2024 to 5.3% with a median of 0.6% compared to 7.5% and 10.6% in 2023, now lower than the civil service average.

Our science is brigaded into three programmes of work, driving delivery of our strategic priorities in 2024-25.

UK Co-ordination

During 2024-25, we co-ordinated and integrated the responses of the four countries of the UK to the Kunming-Montreal Biodiversity Framework (GBF) into the UK's National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan (NBSAP), the official UK response to the GBF commitments. To support this vital work, we worked closely with colleagues in Defra to refresh the UK Biodiversity Indicators and began work to evolve these indicators to meet GBF requirements.

Our species surveillance schemes continued to signal how biodiversity across the UK is changing. These schemes are becoming increasingly critical in assessing the impacts of policy divergence across the UK. This year, we started to explore how these signals can be projected to assess effects on biodiversity of proposed policies, to enable us to support policy decision-making.

We continued to focus our evidence and advice to influence the policy areas likely to have the most impact on nature. The UK Air Pollution Assessment Service is ready for launch and has the potential to have significant impact on strategic regulation of air pollution, a key pressure on nature. We have also worked closely with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs in Northern Ireland (DAERA) to explore how nature can be better integrated with other demands for land use.

International

The UK Overseas Territories make a significant contribution to global biodiversity and geodiversity; this is often fragile and vulnerable. JNCC provides technical assistance to support the Territories' biodiversity and wider environmental management strategies. JNCC supported Defra on the production of the UK Overseas Territories Biodiversity Strategy, which aims to drive new investments in biodiversity for every Territory, and to recognise the different needs, priorities, commitments, and drivers for change in each Territory.

We hosted colleagues from Montserrat, in collaboration with the Government of Montserrat, the RSPB, the Environment Agency, and the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, for an intensive training programme on biodiversity monitoring, ecosystem management and sustainable land use practices. We also supported the work of the Coral Conservation in the Overseas Territories (C-COT). We administered > £900k grants in all 14 UK Overseas Territories, through the Darwin Plus Local scheme that funds small-scale environmental projects to build capacity in the Territories and contribute to local economies.

JNCC is the UK Government's statutory nature conservation and recovery adviser in international fora. Acting on behalf of the UK, JNCC played a significant role in developing and drafting the Regional Action Plan for Marine Birds (RAP-Bird) which was adopted by countries from around the North-East Atlantic. JNCC is the UK's CITES Scientific Authority for animals, our experts responded to >27,000 licence

referrals, from snakeskin handbags to falcons, to ensure that trade to and from the UK will not have a harmful population effect.

We delivered the Ocean Country Partnership Programme (OCPP), supporting nine Official Development Assistance (ODA)-eligible countries to deliver tangible, positive impacts on the livelihoods of coastal communities, such as sustainable shark tourism in the Maldives. The Environmental Pollution Programme in South Africa completed this financial year, enhancing our partners' capacity by equipping them with knowledge and skills in pollution monitoring and mitigation, resilience in ecosystem management, sustainable land use practices, and equipment including a state-of-the-art mobile laboratory.

UK Marine

JNCC has responsibility for nature conservation and recovery in the offshore marine environment. We published the latest version of the Offshore Wind Environmental Evidence Register, a UK-wide register that collates prioritised evidence gaps that could be addressed to increase certainty in offshore wind environmental impact assessments.

This year saw the completion of the marine component of the Natural Capital & Ecosystem Assessment programme. We produced new evidence to support decision making, including offshore survey data , a new on-line tool to produce maps and estimates of where and how marine nature meets our needs and supports prosperity. Habitat mapping is foundational for most marine decisions, and, through this programme, we produced UKSeaMap, a broadscale habitat map of the entire seabed that has been refreshed using the most up-to-date survey data.

In support of changes in the management of underwater noise to protect vulnerable sealife, we updated our marine mammal mitigation guidelines for minimising the risk of injury to marine mammals from explosive use and introduced new mitigation guidelines for clearing unexploded marine ordinance (UXO).

Investing in our people

Collaboration was at the fore when JNCC colleagues from across the UK met for our second conference. The conference theme was 'Being good ancestors', building on the work of Roman Krznaric, who attended the conference to share his ideas on long-term thinking to support us in delivering 'Together for Nature'. We celebrated the work of all our colleagues, hosting out first people awards ceremony to recognise and celebrate some of our unsung heroes.

As part of our ambition to be good ancestors, we have made significant strides in youth engagement. Our youth working group has trained with experts and led a workshop with young people at JNCC to shape priorities for 2025-26. Externally, we have deepened ties with the Global Youth Biodiversity Network UK and are actively exploring opportunities to support youth leadership in nature conservation and recovery.

Dr Gemma Harper OBE

Chief Executive

Rhagair y Cadeirydd

Mae'n bleser gen i gyflwyno'r Adroddiad Blynyddol a'r Cyfrifon ar gyfer y Cyd-bwyllgor Cadwraeth Natur am y flwyddyn a ddaeth i ben ar Fawrth yr 31ain 2025.

Corff statudol i gynnig cyngor i Lywodraeth y DU a Llywodraethau Datganoledig ar gadwraeth natur yn y DU a ledled y byd yw JNCC ac mae ein gwaith yn mynd i'r afael â heriau cydberthynol colli bioamrywiaeth, newid mewn hinsawdd a llygredd. Mae JNCC yn gweithio ledled y DU ac yn chwarae rhan annatod yn bodloni cyfrifoldebau'r DU o ran ymrwymiadau rhyngwladol o ran cadwraeth ac adfer natur.

Mae JNCC yn cydweithio gyda phedair gwlad y DU, Tiriogaethau Tramor y DU a Dibyniaethau'r Goron; mae'n trin a thrafod cytundebau amgylcheddol amlochrog rhyngwladol; ac yn cynrychioli'r DU ar gyrff pwysig y Cenhedloedd Unedig, megis y Confensiwn ar Amrywiaeth Fiolegol (CBD) a'r Confensiwn ar Fasnach Ryngwladol Rhywogaethau sydd mewn Perygl (CITES). Mae cyngor JNCC yn drwyadl, yn gadarn ac yn seiliedig ar dystiolaeth.

Fel enghraifft arbennig o gyrhaeddiad rhyngwladol, bu i JNCC chwarae rhan annatod yn nhrafodaethau'r DU ynghylch metrigau sy'n sail i Fframwaith Bioamrywiaeth Fyd-eang y Cenhedloedd Unedig Kunming-Montreal yng Nghonfensiwn Partïon CBD y Cenhedloedd Unedig (CBD COP16), Cali, Colombia, yn Hydref 2024. Fel rhan o'u hymdrechion, bu iddyn nhw chwarae rhan uniongyrchol yng nghytundebau rhyngwladol a drafodwyd ar ddangosyddion bioamrywiaeth. At hyn, bu i JNCC hyrwyddo ystadegau sy'n dod i'r amlwg, megis dangosydd Effeithiau Amgylcheddol Byd-eang Defnydd sy'n mynd i'r afael â'r berthynas rhwng defnydd byd-eang a bioamrywiaeth.

Yn y cyfnod cyn ac yn ystod fy nhymor fel Cadeirydd Dros Dro, llwyddais i arsylwi deilliannau ymgysylltu JNCC yn uniongyrchol, er enghraifft mewn perthynas â'r amgylchedd morol. Yn CBD COP16, cynhaliodd JNCC fforwm ar 'Un Cefnfor, Un Her: meithrin rhwydweithiau Ardaloedd Morol Gwarchodedig drwy bartneriaethau traws-genedlaethol', gan amlygu pwysigrwydd hanfodol ac amserol mynd i'r afael ag iechyd y cefnfor ac arddangos gwaith JNCC gyda'r Maldives i gyflawni'r amcan hwn. Cafodd gwaith JNCC ar yr amgylchedd morol hefyd ei glodfori mewn Derbyniad Seneddol a gynhaliwyd gan Lefarydd Tŷ'r Cyffredin, a oedd yn arddangos ein gwaith gydag Ynysoedd y Cayman.

O dan arweinyddiaeth gadarn y Prif Weithredwr, Dr Gemma Harper OBE, mae JNCC yn y broses o adnewyddu, gan ganolbwyntio ar ddeilliannau a fyddai'n hybu effeithiolrwydd tystiolaeth a chyngor JNCC. Yn bwysig, bydd hyn yn hyrwyddo JNCC ac yn hybu eu gallu i gyflawni deilliannau cadarnhaol ar gyfer y byd naturiol yn ei chyfanrwydd.

Dydy cadwraeth ac adfer natur ddim yn amcanion er budd natur ei hun yn unig; maen nhw hefyd yn chwarae rhan annatod mewn diogelwch ynni a sero net,

diogelwch dŵr a bwyd, iechyd cyhoeddus, twf economaidd cynaliadwy, a diogelwch cenedlaethol. Mewn geiriau eraill, mae cadwraeth ac adfer natur yn hollbwysig i'r gymdeithas a lles pobl. Yn seiliedig ar dystiolaeth a dadansoddi, mae cyngor JNCC yn llywio polisïau'r llywodraeth a dewisiadau cadarnhaol i fynd i'r afael â'r heriau cymdeithasol hyn.

Yn fy marn i, mae'n bryd i bawb ohonom, nid JNCC yn unig, i newid ein safbwynt o ran cadwraeth ac adfer natur fel her ar wahân i gynnwys ein hunain ynddo – i gysoni natur, gwella newid yn yr hinsawdd a thwf economaidd, yn ogystal â hybu lles.

Rwy'n edrych ymlaen at yr hyn sydd ar y gweill yn y dyfodol i JNCC a'i gyfraniad ar sail tystiolaeth i gadwraeth ac adfer natur.

Yr Athro Thomas R Meagher

Cadeirydd Dros Dro, JNCC

Datganiad y Prif Weithredwr

Wrth inni fynd ati i gyflwyno ein gwaith yn 2024-25, rydym yn parhau i weithredu ein strategaeth, Gyda'n Gilydd er Lles Natur. Mae hyn yn pennu ein gweledigaeth i sicrhau natur sy'n ffynnu ar gyfer dyfodol cynaliadwy ac ein nod i roi gwyddoniaeth ar waith er budd natur, pobl a'r blaned.

Mae ein gwerthoedd wrth wraidd Gyda'n Gilydd er Lles Natur: cynhwysiant, cydweithio ac arloesedd. Ein pobl ac ein gwerthoedd yw sylfaen ein diwylliant ac maen nhw'n allweddol i'n llwyddiant. Er mwyn cydnabod hyn, cytunodd ein Pwyllgor Pobl a Diwylliant ar strategaeth pobl newydd eleni.

Yn ogystal â'r pwyslais hwn ar ein pobl, rydym wedi datblygu ein systemau a phrosesau mewnol i gefnogi cyflawni ein huchelgeisiau Gyda'n Gilydd er Lles Natur. Bu inni gyflwyno ein system gyllid a phobl integredig a chorfforaethol newydd, Nautilus, gan gynnig rhyngwyneb mwy modern a hawdd ei ddefnyddio i'n pobl allu trefnu eu gwasanaeth eu hunain. Bu inni hefyd lwyddo i ennill tystysgrif ISO 14001 ar gyfer ein System Rheoli Amgylcheddol, gan nodi carreg filltir sylweddol yn ein taith cynaliadwyedd.

Bu inni ganolbwyntio ar ddysgu a datblygu gyda'r bedwaredd garfan o'n rhaglen arweinyddiaeth yn graddio eleni. Mae'r rhaglen lwyddiannus hwn wedi cefnogi dros 40 o'n harweinwyr y dyfodol gyda chyfleoedd ymarferol i ddatblygu a phrofi eu sgiliau arwain.

Am yr ail flwyddyn yn olynol, fe wnaethom dderbyn y safon Efydd Gwerthusiad Cynhwysiant Talent ac Amrywiaeth (TIDE) gan ENEI (Rhwydwaith Cydraddoldeb a Chynhwysiant Cyflogwyr). Mae'r asesiad blynyddol hwn yn cynnig darlun mwy eglur

o sut rydym yn datblygu fesul blwyddyn mewn gwahanol gategorïau a sut rydym yn cymharu gydag eraill yn ein sector. Bu inni hefyd gyhoeddi Strategaeth Amrywiaeth, Cyfiawnder a Chynhwysiant UK Terrestrial Evidence Partnership of Partnership (TEPoP) a dwyn ynghyd 10 o'n partneriaid i gyhoeddi datganiad ar y cyd yn addo ein hymrwymiad i DEI mewn cynlluniau monitro rhywogaethau'r DU.

Roeddwn yn falch iawn o weld ein bod wedi gwneud cynnydd o ran y bwlch cyflog rhwng y rhywiau: gostyngodd y bwlch cyflog cymedrig i 5.3% yn 2024 gyda chanolrif o 0.6% o'i gymharu â 7.5% a 10.6% yn 2023, sydd bellach yn is na'r gwasanaeth sifil ar gyfartaledd.

Mae ein gwyddoniaeth wedi'i frigadu i dair rhaglen waith, gan ysgogi cyflawni ein blaenoriaethau strategol yn 2024-25.

Cydlynu yn y DU

Yn ystod 2024-25, bu inni gydlynu ac integreiddio ymatebion pedair gwlad y DU i Fframwaith Bioamrywiaeth Kunming-Montreal (GBF) i mewn i Strategaethau a Chynllun Gweithredu Bioamrywiaeth Genedlaethol y DU (NBSAP), ymateb swyddogol y DU i ymrwymiadau'r GBF. I ategu'r gwaith hanfodol hwn, buom yn gweithio'n agos gyda chydweithwyr yn Defra i adnewyddu Dangosyddion Bioamrywiaeth y DU a bwrw iddi i esblygu'r dangosyddion hyn i fodloni gofynion y GBF.

Parhaodd ein cynlluniau gwylio rhywogaethau i nodi sut mae bioamrywiaeth ledled y DU yn newid. Mae'r cynlluniau hyn yn dod yn fwyfwy hanfodol yn asesu effeithiau dargyfeirio polisi ledled y DU. Eleni, aethom ati i fwrw golwg ar sut gellir rhagamcan y signalau hyn i asesu'r effeithiau ar fioamrywiaeth y polisïau arfaethedig, er mwyn ein galluogi ni i gefnogi gwneud penderfyniadau ynghylch polisïau.

Bu inni barhau i ganolbwyntio ar ein tystiolaeth a'n cyngor i ddylanwadu'r meysydd polisi sy'n debygol o gael yr effaith fwyaf ar natur. Mae Gwasanaeth Asesu Llygredd Aer y DU yn barod i'w lansio ac fe allai gael effaith sylweddol ar reoleiddio strategol llygredd aer, pwysau allweddol ar natur. Buom hefyd yn cydweithio'n agos gydag Adran yr Amgylchedd, Bwyd a Materion Gwledig (DEFRA) ac Adran Amaethyddiaeth, yr Amgylchedd a Materion Gwledig yng Ngogledd Iwerddon (DAERA) i fwrw golwg ar sut gellir integreiddio natur yn well gyda gofynion eraill o ran defnydd tir.

Rhyngwladol

Mae Tiriogaethau Tramor y DU yn gwneud cyfraniad sylweddol at fioamrywiaeth a geoamrywiaeth byd-eang; mae hyn yn aml yn wan a bregus. Mae JNCC yn cynnig cymorth technegol i gefnogi bioamrywiaeth a strategaethau rheoli amgylcheddol ehangach y Tiriogaethau. Cefnogodd JNCC Defra gyda chynhyrchu Strategaeth Bioamrywiaeth Tiriogaethau Tramor y DU, sydd â'r nod o ysgogi buddsoddiadau newydd mewn bioamrywiaeth ar gyfer bob Tiriogaeth, a nodi'r gwahanol anghenion, blaenoriaethau, ymrwymiadau ac ysgogwyr ar gyfer newid ym mhob Tiriogaeth.

Bu inni groesawu colegau o Montserrat, ar y cyd â Llywodraeth Montserrat, yr RSPB, Asiantaeth yr Amgylchedd a'r Ganolfan Ecoleg a Hydroleg, ar gyfer rhaglen hyfforddiant dwys ar fonitro bioamrywiaeth, rheoli ecosystemau ac arferion defnydd cynaliadwy o'r tir. At hyn, bu inni gefnogi gwaith Cadwraeth Cwrel yn y Tiriogaethau Tramor (C-COT). Bu inni weinyddu grantiau gwerth dros £900mil ym mhob un o 14 Tiriogaeth Tramor y DU, drwy'r cynllun Darwin Plus Local sy'n ariannu prosiectau amgylcheddol ar raddfa fach i gynyddu capasiti yn y Tiriogaethau a chyfrannu at economïau lleol.

JNCC yw cynghorydd cadwraeth ac adfer natur statudol Llywodraeth y DU mewn fforymau rhyngwladol. Gan weithredu ar ran y DU, chwaraeodd JNCC ran allweddol yn datblygu a drafftio'r Cynllun Gweithredu Rhanbarthol ar gyfer Adar Morol (RAP-Bird) a fabwysiadwyd gan wledydd ledled Gogledd-ddwyrain yr Iwerydd. JNCC yw Awdurdod Gwyddonol Confensiwn ar Fasnach Ryngwladol Rhywogaethau sydd mewn Perygl y DU ar gyfer anifeiliaid a bu i'n harbenigwyr ymateb i dros 27,000 o atgyfeiriadau trwydded, o fagiau llaw croen neidr i hebogau, i sicrhau na fyddai masnachu i ac o'r DU yn cael effaith andwyol ar y poblogaethau.

Bu inni gyflawni'r Rhaglen Ocean Country Partnership (OCPP), gan gefnogi naw o wledydd oedd yn gymwys am Gymorth Datblygu Swyddogol (ODA) i gyflawni effeithiau cadarnhaol a sylweddol ar fywoliaethau cymunedau arfordirol, megis twristiaeth siarcod cynaliadwy yn y Maldives. Cwblhawyd y Rhaglen Llygredd Amgylcheddol yn Ne Affrica yn y flwyddyn ariannol eleni, gan hybu gallu ein partneriaid drwy eu harfogi gyda'r wybodaeth a'r sgiliau i fonitro a lliniaru llygredd, gwydnwch wrth reoli ecosystemau, arferion defnydd cynaliadwy o dir, a chyfarpar gan gynnwys labordy symudol o'r radd flaenaf.

Sefyllfa Forol y DU

Mae JNCC yn gyfrifol am gadwraeth ac adfer natur yn yr amgylchedd morol ar y môr. Fe wnaethom gyhoeddi'r fersiwn ddiweddaraf o'r Gofrestr Tystiolaeth Amgylcheddol Gwynt ar y Môr , sef cofrestr ar draws y DU sy'n cydgasglu diffygion o ran tystiolaeth wedi'u blaenoriaethu y gellir mynd i'r afael â nhw i gynyddu sicrwydd yn asesiadau effaith amgylcheddol gwynt ar y môr.

Eleni fe gwblhawyd elfen forol y rhaglen Asesu Cyfalaf Naturiol ac Ecosystemau. Fe wnaethom gyhoeddi tystiolaeth newydd i gefnogi gwneud penderfyniadau, gan gynnwys data arolwg ar y môr, adnodd ar-lein newydd i lunio mapiau ac amcangyfrifon o ble a sut mae natur forol yn diwallu ein hanghenion ac yn cefnogi ffyniant. Mae mapio cynefinoedd yn sylfaenol ar gyfer y rhan fwyaf o benderfyniadau sy'n ymwneud gyda'r môr a, drwy'r rhaglen hwn, bu inni gynhyrchu UKSeaMap, map cynefinoedd eang o wely'r môr cyfan sydd wedi'i adnewyddu gan ddefnyddio'r data arolwg mwyaf cyfredol.

I ategu'r newidiadau o ran rheoli sŵn tanddwr i amddiffyn y bywyd môr bregus, bu inni ddiweddaru ein canllawiau lliniaru mamaliaid morol er mwyn lleihau'r risg o anaf i famaliaid morol o ddefnydd ffrwydrol a chyflwyno canllawiau lliniaru newydd ar gyfer cael gwared ar ordnans morol heb ei ffrwydro (UXO).

Buddsoddi yn ein pobl

Cydweithio oedd y brif nod pan ddaeth cydweithwyr JNCC o bob cwr o'r DU ynghyd ar gyfer ein hail gynhadledd. Thema'r gynhadledd oedd 'Gweithredu fel Hynafiaid Cydwybodol', gan ategu gwaith Roman Krznaric, a wnaeth fynychu'r gynhadledd i rannu ei syniadau ar feddwl hirdymor i'n cefnogi i gyflawni 'Gyda'n Gilydd er Lles Natur'. Aethom ati i glodfori gwaith ein holl gydweithwyr, gan gynnal ein seremoni wobrwyo pobl gyntaf i gydnabod a chlodfori rhai o'n harwyr di-glod.

Fel rhan o'n huchelgais i fod yn hynafiaid cydwybodol, rydym wedi cymryd camau sylweddol o ran ymgysylltu gyda phobl ifanc. Mae ein gweithgor ieuenctid wedi hyfforddi gydag arbenigwyr ac wedi arwain gweithdy gyda phobl ifanc yn JNCC i lywio blaenoriaethau ar gyfer 2025-26. Yn allanol, rydym wedi dyfnhau cysylltiadau gyda Rhwydwaith Bioamrywiaeth Ieuenctid Byd-eang y DU ac rydym wrthi'n achub ar gyfleoedd i gefnogi arweinyddiaeth ieuenctid mewn cadwraeth ac adfer natur.

Dr Gemma Harper OBE

Prif Weithredwr

Ro-ràdh a' Chathraiche

Tha e na adhbhar toileachais fàilte a chur air an Aithisg Bhliadhnail agus Cunntasan dha Joint Nature Conservation Committee airson na bliadhna a chrìochnaich 31 Màrt 2025.

Tha obair JNCC a' freagairt ri dùbhlanan co-ceangailte, a leithid call bith-iomadachd, atharrachadh na gnàth-shìde is truailleadh, mar a' bhuidheann reachdail a chumas comhairle ri Riaghaltas na Rìoghachd Aonaichte is Riaghaltasan Tiomnaichte air glèidhteachas air feadh na RA is gu h-eadar-nàiseanta. Tha ruigsinneachd fharsaing aig JNCC air feadh na RA agus tha e cudromach ann a bhith a' freagairt ri dleastanasan na RA air geallaidhean eadar-nàiseanta air glèidhteachas is ath-bheothachadh nàdair.

Bidh JNCC ag obair cuide ri ceithir dùthchannan na RA, Ranntairean Thall-thairis na RA, is Tìrean Eisimeileachd a' Chrùin; bidh e a' barganachadh aontaidhean àrainneachd ioma-thaobhach eadar-nàiseanta; agus tha e a' riochdachadh na RA air buidhnean cudromach nan Dùthchannan Aonaichte, a leithid a' Cho-chruinneachaidh air Iomadachd Bhith-eòlasach (CBD) agus a' Cho-chruinneachaidh air Malairt Eadar-nàiseanta air Gnèithean ann an Cunnart (CITES). Tha comhairleachadh le JNCC stèidhichte air fianais, agus tha e earbsach is làidir.

Airson tarraing air deagh eisimpleir de ruigsinneachd eadar-nàiseanta, bha dleastanasan cudromach aig JNCC an lùib còmhraidhean na RA a thaobh nan slatan-tomhais an lùib Frèam Bith-iomadachd Cruinneil Kunming-Montreal leis na Dùthchannan Aonaichte aig Co-chruinneachadh Phàrtaidhean CBD nan Dùthchannan Aonaichte (CBD COP16), ann an Cali, Coloimbia, san Dàmhair 2024. Bha seo a' toirt a-staigh dleastanas dìreach an cois aontaidhean eadar-nàiseanta

barganaichte air comharran bith-iomadachd. Thug JNCC brosnachadh do dh'figearan a thàinig am bàrr cuideachd, a leithid comharra Buaidhean Àrainneachdail Cruinneil an lùib Caitheimh a bhios a' comharradh a' cheangail eadar caitheamh cruinneil is bith-iomadachd.

Bha cothrom agam builean conaltraidh JNCC fhaicinn gu dìreach, ron àm is tron àm a bha mi nam Chathraiche Eadar-amail, mar eisimpleir a thaobh na h-àrainneachd mara. Aig CBD COP16, chùm JNCC fòram air 'Aon Chuan, Aon Dùbhlan: a' togail lìonraidhean èifeachdach de Sgìrean Mara Dìonta tro chom-pàirteachasan thar-nàiseanta', is sinn a' soilleireachadh cho cudromach is cho èiginneach 's a tha slàinte a' chuain is sinn a' taisbeanadh obair JNCC cuide ris na Maldives airson an t-amas seo a choileanadh. Chaidh obair JNCC air an àrainneachd mhara a chomharrachadh cuideachd aig Cuirm Phàrlamaideach a chùm Labhraiche Taigh nan Cumantan, agus a thug iomradh air ar cuid obrach leis na h-Eileanan Cayman.

Tha JNCC an lùib pròiseas ùrachaidh, fo stiùir làidir a' Cheannaird, an Dr Gemma Harper OBE, agus fòcas air builean a neartaicheas èifeachdas fianais is comhairleachadh JNCC. Bheir seo neartachadh air faicsinneachd JNCC is thèid comasan gus builean adhartach a choileanadh a neartachadh airson an t-saoghail nàdarra gu lèir.

Chan ann air sgàth nàdar a-mhàin a tha glèidhteachas is ath-bheothachadh nàdair a' tachairt; tha iad cudromach ri linn tèarainteachd cumhachd is *net zero*, tèarainteachd uisge is bidhe, slàinte phoblach, fàs eaconamach seasmhach is tèarainteachd nàiseanta. Mar sin dheth, tha glèidhteachas is ath-bheothachadh nàdair air leth cudromach don chomann-shòisealta agus airson sunnd mic an duine. Tha comhairle JNCC, a tha stèidhichte air fianais is mion-sgrùdadh, a' cumail fiosrachadh ri poileasaidhean an riaghaltais is roghainnean adhartach airson freagairt ris na dùbhlanan sòisealta seo.

Nam bharail fhèin, feumaidh sinn uile, cho math ri JNCC fhèin, ar cuid bheachdan mu ghlèidhteachas is ath-bheothachadh nàdair atharrachadh mar dhùbhlan fa leth gus an toir sinn sinn fhèin na lùib - airson nàdar, atharrachadh na gnàth-shìde is fàs eaconamach a chothromachadh, cho math ri bhith a' toirt sunnd a' mhòr-shluaigh am feabhas.

Tha fiughair agam ri bhith a' faicinn na tha san amharc do JNCC agus na chuireas e ri glèidhteachas is ath-bheothachadh nàdair stèidhichte air fianais.

An t-Àrd-ollamh Thomas R Meagher

Cathraiche Eadar-amail, JNCC

Aithris an Àrd-oifigeir

Tha sinn a' leantainn oirnn a' cur an gnìomh an ro-innleachd againn, Còmhla airson Nàdar, is sinn a' taisbeanadh na h-obrach a choilean sinn ann an 2024-25. Tha seo a' mìneachadh ar lèirsinn airson nàdar fallainn airson saoghal

seasmhach ri teachd is ar n-amas airson saidheans a chur an gnìomh airson nàdar, daoine is na cruinne.

Tha na luachan againn aig teis-meadhan Còmhla airson Nàdar: in-ghabhail, co-obrachadh is innleachdas. ’S e a tha sa chultar againn ach na daoine againn is na prìomh luachan againn agus tha iad deatamach ma tha sinn a’ dol a shoirbheachadh. Mar chomharra air seo, dh’aontaich Comataidh Dhaoine is Cultair againn ri ro-innleachd dhaoine ùr airson na bliadhna seo.

Tha sinn air na siostaman is na pròiseasan againn a-staigh a leasachadh airson taic a chumail ri lìbhrigeadh ar n-amasan a thaobh Còmhla airson Nàdar. Chuir sinn an gnìomh siostam corporra ùr againn airson ionmhas is luchd-obrach, Nautilus, a bheir seachad eadar-aghaidh nas ùire is nas fhasa airson ar luchd-obrach a thaobh fèin-fhrithealadh. Choilean sinn teisteanas ISO 14001 airson Siostam Riaghlaidh Àrainneachdail, a’ comharrachadh clach-mhìle chudromach san t-slighe sheasmhachd againn.

Bha ionnsachadh is leasachadh aig teis-meadhan a’ cheathramh buidhne a cheumnaich bhon phròram cheannardais againn am-bliadhna. Tha am pròram soirbheachail seo air taic a chumail ri còrr is 40 de na stiùirichean againn sna bliadhnaichean ri teachd agus cothroman prataigeach ann airson na sgilean ceannardais aca a leasachadh is a dhearbhadh.

Mar a choisinn an-uiridh, fhuair sinn inbhe Umha airson Measadh air In-ghabhail is Iomadachd Thàlant (TIDE) bho ENEI (Lìonra Luchd-fastaidh airson Co-ionannachd is In-ghabhail). Tha am measadh bliadhnail seo a’ toirt sealladh nas fharsainge air mar a tha sinn a’ dol air adhart bliadhna an dèidh bliadhna ann an diofar roinnean agus mar a tha sinn an coimeas ri cuid eile san roinn againn. Dh’fhoillsich sinn cuideachd Ro-innleachd Iomadachd, Co-ionannachd is In-ghabhail Com-pàirteachas Fianais Talmhaidh na RA (TEPoP) agus ghairm sinn 10 de na com-pàirtichean againn airson aithris cho-roinnte fhoillseachadh a’ gealltainn ar dealas do DEI ann an sgeamaichean sgrùdadh ghnèithean na RA.

Bha e na adhbhar toileachais gun do rinn sinn adhartas air a’ bheàrn phàighidh eadar gnèithean: lùghdaich a’ bheàrn pàighidh san uair ann an 2024 gu 5.3% le meadhan de 0.6% an taca ri 7.5% agus 10.6% ann an 2023, is e a-nis nas ìsle na cuibheasachd na seirbheis catharra.

Tha an saidheans againn air a roinn ann an trì pròraman obrach is e a’ toirt air adhart lìbhrigeadh ar cuid phrìomhachasan ro-innleachdail ann an 2024-25.

Co-òrdanachadh na Rìoghachd Aonaichte

Rinn sinn co-òrdanachadh is chuir sinn freagairtean nan ceithir dùthchannan san RA an lùib Frèam-obrach Bith-iomadachd Kunming-Montreal (GBF) an cois Ro-innleachdan is Plana Gnìomha Bith-iomadachd Nàiseanta na RA (NBSAP), ’s e sin freagairt oifigeil na RA do gheallaidhean GBF. Rinn sinn ùrachadh air Comharran Bith-iomadachd na RA is thòisich sinn air obair airson na comharran seo a leasachadh gus coinneachadh ri riatanasan GBF.

Lean na sgeamaichean sgrùdaidh againn air gnèithean is iad a' comharrachadh mar a tha bith-iomadachd air feadh na RA ag atharrachadh. Tha na sgeamaichean seo a' sìor fhàs cudromach ann a bhith a' measadh na buaidh an cois eadar-dhealachadh eadar poileasaidhean air feadh na RA. Thòisich sinn am-bliadhna a' sgrùdadh mar as urrainnear na comharran seo a ro-mheasadh airson measadh a dhèanamh air buaidh phoileasaidhean a thathar a' moladh air bith-iomadachd, gus leigeil leinn taic a chumail ri co-dhùnaidhean poileasaidh.

Lean sinn oirnn a' cur cuideam air an fhianais agus a' chomhairle againn airson buaidh a thoirt air na raointean poileasaidh a tha dualtach a' bhuaidh as motha a thoirt air nàdar. Tha Seirbheis Measadh Truailleadh Adhair na RA deiseil airson a cur air bhog agus tha comas aice buaidh mhòr a thoirt air riaghladh ro-innleachdail truailleadh adhair, a tha a' cur cuideam mòr air nàdar. Tha sinn air a bhith ag obair gu dlùth le Roinn na h-Àrainneachd, a' Bhidhe is Chùisean Dùthchail (Defra) agus Roinn an Àiteachais, na h-Àrainneachd is Chùisean Dùthchail ann an Èirinn a Tuath (DAERA) gus sgrùdadh a dhèanamh air mar as urrainnear nàdar a thoirt a-staigh nas fheàrr leis na dleastanasan eile an lùib cleachdadh fearainn.

Eadar-nàiseanta

Tha Ranntairean Thall Thairis na RA a' cur gu mòr ri bith-iomadachd is geo-iomadachd na cruinne; tha seo ann an suidheachadh cugallach gu tric. Tha JNCC a' toirt seachad taic theicnigeach airson taic a chumail ri ro-innleachdan bith-iomadachd is riaghladh àrainneachdail nas fharsainge sna h-àiteachan sin fhèin. Bha JNCC a' stiùireadh chàich air dealbhadh Ro-innleachd Bith-iomadachd Tìrean Thall Thairis na RA, a tha ag amas air brosnachadh maoineachadh ùr ann am bith-iomadachd airson gach Tìr, agus na diofar fheumalachdan, phrìomhachasan, gheallaidhean is adhbharan airson atharrachadh anns gach Tìr aithneachadh.

Chuir sinn fàilte air co-obraichean à Montserrat, ann an com-pàirteachas le Riaghaltas Montserrat, an RSPB, Buidheann na h-Àrainneachd, is Ionad na h-Eag-eòlais is an Uisge-eòlais, airson pròram trèanaidh dian air sgrùdadh bith-iomadachd, riaghladh eag-shiostam is cleachdaidhean seasmhach cleachdadh fearainn. Thug sinn taic cuideachd do dh'obair Glèidhteachas Corail anns na Tìrean Thall Thairis (C-COT). Stiùirich sinn tabhartasan > £900k anns na 14 Tìrean Thall Thairis san RA, tron sgeama Darwin Plus Local, a bhios a' maoineachadh phròiseactan àrainneachdail beaga gus comas a thogail anns na Tìrean agus airson cur ri eaconamaidhean ionadail.

'S e JNCC comhairliche reachdail Riaghaltas na RA airson glèidhteachas is ath-bheothachadh nàdair ann am fòraman eadar-nàiseanta. Bha JNCC cudromach às leth na RA is sinn a' leasachadh is a' dealbhadh Plana Gnìomha Roinneil airson Eòin Mara (RAP-Bird) a chaidh a ghabhail os làimh le dùthchannan bho air feadh Ear-thuath a' Chuain Siar. 'S e JNCC Ùghdarras Saidheansail CITES na RA airson bheathaichean is fhreagair na h-eòlaichean againn còrr is 27,000 iarrtas cead, eadar bagaichean craiceann nathrach is seabhagan, airson dèanamh cinnteach nach biodh droch bhuaidh aig malairt a-steach is a-mach às an RA air àireamhan bheathaichean.

Lìbhrig sinn Pròram Com-pàirteachas Dùthaich a' Chuain (OCPP), a' toirt taic do naoi dùthchannan a tha airidh air Taic Leasachaidh Oifigeil (ODA) gus buaidhean

làidir, adhartach a thoirt gu buil air beòshlaint choimhearsnachdan cladaich, a leithid turasachd siorc seasmhach anns na Maldives. Chrìochnaich Pròg ram Truailleadh na h-Àrainneachd ann an Afraga a Deas am-bliadhna, a' neartachadh comas ar com-pàirtichean le bhith gan uidheamachadh le eòlas is sgilean ann an sgrùdadh is lùghdachadh truailleadh, seasmhachd ann an riaghladh eag-shiostam, cleachdadh talmhainn seasmhach agus uidheamachd, a leithid bùth-obrach gluasadach ùr-nodha.

Glèidhteachas Mara na RA

Tha JNCC an urra ri glèidhteachas is ath-bheothachadh nàdair san àrainneachd mhara far a' chladaich. Dh'fhoillsich sinn an dreachd as ùire de Chlàr Fianais Àrainneachdail Gaoithe Far a' Chladaich, clàr na RA a bhios a' cruinneachadh bheàrnan san fhianais a dh'fhaodar coileanadh airson cinnt a neartachadh ann am measadh buaidh àrainneachdail gaoithe far a' chladaich.

Thàinig crìoch air cuid na mara den phròg ram Measadh Calpa Nàdarra is Eag-shiostam. Dh'fhoillsich sinn fianais ùr airson taic a chumail ri co-dhùnaidhean, a leithid dàta suirbhidh far a' chladaich, inneal ùr air-loidhne gus mapaichean is tuairmsean a thoirt gu buil air càite is ciamar a choileanas nàdar na mara ri ar feumalachdan is soirbheachas. Tha mapadh àrainnean bunaiteach ann airson a' mhòr-chuid de cho-dhùnaidhean mara agus, tron phròg ram seo, rinn sinn UKSeaMap, mapa àrainn farsaing de ghrunnd na mara gu lèir a chaidh ùrachadh is e a' cleachdadh an dàta as ùire.

Rinn sinn ùrachadh air ar cuid stiùiridh a thaobh mhamalan mara, a chumas taic ri atharrachaidhean le riaghladh fuaim fon uisge airson beatha mara so-leònte a dhìon, airson cunnart do mhamalan mara ri linn cleachdadh uidheam spreadhaidh a lùghdachadh agus stèidhich sinn stiùireadh ùr airson òrdanas mara nach do spreadh (UXO) a ghlanadh.

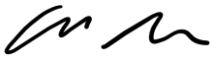
Creideas nar daoine

Bha com-pàirteachadh aig teis-meadhan na co-labhairt nuair a choinnich co-obraichean JNCC bho air feadh na RA airson na dàrna co-labhairt againn. B' e "Nur deagh shinnsearan" cuspair na co-labhairt, a' togail air obair Roman Krznaric, a bha an làthair aig a' cho-labhairt airson a chuid bheachdan air meòrachadh fad-ùine a cho-roinn airson taic a chumail rinn is sinn a' lìbhrigeadh "Còmhla airson Nàdair". Chomharraich sinn obair ar co-obraichean uile, a' cumail a' chiad chuirm dhuaisean againn airson cuid de na gaisgich againn aithneachadh is a chomharrachadh.

Mar phàirt den amas againn a bhith nar deagh shinnsearan, tha sinn air ceumannan mòra a ghabhail ann an com-pàirteachadh òigridh. Tha a' bhuidheann-obrach òigridh air trèanadh le eòlaichean agus air bùth-obrach a stiùireadh le daoine òga aig JNCC airson prìomhachasan a dhealbhadh airson 2025-26. Tha sinn air ceanglaichean a neartachadh gu h-eadar-nàiseanta le Lìonra Bith-iomadachd Òigridh na Cruinne san RA agus tha sinn a' sgrùdadh chothroman airson taic a chumail ri ceannardas òigridh ann an glèidhteachas is ath-bheothachadh nàdair.

Dr Gemma Harper OBE

Àrd-oifigear





List of acronyms

Table 1. Details of the acronyms contained in this document.

Acronym	Definition
ALB	Arm's Length Body
APHA	Animal & Plant Health Agency
ARAC	Audit and Risk Assurance Committee
BPO	Business Plan Objective
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
Cefas	Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CETV	Cash Equivalent Transfer Values
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
CMS	Convention on Migratory Species
COP	Conference of the Parties
COP15	Fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
COP 16	Sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).
CSG	Chief Scientists' Group
DAB	Delivery Assurance Board
Defra	Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs
DGs	Devolved Governments
DPO	Data Protection Officer
ERP	Enterprise resource planning
ExCo	Executive Committee
FReM	The government financial reporting manual

Acronym	Definition
FRS	Financial Reporting Standard
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent
GES	Good Ecological Status
GFS	Government Functional Standards
GiA	Grant in Aid
GIAA	Government Internal Audit Agency
HMRC	His Majesty's Revenue & Customs
HPMA	Highly Protected Marine Area
ICO	Information Commissioner's Office
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
IT	Information Technology
MMO	Marine Management Organisation
mNCEA	Natural Capital and Ecosystem Assessment programme (the Marine arm specifically)
MPA	Marine Protected Area
NAO	National Audit Office
NDPB	Non-Departmental Public Body
NE	Natural England
NERC Act 2006	Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006
OCPP	Ocean Country Partnership Programme
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OSPAR	The Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic
OT	Overseas Territory

Acronym	Definition
PAYE	Pay As You Earn
PCSPS	Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme
PID	Project Initiation Document
QQR	Quinquennial Review
SCS	Senior Civil Service
SEPA	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
SLT	Senior Leadership Team
SNCBs	Statutory Nature Conservation Bodies
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
TIDE	Talent Inclusion and Diversity Evaluation

Directors' Report for the year ended 31 March 2025

JNCC Support Co Company number: 05380206 (England and Wales)

Peterborough office and registered office
Joint Nature Conservation Committee
Quay House, 2 East Station Road, Peterborough, PE2 8YY
Tel: +44 (0) 1733 562626

Aberdeen office
Joint Nature Conservation Committee
Inverdee House, Baxter Street, Aberdeen, AB11 9QA
Tel: +44 (0) 1224 266564

Email: feedback@jncc.gov.uk
Web: JNCC Website

Senior staff in 2024 to 2025

- Chief Executive: Dr G Harper
- Director of Finance and Resources: Mr D Collins
- Chief Scientist: Mr D Stone
- Chief Officer – Strategy and Impact: Dr C Tuckett
- Director of Marine Evidence and Advice: Dr JC Goold
- Director of Ecosystem Evidence and Advice: Dr S Wilkinson
- Directors of International Evidence and Advice: Ms B Stoker and Mrs N Askew
- Director of Finance, Planning & Governance: Dr C Callaghan (Appointed 25 November 2024)
- Director of People and Infrastructure: Mrs M Fulford (Appointed 25 November 2024)

Company directors in 2024 to 2025

- Professor MCV Austen
- Rt Hon. Lord Blencathra (Resigned 11 December 2024)
- Mr DP Collins
- Ms CS Denholm (Resigned 3 April 2025)
- Professor CA Galbraith
- Dr GC Harper
- Professor P Higgins
- Professor TR Meagher
- Dr JD Orford (Resigned 28 February 2025)

- Professor SJ Ormerod
- Professor RA Jones
- Mr DA Stone (Appointed 1 July 2024)
- Dr CJ Tuckett (Appointed 1 July 2024)
- Mr DE Ebanks (Appointed 1 February 2025)
- Professor RD Garrett (Appointed 1 February 2025)
- Ms MO Ramroop (Appointed 1 February 2025)

Company secretary

- Mr David Collins

Donations

There were no political or charitable donations made in the financial year ending 31 March 2025 (year ended 31 March 2024 - £nil).

Data security

In the year to 31 March 2025, there were no data breaches reportable to the ICO and hence there were no resultant penalties or financial impacts. Further information regarding information management has been included in Section 12 of the Governance report.

There were no incidences of fraud or attempted fraud identified or reported in the year.

Results and dividends

The Company has no share capital and consequently the question of the payment of a dividend does not arise. Any surplus at the year-end is transferred to the forthcoming year and applied to meet the objectives of the company.

Directors' interests

As the company has no share capital, directors have no rights to subscribe for additional shares or debentures.

The Articles of Association do not require any of the directors to retire by rotation. However, directors must retire if they are no longer members of the company. A member will cease to be a member of the company if they cease to be a member of the Joint Committee.

A register of the interests of all Company Board members is held by the Company Secretary and may be viewed by request to cosec@jncc.gov.uk.

Pension liabilities

Full details of pension liabilities and their accounting treatment are given in the accounting policies note.

Auditors

Following the passing of the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000 (Audit of Non-profit-making Companies) Order 2009 the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) shall audit JNCC Support Co's financial statements. The C&AG's certificate and report (Auditors' Report) commence on page 104. The audit fee charged in the Profit and Loss Account was £81k (2024: £74k) which reflects the NAO fee for the external audit for the financial year. The auditor received no fees for non-audit services. The BDO Internal audit fees for the year were £73k (2024: £31k).

The Directors confirm that:

- There is no relevant audit information of which the auditor is unaware; and
- They have taken all the steps they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that JNCC's auditor is aware of that information.



Dr G. Harper OBE
Chief Executive
On behalf of the board of directors
xx XXXX 2025

Strategic Report for the year ended 31 March 2025

The Directors present their report and the financial statements for the year ending 31 March 2025. This report should be read in conjunction with the Governance Statement commencing on page 48 and the Directors' report commencing on page 21.

JNCC Support Co

The Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) is the statutory adviser to the UK Government and Devolved Governments on UK and international nature conservation.

JNCC, originally established under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, was reconstituted by the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. JNCC Support Co is a company limited by guarantee established in 2005 whose principal activity is the provision of support to JNCC.

The Joint Committee comprises 11 members: a Chair and five independent members appointed by the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs; the Chair of the Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside (Northern Ireland); the Chair or Deputy Chair of Natural Resources Wales, Natural England and NatureScot; and one other member from each of these bodies. The term of appointments for the Chair and independent members is initially for three years. Members from the UK Country nature conservation bodies may continue as members of the Committee as long as they retain their membership of the Councils or Boards of their respective bodies.

Support is provided to the Joint Committee by the JNCC Support Co, a Company limited by guarantee. The Company Board consists of the Joint Committee members, the Chief Executive, and the Chief Operating Officer. The Committee has adopted the Guidance on Codes of Practice for Board Members of Public Bodies issued by the Cabinet Office, for the purposes of corporate governance.

JNCC Support Co is funded primarily by grant in aid, with additional monies received for other work related to non-core activities.

The total budget for JNCC's core activities is set each year by Ministers of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) after consultation and in agreement with their Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish counterparts. Additionally, the Committee agrees longer-term financial plans related to its non-core activity.

JNCC exists because, while UK environmental policy is devolved, ecological systems do not respect geographical or political boundaries. As an impartial scientific authority JNCC will continue to work with the UK's country nature conservation bodies (the Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside (Northern Ireland), Natural England, Natural Resources Wales and NatureScot) to advise governments across the UK on nature conservation and recovery. On the international stage, the UK needs to be able to assess the state and change of nature at a UK level in a consistent and scientifically robust way for effective international negotiations and credible global leadership. JNCC will continue to have a leading role in this.

JNCC delivers the UK and international responsibilities of the UK's country nature conservation bodies.

JNCC launched its strategy for nature recovery, *Together for Nature 2023 – 2030*, in May 2023 with the following strategic priorities remaining the basis for setting our workplan for each year:

- Use our scientific expertise to facilitate a collective response to the global biodiversity crisis.
- Use our trusted expertise and judgement to evaluate effectiveness of existing policies and advise on the design of new policies and action to progress nature recovery.
- Lead the discussion to align action for nature and climate change to deliver outcomes that tackle climate breakdown and accelerate nature recovery.
- Continue to innovate and advance our learning on nature recovery so that science, technology and new digital knowledge are applied to drive positive environmental outcomes.
- Work collaboratively to support the transition to sustainable blue/green economies, linking nature recovery to economic prosperity and societal wellbeing.
- Seek opportunities to integrate the value of nature into decision-making by mainstreaming nature recovery into social and economic policy areas.
- Invest in our people and culture to ensure an inclusive, collaborative and innovative learning organisation, where staff wellbeing is prioritised and our partners are engaged and respected.

Budget

The budget for 2024 to 2025 comprised two parts:

Core activities

Grant in aid for JNCC's core activities is from four sources:

- UK co-ordination work funded through Natural England, NatureScot and Natural Resources Wales (the GB conservation bodies) and the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs in Northern Ireland, for work which applies across the UK including UK marine waters, for example development of common guidelines, standards and tools and UK-level co-ordination;

- Funding provided by Defra for work relating to territories outside of the UK and work in support of, or on behalf of, UK Government in contributing to international, European or regional bodies;

- Funding provided by Defra for operational work in offshore waters (beyond 12 nautical miles); and

- Governance and corporate services, funded by all funding bodies, in proportion to their contributions to the other three funding streams.

Under the provisions of the Government's alignment process, all JNCC's grant in aid, including that funded by Devolved Governments through the UK conservation bodies, is channelled through Defra and therefore counts towards Defra's Departmental Expenditure Limit. Internal organisation structures and governance arrangements reflect these 4 sources of funding while retaining flexibility to deploy resources to respond effectively to priority outcomes.

Non-core activities

Non-core activities are funded from a range of sources, including additional funding from central government to provide additional evidence and advice and from EU grants and royalties and fees. Financial plans and risks related to such activities are reported on a quarterly basis.

Funding, which is usually linked to specific projects, is detailed in the accounts.

Risks

Overall responsibility for risk lies with the Joint Nature Conservation Committee with the support and advice of its sub-committees. The ***Audit and Risk Assurance Committee*** (ARAC) monitors JNCC's corporate governance and control systems and advises the Joint Committee on internal and external audit matters, risk, and governance in JNCC, as well as providing oversight and assurance on JNCC's financial management and resilience. The ***People and Culture Committee*** leads on the monitoring of people related risks and opportunities with a focus over the last year on supporting the Executive to develop a People Strategy to build and develop the capability, skills and structures necessary to deliver our *Together for Nature* strategy.

Responsibility for the effective management of risk within JNCC rests with the Executive Committee, with leadership of the risk management process provided by the Chief Executive and Accounting Officer. Effective risk management and governance is critical to the ability of JNCC to achieve its objectives and manage the risks it faces. Any significant risks identified by management considered likely to affect the performance of the business have been reported as part of the Governance Statement commencing on page 48 of this report.

Review of business

During the financial year ending 31 March 2025, the company made a significant contribution to nature conservation on both the national and international stages through an extensive and varied programme of work. The monitoring of JNCC's performance in delivering its priorities is primarily a task for the Delivery and Assurance Board (DAB) which then prepares reports for consideration through the Joint Committee and for submission to JNCC's sponsors. In this year the DAB has been tracking a total of 37 critical delivery milestones. By the end of the year 30 of these milestones had been either fully delivered or rated as green as part of ongoing projects that were on track for delivery. 6 milestones were rated as Amber reflecting that progress had been made but that activities had not kept to schedule and would be completed early in 2025/26. One milestone remained at Red status at the end of the year due to ongoing funding risks despite good progress in project delivery. Further details of our performance against our planned outputs are given on pages 28 to 37.

This consistent and sustained level of performance and the wide recognition of JNCC's unique perspective and technical capability have resulted in a further increase in revenue over the course of this year. Overall revenue has increased to £30.1m (from £24.1m in 2024).

Following a comprehensive staff survey carried out during February 2024, management agreed plan to complete a similar survey each year to track trends between years and to allow for comparison with similar surveys across other Civil Service and Public Service bodies. A staff survey was not carried out in the 2024/25 financial year, but a further survey was completed in June 2025. The Executive Team will be working with team leaders across the organisation to develop a practical and deliverable action plan at organisation and team levels. Progress will be reported in the 2025/26 Annual report and Accounts.

JNCC manages both its core and non-core activities closely, evaluating the extent to which value for money has been achieved and costing, where practicable, its activities according to its strategic outcomes.

JNCC plans to operate on a break-even basis, recovering all costs in line with Managing Public Money, for activities related to its statutory responsibilities and core functions in supporting UK Governments. Cash-flow forecasting largely mirrors its budgeted funding profile. Activities supported by income from wider markets including commercial entities are planned on the basis of a fair commercial rate providing opportunities to pump-prime future activity and to enhance JNCC's financial resilience and ability to withstand, to an extent, decreases in grant in aid funding.

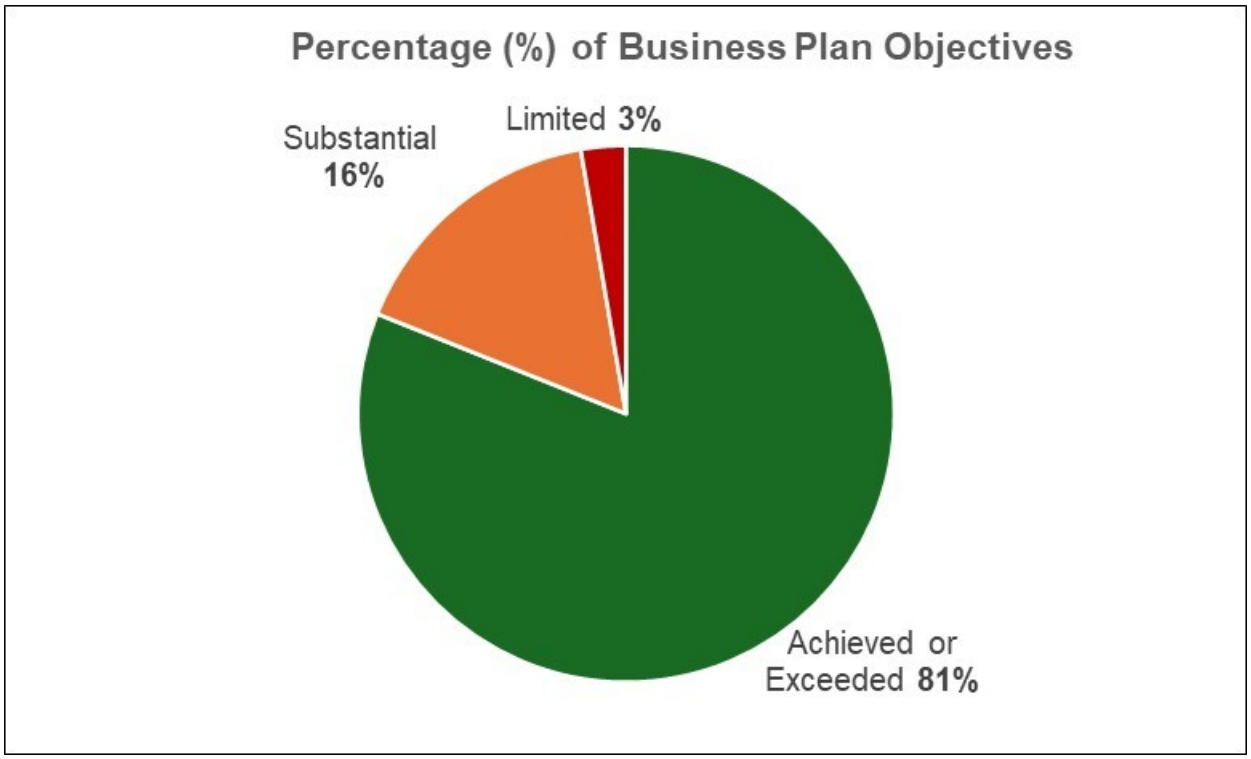
Throughout the year, including up to the final month of the year, analysis from projects and programmes across JNCC reported a consistent risk of overspend but by the year-ending 31 March 2025 the company made a surplus on ordinary activities of £757k (compared to a deficit on ordinary activities of £1324k in 2024). This has increased the reserves balance to £1744k as at 31 March 2025 (£987k as at 31 March 2024).

The late movement in forecast outturn resulted in a larger surplus than expected. While this has supported ambitions to reinstate target levels of reserves, ARAC and management will continue to focus on plans to sharpen up JNCC's financial management capability with improvements in forecasting accuracy and timeliness supported by improved functionality of our new corporate reporting system, Nautilus, along with revised accountability systems and training for budget holders supported by a stable and appropriately resourced finance function.

Performance Report – Summary

Table 2. Critical delivery milestones 2024 to 2025.

Milestones	Description	Number of performance measures reporting in this category at end of year
Completed or Green	Achieved or exceeded	**30**
Amber	Substantial progress made with full achievement anticipated early in 2025/2026	**6**
Red	Limited progress	**1**



Performance Report – Detail

This section gives further details of our performance against our planned outputs on a programme-by-programme basis.

Programme: UK Co-ordination

Table 3. Business Plan Objectives (UK Co-ordination programme)

No.	Objective
i	To begin to evolve how protected areas are monitored to make better use of technologies and emerging protocols to enable scaling to cover a broader area of the countryside
ii	To continue to build an understanding of the impact of policies and interventions on UK nature recovery
iii	To maintain the existing picture of biodiversity state and change across the UK provided through the species surveillance schemes
iv	To provide co-ordination across the four countries to facilitate a shared UK response to international commitments including beginning to evolve the indicators to assess implementation
v	Work across the four countries to improve the evidence and processes to address the impacts of pollution on biodiversity
vi	Work across the four countries to share experiences on how decisions on land use change can better integrate biodiversity
vii	Work with the four countries to enable the development of a coherent UK network of protected areas

Table 4. Critical Milestones (UK Co-ordination Programme)

BPO number	**Key deliverables**	**Year end rating**
i	Demonstrate the potential of methods to detect finer scale environmental change in response to interventions and produce report with recommendations on how the methods and approaches could be scaled. [Q4]	Green
ii	Build resources, including two reports and a case study, for policymakers to understand possible nature positive scenarios, the likely policy options available within those	Complete

	scenarios, and how models can be used to quantify policy options. [Q4]	
iii	Publish National Plant Monitoring Scheme (NPMS) annual report and Official Statistics in Development which provide a valuable expansion to JNCC's species surveillance suite. [Q1]	Complete
iv	Publish the UK Biodiversity Framework and National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAP) setting out the UK's commitments to the Global Biodiversity Framework. [Q1]	Complete
iv	Publish the 2024 update of the UK Biodiversity Indicators to highlight progress towards UK nature recovery. [Q3]	Complete
iv	Collate country reporting pro-formas for Habitat Regulations Reporting across the four countries. [Q4]	Green
v	Release an operating version of the UK Air Pollution Assessment Service tool with a Customer Contact Service to streamline risk assessment and facilitate permissions for emission reducing activity. [Q4]	Red
vi	Produce report which assesses potential approach to assessing the displaced environmental impacts associated with domestic land use change and make recommendations for the assessment of sustainable consumption into the future. [Q4]	Complete
vi	Create and publish at least four fully documented ecosystem service demand maps to support spatial prioritisation of land use within Defra's Environmental Land Management framework. [Q4]	Green
vii	Publish Phase 2 report of the Third SPA Review. [Q1]	Green

Programme: Marine

Table 5. Business Plan Objectives (Marine Programme)

No	Objectives
viii	Advice to competent authorities and industry facilitates sustainable management of licensed offshore industry activities
ix	Build natural capital evidence to support the management and recovery of marine ecosystems for a sustainable blue economy.
x	Datasets for UK waters and associated products are enhanced, with improved internal data management and streamlining of processes allowing for better and faster access to data for stakeholders and partners.
xi	Designations advice is delivered to governments across the UK to further develop the offshore protected area network and conservation advice actively supports the furtherment of conservation objectives across the offshore network.
xii	Evidence, advice and services are provided to facilitate marine habitat and species protection in the context of energy security.
xiii	Provide evidence and data products on the status and trends of marine ecosystems to assess progress towards sustainable use and nature recovery, including links to climate change and ocean acidification impacts.
xiv	Support and advice are provided to governments and regulators on the implementation of fisheries management and the broader ecosystem approach to fisheries
xv	Support the public consultation and publication of the UK Marine Strategy part 1 assessments and environmental target development.
xvi	Working with partners, lead biodiversity and environmental data collection, research and development and reporting for offshore Marine Protected Areas and the wider seas.

Table 6. Critical Milestones (Marine Programme)

BPO number	Key deliverables	Year end rating
viii	Advise competent authorities and offshore industry within agreed timelines to facilitate sustainable development. [Q4]	Green
ix	Deliver three JNCC-led Year 3 mNCEA projects on time, to specification and on budget. [Q4]	Complete
x	Deliver the Marine Recorder Online system, a modern marine benthic data management system for use by governments, CNCBs, government agencies and NGOS. Soft launch in Q1, with final product launch in Q4. [Q4]	Green
xi	Support Welsh Government, in collaboration with Natural Resources Wales, in the public consultation on possible Marine Conservation Zones in Welsh waters. [Q3]	Green
xii	Advise Defra on environmental issues relation to the development of deep-sea mining exploitation regulations within agreed timelines and attend November International Seabed Authority Council Session as part of UK delegation. [Q4]	Complete
xii	Support Marine Directorate with Nature Positive policy and development of compensatory / wider measures. [Q4]	Green
xii	Support the implementation of SoS approved strategic compensatory measures for offshore wind and the development of further measures. [Q4]	Amber
xii	Deliver the Offshore Wind Environmental Evidence Register (OWEER) #6 for The Crown Estate. [Q4]	Complete
xii	Deliver the Marine Noise Registry Phase 3. [Q4]	Green
xii	Support the implementation of British Energy Security Strategy and Environmental Improvement Package. [Q4]	Green
xiii	Continue the development of 25YEP Indicators, including analysis and preparation of Outputs for framework analysis. [Q3]	Complete
xiv	Complete advice and review work in support of implementation of MPA fisheries measures in offshore sites. [Q2]	Complete
xiv	Deliver conservation advice to Defra and Devolved Governments in support of Fisheries Management Plan drafting programmes and support the production and review of	Complete

	Environmental reports as part of FMP Strategic Environmental Assessment process. [Q4]	
xv	Support the coordination of biodiversity thematic summaries for the public consultation and support the UKMS Tasks and Finish group. [Q2]	Complete
xv	Provide advice on the revision of GES targets and indicators thresholds and align with OSPAR. [Q3]	Complete
xv	Support the publication of the final results, including data products in MOAT. [Q4]	Complete
xvi	Plan, deliver and report on Marine Protected Area monitoring surveys for England. [Q4]	Amber
xvi	Plan, deliver and report on Marine Protected Area monitoring surveys for Scotland. [Q4]	Amber
xvi	Deliver HPMA baseline surveys and research and development for tranche 1 HPMAs. [Q4]	Amber

Programme: International

Table 7. Business Plan Objectives (International Programme)

No	Objectives
xvii	Continue to develop a robust evidence base to inform and shape international policy.
xviii	Continue to support UK government with implementation of key biodiversity, pollution and climate change MEAs, informing UK negotiating positions and fulfilling reporting obligations with evidence-based advice.
xix	Implement the JNCC International Roadmap setting out how the International Directorate will achieve JNCC's Strategy to 2030, prioritising activities across MEAs, countries, funding sources and themes.
xx	Influence and make best use of ODA funding to supporting eligible countries in overcoming challenges that threaten the environment and the livelihoods that depend on them.
xxi	Support the development of a new HMG Overseas Territories Biodiversity Strategy, in partnership with OTs and Defra.
xxii	Provide policy and operational advice on CITES and illegal wildlife trade, ensuring ongoing compliance and reductions in pressures on biodiversity from illegal and unsustainable trade.

Table 8. Critical Milestones (International Programme)

BPO number	Key deliverables	Year end rating
xvii	Collaborate with national and international scientific experts and policy leads to develop and implement UK-led tasks (e.g. regional action plans) under the OSPAR North East Atlantic Strategy. [Q3]	Complete
xviii	Provide expert advice to inform the UK's negotiating position at CBD COP16 in October 2024, both in advance of the negotiations and in 'real-time' during the negotiations. [Q3]	Complete
xix	Update the JNCC International Roadmap including prioritisation of JNCC's contribution to Multilateral Environmental Agreements. [Q2]	Amber
xx	Facilitate procurement and operationalisation of a mobile laboratory to support the Environmental Pollution Programme Projects and ongoing environmental research work in South Africa. [Q1]	Complete
xx	Define and agree with FCDO JNCC's contribution to the Sustainable Blue Economies programme. [Q1]	Complete
xx	Complete 12 deployments to 9 OCPP countries in 2024/25, providing technical assistance in capacity building, stakeholder engagement workshops and technical implementation to support countries to overcome challenges that threaten the marine environment and the livelihoods of the people that depend on them. [Q3]	Complete
xxi	Submit Overseas Territories Biodiversity Strategy to Defra, for approval by Ministers in UK Government and Overseas Territories. [Q2]	Complete
xxii	Manage CITES licensing Advisory Service to APHA advising on up to 25,000 CITES licence applications annually, with at least 90% returned within 5 working days. [Q4]	Complete

Programme: Cross cutting and corporate

Table 9. Business Plan Objectives (Cross cutting and corporate programme)

No	Objectives
xxiii	To improve decision making and prioritisation, create efficiencies in project, programme and portfolio management and to improve management information across JNCC
xxiv	To maintain good corporate governance In line with our statutory duties, delegated authorities, and maintain value for the expenditure of public funds

Table 10. Critical Milestones (Cross-cutting and corporate programme).

BPO number	Key deliverables	Year end rating
xxiii	Establish a Portfolio Management Office. [Q1]	Complete
xxiii	Implement integrated finance and HR corporate reporting system. [Q2]	Complete
xxiv	Publish JNCC's Annual Report. [Q2]	Complete

Going concern

As at 31 March 2025, JNCC's reserves stood at £1744k (2024: £987k). Grant-in-aid funding for the financial year ending 31 March 2026 has been confirmed and included in the estimates of Defra and the Devolved Governments. This funding is sufficient to meet JNCC's liabilities falling due in that period and to support its core operations.

JNCC's funding is underpinned by statutory provision. Schedule 4, paragraph 14(1) of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 requires the appropriate authorities to provide the Joint Committee with such financial resources as are necessary for the proper discharge of its functions.

Following the conclusion of the Comprehensive Spending Review in June 2025, it is expected that Defra will be in a position to confirm indicative funding levels for the three years to 2028/29 by the end of 2025, with final arrangements for the funding of other projects that will sustain JNCC full operations into 2026/27 to be confirmed by the end of the 2025/26 financial year. In the interim, Defra has provided baseline budgets and project funding for 2025/26, which are sufficient to sustain JNCC's current operations.

In accordance with FRS 102 (paragraphs 3.8–3.9), the directors have assessed all available information about the future, covering a period of at least 12 months from the date of approval of the financial statements. They have concluded that there are no material uncertainties that cast significant doubt on the company's ability to continue as a going concern.

This assessment also complies with the Companies Act 2006, which presumes the entity is a going concern unless there is evidence to the contrary, and with the FReM, which requires disclosure of material uncertainties where relevant.

Accordingly, the directors consider it appropriate to prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis. They are not aware of any significant risks that would impact the company's ability to continue operating at its current level of activity.

Sustainability Report for JNCC Operations

Overall commentary

In August 2024, our environmental management system (EMS) was certified to ISO 14001 standard, marking a key milestone in our commitment to continuous environmental improvement. Our environmental objectives reflect our commitment to helping meet the UK Government's ambition of net zero by 2050. Over the past year, we have integrated sustainability more fully into organisational policies, including the introduction of a sustainable travel approach within our travel policies. To support the implementation of ISO 14001, we have trained a group of colleagues as internal auditors, building in-house capability to monitor and improve our system over time.

Our staff Sustainability Group continues to drive engagement across JNCC. This year, we ran a range of initiatives to encourage sustainable behaviours, including a sustainable ideas advent calendar, butterfly count event and several litter picks. These activities, combined with regular contributions to internal communications, have helped ensure sustainability remains a visible and ongoing consideration for staff. We also continue to hold our Bronze Carbon Literate Organisation status and have expanded access to carbon literacy training to all staff, contributing to increased awareness and more informed decision-making.

Data collection process

We have continued to improve the quality and quantity of our emissions data. Emissions calculations are based on the UK Government Greenhouse Gas Conversion Factors for Company Reporting, aligning with our reporting to Defra Group on progress against the Greening Government Commitments (GGCs). For this year, travel emissions data also includes a spend-based proxy estimate for reimbursed travel, using the latest available government conversion factors ($kgCO_2e$ per £ spent) by standard industrial classification (SIC) code (2022). This was not captured in previous years, which relied only on mileage-based centrally managed booking and procurement card data. To illustrate overall trends, 2024-2025 data is presented with comparisons to the baseline GGC target year (2017-2018) and the previous financial year where possible. However, due to significant changes in our office footprint in 2023 and data collection methods, some comparisons should be interpreted with caution. All figures are rounded for clarity and ease of reporting.

Total emissions by scope

As outlined in Table 11, JNCC recorded total emissions of 669 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO_2e) in 2024-2025. This represents an increase of 409 tonnes (158%) from the previous financial year, largely due to newly captured data on homeworking and commuting, along with an increase in certain categories of official business travel.

Reportable emissions under the GGC targets show a 15% increase in Scope 3 emissions since the previous year. This is primarily the result of enhanced data collection, particularly road travel and hire car use. Despite this year's rise, our

emissions remain 37% lower than in the 2017-2018 GGC baseline year. However, we remain below the Defra Group's GGC target of a 50% reduction, reflecting both growth in our organisational size and the evolving nature of our work since the baseline. Scope 1 and 2 emissions, largely minimal due to our operational model, have decreased by 62% and 65% respectively compared to 2017-2018.

Table 11. Total JNCC emissions by scope (definitions of the scopes can be found here) between the reporting years 2017 to 2018 and 2024 to 2025. For some years, data are unavailable, indicated by a '-' symbol.

Emissions by scope (tonnes, CO2e)		2017-2018	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	Percentage change since 2017-2018	Percentage change since last FY
GGC target data [note 1]	Total	124	21	44	68	78	-37%	15%
	Total per FTE	0.7	0.09	0.2	0.2	0.3	-63%	19%
	Scope 1	15	-	-	6	6	-62%	-8%
	Scope 2	52	15	13	18	18	-65%	0%
	Scope 3	57	6	31	43	54	-4%	25%
GGC target and voluntarily reported data	Total	183	35	173	260	669	267%	158%
	Total per FTE	1.1	0.1	0.7	0.8	2.3	118%	165%
	Scope 1	15	-	-	6	6	-62%	-8%
	Scope 2	52	15	13	18	18	-65%	0%
	Scope 3	115	20	160	236	646	459%	174%

Note 1: GGC target data excludes emissions from international travel. In all years prior to 2024-2025, international road travel was included within domestic figures due to a lack of separate tracking, and water travel was not measured. International sources contributed minimally to overall emissions so are included within the GGC target data.

Energy consumption

JNCC's energy consumption for 2024-2025 is shown in Table 12. Whilst most staff work primarily at home, JNCC operates from two main office locations: Quay House in Peterborough (575m^2) and Inverdee House in Aberdeen (294m^2). Both offices are in shared Government hub buildings, where JNCC has limited control over building management. Energy consumption is calculated through apportionment. In early 2023, we relocated our Peterborough office from Monkstone House to Quay House. Data before the move relates to Monkstone House; data after reflects Quay House.

Table 12. JNCC's energy consumption between the years 2017 to 2018 and 2024 to 2025. For some years, data are unavailable, indicated by a '-' symbol.

Energy	2017-2018	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	Percentage change since 2017-2018	Percentage change since last FY
Electricity (kWh, 000s)	149	68 [note 1]	68 [note 1]	88	88	-41%	0%

Gas (kWh, 000s)	79	-	-	33 [note 2]	30 [note 2]	-62%	-8%
Biomass (tonnes)	5	-	-	0	0	-100%	n/a
Energy costs (£ 000s)	-	-	38	- [note 3]	- [note 3]	n/a	n/a

Note 1: data for Peterborough office only.
Note 2: data for Inverdee House only. Gas is not used at Quay House.
Note 3: energy bills are included in the annual charge for Quay House and Inverdee House; we are not directly billed from the energy company and therefore cannot provide the expenditure figures for this.

This year, JNCC conducted the first staff survey to estimate homeworking emissions, using government conversion factors covering office equipment and heating. Total homeworking emissions were estimated at 212 tonnes CO_2e, representing a significant addition to our overall emissions measurements. As most staff continue to work predominantly from home and are geographically dispersed across the UK, these emissions should be considered alongside commuting emissions (also estimated in the same survey) which, while lower, reflect longer travel distances. Both form an important inclusion in our ongoing environmental improvement efforts.

Scope 3 GHG emissions: Official business travel

JNCC's scope 3 emissions increased in 2024-2025, as shown in Table 13, largely due to expanded international activity and improved and enlarged emissions reporting. The increased international air travel reflects our ongoing work in the UK overseas territories and the delivery of several in-person training and events, including in Australia and Madagascar under the Ocean Country Partnership Programme (OCPP). Emissions from accommodation also rose this year, driven by both improved data capture and the aforementioned international travel. A notable new addition to our emissions is from staff commuting, estimated via a staff survey on commuting frequency and mode. In contrast, domestic air travel emissions fell by 46% from the previous year, following updates to our travel policy to promote more climate-conscious travel choices and more stringent domestic air travel rules. Table 13 has been updated to better align with HM Treasury sustainability reporting guidance.

Table 13. Tracked business travel emissions between the years 2017 to 2018 and 2024 to 2025. For some years, data are unavailable, indicated by a '-' symbol.

Business travel emissions (tonnes CO2e)	**2017-2018**	**2021-2022**	**2022-2023**	**2023-2024**	**2024-2025**	**Percentage change since 2017-2018**	**Percentage change since last FY**
GGC target							
Domestic air	20	1	9	13	7	-64%	-46%
Domestic rail / tube / tram	32 [note 1]	4	19	26	30	-7%	16%
Domestic bus / coach [note 2]	0.01	0.02	-	0.06	0.4	5,064%	511%

Domestic hire car / taxi [note 2]	-	-	0.5	2.9	7.3	n/a	154%
Domestic private vehicle [note 2]	-	-	-	-	7.8	n/a	n/a
Domestic ferry [note 2]	-	-	-	0.002	0.2	n/a	n/a
International ferry [note 2]	-	-	-		0.2	n/a	n/a
GGC other travel							
International rail	0.3	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.2	-43%	1,030%
International air, total [note 3]	58 [note 1]	14	130	173	238	307%	38%
International air, short haul	18	2	11	11	13	-27%	13%
International air, long haul	41	12	105	133	141	246%	6%
International air, non-UK	-	-	14	28	71	n/a	149%
Non-GGC							
Domestic accommodation [note 2]	-	-	-	19	13	n/a	263%
International accommodation [note 2]	-	-	-		57	n/a	
Staff commutes	-	-	-	-	67	n/a	n/a

2024-2025 data includes estimated (proxy) emissions from reimbursed travel using spend data, whereas earlier years only include travel where mileage data is reported. Flight carbon conversion factors without radiative forcing are used to align with GGC methodology.
Note 1: this data has been restated to improve historic data accuracy based on new information or methodology improvements.
Note 2: international and domestic data not measured separately before 2024-2025. International sources contributed minimally to overall emissions so are included within the GGC target data.
Note 3: this includes the 2024-2025 spend-based emissions estimate (proxy) for reimbursed travel; subcategories exclude this.

Table 14 presents the total recorded business travel distance for JNCC in 2024-2025, based on journeys where mileage data was available. While the overall pattern broadly mirrors emissions trends in Table 13, there are some discrepancies. For example, modes such as domestic bus / coach show a high percentage increase in emissions, but a much smaller increase in reported mileage. This difference arises because spend-only reimbursed travel data, which cannot be converted into mileage, is excluded from the distance table. As this type of travel is typically more local, it disproportionately affects mileage totals for shorter-distance modes of transport.

Table 14. Business travel distance (measured in 000's kilometres) between the years 2017 to 2018 and 2024 to 2025. For some years, data are unavailable, indicated by a '-' symbol.

Business travel distance (000's km)	2017-2018	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	Percentage change since 2017-2018	Percentage change since last FY
Domestic air	138	5	72	81	44	-68%	-46%
Domestic rail / tube / tram	693	127	548	730	804	16%	10%
Domestic bus / coach [note 1]	0.3	0.2	-	1	0.2	-17%	-83%
Domestic hire car / taxi [note 1]	-	-	4	18	19	n/a	3%
Domestic private vehicle [note 1]	-	-	-	-	18	n/a	n/a
Domestic ferry [note 1]	-	-	-	0.1	0.4	n/a	n/a
International ferry [note 1]	-	-	-		0.3	n/a	n/a
International rail	25	2	3	3	5	-81%	40%
International air (total)	697	162	1,420	1,338	2,026	191%	51%
International air, short haul	210	20	141	100	118	-44%	19%
International air, long haul	487	143	1,158	924	1,105	127%	20%
International air, non-UK	-	-	121	315	803	n/a	155%

Only includes travel with reported mileage; spend-only reimbursed travel not included.
Note 1: international and domestic data not measured separately before 2024-2025.

Table 15 shows the total spend on official business travel, along with specific breakdowns for spend for some modes of transportation. There has been an overall decrease in corporate travel spend compared to the previous financial year, with the exception of international short-haul air travel, which saw a 25% increase. The reduction in spend, despite a rise in travel-related emissions, may be due to several factors. These include stricter restrictions on business class flights within our travel policies and improvements in how emissions are measured (while financial reporting methods remain unchanged).

Table 15. Business travel spend between the years 2017 to 2018 and 2024 to 2025. For some years, data are unavailable, indicated by a '-' symbol.

Business travel spend (£ 000s)	2017-2018	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	Percentage change since 2017-2018	Percentage change since last FY
Total [note 1]	299	65	339	421	333	11%	-21%
Rail	-	21	105	150	124	n/a	-17%
Road	-	15	45	58	47	n/a	-19%
Domestic air	-	3	13	23	10	n/a	-56%
International air, short haul	-	2	24	27	34	n/a	25%
International air, long haul and non-UK	-	22	150	161	118	n/a	-27%

Note 1: excludes accommodation spend.

Waste minimisation and management

Table 16 shows the total tracked waste generated by JNCC, covering both office waste and electrical and electronic equipment (predominantly ICT equipment). General office waste figures are based on apportioned data for Quay House and are not available for Inverdee House. Office waste volumes are broadly consistent with the previous year. ICT waste was lower this year following a significant clearance of accumulated equipment during the previous financial year.

Table 16. Tonnes of waste generated by JNCC between the years 2017 to 2018 and 2024 to 2025. For some years, data are unavailable, indicated by a '-' symbol.

Waste (tonnes)	2017-2018	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	Percentage change since 2017-2018	Percentage change since last FY
Total	25 [note 1]	18	83	13	13	-47%	4%
Recycled	0.8 [note 1]	-	69 [note 1]	11 [note 1]	12	1,344%	13%
ICT [note 2]	0.9	-	2.2	1	0.2	-81%	-83%
Composted food [note 3]	0	-	-	0.3	0.2	100%	-31%
Incinerated with energy recovery	0	-	0.9	1.1	0.8	100%	-27%

Incinerated, no energy recovery	0	-	0	0	0	n/a	n/a
Landfill	24	18	12	0	0	-100%	0%

Note 1: this data has been restated to improve historic data accuracy based on new information or methodology improvements.
Note 2: recycled, reused and recovered (externally). None has been sent to landfill.
Note 3: these figures reflect office food waste from Quay House. Inverdee House does not currently have a separate food waste collection service.

The total available spend on waste management is presented in Table 17. At both Quay House and Inverdee House, waste services are included within the overall facilities management charges, meaning direct expenditure data is not available. In 2024-2025, most recorded waste activity related to ICT equipment, from which value was recovered and returned to JNCC through the sale of materials.

Table 17. JNCC waste spend between the years 2017 to 2018 and 2024 to 2025. For some years, data are unavailable, indicated by a '-' symbol.

Spend (000's £)	2017-2018	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	Percentage change since 2017-2018	Percentage change since last FY
Total	-	3	6	2 [note 1]	0 [note 1]	n/a	-100%
Waste ICT	-	-	3	2	0	n/a	-100%

Note 1: data available for ICT waste only.

We recorded the procurement of 95 consumer single-use plastic items for our office spaces in 2024-2025, primarily related to kitchen consumables. As this is our first full year of tracking these items, no previous year comparisons are available.

Finite resource consumption: Water usage

JNCC's water data (Table 18) is available for our Peterborough office only - Monkstone House pre-2023 and Quay House thereafter. Water use this year is 85% lower than in 2017-2018. We remain unable to obtain usage data for our Inverdee House office, though efforts to access this information are ongoing. Both Quay House and Inverdee House are equipped with grey water recycling and/or rainwater capture systems.

Table 18. JNCC Peterborough office water usage between the years 2017 to 2018 and 2024 to 2025. For some years, data are unavailable, indicated by a '-' symbol.

Water (m^3)	2017-2018	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	Percentage change since 2017-2018	Percentage change since last FY
Water	576	-	-	117	89	-85%	-24%

With regards to expenditure, water bills are included in the annual charge for Quay

House; we are not directly billed from the water company and therefore cannot provide specific expenditure figures.

Sustainable procurement

One of our EMS objectives is to increase the proportion of goods and services procured that have a minimal environmental impact across their lifecycle.
This year, we have developed scoring systems and guidance for sustainable procurement that reflect the three pillars of sustainability: environmental, social and economic. We have also drawn on the Flexible Framework tool to help highlight opportunities for improving the sustainability of our procurement practices.

JNCC suppliers are asked to share whether they are accredited to ISO 14001 or meet JNCC's 'greening credentials' of having an implemented environmental or sustainability policy. As shown in Table 19, there was a decline across all measured factors this year compared to the previous year. In response, further work will be undertaken to review the sustainability of our contracts and the associated scoring mechanisms, to ensure they are equitable and aligned with ongoing sustainable procurement work.

Table 19. Sustainability of JNCC agreements made between the years 2017 to 2018 and 2024 to 2025. For some years, data are unavailable, indicated by a '-' symbol.

Agreements	2017-2018	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	Percentage change since 2017-2018	Percentage change since last FY
Meet JNCC greening credentials (%)	-	65	55	60	50	n/a	-16%
ISO 14001 accredited (%)	-	8	15	13	8	n/a	-37%

Paper reams are only purchased for our Inverdee House office and are shown in Table 20. At our other shared office spaces, printing facilities are managed centrally and cannot be quantified.

Table 20. Number of A4 paper reams equivalent purchased between the years 2017 to 2018 and 2024 to 2025.

Paper	2017-2018	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	Percentage change since 2017-2018	Percentage change since last FY
No. A4 reams equivalent	521	42	14	12 [note 1]	5 [note 1]	-99%	-58%

Note 1: data for Inverdee House only.

Reducing environmental impacts from ICT and Digital

At JNCC, we are responsible for the procurement, management, and disposal of our ICT equipment. As part of our EMS objectives, we are committed to reducing the environmental impact of electrical and electronic equipment (EEE) throughout its lifecycle. This year, we have begun to place greater emphasis on improving data management. Our aim is to raise staff awareness and streamline the data we store, to help avoid unnecessary energy use associated with digital storage. In addition, we have implemented a new waste EEE (WEEE) procedure. This ensures that, when equipment can no longer be used or retained for example for security reasons, it is disposed of responsibly through suppliers who guarantee 100% reuse or recycling.

Other reporting areas

- **Nature recovery and biodiversity action planning.** JNCC does not hold ownership or control over significant natural capital so are not required to report on a natural capital approach. However, we aim to contribute where we can to the environment around our managed offices, for example organising cross-building staff litter picks.
- **Climate change adaptation.** Key risks to JNCC's operations from climate change are identified, monitored and reviewed within EMS planning documentation. Appropriate mitigations, as required, are explored as part of wider JNCC strategy and risk management.
- **Sustainable construction.** No construction or refurbishment projects have been undertaken this year.



Dr G. Harper
Chief Executive
On behalf of the board of directors
XX XXXX 2025

Governance Statement for the Joint Nature Conservation Committee for the year ending 31 March 2025

1. Introduction

This Governance Statement sets out how we have managed and controlled our resources during the year. It provides assurance on how we have conducted our corporate governance, how we have managed significant organisational risks and how we have addressed control issues. The governance arrangements set out in this statement have supported JNCC's strategic priorities throughout the reporting year as evidenced by high levels of partner satisfaction, highly regarded scientific excellence, engaged people and sound assurances.

The underlying financial environment continues to pose significant challenges, combined with years of reducing levels of guaranteed funding and increasing demand pressures. The current economic climate has imposed greater cost pressures across all aspects of our operations and is expected to have an enduring impact on costs in the medium term. Within this overall context, the role of good governance remains critical to stakeholder trust and confidence in our decision making.

As Chief Executive and Accounting Officer, I am responsible for all executive matters carried out by the JNCC Support Co. In delivering this role, I am supported and challenged by the Joint Committee who provide strategic leadership for JNCC within a framework of prudent and effective controls, which enables risk to be assessed and managed. In my Accounting Officer role, I am responsible for the use and stewardship of public assets, and I have responsibilities (and associated powers) to advise the Joint Committee and to act if the Committee makes any decisions that would infringe their governance or statutory responsibilities.

This Annual Governance Statement provides the opportunity for me to provide a candid reflection on whether our governance arrangements are fit for purpose. There have been control weaknesses identified this year, which we have responded to by implementing a financial improvement plan, but the effectiveness of the overall governance and risk framework has been maintained to a good standard, despite these challenges. A culture of accountability and responsibility exists throughout the organisation, and I am driving improvement through Director Accountability Letters and the setting of accountability objectives in Directors' performance management reviews. I am pleased to report that through these discrete changes and an emphasis to build a cohesive and accountable executive team, JNCC continues to have good governance and risk processes in place which have been maintained throughout the year. The creation of a Chief Officers Executive Committee (ExCo) to lead the organisation and a programme director led Senior Leadership Team (SLT) supporting ExCo has further enhanced our governance profile.

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee have considered and reviewed the content of this statement including the control weaknesses identified and are content that this statement reflects the effectiveness of the governance arrangements over the past 12

months and that improvement actions, particularly in relation to financial management have been identified and are being addressed through a series of planned plans.

I am pleased to confirm that risk management processes and systems of internal control have been in place in JNCC for the year ended 31 March 2025, up to the approval of the Annual Report and Accounts and accords with HM Treasury guidance. These processes and systems have been effective, subject to specific issues identified further in this statement.

2. Governance arrangements

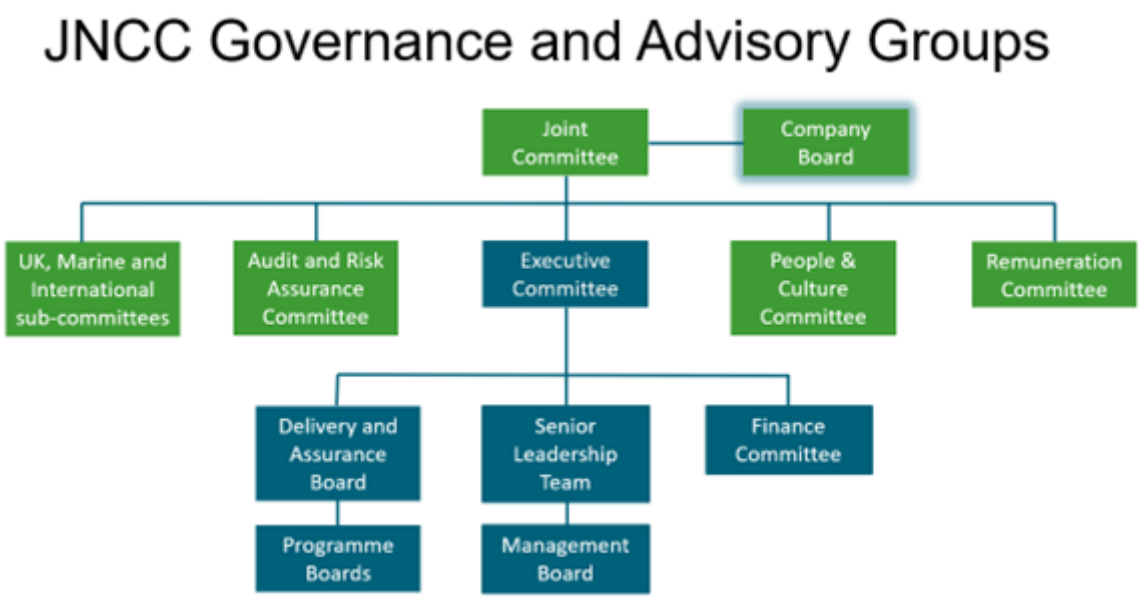
The governance framework

JNCC is an executive Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) sponsored jointly by Defra and the Devolved Governments. It carries out its UK and international functions with technical expertise, impartiality, and transparency, and at arm's length from its sponsors.

JNCC is led by the Joint Committee, which brings together members from the nature conservation bodies for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and independent members appointed by the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs under an independent Chair.

Governance arrangements for JNCC, and the relationship between JNCC, UK government departments, Devolved Governments, and the country nature conservation bodies, are described in a Governance Framework document. This is available at https://data.jncc.gov.uk/data/d2c546d0-5eda-466a-b598-e609a5e51dd5/jncc-framework-document-2022.pdf.

A diagram of the governance structure as of 31 March 2025 is presented below.



JNCC operates to a Corporate Governance Framework that is based on the seven core principles ('the Nolan Principles') of good governance for public services. Through this Framework, JNCC complies with the Principles of Good Governance in Executive NDPBs as they apply to JNCC.

As Accounting Officer, I have responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control and this is informed by the work of the internal auditors and the senior executives responsible for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework. Despite issues in relation to budgetary control and financial management and checks on right to employment, compliance with processes in relation to international travel and quality and reliability of financial information, the internal control, risk management and governance processes have been reasonably effective.

3. Effectiveness of the Joint Committee and Company Board

Joint Committee

The Joint Committee operates within a strategic context, and its remit includes setting the vision, mission, strategic objectives and risk appetite; ensuring that necessary leadership and resources are in place to deliver the JNCC strategy; challenging and supporting management performance; providing assurance on effective controls and risk management.

Joint Committee membership is defined in Schedule 4 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, and in total comprises 14 non-executive members and in 2024 to 25 was chaired by two interim chairs, Cath Denholm (1 April-31 December 2024), and Tom Meagher (1 January to 20 June 2025). Three new independent

members (Dan Ebanks, Rachael Garrett and Marsha Ramroop) joined on 1 February 2025. Cath Denholm's tenure on the Joint Committee ended on 3 April 2025.

Joint Committee members are all non-executives and have the appropriate skills, experience, independence and knowledge to enable the Joint Committee to discharge its duties and responsibilities. The Joint Committee undertakes assessments of its performance every two years in line with biennial performance assessments undertaken by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee. The last assessment took place in June 2024 and was externally facilitated by TIAA consultants. The assessment concluded that JNCC has a strong, visionary strategy, with the next step to develop phased delivery plans, with SMART, concise Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), which reflect a more proactive approach to influencing policy. The assessment provided a good opportunity to re-set the way the Joint Committee and its sub-groups/committees work, taking a 'golden thread' approach to strategy delivery, risk and performance management. It highlighted the positive culture, and constructive working relationship between the executive and non-executives, with active participation and psychological safety in speaking up at meetings. Succession planning, with an improved training and development programme for non-executives and making more use of the expertise of Joint Committee members within the wider organisation were key actions to take forward, alongside strengthening assurance versus reassurance reporting to the Joint Committee.

Annually, the Joint Committee agrees a small number of work objectives that are aligned with JNCC's strategy. Objectives define how the Committee will add value to the organisation each year and how it will enhance its own effectiveness. Annual objectives are also used to facilitate a realistic assessment of Committee and member performance. In 2024 to 2025 specific tasks within key objectives included overseeing the implementation of Together for Nature and delivery of the 2024 to 2025 business plan, advising on strategic resource requirements and supporting the achievement and maintenance of ISO 14001:2015 certification by overseeing continual improvement of JNCC's environmental management system.

Conflicts of interest declared by Joint Committee members are managed by the Chair to ensure any necessary separation of the topic and the individual. During the year, no conflicts of interest at meetings were reported but conflicts between Cath Denholm's new role within the Department of Energy Security and Net Zero were managed effectively with the Interim Deputy Chair, Mel Austen stepping in to cover issues where a conflict could be perceived. JNCC maintains a register of interests for all Joint Committee members and publishes the register on the JNCC website https://jncc.gov.uk/about-jncc/who-we-are/joint-committee/register-of-interests/.

The Joint Committee reviews quarterly performance data provided by the executive. The Committee considered this data to be of an adequate quality and is content that all relevant matters are correctly reported for their assessment. This judgement is further assured through formal reports from Committee sub-committees such as the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) and People and Culture Committee (PCC).

JNCC has delivered its priorities through a year of challenges. 21 of our 37 key milestones were complete by the end of the year with most remaining milestones due

for completion early in 2025 to 2026. Additional recruitment controls applied over the year have eased financial pressures but a more strategic approach to workforce planning and flexible resourcing is planned in future years to maintain strong delivery and impact while easing workload pressures and supporting JNCC's vision for thriving nature for a sustainable future.

As well as challenge and assurance of JNCC's operational performance, other significant items the Joint Committee addressed in the year included a strategy day in June to consider implementation of the JNCC Strategy and how we communicate our strategy and purpose; review of UK Biodiversity Indicators and their contribution to the CBD Global Biodiversity Framework; formal reporting into the Joint Committee; Business planning and Spending Review; a revised schedule of delegations; and a second strategy day in March 2025 to reflect and consider JNCC's future role and engagement with wider governments.

Company Board

Support is provided to the Joint Committee by a company limited by guarantee, JNCC Support Co, which was incorporated on 2 March 2005. The Joint Committee has delegated the operational delivery of JNCC's functions and duties to the company through me as Chief Executive. The Company Board comprises Joint Committee members, me as Chief Executive, David Collins as Director of Finance & Resources, Dave Stone as Chief Scientist and Chris Tuckett as Chief Officer, Strategy & Impact. The Company Board met in June 2024 to approve the Annual Report and Accounts for 2023 to 2024.

Attendance by members at meetings of the Joint Committee, Company Board and its standing sub-committees, are detailed in Table 21 below.

Table 21 Attendance at meetings in 2024 to 2025.

	Joint Committee		JNCC Support Co Board		ARAC		Remuneration Committee		People Committee	
Members	**Meetings**	**Att**	**Meetings**	**Att**	**Meetings**	**Att**	**Meetings**	**Att**	**Meetings**	**Att**
Professor Melanie Austen	4	3	1	1	4	3	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Lord David Blencathra	3	2	1	1	N/A		N/A		N/A	
Ms Cath Denholm	4	4	1	1	N/A		2	2	4	4

Mr Daniel Ebanks	1	1	N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A			
Professor Colin Galbraith	4	4	1	1	N/A		N/A		N/A			
Professor Rachael Garrett	1	1	N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A			
Professor Pete Higgins	4	3	1	1	4	3	2	2	N/A			
Rhys Jones	4	0	1	0	N/A		N/A		N/A			
Professor Thomas Meagher	4	4	1	1	N/A		N/A		N/A			
Professor Julian Orford	3	3	1	1	N/A		N/A		N/A			
Professor Steve Ormerod	4	4	1	1	N/A		N/A		N/A			
Ms Marsha Ramroop	1	1	N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A			
ARAC Independent members (not members of the Joint Committee)												
Karen Balmer	N/A		N/A		4	3	N/A		4	4		
Nigel Reader	N/A		N/A		4	4	2	1	4	4		
Executive members of the Company Board (not members of the Joint Committee, ARAC, Remuneration Committee & People & Culture Committee)												
Dr Gemma Harper	N/A		1	1	N/A		N/A		N/A			

Mr David Collins	N/A	1	1	N/A	N/A	N/A

Lord David Blencathra left Joint Committee on 11/12/2024

Mr Dan Ebanks, Professor Rachael Garrett and Ms Marsha Ramroop joined Joint Committee on 01/02/2025

Professor Julian Orford left Joint Committee on 28/02/2024.

Mr Nigel Reader joined the Remuneration Committee in September 2024.

4. Joint Committee and its sub-committees

The Joint Committee leads JNCC and has overall responsibility for fulfilling the statutory functions of JNCC and in maintaining an effective framework of corporate governance, promoting the efficient and effective use of resources.

The Joint Committee is supported in its work by three standing sub-committees: Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, People & Culture Committee and Remuneration Committee, and three thematic sub-groups: Marine (including marine protected areas), International & UK Overseas Territories and UK Coordination. In December 2024, it was agreed that the Chief Scientists Group (CSG) would become a sub-committee of the Joint Committee and would be co-chaired by the Chief Scientist and a Joint Committee member.

A schedule of delegations for financial and non-financial delegations is in place, and both were revised in a new format in 2024 to reflect the responsibilities of the Joint Committee, Company Board, and sub-committees, alongside executive and staff delegations.

Whilst the Joint Committee has performed its duties well during the year, delays with recruiting new independent members and a permanent chair have affected the ability to move forward on some strategic issues and reshaping thematic sub-groups to deliver the JNCC Strategy. The appointment of Dr David Cooper in June 2025 as the new JNCC Chair is welcomed and means that the Joint Committee can now embark on its ambitious plans to delivery its strategy while seeking opportunities to improve the organisation’s productivity and efficiency

ARAC

During 2024 to 2025, ARAC was chaired by Nigel Reader an independent external member. ARAC’s membership consisted of two Joint Committee members and two independent external members (including the chair). Key topics during the year

included approving the internal audit plan and strategy, reviewing the draft Annual Report & Accounts and recommending them to the Company Board, reviewing the international travel policy and reviewing the processes and procedures in relation to overseas travel and associated risks, reviewing JNCC's reserves policy, discussing Executive's plan to improve JNCC's financial management capability, agreed the external audit strategy, undertook an annual review of accounting policies, noted the review of Government Functional Standards undertaken by the Executive, noted the annual report on cyber security produced by the Head of IT and recommended the revised schedule of delegations be approved by the Joint Committee.

ARAC provides the primary assurance mechanism. It operates in accordance with the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Handbook, published by HM Treasury. ARAC monitors JNCC's governance and control systems and advises on internal and external audit matters, risk and governance. ARAC meets four times a year and meets intersessionally as required. Its meetings are attended by JNCC's new internal audit providers (BDO) and the National Audit Office. BDO replaced the Government Internal Audit Agency as providers of internal audit services to JNCC in April 2024.

ARAC has a clear purpose, supports the improvement of JNCC and covers the areas set out in the HM Treasury Handbook for ARAC's. Understandably during the year, more attention was given to financial risk management and the challenges faced by the executive in this area. Once there is more grip and control in this area, there is a commitment from ARAC to take a more balanced, strategic view of risks to the delivery of the JNCC Strategy 'Together for Nature.' This provides a good opportunity to re-set the risk assurance framework, linking it explicitly to strategic objectives, using a risk lens to shape the agenda and referring more to risk appetite in discussions.

The Executive values ARAC's curiosity, openness, honesty and constructive and supportive challenge. There is a positive culture, with appreciative working relationships between executive and members, and difficult issues are well managed, as demonstrated by the recent, robust challenge on financial management. ARAC continues to press the Executive to move more quickly to escalate and address emerging risks including taking practical actions to address findings and recommendations from internal and external audit reviews.

ARAC currently has the appropriate knowledge, experience and credibility and is well led and chaired. The ARAC Chair meets regularly with the Chief Operating Officer, Director of Finance & Governance, Governance Manager, Senior auditor in BDO and six monthly with the JNCC Chair. The ARAC Chair refers to the Joint Committee all issues that pose a major risk to the business integrity of JNCC and those that in their judgement require disclosure to the full Committee or need immediate action. This is actioned through a report to each Joint Committee meeting, which advises and assures Joint Committee members and alerts them to key issues.

ARAC reviews its performance every two years, with a review undertaken in 2024 which was externally facilitated by TIAA consultants. Actions to take forward included succession planning for the chair and members, a training needs analysis for members with an agreed training and development plan, establishing a buddying/mentoring scheme for new members and support for the executive in paper

writing with more succinct, better summaries, writing for assurance, using more data and independent sources of assurance.

ARAC and the executive's relationship with auditors is seen as positive, the audit programme coverage is appropriate, risk-based and responsive and reports noted as being fair and helpful. An annual risk-based audit plan, operating to professional internal audit standards, has been delivered and the annual opinion from the Head of Internal Audit provided reasonable assurance over the controls reviewed in the year. This means that some improvements are required to enhance the adequacy and effectiveness of the framework of governance, risk management and control, but overall, there were no significant weaknesses putting JNCC's governance framework at significant risk. The executive have largely agreed with the recommendations arising from the audits undertaken in 2024 to 2025 and are committed to implementing improvements at a faster pace to enhance the adequacy and effectiveness of the framework of governance, risk management and control.

People Committee

The People Committee provides strategic advice, support and challenge to management and assurance to the Joint Committee on all people and people-related matters (including internal communications and workspace) affecting the employee lifecycle. The Committee takes a high level and strategic view of people related issues, with an overall purpose of ensuring a clear line of sight between the JNCC strategic plan, the People Strategy, people-related strategic risks, performance against people-related metrics and the organisation's people policies and initiatives. The Committee was chaired by Ms Cath Denholm, an independent member of the Joint Committee, throughout the year. The Committee meets four times a year and maintained an annual schedule of thematic areas, covering the full range of people issues, including the effectiveness of JNCC's people and transformation strategies; health, wellbeing and engagement of staff, fair and consistent management and reward; capability and capacity and quality and effectiveness of workspaces and policies. In September, the Committee agreed to suspend the annual schedule of thematic areas to focus on a more tactical agenda that would provide more support to the executive.

The People Committee benefits from having amongst its membership, ARAC members Nigel Reader and Karen Balmer. This creates a valuable governance link with the work of ARAC.

In April 2025, the People Committee was renamed to People & Culture Committee.

Remuneration Committee

The Remuneration Committee reverted back to a sub-committee in its own right in 2024, having been a sub-committee of the People and Culture Committee. The Committee meets twice a year and is chaired by the JNCC Chair. In 2024/25 this was Cath Denholm, as the Committee did not meet during Tom Meagher's term as interim

chair. This sub-group sets the overall pay remit for staff employed by the company on the Joint Committee's behalf (with the approval of Defra and Treasury as required) and sets and reviews the terms and conditions and performance objectives for the Chief Executive.

International, Marine and UK Coordination sub-groups

The three thematic sub-groups of the Joint Committee support the implementation of JNCC's strategy. Each sub-group in 2024 to 2025 was tasked with the same four objectives: -

- Produce a statement of what JNCC is trying to achieve in their respective spaces.
- Identify the top five work areas to develop over the next two spending rounds.
- Identify specific areas of work where JNCC should reduce activity.
- Consider the barriers to achieving such a change and refocus.

Each sub-group oversaw the development of the three thematic roadmaps (Marine, International and UK Co-ordination) which support the delivery of the overarching JNCC strategy. Each sub-group supported the delivery of the policies and programmes across JNCC in their respective areas and formally reported to the Joint Committee at each of its meetings.

Chief Scientists Group

The Chief Scientists' Group (CSG) is a director-level group of the four country Statutory Nature Conservation Bodies and JNCC. Each member of CSG is accountable to their own Chief Executive Officer with the delegated authority to take decisions and commit resources on behalf of their employing organisation. Its scope is terrestrial and marine nature conservation in its broadest sense, focussed on the United Kingdom but covering wider concerns as appropriate. The goals are to share best practice and to discuss, develop and jointly resource solutions for common nature conservation and recovery issues. It exchanges information among the five organisations, thereby avoiding duplication of effort and identifying opportunities for further collaborative working.

In December 2024, the Joint Committee agreed to make the CSG a sub-committee of the Joint Committee. The core work of the CSG is germane to the purposes of Joint Committee in that it provides advice and disseminates knowledge; establishes common standards throughout the United Kingdom and drives research into nature conservation and recovery and the analysis of the resulting information; and commissions or supports research.

JNCC UK Sponsor Group

The JNCC UK Sponsor Group brings together senior officials from JNCC, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and the Devolved Governments (DGs) to provide strategic policy direction and promote increasing collaboration between JNCC and its sponsors.

The Group meets annually with the meeting affording an opportunity to impart information and allows Defra and the DGs to agree shared priorities for JNCC, sign off contributions to JNCC's Grant-in-Aid (GiA) settlement and approve the business plan for a given financial year.

The Group is chaired by me as JNCC's CEO, with membership from all four UK countries at senior level, with parity across Defra and the DGs.

5. Executive governance framework

Executive Leadership

Executive Committee (ExCo)

The Executive Leadership Team (ELT) was disbanded in 2024 with a new Executive Committee (ExCo) formed which comprises the four Chief Officers and Head of Organisational Development. ExCo is a generative forum which shapes and develops the organisation's strategic direction and priorities. It oversees budget and financial management; corporate performance; assessment and control of risk; and implementation of major change programmes. The Executive Committee has a focus on culture, people and resource management to ensure the people and culture of the organisation are supporting the delivery of JNCC's strategy.

ExCo is a high-level decision-making group and is the senior Executive authority for decisions or serious matters which need to be escalated within the organisation. ExCo's key priorities include:

- Building a culture that supports integrated ways of working that will deliver the JNCC's strategic objectives.
- Agreeing the high-level priorities of JNCC to deliver on strategic objectives.
- ensuring effective leadership and maintaining oversight of the strategic direction.
- ensuring strategic allocation and management of resources aligned with priorities.

During 2024 to 2025 its membership consisted of:

- Dr Gemma Harper, Chief Executive.
- Mr David Collins, Director of Finance and Resources (Chief Operating Officer from 1 April 2025).
- Mr Dave Stone, Chief Scientist.
- Dr Chris Tuckett, Chief Officer, Strategy & Impact.
- Ms Lynn Heeley, Head of Organisational Development

ExCo is chaired by me as the JNCC CEO and meets fortnightly in person.

As a new board its effectiveness is subject to review in 2025.

Senior Leadership Team

The Senior Leadership Team was formed in 2024 following the disbanding of the Executive Leadership Team (ELT). SLT supports the Executive Committee to deliver JNCC's strategy and in their decision-making by reviewing and advising on cross-cutting topics, strategy implementation and business planning.

During 2024 to 2025 SLT membership consisted of:

- Mr David Collins, Director of Finance and Resources.
- Mr Dave Stone, Chief Scientist.
- Dr Chris Tuckett, Chief Officer, Strategy & Impact.
- Ms Lynn Heeley, Head of Organisational Development.
- Mr John Goold, Director of Marine Evidence and Advice.
- Dr Steve Wilkinson, Director of Ecosystem Evidence and Advice.
- Ms Natalie Askew and Ms Beth Stoker (job share), Directors of International Evidence and Advice.
- Dr Claire Callaghan, Director of Finance, Planning and Governance.
- Ms Michelle Fulford, Director of People and Infrastructure.

As CEO I attend by invitation.

SLT is chaired by each member on a rotational basis. It meets monthly with fortnightly 'light' meetings between Chris Tuckett and the four science directors that directly report to her (John Goold, Steve Wilkinson, Natalie Askew and Beth Stoker).

As a new board its effectiveness is subject to review in 2025.

Delivery & Assurance Board

The Delivery & Assurance Board meets quarterly and is chaired by me as the JNCC CEO. The role of the Board is to identify and respond to issues, challenges and risks raised by the Director-led Programme Boards, by providing clear advice and decisions. The Board ensures a consistent and accountable approach to governance and management of work priorities in line with the organisational strategy across JNCC's directorates. The Board also undertakes deep dives into significant risks,

assessing the impact of the mitigation being implemented. Its findings are reported and discussed at ARAC.

Management Board

Management Board revised its terms of reference in 2024. This board provides a senior leader level forum for discussion and collective problem solving of topics that are of concern to staff. Its role is to optimise the efficient delivery of JNCC's work by enabling cross organisational topics to be addressed collectively and efficiently in a single forum and provide advice and information to the Executive Committee, the Senior Leadership Team and the Joint Committee and review new and developing cross-cutting scientific, technical or corporate issues and opportunities alongside the implications for JNCC.

Management Board is chaired by one of our Chief Officers and its membership comprises of all Team Leaders, Chief Officers and Directors.

Programme Boards

Programme Boards are based on JNCC's four thematic themes, UK Coordination, Marine, International and Corporate Services. These Boards support the Director in leading the strategic thematic work area within JNCC for the life cycle of the JNCC strategy, which is currently 2030. All four Boards work together to ensure consistency in approach to monitoring and managing work priorities in line with the organisational strategy, identifying and managing risk and effective reporting whilst creating space for learning as well as placing wellbeing of people at the heart of what JNCC achieves.

Programme Boards support the Delivery & Assurance Board to help them provide clear advice and decisions on issues, challenges and risks raised through quarterly performance reporting. This helps to ensure a consistent and accountable approach to governance and management of work priorities in line with the organisational strategy across the directorates.

During the year, programme boards helped to maintain an overview of customer needs covering the development and implementation of policy, assessed the existing and potential role for JNCC in addressing these and the strength of this role relative to other organisations. They also individually developed a road map and theory of change for the implementation of the JNCC strategy.

Programme Boards meet monthly and consist of Team Leaders responsible for work in their respective areas. Team Leaders are supported at each meeting by business partner representatives from Communications, HR, Finance and Digital & Data Solutions Teams.

6. Financial management and control

JNCC's financial management and budgetary control processes have not always provided the quality, consistency and reliability of information and advice required, which has, at times, resulted in the Executive having less confidence in our forecast year-end financial position and in taking appropriate action to manage financial risks. Accordingly, it has not been possible to consistently support the Joint Committee in exercising its role in overseeing and scrutinising the resources delegated to the Executive.

Although the organisation ultimately recorded an underspend across the period, measures to improve the ability of the organisation to plan and forecast spend, income and workforce, did not develop as quickly or as effectively as was intended in the early part of the year. While there has been success in strengthening and stabilising the Finance and Planning Team after a period of significant staff turnover and in improving the business partnering service, the core of the team is still relatively new to the organisation with systems and processes in need of renewal. Capacity and capability will need to continue to be addressed in 2025 to 2026 with a commitment and focus to develop and progress the agreed financial management improvement plan to eliminate the shortcomings especially in the area of financial forecasting. This plan alongside the new integrated finance and HR system should refresh and simplify processes while enhancing controls and management information throughout the annual financial cycle. This will need to be supported by robust training for all staff and broader financial training for budget holders and senior managers. It is a key area for ARAC's continuing focus.

Plans to establish a Portfolio Management Office (PMO) with 3-4 members of staff from the start of the new financial year were scaled back during the year as a result of resourcing and recruitment controls across the organisation. One experienced member of staff was assigned to establish the function and prioritise work on the development of a new suite of performance reporting capabilities, which are offered through our new corporate system, and to design and develop our capacity and capability in business planning and resource allocation. We plan to review resource requirements to realise the full benefits of the PMO function in working closely alongside the finance team or other cross cutting support functions, to ensure that our finance and other reporting systems operate effectively together.

Government Functional Standards

Government functional standards are essential to creating a coherent, effective, and mutually understood way of working across all government organisations. They work to ensure value for taxpayers' money and provide guidelines for assurance, risk management and capability improvement. It is therefore essential that JNCC is continually monitoring our ways of working as well as making relevant adjustments to ensure conformity with functional standards.

During 2024 to 2025 we have revitalised our efforts to review compliance and alignment with an updated suite of functional standards. We joined the Defra ALB Functional Standards Working Group to access support and advice on managing functions and compliance.

Comprehensive self-assessment reviews have been conducted across multiple areas, including Finance, Analysis, Communications, and IT. Key highlights include Finance compliance moving from 93% in 2022 to 94% in 2025 and Communications from 84% to 90% met. Full compliance with all internal audit standards has also been achieved, requiring no further action.

We have peer-reviewed the communications functional standard with Historic England as part of the Government Communication Service (GCS) pilot for ALB's. This was followed by discussions and knowledge sharing on systems, processes and experiences which have developed relationships well beyond compliance with the standards to support the development of strategic communications capability. We reviewed the project delivery standard as part of the establishment and implementation of the Project Management Office (PMO).

Budgetary pressures and capacity constraints have limited the pace of compliance in some areas particularly around IT security and project delivery. In particular, challenges with staff turnover and the implementation of a new Finance and HR system have affected our work in this area. Although our assessment overall is that compliance against the standard has improved in terms of the number of requirements met, there remains some substantial work to ensure that improvements are fully and consistently applied.

JNCC receives corporate services from Defra in two areas. JNCC's estates management function is provided by Defra Group Property and has been assessed as 'Good.' JNCC relies on joint service provision for some Digital projects, and this provision has been rated as "Developing" against the Digital Functional Standard. As part of the services delivery model, Defra and its Heads of Profession conduct regular benchmarking and assessments against cross government Standards. These are used to determine future development areas and investment bids and requirements.

External audit of JNCC

The external audit of the financial statements is undertaken by the National Audit Office (NAO). The NAO's audit certificate has been included in this document.

7. ARAC assurance statement

Presentation of an annual assurance statement reflects the principles of good corporate governance and contributes to the effective delivery of the JNCC's strategy "Together for Nature." The work of ARAC provides assurance to the Joint Committee in relation to a wide range of governance issues, including risk management, internal

and external audit, environmental and financial management. This is supported by a risk based internal audit annual work plan, targeted to the highest risk areas.

Through ARAC meetings, reports and action plans presented and agreed, outputs from internal and external audit, together with additional assurance provided by the Executive, ARAC has effectively discharged its duties during 2024-25 and can confirm to the Joint Committee that arrangements for risk management, control and governance, efficiency, and effectiveness are in place and are working sufficiently to allow for a moderate assurance opinion.

ARAC can provide assurance that, on the whole, these arrangements support the organisation in fulfilling its policies, aims and objectives, enabling it to identify, understand and manage its principal risks, and to be accountable and transparent in its governance. During the year, the standard and reliability of financial management has progressively improved. There are however a number of actions still to be fully implemented in relation to management's financial improvement plan which are required to ensure JNCC has a robust financial management and forecasting process in place that provides accurate financial information as the basis for decision-making.

ARAC notes the commitment of the Accounting Officer and the Chief Officers to make the necessary improvements throughout 2025 and 2026 to the financial management processes, alongside the work to ensure that policies, processes and procedures in relation to risk management, governance, and internal controls are easily understood, clearly communicated and sufficiently incorporated into JNCC's day to day work.

8. Risk management

Overall responsibility for risk lies with the Joint Committee. Responsibility for the effective management of risk within JNCC rests with ExCo and SLT, with leadership of the risk management process provided by me as Chief Executive and Accounting Officer. Effective risk management and governance is critical to the ability of JNCC to achieve its objectives and manage the risks it faces.

JNCC ensures that the risks that it faces are dealt with in an appropriate manner, in accordance with relevant aspects of best practice in corporate governance, and adopting the principles contained within the Treasury guidance Management of Risk: Principles and Concepts https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/orange-book.

The risk management system in JNCC, is based on a hierarchical structure, with risk escalation processes detailed in our risk management strategy. This structure promotes the escalation of risks that cannot be controlled at lower levels, or which may have an impact on teams or the organisation as a whole. JNCC's risk management process comprises:

- A high-level corporate risk register, which includes the principal long-term risks affecting JNCC.
- An annual significant risks register capturing a small number of significant risks which are 'live' and require active management during the year.
- A risk appetite statement.

- Quarterly reporting on significant risks to the Delivery & Assurance Board (DAB), the Joint Committee and ARAC
- Risk drill-downs undertaken by DAB and reported to ARAC, evidence and challenge the mitigation measures in place and propose additional action where required. DAB undertook two risk drill downs during the year in the areas of financial management and funding and organisational impact.

In addition to quarterly risk reporting on the annual significant risks register, regular consideration and reporting of new or fast-evolving risks is undertaken by ARAC.

The significant risks register forms an integral part of the internal audit process in informing the internal audit operational plan and helps to focus audit effort on key risk areas. From April 2025, a quarterly review of the corporate risk register is now undertaken by SLT.

In March 2025, our internal audit team provided a risk workshop for Team Leaders and Directors. The workshop focussed on:

- Risk management as a concept.
- How risk management works in JNCC.
- How risk management feeds into the business.
- Risk management approach and methods.
- How the Joint Committee and Executive manage risk.
- The concept of risk appetite and how risk appetite works in practice.
- How to realise opportunities from increasing our risk appetite.
- How to manage risks outside of our control.
- How to raise risks and what to do if you suspect something does not look right.
- How risk should be escalated to ensure it is dealt with.

An internal audit of our risk management processes was undertaken in 2024 and concluded that we have a standard approach to risk management and adequate controls are in place in line with the size of the organisation. There is clear reporting and oversight of the significant risks register provided by ARAC and the Executive and the risk management strategy is updated annually and describes the risk management processes within the organisation. Risk appetites are defined to ensure that risks are managed within the appetite set by the Joint Committee and reviewed annually, and roles and responsibilities are documented within the strategy.

Overall, a moderate level of assurance over the design and operational effectiveness of the risk management control environment was achieved, with 5 recommendations for improvement, 2 were medium priority and 3 low priority.

Risk appetite

Public sector organisations like JNCC cannot be culturally risk averse and be successful. Effective and meaningful risk management is important in taking a balanced view of risk and opportunity in delivering JNCC's ambition on nature

recovery. We use our risk appetite to support our decision-making, improve our performance and inform spending review and resource prioritisation processes.

Every 6 months, the Joint Committee are asked to review the risk appetite and agree that it reflects the current risk picture, considering previous risk discussions and any new and emerging risk. The Committee is asked to set the organisational risk appetite, with an appreciation that it includes a degree of risk-taking to achieve the organisation's ambition for nature recovery, as set out in the JNCC strategy.

JNCC risk appetite and statements

Introduction

Our risk appetite has been defined following consideration of organisational risks, issues and consequences. Appetite levels will vary, in some areas our risk tolerance will be minimalist or cautious, in others, we are open for risk and are willing to carry risk in the pursuit of our strategic objectives and to deliver our vision for thriving nature for a sustainable future.

We should always aim to operate our activities at the levels defined below. Where activities are anticipated to exceed the defined levels, this must be highlighted through the appropriate governance mechanisms.

Risk appetite scales: -
Averse - Avoidance of risk and uncertainty in achievement of key deliverables or initiatives is key objective. Activities undertaken will only be those considered to carry virtually no inherent risk.
Minimal – Preference for very safe business delivery options that have a low degree of inherent risk with the potential for benefit/return not a key driver. Activities will only be undertaken where they have a low degree of inherent risk.
Cautious - Preference for safe options that have a low degree of inherent risk and only limited potential for benefit. Willing to tolerate a degree of risk in selecting which activities to undertake to achieve key deliverables or initiatives, where we have identified scope to achieve significant benefit and/or realise an opportunity. Activities undertaken may carry a high degree of inherent risk that is deemed controllable to a large extent.
Open - Willing to consider all options and choose one most likely to result in successful delivery while providing an acceptable level of benefit. Seek to achieve a balance between a high likelihood of successful delivery and a high degree of benefit and value for money. Activities themselves may potentially carry, or contribute to, a high degree of residual risk.
Eager - Eager to be innovative and to choose options based on maximising opportunities and potential higher benefit even if those activities carry a very high residual risk.

Risk Appetite by Category

Risk Category	Risk Appetite
People/Culture/Values	Open
Cyber Security and Data Management	Cautious
Governance/Compliance/Legal	Cautious
Reputation/Relationships	Open
Together for Nature Implementation & Impact	Eager

Financial Management	Cautious
Funding	Eager

Risk Appetite Statements

People/Culture/Values

Risk appetite: **OPEN**

Risk appetite statement

We are prepared to invest in our people to create the innovative mix of skills that we need to deliver our vision for thriving nature for a sustainable future. We will support, develop and utilise the full potential of our people, delivering our new People Strategy effectively. JNCC will endeavour to be an excellent employer by making the workplace a stimulating and safe place to work, placing importance on a culture of diversity, equity and inclusion, dignity and respect, organisational values, learning and development, constructive performance appraisal, and personal security. We aim to build a resilient and flexible workforce now and for the future, which models the organisation we are and aspire to be, valuing our people for their capabilities, competencies, contributions and professionalism.

Cyber Security and Data Management

Risk appetite: **CAUTIOUS**

Risk appetite statement

On cyber security, we are committed to having in place robust and proportionate controls based on current security capabilities, the likelihood of threats, and the impact of any potential cyber breach. Continuing investment in cyber security will be sufficient to reduce the remaining technology and cyber risks to a point the organisation can tolerate. We are committed to ensuring that information is authentic, appropriately classified, properly conserved and managed in accordance with legislative and business requirements. We will ensure that a robust information management policy is in place, complete with a suite of protocols. All our people are expected to comply with policies and procedures in relation to cyber security and information management and annual training in this area for all our people is mandatory.

Governance/Compliance/Legal

Risk appetite: **CAUTIOUS**

Risk appetite statement

We will comply with the high standards of corporate governance expected of a public body and ensure that our activities are carried out in accordance with the regulatory parameters set. We will also ensure that we follow all related legislation associated with our activities. Compliance with policies and procedures is expected at all times unless there is good reason for alternative action to be taken.

Reputation/Relationships

Risk appetite: **OPEN**

Risk appetite statement

JNCC's reputation has been a key driver to the organisation's success. Our reputation across the UK and internationally for delivering high quality evidence and advice should therefore be maintained and enhanced through acting in line with our values. To continue to carry out our role effectively, we need to build relationships and partnerships with a range of government and non-government bodies. Our key strengths are convenor and collaborator, collaboration being a key JNCC value. A strong partnership working culture is important in ensuring that we are successful in our pursuit of nature recovery. Our existing relationships are strong, but we need to create and build additional relationships with appropriate sponsors, funders and partners in progress (particularly across government) to deliver our impact and establish a positive profile across a wider range of sectors. New relationships and partnerships are also essential to our continued success and financial sustainability. There may be necessary elements of risk-taking, working with a new, unfamiliar partner that we should be prepared to take to realise the ambition in our strategy. Risks must be fully understood, discussed and managed throughout the relationship building process.

Together for Nature Implementation and Impact

Risk appetite: **EAGER**

Risk appetite statement

Nature is in crisis around the world with species and habitats declining, ecosystem processes failing rapidly and people becoming disconnected from the natural world on which they depend. There is an urgent need to understand the changes we are seeing and to use this knowledge to help nature recover. We have a strong record of success

in providing robust evidence and trusted advice to enable governments, and other stakeholders, to achieve their policy objectives via effective evidence-based decision making. We should work in a way that means we continue to be relevant and adaptable and, importantly, flexible to meet evolving and emerging challenges. We encourage all our people to be innovative, one of our key values, and creative in the way we deliver 'Together for Nature.' We should all actively seek out opportunities to take on new roles that help deliver our outcomes and improve our reach and profile. In our day-to-day work, we should continue to be intentional about our influence and our impact, to ensure we leave a legacy that we would all be proud of.

Financial Management

Risk appetite: **CAUTIOUS**

Risk appetite statement

We recognise that public finances will continue to remain under significant pressure. As a public body it is imperative that we manage public money in accordance with the high standards of probity expected. We can and should innovate in carrying out our responsibilities, using new technology and adopting good business practices, ensuring value for money in the use and deployment of our financial resources and setting a balanced budget which is maintained each year. All staff must follow and meet the financial management standards set out in *Managing Public Money.*

Funding

Risk appetite: **EAGER**

Risk appetite statement

Our relevance, expertise and skills need to be sufficiently understood and supported to ensure we secure adequate and appropriate funding to have the maximum impact on nature recovery and to achieve the ambitions in 'Together for Nature.' While income generation alone cannot mitigate the financial burden we face, it is becoming increasingly important to ensure that the organisation is financially robust, resilient and offering quality services that are competitive in the sectors we work in. We have benefited from a number of years of increased funding opportunities, which has supported a growth in capacity and capability in our workforce, we now need to build on that further and be eager to diversify our income streams and explore new revenue opportunities, avoiding reliance solely on a small number of income sources. This requires setting clear goals, regularly reviewing and refining work areas, developing new and more broader collaborations and managing any risks associated in engaging with new partners and organisations. Colleagues will be supported in their pursuit of external funding, with the organisation adopting a no blame culture. Underpinning this move to a more commercial mindset, provides an opportunity to frame a way of working which seeks to maximise efficiency, improve our offer, target our services and provide best value in all we do as well as improving our financial resilience and sustainability.

Significant risks managed during 2024 to 25

JNCC's significant risks in 2024 to 2025 can be found in Table 22 below. Implementation of key mitigation is monitored and reported throughout the year to ARAC and the Joint Committee.

Table 22. JNCC significant risks in 2024 to 2025.

Risk No.	**Risk description**
Risk 1 People & place	JNCC's ambitions in "Together for Nature" are impeded, due to an inability to align the organisation's staffing, structure, capabilities, hybrid working environment and culture to deliver on all aspects of the strategy.
Risk 2 Cyber and information security	Ineffective disaster recovery options exercised as a result of inadvertent staff behaviour or malicious intrusion on the network results in a prolonged loss of the infrastructure we need to support delivery of strategic priorities.
Risk 3 Financial management & funding	**3a. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT** Inability to manage financial resources in accordance with requirements and financial controls, results in a failure to achieve a balanced budget at the year end, resulting in failure to comply with financial requirements of a public body and delegated authority and challenges to our licence to operate effectively as an independent ALB. **3b. FUNDING** JNCC's relevance, expertise and skills are not sufficiently understood and/or supported to ensure we secure the right kind of funding to have maximum impact and achieve our strategy, or that while delivering our statutory commitments and other expectations from funders.
Risk 4 Organisational Impact	Lack of stakeholder engagement, visibility, and profile of JNCC work across the UK, the UK Overseas Territories and internationally results in JNCC not optimising its convening role and unique position, leading to weakened relationships with key sponsors, funders and partners, and low visibility and confidence in JNCC's science and evidence products leading to failure to shape decision making.

Risk 5 Organisational Compliance	Limited organisational awareness and policy complexity leads to a lack of knowledge, understanding of when to activate, and compliance with policies and processes, leads to failure to mitigate and manage risks to staff and business delivery.

Significant risks in 2025 to 2026

Our overarching risk in the coming 12 months is the impact and influence we have to deal with the nature and climate crisis around the world. JNCC has a unique role as the UK-wide advisor on nature, and in enacting our role, we must align with and support the priorities of the UK, Devolved Governments, Crown Dependencies and Overseas Territories, and provide our evidence and data in a clear and compelling way to decision-makers. Looking ahead we need to continue to build the knowledge base, predicting the future for nature and informing policy agendas to reverse biodiversity decline. Our existing relationships are strong, but maintaining these and building new relationships with key decision-makers is vital to maximise the impact of JNCC and deliver against our Strategy 'Together for Nature.'

Our risk themes for the next 12 months are:

Funding flexibility (linked to Strategic Priority 7) – JNCC's relevance, expertise and skills are not sufficiently understood or recognised and/or supported to ensure we receive the correct and sufficient level of funding to ensure impact, to achieve our strategy and to ensure delivery of statutory functions.

Engagement and relationships (linked to Strategic Priorities 2 and 7) – Lack of profile or limited access to engagement with the right people lead to misunderstanding about or lack of knowledge of JNCC's contribution and/or role leading to a failure to be involved in relevant decision making.

Culture and behaviours (linked to Strategic Priority 7) – Lack of alignment in culture and behaviour with JNCC's requirements impedes delivery of the strategy and impacts delivery and efficiency.

Capabilities and skills (linked to Strategic Priority 4) – JNCC's ambitions are impeded due to an inability to align the organisations staffing, structure and capabilities resulting in not being able to deliver all aspects of the strategy effectively.

An audit trail of mitigation actions still in progress in relation to significant risks in 2024/25 is kept and reported to ARAC.

Russia – exposure of investments

This does not apply to JNCC.

Management of fraud risk

JNCC has zero tolerance towards fraud, bribery and corruption, and all staff are required to undertake mandatory 'Responsible for Information' training which includes content relating to fraud, bribery, and corruption. JNCC continued to contribute to Government counter-fraud initiatives and activities through collaboration with the Defra Fraud and Error Board where best practice is shared between Defra and its arm's-length bodies. Regular training and internal communications provide an effective way of maintaining awareness of obligations and reporting arrangements for dealing with potential fraud, bribery, information security and whistleblowing matters.

Overseas travel

An overseas travel incident was reported in our 2023 to 2024 Governance Statement. This related to excessive data roaming charges resulting from the use of mobile phones overseas by two members of JNCC staff.

In 2024, a review was instigated into the policies, processes and procedures applied in response to the incident to investigate the extent of compliance with extant policies, processes and procedures and to identify recommendations which could be built into future practices. The review recommended: -

1. A comprehensive review of JNCC policies should be conducted on a "triaged" and prioritised basis with the emphasis on:
    - Rationalisation.
    - Ensuring they hang together without inconsistencies or contradictions.
    - Making them less legalistic and easier to read.
    - Introducing cyclical reviews to ensure they remain fit-for-purpose.
2. Simple ways of communicating policies should be developed, raising staff awareness of when to invoke policies with a stated expert point of contact to help staff ensure compliance.
3. A strategic review of JNCC's international business should be conducted to ensure full alignment with JNCC's corporate strategy and that JNCC has the capacity to manage and deliver successfully with effective governance in place.
4. A risk drill down should be commissioned by ARAC into the risks arising from overseas travel and the adequacy of current mitigations. This should consider all aspects of international business, in particular costs and health & safety.

Recommendations 2-4 have been implemented over the past 12 months, recommendation 1 is a far-reaching project and will continue into 2025 to 2026. A comprehensive series of training sessions for staff on travelling overseas and a launch of the revised overseas travel policy took place during 2024.

The policies and procedures for planning and managing risks before, during and after overseas travel in relation to IT equipment and services have also been reviewed through 2024. Risks have been substantially reduced through better integration of services and advice across the IT Operations and Operational Services teams and improved engagement with regular travellers and their line managers. Comprehensive guidance is readily available with simple checklists to cover all key preparations including actions tailored to different territories to support the assessment of risks to personal safety and financial and cyber security risks when travelling. Recent feedback from regular travellers and their line managers indicates that there is more work to do to improve understanding on approvals and processes prior to departure to ensure IT equipment can be used safely in all locations. This is being actioned, but we remain in a much better position to avoid the risks and impacts faced through the incident.

Breach of the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006

In 2024, we dealt with an employment case that involved a JNCC employee who was employed by JNCC after their visa had expired. Following an immediate investigation the employee resigned, and the Home Office was informed as soon as possible through their right to work support and reporting helpline. A response from the Home Office regarding our breach of the Act is awaited.

Since this breach, we have reviewed the visa and right to work status of all JNCC employees and there are no other cases of concern. We have reviewed and updated our policies and procedures and ensured that dates for follow up checks and the expiration dates for visas and other permits are recorded appropriately in our systems with clear processes for follow up actions documented and communicated to staff. All members of the HR team (including senior leaders) undertook Home Office led refresher training on employer responsibilities for immigration controls in May 2025.

9. Assurance reporting

Throughout the year, we provided quarterly assurance reporting data to ARAC. Quarterly reporting assists in identifying gaps in assurance and strengthens accountability and ownership of control and risk issues within JNCC teams. Returns from teams are collated and an average organisational rating is calculated for each of seven assurance areas. Action plans are devised to address any weaknesses with support offered where required. Outputs from reporting are shared with myself as Accounting Officer, ARAC, the Delivery & Assurance Board and Team Leaders. JNCC executive directors use data from assurance reporting to escalate risks and identify emerging issues that might be a concern. Assurance reporting data also provides evidence to support their annual Director Assurance Statements which are considered by the National Audit Office (NAO) when undertaking the external audit of JNCC.

10. Information management and cyber security

The risk of cyber-attacks, particularly ransomware and data exfiltration, remains critically high. The National Cyber Security Centre warns of an extended period of heightened threat, necessitating a strengthened cyber posture for government organisations like JNCC.

JNCC's 2-year IT Security Change Plan concluded in 2024 and has successfully boosted our cyber defences. However, cyber security threats are constantly evolving, requiring urgent action to sustain and enhance JNCC's resilience. Continued allocation of dedicated staff time and financial investment to the cyber security environment is essential. Cyber security risks and our planned responses remain a key area of consideration on our strategic risk register.

In response to a growing risk of cyber-attacks to government systems, notably the incident to SEPA systems, and our increasing reliance on online tools JNCC has taken proactive steps to consider its risk exposure, posture and response to these changing threats. Over the last two years we have developed a set of responses as a programme and provided ARAC with regular updates on progress.

JNCC has set a low appetite for cyber-security risks. The following risk statement and responses have been tracked through our Significant Risk Register:

Risk	**Impact of Risk if it occurs (H/M/L)**	**Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L)**	**Mitigation steps taken**
Ineffective disaster recovery options exercised as a result of inadvertent staff behaviour or malicious intrusion on the network results in a prolonged loss of the infrastructure we need to support delivery of strategic priorities	H	M	• Penetration testing to assess suitability of security around the enterprise boundary firewalls. Further testing of the JNCC Intranet server once live • Deployment of a web-based security patching system utilising existing JNCC M365 technology.

			• Ongoing staff awareness training and internal cyber threat simulations.
			
			• Continuous improvement of on-premises and cloud backup solutions, along with robust incident response procedures to ensure efficient recovery from disruptions.
			
			• Investment in developing cyber skills within the team during the year to:
			
			  ○ Mitigate single points of failure.
			  ○ Leverage the potential of evolving technologies and Artificial Intelligence (AI) for improved threat detection and response.

While we have made good progress in building our resistance to and resilience from attacks, we will continue to maintain a high level of vigilance and responsiveness to emerging threats and assess how our changing ways of working impact on our overall risk management.

Our plans during 2025 and 2026 include:

- **Continued investment:** There is a recognition that funding will be tight over the next few years so we will need to assess the balance of risks in considering the allocation of resources for system upgrades, end-point devices, evolving technical solutions, and continuous staff training to address the ever-changing cyber landscape.
- **Integrated resilience:** we will embed cyber security considerations within daily IT operations, distribute relevant skills across the team and foster resilience across our cyber security function.
- **Cyber Essentials Plus certification:** we will pursue this rigorous certification to demonstrably uphold best practices and ensure our networks meet the highest security standards for our size.
- **AI tools for cyber-security:** we will assess the opportunities to utilise emerging technologies to detect, analyse, and respond to a wide range of cyber threats in real-time. We will consider the cost and benefits of deploying Microsoft Sentinel's AI functions within our environment to improve threat intelligence, automate incident responses, and maintain comprehensive visibility into our cloud infrastructure.

11. Compliance with the Corporate Governance Code

In 2024 to 2025 JNCC complied with all appropriate revisions to sections of Corporate Governance in Central Government Departments: Code of Good Practice https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/corporate-governance-code-for-central-government-departments, with the following exceptions.

i. JNCC does not currently undertake an annual evaluation of Joint Committee performance. The Joint Committee evaluates its performance every two years; this is commensurate with the size of the Committee and number of meetings each year.

ii. JNCC monitors performance in handling Freedom of Information and Environmental Information Regulations requests and reports this information quarterly on the JNCC website: https://jncc.gov.uk/about-jncc/corporate-information/access-to-information/. Significant resources would be required to develop and implement systems to monitor and report on other correspondence, and there are currently no plans to do this. JNCC has a complaints procedure documented on its website which explains who is responsible for investigating and adjudicating on any complaints: https://jncc.gov.uk/about-jncc/corporate-information/complaints/. All correspondence is handled on a need-to-know basis and held in a confidential file with restricted access.

12. Evidence quality

JNCC has robust evidence quality assurance processes in place to maintain its reputation for scientific excellence. Policies and associated guidance notes provide a standard for JNCC staff to follow to ensure that the quality of JNCC scientific advice and evidence is fit for purpose. A key principle is that quality assurance should be

proportionate to the intended use of the advice or evidence. JNCC's policy is compliant with *The Government Chief Scientific Adviser's Guidelines on the Use of Scientific and Engineering Advice in Policy Making* (2010).

In 2024 to 2025, a series of in-house audits were conducted on projects subject to the evidence quality assurance process. These audits assessed whether processes had been followed, and relevant documentation produced. Recommendations were raised to address any perceived weaknesses and ensure consistency across projects and outcomes from audits were reported to ARAC.

Business critical models

JNCC does not own any business-critical models.

13. Ministerial directions

In 2024 to 2025 JNCC received no ministerial directions.

14. Whistleblowing

JNCC has a Public Interest Disclosure Policy (Whistleblower's Charter) in place. The policy promotes openness in dealing responsibly with wrongdoing in the workplace and if staff have concerns, they can raise them as a 'qualifying disclosure.' Compliance with the policy is monitored and reported to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee each quarter. In 2024 to 2025, no instances of whistleblowing were reported.

15. The Taskforce on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFDs).

As an arms-length body, JNCC falls under the remit of the 2023 Defra Group Sustainability Strategy, and we report quarterly to Defra on our performance against the Greening Government Commitments. This year, we gave a commitment to seek ISO14001 accreditation. I am pleased to report that on 24 July 2024, JNCC's environmental management system received a positive approval and recommendation for ISO 14001 certification, following two audits carried out in Inverdee House in June and Quay House in July and ISO 14001 certification was granted on 7th August. This accreditation will last for 3 years, although annual external surveillance audits will be required.

The two certification audits did not find any nonconformities but there were four opportunities for improvement cited, which are being actioned by the Sustainability

Manager. These included ensuring that JNCC has appropriate permits for marine surveys where needed and revising some legislation within our environmental compliance obligations. A separate waste electrical (ICT equipment) audit was carried out in early June 2024 to assess our new protocol in this area, which was found to meet ISO14001 standards. The all-staff training programme on our environmental management system has been delivered, with 273 staff having either attended the live training or having watched the recording.

The travel and subsistence (T&S) policy with sustainability updates, including the introduction of the climate conscious travel approach and sustainable travel hierarchy, was published on 8 July 2024.

In June 2024, JNCC was formally awarded Bronze Carbon Literate Organisation status at an awards ceremony. The award is given by the Carbon Literacy Project to organisation's that have a substantial commitment to Carbon Literacy.

To date, JNCC has not included a climate related risk on its risk register or undertaken a climate risk assessment either independently or through the voluntary Adaptation Reporting Power framework. This is consistent with an organisation of JNCC's size and is not a requirement mandated by our sponsor department, Defra.

16. Plans and challenges for future years

During 2025 to 2026, we will embark on a programme of change. We will be implementing change in a strategically planned way and there will be five new strategic programmes of activity aligned with UK and Devolved Government priorities. The strategic programmes will be supported by our enabling programmes (Corporate Services & Strategic Science). Our Strategy "Together for Nature" is our anchor and will remain the foundation of what we do, and we will continue to assess the state and change of nature. Our reliance on in-year funding imposes a significant overhead on the organisation and impedes our ability to plan strategically. JNCC could be more efficient, effective, innovative and impactful if our funding were rebalanced to enable us to focus on our NERC Act purpose. Our programme of change will help to redress this.

17. Conclusion

During 2024 to 2025, JNCC fulfilled its role as the UK's scientific authority on nature conservation and recovery by delivering a wide-ranging programme of work on behalf of government and other stakeholders across the UK and internationally. Governance arrangements were in place and all governance groups helped to support JNCC's aims as evidenced through our scientific capability, engaged staff and stakeholder satisfaction.

Strong and effective governance remains at the heart of our purpose and the successful delivery of our strategy. Our supportive governance structure has been crucial in another year of challenges against a backdrop of a difficult financial

settlement. The strong collaborative culture and the depth of experience of the Joint Committee has been instrumental in the development of our strategy and continued support through its delivery.

As CEO, my role is to lead the Executive and guide the Joint Committee so that it can discharge its duties effectively. I, alongside the JNCC Chair, am responsible for promoting best practice in corporate governance and for overseeing the development, adoption, delivery and communication of an effective corporate governance model in JNCC. The Joint Committee collectively develops and determines JNCC's purpose, strategy and overall strategic objectives and alongside the Executive ensures that the organisation adopts policies and procedures that it considers appropriate having regard to its size and activities.

The Joint Committee and I are committed to ensuring that a strong governance framework operates throughout the organisation, recognising that good corporate governance is a vital component to support the Executive in their delivery of the strategic objectives and to operate a sustainable business for the benefit of all stakeholders. The process of identifying, developing and maintaining high standards of corporate governance is ongoing and dynamic, to reflect changes in the organisation and how it wishes to operate. All of the work undertaken in this area during 2024 to 2025 will continue into the next 12 months and into the JNCC programme of change.

Dr Gemma Harper OBE

Chief Executive

October 2025

JNCC Support Co Remuneration and Staff Report

Remuneration policy

The remuneration for the JNCC Chair and independent Committee members is set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra).

JNCC is advised of the salaries of the Chair and independent Committee members by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. Members appointed by the country nature conservation bodies are remunerated directly by those bodies. This information is subject to audit.

The remuneration of the Chief Executive and other Senior Civil Service (SCS) level staff is reviewed annually against the advice issued by the Review Body on Senior Salaries. Any proposed changes are then subject to the approval of the Remuneration Committee (RemCo).

All pay awards for staff other than the Chief Executive and SCS members have to conform to the annual Civil Service Pay Guidance document issued by Cabinet Office. This guidance document forms part of the pay remit process and is intended to ensure that pay awards are affordable, offer value for money, and meet the needs of individual businesses. As part of this process JNCC has to submit its recommended pay award to Defra, who have delegated authority to approve pay remits that conform to Cabinet Office guidance.

JNCC applies a number of reward principles which aim to ensure pay-related decisions:

- support the Together for Nature strategy by ensuring that appropriately skilled and experienced staff can be recruited and retained.
- align with our values of Inclusion, Collaboration and Innovation.
- are fair and transparent and support equal pay.
- encourage and reward excellent individual performance, outstanding effort and achievement.
- provide a total reward package that supports the wellbeing and diversity of our employees.
- are affordable for the organisation in the short and long-term.

Contracts of employment

The Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010 requires Civil Service appointments to be made on merit on the basis of fair and open competition. The Recruitment Principles published by the Civil Service Commission specify the circumstances when appointments may be made otherwise. Further information about the work of the Civil Service Commissioners.

Unless otherwise stated below, the directors and other staff covered by this report hold appointments which are open-ended. Early termination, other than for

misconduct, would result in the individual receiving compensation as set out in the Civil Service Compensation Scheme. Independent members of the Committee, who are appointed by Defra under an instrument of appointment, would not be eligible for compensation under the Civil Service Compensation Scheme.

The periods of appointment for independent Committee members are detailed below.

Table 23. Independent Committee member appointment periods.

Independent Committee Member	Term (Years)	Commencement Date
Ms CS Denholm	3	4 April 2022
Prof TR Meagher	7	4 April 2022
Ms M Ramroop	3	1 February 2025
Prof R Garrett	3	1 February 2025
Mr D Ebanks	3	1 February 2025

Remuneration (including salary) and pension entitlements (subject to audit)

The following sections provide details of the remuneration and pension interests of the most senior JNCC staff, and those of the Chair and independent members of the Committee.

Salary

'Salary' includes gross salary and any allowances, such as recruitment and retention allowances, to the extent that it is subject to UK taxation. This report is based on payments made by JNCC Support Co and thus recorded in these accounts.

Benefits in kind

The monetary value of benefits in kind covers any benefits provided by the employer and treated by HMRC as a taxable emolument. At the present time, no senior member of staff of JNCC Support Co is in receipt of taxable benefits.

Bonuses

Bonuses are based on performance levels and are made as part of the formal staff appraisal process. The Remuneration Committee are responsible for approval of performance bonuses for the Chief Executive and other Senior Civil Service (SCS) posts. For all other staff, performance levels are established through the line management chain, with overall oversight of eligibility and approval for bonus payments at ExCo.

The final bonus payment relating to performance in 2024 to 2025 will be paid during 2025 to 2026, has been accrued and is included in the relevant remuneration table on an accruals basis.

Single total figure of remuneration (subject to audit)

Table 24. Joint Committee member remuneration.

Members	Period of appointment	Days service 2025	Salary (£'000) 2025	Salary (£'000) 2024
Ms CS Denholm	4 April 2022 to 3 April 2025	79	35 to 40	25 to 30
Prof TR Meagher	4 April 2022 to 3 April 2029	27	15 to 20	10 to 15
Ms M Ramroop	1 February 2025 to 31 January 2028	5	0 to 5	
Prof R Garrett	1 February 2025 to 31 January 2028	5	0 to 5	
Mr D Ebanks	1 February 2025 to 31 January 2028	5	0 to 5	

The full year equivalent remuneration for Mr D Ebanks, Prof R Garrett and Ms M Ramroop respectively was in the £5-10k band, based on a 30 days per year requirement for each member.

No Joint Committee members received bonus payments or pension benefits in either the current or prior year.

SNCB members of the Joint Committee do not receive remuneration from JNCC Support Co.

Table 25. ARAC and People and Culture Committee remuneration

ARAC/People and Culture Committee members who are not also members of the Committee	Period of Appointment	Days Service 2025	Salary (£'000) 2025	Salary (£'000) 2024
Mr NF Reader	1 September 2016 to 31 December 2026	34	10 to 15	0 to 5
Ms K Balmer	2 September 2019 to 31 January 2026	16	5 to 10	5 to 10

NB: Salary changes between 2024 and 2025 reflects Mr NF Reader's appointment as interim ARAC chair.

Table 26. Marine Protected Areas member remuneration

Marine Protected Areas sub-group members who are not also members of the Committee	Period of appointment	Days service 2025	Salary (£'000) 2025	Salary (£'000) 2024
Dr J Horwood	1 March 2023 to 28 February 2025	6	0 to 5	0 to 5

Table 27. Senior Staff Remuneration.

Senior staff	Salary (£'000) 2025	Salary (£'000) 2024	Bonus payments (£'000) 2025	Bonus payments (£'000) 2024	Pension benefits (£'000) 2025[1]	Pension benefits (£'000) 2024[1]	Total (£'000) 2025	Total (£'000) 2024
Dr G Harper (Chief Executive)	110 to 115	105 to 110	5 to 10	10 to 15	43	96	160 to 165	210 to 215
Dr JC Goold (Executive director)	65 to 70	60 to 65	0 to 5	0 to 5	26	25	90 to 95	85 to 90
Dr SB Wilkinson (Executive director)	60 to 65	55 to 60	0 to 5	0 to 5	38	11	100 to 105	70 to 75
Mr DP Collins (Executive director)	75 to 80	75 to 80	0 to 5	5 to 10	22	60	100 to 105	140 to 145
Mrs N Askew (Executive director)	35 to 40	35 to 40	0 to 5	0 to 5	19	21	55 to 60	55 to 60
Dr CJ Tuckett (Executive director)	75 to 80	15 to 20	0 to 5	-	30	7	105 to 110	20 to 25
Ms B Stoker (Executive director)	35 to 40	35 to 40	0 to 5	0 to 5	24	28	60 to 65	60 to 65
Mr D Stone (Executive director)	75 to 80	75 to 80	0 to 5	-	52	209	130 to 135	280 to 285
Dr C Callaghan[2] (Executive director)	25 to 30	-	-	-	11	-	35 to 40	-
Mrs M Fulford (Executive director)[3]	20 to 25	-	-	-	9	-	30 to 35	-

Notes for Table 27

1. Pension Benefit: The value of benefits accrued during the year is calculated as (the real increase in pension multiplied by 20) plus (the real increase in any lump sum) less (the contributions made by the individual). The real increase excludes increase due to inflation or any increase or decreases due to a transfer of pension rights.
2. Dr Claire Callaghan was appointed as Director of Finance, Planning and Governance on 25 November 2024. Her salary, expressed as a full year equivalent falls into the band £70,000 to £75,000
3. Mrs Michelle Fulford was appointed as director of People and Infrastructure on 25 November 2024. Her salary, expressed as a full year equivalent falls into the band £65,000 to £70,000

Accrued pension benefits included in this table for any individual affected by the Public Service Pensions Remedy have been calculated based on their inclusion in the legacy scheme for the period between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022, following the McCloud judgment. The Public Service Pensions Remedy applies to individuals that were members, or eligible to be members, of a public service pension scheme on 31 March 2012 and were members of a public service pension scheme between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022. The basis for the calculation reflects the legal position that impacted members have been rolled back into the relevant legacy scheme for the remedy period and that this will apply unless the member actively exercises their entitlement on retirement to decide instead to receive benefits calculated under the terms of the Alpha scheme for the period from 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2022.

Fair Pay Disclosures (subject to audit)

Reporting bodies are required to disclose the relationship between the remuneration of the highest-paid director in their organisation and the 25th percentile, median and the 75th percentile of remuneration of the organisation's workforce.

Total remuneration includes salary, non-consolidated performance-related pay and benefits-in-kind. It does not include severance payments, employer pension contributions and the cash equivalent transfer value of pensions.

The banded remuneration of the highest-paid director in JNCC Support Co for the financial year was £120,000 to £125,000 (2024: £115,000 to £125,000). The relationship of this to the remuneration of our workforce is disclosed in Table 28 below. The ratios are calculated on the basis of the mid-point of the highest paid director band.

Table 28. Fair pay disclosure percentile comparisons.

Benefits	**25th percentile pay ratio 2025 (£)**	**25th percentile pay ratio 2024 (£)**	**Median pay ratio 2025 (£)**	**Median pay ratio 2024 (£)**	**75th percentile pay ratio 2025 (£)**	**75th percentile pay ratio 2024 (£)**
Total Pay and Benefits	32,687	32,399	40,625	38,320	42,814	41,075
Salary component of total pay and benefits	32,102	30,573	40,236	38,320	40,869	39,639
Ratio on Total Pay and Benefits	3.82	3.63	3.04	3.07	3.00	2.86

Tables 29 and 30 contain disclosures of the percentage changes in the highest paid director's salaries and bonuses and of the average salary and average bonus of the organisation (excluding the highest paid director) which are also required as part of the fair pay disclosure.

Table 29. Percentage changes in pay and bonuses.

Highest Paid Director Total Salary and Allowances 2025	Highest Paid Director Total Salary and Allowances 2024	% Change	Highest Paid Director Bonus 2025	Highest Paid Director Bonus 2024	% Change
£110,000 to £115,000	£105,000 to £110,000	4.65%	£5,000 to £10,000	£10,000 to £15,000	-35%

Table 30. Percentage changes in average pay and bonuses of the organisation (excluding the highest paid director).

Average Salary and Allowances 2025	Average Salary and Allowances 2024	% Change	Average Bonus 2025	Average Bonus 2024	% Change
£41,822	£36,988	13.23%	£488	£1,551	-68.53%

The average percentage change in salary and allowances from the previous financial year for all JNCC employees (excluding the highest paid individual) is calculated based on the average salary of all staff (including fixed term employees) in post at the year-end compared with the average salary of those in post at the prior year-end.

The significant decrease in average bonus for all JNCC employees is due to the one-off £1500 payment awarded to all public servants in July 2023, which led to an extraordinarily high average bonus figure for the 2023-2024 financial year.

No employees received remuneration in excess of the highest paid director in either 2025 or 2024. Remuneration in the organisation, excluding pension benefits and including the highest paid director, ranged from £20,000 to £25,000 and £120,000 to £125,000 (2024: £15,000 to £20,000 and £115,000 to £120,000).

The median pay ratio is consistent with the application of JNCC's pay remit which is developed annually in line with the Cabinet Office pay guidelines in effect at the time.

The pay remit document forms the basis of the pay policy for each year and is agreed by the Remuneration Committee, on behalf of the Joint Committee.

Pension benefits (subject to audit)

Table 31. Pension Benefits.

Senior Staff	Total accrued pension at pension age at 31 March 2025 and related lump sum £'000	Real increase in pension and related lump sum at pension age £'000	CETV at 31 March 2025 £'000	CETV at 31 March 2024 £'000	Real increase in CETV £'000
Dr G Harper (Chief Executive)	45-50	2.5-5	907	838	30
Dr JC Goold	25-30	0-2.5	483	421	20
Dr SB Wilkinson	20-25 plus a lump sum of 55-60	0-2.5 plus a lump sum of 0-2.5	528	474	31
Mr DP Collins	25-30 plus a lump sum of 70-75	0-2.5 plus a lump sum of 0	599	561	11
Mrs N Askew	5-10	0-2.5	151	132	12
Ms B Stoker	15-20	0-2.5	299	270	16
Mr D Stone	40-45 plus a lump sum of 100-105	2.5-5 plus a lump sum of 2.5-5	972	903	47
Dr C Tuckett	0-5	0-2.5	35	6	22
Dr C Callaghan	15-20	0-2.5	274	264	9
Mrs M Fulford	0-5	0-2.5	9	0	7

Notes for Table 31

Dr G Harper, Mr JC Goold, Mrs N Askew, Ms B Stoker, Dr C Tuckett, Dr C Callaghan (appointed 25th November 2024) and Mrs M Fulford (appointed 25th November 2024) are members of pension schemes that do not include a lump sum payment.

Accrued pension benefits included in this table for any individual affected by the Public Service Pensions Remedy have been calculated based on their inclusion in the legacy

scheme for the period between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022, following the McCloud judgment. The Public Service Pensions Remedy applies to individuals that were members, or eligible to be members, of a public service pension scheme on 31 March 2012 and were members of a public service pension scheme between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022. The basis for the calculation reflects the legal position that impacted members have been rolled back into the relevant legacy scheme for the remedy period and that this will apply unless the member actively exercises their entitlement on retirement to decide instead to receive benefits calculated under the terms of the Alpha scheme for the period from 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2022.

Civil Service Pensions

Pension benefits are provided through the Civil Service pension arrangements. Before 1 April 2015, the only scheme was the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS), which is divided into a few different sections – classic, premium, and classic plus provide benefits on a final salary basis, whilst nuvos provides benefits on a career average basis. From 1 April 2015 a new pension scheme for civil servants was introduced – the Civil Servants and Others Pension Scheme or alpha, which provides benefits on a career average basis. All newly appointed civil servants, and the majority of those already in service, joined the new scheme.

The PCSPS and alpha are unfunded statutory schemes. Employees and employers make contributions (employee contributions range between 4.6% and 8.05%, depending on salary). The balance of the cost of benefits in payment is met by monies voted by Parliament each year. Pensions in payment are increased annually in line with the Pensions Increase legislation. Instead of the defined benefit arrangements, employees may opt for a defined contribution pension with an employer contribution, the partnership pension account.

In alpha, pension builds up at a rate of 2.32% of pensionable earnings each year, and the total amount accrued is adjusted annually in line with a rate set by HM Treasury. Members may opt to give up (commute) pension for a lump sum up to the limits set by the Finance Act 2004. All members who switched to alpha from the PCSPS had their PCSPS benefits ‘banked’, with those with earlier benefits in one of the final salary sections of the PCSPS having those benefits based on their final salary when they leave alpha.

The accrued pensions shown in this report are the pension the member is entitled to receive when they reach normal pension age, or immediately on ceasing to be an active member of the scheme if they are already at or over normal pension age. Normal pension age is 60 for members of classic, premium, and classic plus, 65 for members of nuvos, and the higher of 65 or State Pension Age for members of alpha. The pension figures in this report show pension earned in PCSPS or alpha – as appropriate. Where a member has benefits in both the PCSPS and alpha, the figures show the combined value of their benefits in the two schemes but note that the constituent parts of that pension may be payable from different ages.

When the Government introduced new public service pension schemes in 2015, there were transitional arrangements which treated existing scheme members differently based on their age. Older members of the PCSPS remained in that scheme, rather

than moving to alpha. In 2018, the Court of Appeal found that the transitional arrangements in the public service pension schemes unlawfully discriminated against younger members (the “McCloud judgment”).

As a result, steps are being taken to remedy those 2015 reforms, making the pension scheme provisions fair to all members. The Public Service Pensions Remedy6 is made up of two parts. The first part closed the PCSPS on 31 March 2022, with all active members becoming members of alpha from 1 April 2022. The second part removes the age discrimination for the remedy period, between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022, by moving the membership of eligible members during this period back into the PCSPS on 1 October 2023.

The accrued pension benefits, Cash Equivalent Transfer Value and single total figure of remuneration reported for any individual affected by the Public Service Pensions Remedy have been calculated based on their inclusion in the PCSPS for the period between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022, following the McCloud judgment. The Public Service Pensions Remedy applies to individuals that were members, or eligible to be members, of a public service pension scheme on 31 March 2012 and were members of a public service pension scheme between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022. The basis for the calculation reflects the legal position that impacted members have been rolled back into the PCSPS for the remedy period and that this will apply unless the member actively exercises their entitlement on retirement to decide instead to receive benefits calculated under the terms of the alpha scheme for the period from 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2022.

The partnership pension account is an occupational defined contribution pension arrangement which is part of the Legal & General Master trust. The employer makes a basic contribution of between 8% and 14.75% (depending on the age of the member). The employee does not have to contribute but, where they do make contributions, the employer will match these up to a limit of 3% of pensionable salary (in addition to the employer’s basic contribution). Employers also contribute a further 0.5% of pensionable salary to cover the cost of centrally provided risk benefit cover (death in service and ill health retirement).

Further details about the Civil Service pension arrangements can be found at the website www.civilservicepensionscheme.org.uk

Cash Equivalent Transfer Values

A Cash Equivalent Transfer Value (CETV) is the actuarially assessed capitalised value of the pension scheme benefits accrued by a member at a particular point in time. The benefits valued are the member’s accrued benefits and any contingent spouse’s pension payable from the scheme. A CETV is a payment made by a pension scheme or arrangement to secure pension benefits in another pension scheme or arrangement when the member leaves a scheme and chooses to transfer the benefits accrued in their former scheme. The pension figures shown relate to the benefits that the individual has accrued as a consequence of their total membership of the pension scheme, not just their service in a senior capacity to which disclosure applies.

The figures include the value of any pension benefit in another scheme or arrangement which the member has transferred to the Civil Service pension arrangements. They also include any additional pension benefit accrued to the member as a result of their buying additional pension benefits at their own cost.

CETVs are worked out in accordance with The Occupational Pension Schemes (Transfer Values) (Amendment) Regulations 2008 and do not take account of any actual or potential reduction to benefits resulting from Lifetime Allowance Tax which may be due when pension benefits are taken.

Real increase in CETV

This reflects the increase in CETV that is funded by the employer. It does not include the increase in accrued pension due to inflation, contributions paid by the employee (including the value of any benefits transferred from another pension scheme or arrangement) and uses common market valuation factors for the start and end of the period.

Staff Report

During the year ending 31 March 2025 JNCC Support Co employed, on average, 297 full-time equivalent staff (on average 276 employees were on permanent contacts and 21 on fixed term contacts), based primarily in offices in Peterborough and Aberdeen. Our staff bring together scientific and technical expertise, extensive knowledge of policy at global, European and national levels, and skills in working with other organisations.

JNCC is a Non-Departmental Public Body, and our employees are public rather than civil servants, however our pay grades are aligned to the Civil Service pay grade structure and appointments are made in line with the Civil Service Commissioners' Recruitment Code. This requires appointment to be on merit on the basis of fair and open competition. We promote equality of opportunity for all staff, irrespective of their gender, sexual orientation, marital status, age, pregnancy and maternity, disability, race, religion or belief. A performance management system was in operation throughout the year ending 31 March 2025.

JNCC is a Disability Confident Leader, the highest level possible in the Government's Disability Confident scheme. The scheme aims to help employers make the most of the opportunities provided by employing disabled people. It is voluntary and has been developed by employers and disabled people's representatives. Being a Disability Confident Leader, we demonstrate our commitment to ensure disabled people are treated fairly and have access to the same opportunities as non-disabled people.

JNCC employees are covered by the provisions of the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS). Details of the scheme and the company's liabilities in this regard can be found in the remuneration report and accounting policies note.

The breakdown of staffing by gender at the year-end was as follows:

Table 32. Breakdown of staff by gender.

Staff by gender	Number of staff Male	Number of staff Female	Number of staff Total	Percentage of total 2024 to 2025	Percentage of total 2023 to 2024
Directors of the company (Joint Committee members and Chief Executive)	6	4	10	3	3
Executive directors	2	2	4	2	2
Other staff	78	213	291	95	95
Total	86	219	305	100	100

Table 33. The average FTE number of persons employed during the year was as follows (subject to audit)

	Permanent contracts	Fixed term contracts	Temporary staff	2024/25	2023/24
Staff	**276**	**21**	**0**	**297**	**291**

Table 34. Number of Senior Civil Service Staff by band.

Band	2025 Annualised Headcount	2024 Annualised Headcount
SCS 2	1	1
SCS 1	3	3
Total	4	4

Consultancy and Temporary Staff Expenditure

Spend on temporary staff was £49k in the year, down from £51k in the previous year. Temporary staff were individuals used on a short-term temporary basis to provide cover for business-as-usual tasks to ensure there was no break in service provision whilst recruitment took place. During the year, consultancy expenditure increased from previous years at £203k (£123k in 2023 to 2024). These costs have been incurred directly by JNCC, primarily in the development of the ERP system, and are categorised by their nature within Administrative costs in Note 3 of these accounts.

Staff turnover

Turnover is calculated as the number of leavers within the year divided by the average of staff in post over the period. The average staff in post is calculated as the average headcount over the period. Leavers include retirements, death in service, end of appointments, as well as dismissals, resignations and leavers under compulsory and voluntary redundancy.

The staff turnover during the year was 12.7% (2023/24: 8.1%).

Sickness absence

In 2024 to 2025 the average sickness absence per full-time employee was 4.7 days (4.4 days in 2023 to 2024).

Health and safety

JNCC is committed to complying with all legal obligations for health and safety and is proactive in anticipating and assessing problems to remove or reduce any risks to staff. The table below details the number of health and safety incidents recorded at JNCC for the past two years.

Table 35. Recorded health and safety incidents for the past two years.

Health and safety incidents	2025	2024
Minor Accidents	2	9
Near Miss Incidents	6	6
Lost Time		-4.5 Days (3 separate Incidents)

Reporting of Civil Service and Other Compensation Schemes – Exit Packages (subject to audit)

There were no redundancy or other departure costs paid in 2024 to 2025 in accordance with the provisions of the Civil Service Compensation Scheme.

Trade Union Facility Time

Under the Trade Union (Facility Time Publication Requirements) Regulations 2017, JNCC is required to disclose information relating to paid Trade Union activities undertaken by relevant union officials.

Table 36. Relevant union officials.

Union officials	2025	2024
Number of employees who were relevant union officials during the relevant period	10	9
Full-time equivalents (FTEs)	9.7	8.7

Table 37. Percentage of working time spent on facility time by union officials.

Percentage of time	Number of TU officials 2025
0%	1
1% to 50%	9
51% to 99%	-
100%	-

Table 38. Staff Costs in (£'000)

Staff costs consist of the following	Executive Directors	JNCC Employees	Temporary Workers	2024/25 Total	2023/24 Total
Wages and salaries	413	11,443	49	**11,905**	**11,309**
Social security costs		1,212		**1,212**	**1,090**
Apprenticeship Levy		41		**41**	**40**
Other pension costs	100	3,145		**3,245**	**2,779**
Total staff expenditure	**513**	**15,841**	**49**	**16,403**	**15,218**
Less recoveries in respect of outward secondments		(477)		**(477)**	**(197)**
Net total staff costs	**513**	**15,364**	**49**	**15,926**	**15,021**

Movements in the holiday pay accrual (reduction of £18k) are included under wages and salaries.

Table 39. Percentage of pay bill spent on facility time.

Total cost of facility time	£7,929
Total pay bill	£15.8m
Percentage of the total pay bill spent on facility time	0.05%

There were no paid Trade Union activities during 2024 to 2025

Off-Payroll Appointments

Information on off-payroll engagements is set out in the following tables. Off-payroll means anyone who is working for JNCC but is not paying PAYE (Pay As You Earn) or National Insurance via the payroll.

Table 40. Number of highly paid off-payroll worker engagements as at 31 March 2025, earning £245 per day or greater.

Total Number of existing engagements as at 31 March 2025	1
Number of existing engagements that have existed for **less than one year** at time of reporting	1
Number of existing engagements that have existed for between **one year and two years** at time of reporting	0
Number of existing engagements that have existed for between **two and three years** at time of reporting	0
Number of existing engagements that have existed for between **three and four years** at time of reporting	0
Number of existing engagements that have existed for **four or more years** at time of reporting	0

Table 41. Number of all highly paid off-payroll workers engaged at any point during the year ended 31 March 2025, earning £245 per day or greater.

Total number of off-payroll workers engaged during the year ended 31 March 2025	**8**
Number of off-payroll workers during the year ended 31 March 2024 not subject to off-payroll legislation	0
Number of off-payroll workers during the year ended 31 March 2024 subject to off-payroll legislation and determined as in-scope of IR35	0

Number of off-payroll workers during the year ended 31 March 2024 subject to off-payroll legislation and determined as out-of-scope of IR35	8
Number of engagements reassessed for compliance or assurance purposes during the year	N/A
Number of engagements that saw a change to IR35 status following review	N/A

Notes for Table 41:

- The £245 threshold is set to approximate the minimum point of the pay scale for a Senior Civil Servant.
- A worker that provides their services through their own limited company or another type of intermediary to the client will be subject to off-payroll legislation and the Department must undertake an assessment to determine whether that worker is in-scope of Intermediaries legislation (IR35) or out-of-scope for tax purposes.

Table 42. Off-payroll engagements of board members, and/or, senior officials with significant financial responsibility, between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025.

Number of off-payroll engagements of board members, and/or senior officials with significant financial responsibility, during the financial year (Senior Officials with significant financial responsibility are defined as all board level executives, non-executive directors and finance directors) [see note 1]	0
Total number of individuals **on payroll and off payroll** that have been deemed 'board members, and/or senior officials with significant financial responsibility', during the financial year (this figure includes both on-payroll and off-payroll engagements) [see note 2]	14

Notes for Table 42:

- Note 1: there should only be a very small number of off-payroll engagements of board members and/or senior officials with significant financial responsibility, permitted only in exceptional circumstances and for no more than six months.
- Note 2: As both on-payroll and off-payroll engagements are included in the total figure, no entries here should be blank or zero.

Parliamentary Accountability and Audit Report

The Parliamentary Accountability and Audit Report details required disclosures regarding the regularity of expenditure, so that Parliament can be assured that funds have been expended in the manner intended. This meets the key accountability requirements to Parliament.

Losses, Special payments and Gifts (audited)

JNCC reported no losses and no special payments during the year to 31 March 2025 (2024: five losses totalling £2k and no special payments). Fifteen fruitless payments were recorded in the year to 31 March 2025 with a total value of £5k (2024: fruitless payments totalling £9k). The decrease year on year has been driven by decreased travel.

There were no losses, special payments or gifts incurred which exceeded the limits proscribed in Managing Public Money.

Regularity of Expenditure (audited)

There have been no instances of irregularities of expenditure during the year.

Remote contingent liabilities (audited)

We have carefully considered possible future liabilities relating to past events and have concluded that there are no remote contingent liabilities to be disclosed in the Annual Report and Accounts.

Government Functional Standards

The table below shows progress against meeting the Government Functional standards in 2024/25. More detail can be found in the Government Functional Standards section of the Governance Statement (page 61).

Table 43. Compliance with Government Functional Standards as at 31 March 2025.

Government Standard	Government Standard Title	Current Compliance Level
GovS 001	Government Functions	N/A
GovS 002	Project delivery	Under review – working towards conformity in all applicable areas by end 25/26
GovS 003	Human resources	36 met (88%) 5 partially met (12%); review of standards planned for Q2 25/26

GovS 004	Property	N/A
GovS 005	Digital, data and technology	14 met (48%) 14 partially met (48% 1 not met (3%); review planned for early 25/26
GovS 006	Finance	39 met (89%) 2 partially met (5%) 3 not met (7%); further review in 25/26
GovS 007	Security	26 met (57%) 17 partially met (37%) 3 not met (7%); further review in 25/26
GovS 008	Commercial	23 met (70%) 5 partially met (15%) 5 not met (15%); further review in 25/26
GovS 009	Internal Audit	29 met (100%)
GovS 010	Analysis	19 met (95%) 1 in development (5%)
GovS 011	Communication	9 met (90%) 1 in development (10%)
GovS 013	Counter Fraud	8 met (100%); part of planned Internal Audit in 25/26
GovS 014	Debt	8 met (80%) 1 partially met (10%) 1 not met (10%)
GovS 015	Grants	N/A

Statement of Directors' and Accounting Officer's Responsibilities

The Directors and Accounting Officer are responsible for ensuring that the Annual Report and Accounts are prepared in accordance with appliable law and regulations, including that accounts are prepared which give a true and fair view of the company's assets, liabilities, financial position and profit or loss.

In preparing the accounts, the Directors and Accounting Officer are required to comply with the requirements of the Companies Act and – as required in the company's Framework Document – HM Treasury's Financial Reporting Manual, where this does not conflict with the Act. In particular, the Directors and Accounting Officer are required to:

- observe relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis;
- make judgements and estimates on a reasonable basis;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, and disclose and explain any material departures in the financial statements;
- prepare the accounts on a going concern basis; and
- confirm that the Annual Report and Accounts as a whole is fair, balanced and understandable and take personal responsibility for the Annual Report and Accounts and the judgements required for determining that it is fair, balanced and understandable.

The Directors and Accounting Officer are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and enable them to ensure that the accounts comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Accounting Officer of Defra has designated the Chief Executive as Accounting Officer for the company. The responsibilities of an Accounting Officer, including responsibility for the propriety and regularity of the public finances for which the Accounting Officer is answerable, for keeping proper records and for safeguarding the company's assets, are set out in Managing Public Money published by the HM Treasury.

As required by the Companies Act, information on disclosure of information to auditors is given in the Directors' Report.

Fair, balanced and understandable confirmation

The Accounting Officer confirms that the Annual Report and Accounts as a whole is fair, balanced and understandable and that she takes personal responsibility for the Annual Report and Accounts and the judgements required for determining that it is fair, balanced and understandable.



Dr G. Harper

Chief Executive

xx xxxx 2025

The certificate and report of the Comptroller and Auditor General to the Members of JNCC Support Co, the Houses of Parliament and the Scottish Parliament

Opinion on financial statements

I have audited the financial statements of JNCC Support Co for the year ended 31 March 2025 under the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000.

The financial statements comprise JNCC Support Co's:

- Statement of Financial position as at 31 March 2025;
- Statement of Comprehensive Income, Statement of Changes in Equity and Statement of Cash Flows for the year then ended; and
- the related notes including the significant accounting policies.

The financial reporting framework that has been applied in the preparation of the financial statements is applicable law and the United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102: The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In my opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of JNCC Support Co's affairs as at 31 March 2025 and its profit for the year then ended; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Opinion on regularity

In my opinion, in all material respects, the income and expenditure recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

Basis for opinions

I conducted my audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)), applicable law and Practice Note 10 *Audit of Financial Statements and Regularity of Public Sector Bodies in the United Kingdom (2022)*. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements* section of my certificate.

Those standards require me and my staff to comply with the Financial Reporting Council's *Revised Ethical Standard 2024*. I am independent of JNCC Support Co in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to my audit of the financial statements in the UK. My staff and I have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, I have concluded that JNCC Support Co's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work I have performed, I have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on JNCC Support Co's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

My responsibilities and the responsibilities of the directors with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this certificate.

Other information

The other information comprises information included in the Annual Report, but does not include the financial statements and my auditor's certificate thereon. The directors are responsible for the other information.

My opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in my certificate, I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

My responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements, or my knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If I identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, I am required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, I am required to report that fact.

I have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matters

In my opinion the part of the Remuneration and Staff Report to be audited has been properly prepared in accordance with HM Treasury's Financial Reporting Manual.

In my opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the Annual Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Annual Report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which I report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of JNCC Support Co and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, I have not identified material misstatements in the Annual Report.

I have nothing to report in respect of the following matters which I report to you if, in my opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept or returns adequate for my audit have not been received from branches not visited by my staff; or
- the financial statements and the parts of the Remuneration and Staff Report to be audited are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of director's remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- I have not received all of the information and explanations I require for my audit; or
- the Governance Statement does not reflect compliance with HM Treasury's guidance.

Responsibilities of the directors and accounting officer for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Statement of Directors' and Accounting Officer's Responsibilities Statement, the directors and accounting officer are responsible for:

- maintaining proper accounting records;
- providing the C&AG with access to all information of which management is aware that is relevant to the preparation of the financial statements such as records, documentation and other matters;
- providing the C&AG with additional information and explanations needed for his audit;
- providing the C&AG with unrestricted access to persons within JNCC Support Co from whom the auditor determines it necessary to obtain audit evidence;
- ensuring such internal controls are in place as deemed necessary to enable the preparation of financial statement to be free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error;
- preparing financial statements, which give a true and fair view, in accordance with the Companies Act 2006 and HM Treasury's Financial Reporting Manual where this does not conflict with the Companies Act;
- preparing the Annual Report, which includes the Remuneration and Staff Report, in accordance with the Companies Act 2006 and HM Treasurys Financial Reporting Manual where this does not conflict with the Companies Act; and
- assessing JNCC Support Co's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the directors either intend to liquidate the entity or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

My responsibility is to audit and report on the financial statements in accordance with the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000.

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue a certificate that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a

high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud

I design procedures in line with my responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud. The extent to which my procedures are capable of detecting non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud is detailed below.

Identifying and assessing potential risks related to non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud, I:

- considered the nature of the sector, control environment and operational performance including the design of JNCC Support Co's accounting policies, key performance indicators and performance incentives.
- inquired of management, the JNCC Support Co's head of internal audit and those charged with governance, including obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation relating to JNCC Support Co's policies and procedures on:
    - identifying, evaluating and complying with laws and regulations;
    - detecting and responding to the risks of fraud; and
    - the internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations including JNCC Support Co's controls relating to JNCC Support Co's compliance with the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, Companies Act 2006, Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000 and Managing Public Money;
- inquired of management, the JNCC Support Co's head of internal audit and those charged with governance whether:
    - they were aware of any instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations;
    - they had knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud;
- discussed with the engagement team regarding how and where fraud might occur in the financial statements and any potential indicators of fraud.

As a result of these procedures, I considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within JNCC Support Co for fraud and identified the greatest potential for fraud in the following areas: revenue recognition, posting of unusual journals, complex transactions and bias in management estimates. In common with all audits under ISAs

(UK), I am required to perform specific procedures to respond to the risk of management override.

I obtained an understanding of JNCC Support Co's framework of authority and other legal and regulatory frameworks in which JNCC Support co-operates. I focused on those laws and regulations that had a direct effect on material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of JNCC Support Co. The key laws and regulations I considered in this context included the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, Companies Act 2006, Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000, Managing Public Money, employment law, pensions legislation and tax legislation.

Audit response to identified risk

To respond to the identified risks resulting from the above procedures:

- I reviewed the financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with provisions of relevant laws and regulations described above as having direct effect on the financial statements;
- I enquired of management and the Audit and Risk Committee concerning actual and potential litigation and claims;
- I reviewed minutes of meetings of those charged with governance and the Board and internal audit reports; and
- I addressed the risk of fraud through management override of controls by testing the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments; assessing whether the judgements on estimates are indicative of a potential bias; and evaluating the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

I communicated relevant identified laws and regulations and potential risks of fraud to all engagement team members and remained alert to any indications of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations throughout the audit.

A further description of my responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of my certificate.

Other auditor's responsibilities

I am required to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence to give reasonable assurance that the expenditure and income recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

I communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control I identify during my audit.

Report

I have no observations to make on these financial statements.

Gareth Davies

[Date]

Comptroller and Auditor General

National Audit Office

157-197 Buckingham Palace Road

Victoria

London

SW1W 9SP

Statement of Comprehensive Income (including the profit and loss account)

for the year ended 31 March 2025	Note	2025	2024
		£'000	£'000
Turnover	2	30,089	24,137
Cost of activities	2	(25,253)	(21,767)
Gross profit		**4,836**	**2,370**
Administrative expenditure	3	(4,079)	(3,693)
Operating (loss)/profit	2	**757**	**(1,324)**
Other interest receivable and similar income		-	-
(Loss)/Profit for the financial year		**757**	**(1,324)**
Other comprehensive income		-	-
Total comprehensive income		**757**	**(1,324)**

The notes commencing on page 113 form part of these accounts.
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Statement of Financial Position

as at 31 March 2025

	Note	As at 31 March 2025	As at 31 March 2024
		£'000	£'000
Fixed assets			
Intangible assets	8	-	505
Tangible assets	9	84	112
		84	**617**
Current assets			
Cash at bank and in hand	10	430	2,642
Debtors	11	5,525	1,894
		5,955	**4,536**
Current Liabilities			
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year (note ii)	12	(4,242)	(3,455)
Net current assets		1,713	1,081
Total assets less Current liabilities		**1,797**	**1,698**
Provisions for liabilities	13	(53)	(711)
Net assets		**1,744**	**987**
Capital and reserves			
Profit and loss account		1,744	987
Total reserves		**1,744**	**987**

These accounts have been audited under the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000 and are therefore exempt from the requirements of section 475 of the Companies Act 2006. The Financial Statements on pages 109 to 128 were approved by the board of directors on xx xxxx 2025 and signed on its behalf.



Dr G. Harper, Chief Executive OBE

Company Number 05380206 (England and Wales)

The notes commencing on page 113 form part of these accounts.

Statement of Cash Flows

for the year ended 31 March 2025

	Note	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Gain/(loss) on ordinary activities before interest	2	757	(1,324)
Adjustments for			
Amortisation of intangible assets	8	1	1
Depreciation of property, plant and equipment	9	45	53
Reclassification/write off of assets	9	504	-
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	11	(3,631)	147
Increase/(decrease) in provisions	13	(658)	73
Increase/(decrease) in Trade Liabilities	12	787	493
Net cash (used in)/generated from operational activities		**(2,195)**	**(557)**
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of Property, plant and equipment	8	(17)	(1)
Purchase of intangible assets	8	-	(280)
Cash paid against pension provision		-	-
Interest received		-	-
Net cash outflow from investing activities		**(17)**	**(281)**
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	10	**(2,212)**	**(837)**
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	10	2,642	3,479
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year	10	**430**	**2,642**

The notes commencing on page 113 form part of these accounts.

Statement of Changes in Equity

for the year ended 31 March 2025

	Profit and loss account	Total Equity
	£'000	£'000
As at 1 April 2023	**2,311**	**2,311**
Profit/(Loss) for the year	(1,324)	(1,324)
Other comprehensive income	-	-
As at 31 March 2024	**987**	**987**
Profit/(Loss) for the year	757	757
Other comprehensive income	-	-
As at 31 March 2025	**1,744**	**1,744**

The notes commencing on page 113 form part of these accounts.

JNCC Support Co Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

1. Accounting policies

Statement of accounting policies

The financial statements are intended, without limiting the information given, to conform to the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 and have been prepared in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard (FRS) 102. Where the requirements of the HM Treasury's Financial reporting manual do not conflict with the Companies Act, they have been adhered to.

Where the requirements of the Companies Act or the FReM permits a choice of accounting policy, the accounting policy which is judged to be more appropriate to the particular circumstances of the JNCC Support Co, for the purpose of giving a true and fair view, has been selected. The accounting policies set out below have been applied consistently in dealing with items which are considered material in relation to the accounts.

Accounting convention

These accounts have been prepared on an accruals basis under the historical cost convention.

Turnover

The principal form of income is grant in aid received from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. This is treated as income in the accounts in line with FRS 102 performance model, as it is provided to enable JNCC Support Co to provide the services necessary to support the Joint Nature Conservation Committee in the delivery of its objectives.

The bulk of the remaining turnover is in the form of contributions to project work, plus further income comprising grants from European Union sources, income for the provision of advice, and royalties.

Income is received by JNCC for undertaking specific projects, these projects in some instances may span financial years and as such JNCC accrues or defers income as appropriate based on the stage or percentage completion of the contract. The stage of completion of a project is estimated using the most reliable of the following two methods:

- the proportion that costs incurred for work performed to date bear to the estimated total costs
- completion of a physical proportion of the contract work or the completion of a proportion of the service contract.

All income is stated net of VAT and trade discounts.

Grants received

Grant-in-aid received of a revenue nature is recognised in income in accordance with the performance model under FRS 102. Income is recognised when the associated performance-related conditions are met, which may be before or after the receipt of cash. Where expenditure has been incurred in advance of drawdown, income is accrued where permitted under the performance model. Grants received from sources other than Government grants, including from European Union sources, are matched to the corresponding project expenditure in the year in which it is incurred.

In respect of European Union funding, where JNCC Support Co was acting as the lead partner in respect of joint projects and where income for this work has been channelled to the individual partners through the lead partner, only income and expenditure related to JNCC's own work is shown in the financial statements, in line with the accruals model. Any cash received by JNCC Support Co but not distributed to the partners as at the date of the statement of financial position is shown as a third-party asset.

Going concern

Grant in aid for the next financial year, taking into account the amounts required to meet JNCC Support Co's budgeted liabilities for 2024 to 2025, has already been included in Defra's and the Devolved Governments' estimates for the coming year. Due to parliamentary control processes, Defra do not have authority to commit to providing grant in aid to JNCC beyond March 2025, however JNCC's funding is guaranteed by legislation. The Natural Environment and Communities Act 2006, schedule 4, paragraph 14.1 states that the funding bodies must provide the Joint Committee with such financial resources as the appropriate authorities consider are needed for the proper discharge of the functions conferred by Part 2.

The directors have considered and discussed funding for the following financial year and the twelve months from the date of the approval of the accounts and as such are content that the anticipated funding is sufficient. It is therefore considered appropriate that these financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis.

Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis. Accrued expenditure is recognised when it is assessed that there is an unconditional obligation to pay suppliers and is based on agreed amounts, contractually, or by another form of mutual agreement.

As a non-trading public sector organisation JNCC is only able to reclaim a fraction of the VAT paid on expenditure incurred as part of its normal business. The value of VAT reclaimed in the year is detailed as a separate line within Other Administration Costs (note 3). All other expenditure is therefore stated gross of VAT.

Fixed assets

The 2024 to 2025 FReM requires assets to be valued at current value in existing use, or fair value. JNCC has elected to value fixed assets at depreciated historic cost as a proxy for fair value on the basis that the assets are low value and/or have short useful economic lives. This approach is permitted under paragraph 10.1.14 of the 2024 to 2025 FReM and paragraph 17.15 of FRS 102.

Individual assets costing £5k or more including VAT are capitalised as tangible or intangible assets, assuming they are intended to be used on a continuing basis. These assets are valued at depreciated historical cost. Assets costing less than £5k are charged to the profit and loss account in the year of purchase.

Depreciation

Depreciation is provided on all tangible and intangible fixed assets at rates calculated to write off the cost evenly over its expected useful life. JNCC don't depreciate/amortise assets under construction until it has been brought into use. Standard write-off periods, shown below, are normally used, although alternative lives may be used where relevant information is available to ascribe a more accurate expected useful life:

Company assets	Life span
Leasehold premises and fixtures	over the period of individual leases
Computer equipment	5 years
Other equipment	5 to 10 years
Software licences	5 years

Research and development

In accordance with FRS 102 Section 18 – Intangible Assets other than Goodwill, JNCC assesses whether expenditure on research and development (R&D) meets the criteria for recognition as to an intangible asset. During the reporting period, no development projects met the recognition criteria under FRS 102. As such, all R&D expenditure has been treated as revenue expenditure in the Statement of Comprehensive Income.

This treatment is consistent with the organisation’s accounting policy, which distinguishes between general R&D activity and the capitalisation of intangible assets.

Cash and cash equivalents

All cash and cash equivalents held throughout the year were held in a commercial bank or cash in hand.

Foreign exchange

Assets and liabilities in foreign currencies are translated into sterling at the rates of exchange ruling at the statement of financial position date. Receipts received in foreign currencies are normally converted to sterling on the day of receipt unless JNCC will be making payments to third parties in the currency received.

Transactions in foreign currencies are translated into sterling at the rate ruling at the date of the transaction. Exchange differences are recognised in the profit and loss account.

Leases

Rental costs arising in respect of operating leases are charged to the profit and loss account over the life of each lease. JNCC Support Co has no finance leases.

Accrued holiday pay

In accordance with paragraph 28.6 of FRS 102, JNCC accrues for all short-term compensated absences as holiday entitlement earned but not taken at the date of the statement of financial position. Holiday year runs from March to February, and the accrual is calculated using the number of outstanding days at the end of February plus March entitlement less days taken in March multiplied by a daily rate estimated for each grade band.

Pension costs

Pension benefits are provided through the Civil Service pension arrangements, full details of which are described within the remuneration report.

Although the Civil Service pension arrangements include defined benefit schemes (the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS) and Alpha), entities such as JNCC Support Co covered by these multi-employer schemes are unable to reliably identify their share of the underlying assets and liabilities, and so recognise the costs on a systematic basis over the period during which it benefits from employees' services, by payment to the PCSPS and Alpha, of amounts calculated on an accruing basis. Liability for payment of future benefits is a charge on the PCSPS and Alpha.

Note 6 provides details of JNCC Support Co's pension costs.

Previous JNCC Chairs were entitled to accrue pension benefits but were not eligible to join the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS). Individual 'by analogy to the PCSPS' schemes were therefore established to provide pensions for the Chairs, with any ongoing liability arising from these arrangements being borne by

JNCC Support Co. The future cumulative cost of these pensions was calculated and based on this valuation a provision was taken for the liability, in line with the requirements of Section 21 of FRS 102 (Provisions and Contingencies). The estimated liability is reviewed each year, and the current value of this provision is disclosed in Note 13 to these accounts.

Remuneration for the post of JNCC Chair no longer includes entitlement to membership of a pension scheme.

Financial instruments

A financial instrument is any contract that gives rise to a financial asset of one entity and a financial liability or equity instrument of another entity. Financial assets and financial liabilities would be recognised in the statement of financial position if JNCC became a party to the contractual provisions of an instrument.

JNCC has no borrowings and relies primarily on grant in aid from Defra and the Devolved Governments for its cash requirements and is therefore not exposed to liquidity risks. All material assets and liabilities are denominated in sterling, so it is not exposed to significant currency risk.

Taxation

Corporation Tax

JNCC Support Co's Corporation Tax liability is limited to that arising from Case III investment income and capital gains. In 2024 to 2025 there is Nil charge for the year (2023 to 2024 £nil).

Value Added Tax

Most of the activities of JNCC Support Co are outside the scope of VAT so in general output tax does not apply and input tax on purchases is not recoverable. Expenditure is therefore charged gross to the relevant expense category or included in the capitalised purchase cost of non-current assets. Where output tax is charged, the amounts are stated net of VAT. JNCC uses an agreed formula to enable the quarterly calculation of the amount of reclaimable input tax, which is credited to the profit and loss account.

The amount of reclaimable input tax is small and is therefore shown as a credit to the profit and loss account. During 2025 the amount of reclaimed input tax was £59k (£56k in 2024).

JNCC Support Co receives grant in aid from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and the Devolved Governments, and this is treated as non-business income for the purposes of VAT.

Estimation

In the preparation of the financial statements the JNCC Support Co is required to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and

liabilities and the reported amount of income and expenditure, such as in the calculation of the dilapidations provision (Note 13) and the amounts of income deferred (Note 12) and accrued (Note 11). Where applicable, income recognised by reference to the stage of completion of the contract activity at the statement of financial position date. In accordance with paragraph 2.9 of FRS 102, the Senior Leadership Team is satisfied that an appropriate degree of prudence has been applied in the exercise of any judgments needed where estimation of the value of assets or liabilities has been required in the production of these accounts.

Provisions

In accordance with section 21 of FRS 102, JNCC provides for obligations arising from past events where it is probable that it will be required to settle the obligation and a reliable estimate of it can be made. Future costs are not discounted unless this would significantly affect the valuation of an obligation.

2. Detailed trading profit and loss account for the year ended 31 March 2025

	2025	2024
	£'000	£'000
Turnover		
JNCC grant in aid	26,204	20,800
Secondment income	477	197
European Union funding	108	1,035
Royalties	9	7
Scientific advice and information	3,291	2,098
	30,089	**24,137**
Cost of activities		
Conservation support	9,045	6,703
Publicity and information	367	179
Direct staff costs	15,841	14,885
	25,253	**21,767**
Gross profit	**4,836**	**2,370**
Administrative expenditure		
Directors' remuneration	513	332
Other administrative costs	3,566	3,361
Operating (loss)/profit	**757**	**(1,324)**

3. Schedule of overhead expenses for the year ended 31 March 2025

	2025	2024
	£'000	£'000
Directors' remuneration		
Directors' remuneration	413	273
Contributions to directors' pensions	100	59
	513	**332**

Administration costs		
Cash items		
Rental costs under operating leases	652	617
Accommodation costs	150	252
Information technology	522	573
Human resources	188	343
Travel and subsistence	829	914
Printing, postage, stationery and subscriptions	56	130
Other expenses	227	189
Less reclaimed VAT	(59)	(56)
Legal and professional fees	178	108
Consultancy	203	130
Bank charges	9	8
Provision expense – dilapidations	700	
Exchange rate losses	20	18
	3,675	**3,226**
Non-cash items		
Depreciation and amortisation for the year	46	54
Loss on Disposal	-	-
Utilisation of provision – pension	(8)	
Creation of dilapidations provision		81
Release of provision – dilapidations	(650)	
Reclassification/write off of asset	503	
	(109)	**135**
Administrative expenses	**4,079**	**3,693**

The fees payable to the National Audit Office for the audit of the annual accounts for the year were £80k (2024: £74k).

The total amount required to discharge the dilapidations provision in 2024/25 was £700k, £50k more than the original provision.

4. Directors' remuneration

The number of directors for whom retirement benefits are accruing under defined benefit schemes amounted to 4 (2024: 2).

This note reports on Company Directors only. It does not refer to the team of Executive Directors, details of which can be found in Table 27 of the Remuneration Report.

The remuneration of the highest paid director is disclosed in the Remuneration Report.

5. Staff costs

Aggregate payroll costs, including directors and temporary staff, are reported in Note 2 between directors' remuneration, and other direct staff costs. Recoveries in respect of outward secondments are treated as turnover in the same note.

Further detail including an aggregation of these and specific heads of staff costs are included in the Remuneration and Staff Report (Table 38). Net staff costs for 2024-25 were £15,926k (2023-24: £15,021k).

Total holiday pay accrued at 31 March 2025 was £605k (£624k at 31 March 2024).

6. Pension costs

The pension schemes in operation at JNCC, are the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS) and the Civil Servants and Others Pension Scheme (CSOPS), also known as Alpha. Both are unfunded, defined benefit, contributory, public service occupational pension schemes, for which JNCC is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities. Details of the latest actuarial report can be found in the resource accounts of the Cabinet Office: Civil Service Pensions.

The scheme's actuary reviews employer contributions, usually every four years following a full scheme valuation. Revised rates were implemented on 1st April 2024, with employer contribution rates set at 28.97% for all pay bands. For 2024 to 2025, employers' contributions of £3,227k were payable to the PCSPS and CSOPS schemes (£2,761k in 2023 to 2024). The same rates are to apply until 31 March 2027 and JNCC's total employers' contributions for 2025-2026 are expected to increase in line with pay increases. Employees can instead opt to open a partnership pension account, a stakeholder pension with an employer contribution. Employers' contributions of £17k (£16k in 2023 to 2024) were paid to Legal and General, the appointed stakeholder pension provider. Employer contributions are age-related and range between 8% and 14.75%, with no requirement for the employee to make contributions. If an employee does choose to make contributions, the employer will match these up to 3% of pensionable earnings.

In addition, for employees in the partnership pension scheme, employers must pay a 'mini ASLC' (Accruing Superannuation Liability Charge) of 0.5% of pensionable earnings to cover the cost of risk benefits as a result of death-in-service or ill health retirement. Contributions of £0.7k were made (£0.7k in 2024.).

Contributions due to the partnership pension providers at the statement of financial position date were £1,000 (£1,000 at 31 March 2024). There were no prepaid contributions at this date.

7. Staff numbers

The average number of full-time equivalent (FTE) persons employed by the company, including directors, during the year is provided below.

Staff	2024-2025 (FTEs)	2023-2024 (FTEs)
Chief Executive and executive directors	8	8
Chair and non-executive directors	1	1
Team Leaders	36	36
Other staff	252	246
Total	**297**	**291**

A list of Chief Executive and Executive Directors can be found in the JNCC Support Co Remuneration and Staff Report Table 27.

8. Intangible fixed assets

Cost	£'000	Assets Under Construction	Total
At 1 April 2024	**1**	**504**	**505**
Additions	-	-	0
Reclassification/write off	-	(504)	(504)
At 31 March 2025	**1**	**-**	**1**
Amortisation			
At 1 April 2024	**159**	**-**	**159**
Charge for the year	1	-	1
Amortisation on disposals	-	-	
At 31 March 2025	**160**	**-**	**160**
Net Book Value			
At 1 April 2024	**1**	**504**	**505**
At 31 March 2025	**1**	**-**	**1-**

The ERP system went live in August 2024. As a result, JNCC reassessed the status of costs capitalised under intangible assets in relation to its implementation. As the criteria for capitalisation under FRS 102 section 18 was no longer deemed to be met due to the overall rights and rewards of the intangible asset not sitting with JNCC, the balance of £504k has been written off through the income statement.

		Assets Under Construction	Total
Cost	**£'000**		
At 1 April 2023	**200**	**224**	**424**
Additions	-	280	280
Disposals	(40)	-	(40)
At 31 March 2024	**160**	**504**	**664**
Amortisation			
At 1 April 2023	**198**	**-**	**198**

		Assets Under Construction	Total
Cost	**£'000**		
Charge for the year	1	-	1
Amortisation on disposals	(40)	-	(40)
At 31 March 2024	**159**	**-**	**159**
Net Book Value			
At 1 April 2023	**2**	**224**	**226**
At 31 March 2024	**1**	**504**	**505**

Intangible assets represent the value of the software licences held. Intangible assets are disposed of when no longer used or when superseded by an upgrade, in which case a new asset is created, reflecting the cost of the upgrade.

9. Tangible fixed assets

	Computer equipment £'000	Other equipment £'000	Total £'000
Cost			
At 1 April 2024	340	12	352
Additions during year	17	-	17
Disposals	(8)	-	(8)
At 31 March 2025	**349**	**12**	**361**
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2024	231	9	240
Charge for the year	44	1	45
Depreciation on disposals	(8)	-	(8)
At 31 March 2024	**267**	**10**	**277**
Net Book Value			
At 1 April 2024	**109**	**3**	**112**
At 31 March 2025	**82**	**2**	**84**

Cost	Computer equipment £'000	Other equipment £'000	Total £'000
At 1 April 2023 (opening balance)	369	12	381
Additions during year	1	-	1
Disposals	(30)	-	(30)
At 31 March 2024 (closing balance)	**340**	**12**	**352**
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2023 (opening balance)	209	8	217
Charge for the year	52	1	53
Depreciation on disposals	(30)	-	(30)
At 31 March 2024 (closing balance)	**231**	**9**	**240**
Net Book Value			
At 1 April 2023 (opening balance)	**160**	**4**	**164**
At 31 March 2024 (closing balance)	**109**	**3**	**112**

10. Cash at bank and in hand

Analysis of changes in net funds	1 April 2024 £'000	Cash flows £'000	31 March 2025 £'000
Cash at bank	2,642	(2,212)	430
Cash in hand	-	-	-
Total cash	**2,642**	**(2,212)**	**430**

The cash at bank balance is held in a commercial bank. No amounts are held with the Government Banking Service.

11. Debtors – amounts falling due within one year

Debtors	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Trade debtors	806	392
Other debtors	2	7
Prepayments and accrued income	4,719	1,495
Total	**5,527**	**1,894**

All balances were reviewed, and it was not considered necessary to make provision for any bad debts (2024: no bad debt provision).

Accrued income, which includes grant-in-aid, is recognised in accordance with the performance model under FRS 102. Under paragraph PBE34.67(b), income is recognised when performance-related conditions are satisfied. Where expenditure has been incurred that meets these conditions, income is recognised even if the corresponding cash has not yet been received. In 2024/25, £26.2m of grant-in-aid was approved. Of this, £22.9m was drawn down in cash during the year, and £3.3m was accrued as income in line with the performance model, reflecting expenditure incurred in the year for which funding had been approved.

12. Creditors – amounts falling due within one year

	2025	2024
Creditors	**£'000**	**£'000**
Trade creditors	164	138
Other creditors	401	305
Taxation and social security	507	363
Accruals	2,490	1,994
Holiday pay accrual	606	624
Deferred income	74	31
Total	**4,242**	**3,455**

13. Provisions for liabilities

2024/25	**Pensions and similar obligations £'000**	**Other Provisions £'000**	**Total provisions £'000**
Balance at 1 April 2024	61	650	711
Provision for year	-		
Utilised	(8)	(650)	(658)
Balance at 31 March 2025	**53**	**-**	**53**

2023/24	Pensions and similar obligations £'000	Other provisions £'000	Total provisions £'000
Balance at 1 April 2023	69	569	638
Provision for year	-	81	81
Utilised	(8)	-	(8)
Balance at 31 March 2024	**61**	**650**	**711**

Following the Joint Nature Conservation Committee's (JNCC) exit from Monkstone House, Peterborough, a provision of £650,000 was recognised in respect of dilapidation obligations. During the financial year, negotiations with the landlord were concluded, resulting in a final settlement of £700,000. This payment has been made in full, thereby discharging all liabilities associated with the property.

A provision of £53,000 remains as at 31 March 2025, representing the balance of a liability originally established in 2013–14. This provision reflects the estimated cost of future pension payments to former JNCC Chairs entitled to benefits 'by analogy to the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme'. The provision is being released as payments are made. It was revalued in the prior year, and management has reviewed the closing balance as at 31 March 2025 and confirmed it remains fairly stated.

14. Leasing commitments

JNCC has no lease commitments. Rent and associated service charges relating to JNCC's occupancy of Fletton Quays, Peterborough and Inverdee House, Aberdeen are recharged from DEFRA. No lease commitment exists for JNCC for these premises. DEFRA recognise the leasing liability on their statement of financial position under IFRS16 and hard charge JNCC.

15. Legal status

The company is limited by guarantee. In the event of a liquidation, the liability of each member does not exceed £1 if they are a member at the date of the liquidation, or if they cease to be a member within one year of the date of the liquidation. As at 31 March 2025 the members were:

- Ms Cath Denholm
- Professor Thomas Meagher
- Professor Melanie Austen
- Professor Pete Higgins
- Professor Rhys Jones
- Professor Steve Ormerod

- Dr Gemma Harper
- Mr David Collins
- Professor Colin Galbraith
- Ms Rachael Garrett
- Mr Daniel Ebanks
- Ms Marsha Ramroop
- Mr David Stone
- Dr Christina Tuckett

16. Contingent liability

As at 31 March 2025, JNCC is subject to a potential civil penalty, the outcome of which remains uncertain. The maximum potential liability is estimated to be £60,000.

In accordance with FRS 102 Section 21, this has not been recognised in the Statement of Financial Position as it is not considered probable that an outflow of economic benefits will be required.

17. Ultimate controlling party

Ten out of the fourteen directors in post at 31 March 2025 are members of the Joint Nature Conservation Committee. The Committee sets the overall direction and priorities for the work of the support company. For these reasons the directors consider the Joint Nature Conservation Committee to be the ultimate controlling party.

18. Related party transactions

In order to ensure accuracy in the consolidation of Whole of Government Accounts, the Clear Line of Sight Initiative requires that Arm's Length Bodies (ALBs) such as JNCC receive their grant in aid funding from a single source. As a result, from 1 April 2011 the JNCC Support Co received its grant in aid funding solely via the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), whereas prior to this date, grant in aid was received from the GB conservation bodies, the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs in Northern Ireland and Defra.

The company discloses information for individual directors which relates to contracts in excess of £25,000. Any contract for a lesser sum is not considered to be material in the context of these financial statements.

The Remuneration and Staff report provides further information on Committee members and executive directors.

The directors consider a financial interest to be the ability to influence the company in placing a contract with a party with whom they have a position of influence, or the ability to influence the performance of that contract by the contractor.

There were no contracts or financial interests which met these criteria during the current or previous year.

In addition, JNCC has had a number of transactions with other central government bodies (e.g. the Animal and Plant Health Agency, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew). These are not reported in detail since JNCC takes advantage of the exemption in IAS 24 relating to entities which are only related parties because they are under common control of the same government.

19. Events after the reporting date

No adjusting or non-adjusting events have occurred after the statement of financial position date that materially affect the contents of these financial statements.

20. Date of authorisation for issue

JNCC Support Co's financial statements are laid before the Houses of Parliament by the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. Section 32.9 of FRS102 requires disclosure of the date on which the financial statements are authorised for issue. The authorised for issue date is the date of the Comptroller and Auditor General's audit certificate on pages 104 to 108.

JNCC client letterhead

The Comptroller and Auditor General
National Audit Office
157-197 Buckingham Palace Road
Victoria
LONDON
SW1W 9SP

LETTER OF REPRESENTATION: JNCC Support Co 2024/25

I acknowledge as Accounting Officer of JNCC Support Co my responsibility for preparing accounts that give a true and fair view of the state of affairs, loss, changes in taxpayers equity and cash flows of JNCC Support Co for the year ended 31 March 2025.

In preparing the accounts, I was required to:

- observe the relevant accounting and disclosure requirements and apply appropriate accounting policies on a consistent basis in accordance with UK GAAP in force at the reporting date;
- make judgements and estimates on a reasonable basis;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed and disclosed and explain any material departures in the accounts; and
- make an assessment that JNCC Support Co is a going concern and will continue to be in operation throughout the next year; and ensure that this has been appropriately disclosed in the financial statements.

I confirm that for the financial year ended 31 March 2025:

- neither I nor my staff authorised a course of action, the financial impact of which is that transactions infringe the requirements of regularity as set out in Managing Public Money;
- having considered and enquired as to the JNCC Support Co's compliance with law and regulations, I have disclosed to you any actual or potential non-compliance that could have a material effect on the ability of JNCC Support Co to conduct its business or whose effects should be considered when preparing financial statements;
- all accounting records have been provided to you for the purpose of your audit. All other records and related information, including minutes of all management meetings which you have requested have been supplied to you;
- all transactions undertaken by JNCC Support Co have been recorded in the accounting records and are properly reflected in the financial statements; and
- the information provided regarding the identification of related parties is complete; and the related party disclosures in the financial statements are adequate.

All material accounting policies as adopted are detailed in Note 1 to the financial statements.

INTERNAL CONTROL

I acknowledge as Accounting Officer my responsibility for the design and implementation of internal controls to prevent and detect error and I have disclosed to you the results of my assessment of the risk that the financial statements could be materially misstated.

I confirm that I have reviewed the effectiveness of the system of internal control and that the disclosures I have made are in accordance with HM Treasury guidance on the Governance Statement.

FRAUD

I acknowledge as Accounting Officer my responsibility for the design and implementation of internal controls to prevent and detect fraud and I have disclosed to you the results of my assessment of the risk that the financial statements could be materially misstated as a result of fraud.

I have disclosed to you any knowledge of fraud or suspected fraud affecting JNCC Support Co involving management, employees who have significant roles in internal control, or others where the fraud could have a material effect on the financial statements.

I have disclosed to you any knowledge of any allegations of fraud or suspected fraud, affecting JNCC Support Co's financial statements communicated by employees, former employees, analysts, regulators or others.

ACCOUNTING ESTIMATES

I acknowledge as Accounting Officer my responsibility to make judgments and estimates on a reasonable basis.

I confirm that the methods, the data, and the significant assumptions used by the e JNCC Support Co in making accounting estimates and related disclosures are appropriate to achieve recognition, measurement or disclosure that is reasonable in the context of UK GAAP and represent the best estimate available in the context of information available at the date of signing.

GOING CONCERN

I have assessed whether the going concern basis of accounting is appropriate for JNCC Support Co. There is nothing to note that casts doubt on JNCC Support Co's ability to continue as a going concern. The assumptions made in my assessment are reasonable and appropriate in the context of UK GAAP.

ASSETS

General

All assets included in the statement of financial position were in existence at the reporting date and owned by the JNCC Support Co, and free from any lien, encumbrance or charge, except as disclosed in the financial statements. The statement of financial position includes all tangible assets owned by JNCC Support Co.

Non-Current Assets

All assets over £5,000 are capitalised. They are revalued annually in accordance with JNCC Support Co assesses to be a reasonable proxy for fair value. Depreciation is calculated to reduce the net book amount of each asset to its estimated residual value by the end of its estimated useful life in the JNCC Support Co which are known, or may be expected, to be irrecoverable.

Other Current Assets

On realisation in the ordinary course of JNCC Support Co's operations the other current assets in the statement of financial position are expected to produce at least the amounts at which they are stated. Adequate provision has been made against all amounts owing to the JNCC Support Co which are known, or may be expected, to be irrecoverable.

Accrued and Deferred Income

While predominantly reliant on Grant in Aid from Defra, JNCC accounts for contractual income from elsewhere using the revenue recognition principles in FRS 102. We are content that the accrued and deferred income recognised represents management's best estimate. We have concluded that:

- The balance sheet takes reasonable account of the nature of the projects in determining a revenue recognition method; and

- Judgements made in the measurement of the revenue recognised to date takes adequate account of all relevant factors, including the extent to which projects are on track, and whether any costs incurred may prove ineligible/irrecoverable under the relevant contracts.

With regard to the grant-in-aid recognised as accrued income, I confirm that this receivable was controlled by JNCC as at 31st March 2025.

LIABILITIES

General

All liabilities have been recorded in the statement of financial position in accordance with UK GAAP.

Provisions and Contingent Liabilities

Provision is made in the financial statements for the "by analogy" pension for previous Chairs

I have disclosed to you all actual or possible litigation and claims whose effects should be considered when preparing the financial statements. All such matters have been accounted for and disclosed in accordance with UK GAAP.

I am not aware of any action which is or may be brought against the JNCC Support Co under the Insolvency Act 1986.

OTHER DISCLOSURES

Results

Except as disclosed in the financial statements, the results for the year were not materially affected by transactions of a sort not usually undertaken by the JNCC Support Co, or circumstances of an exceptional or non-recurring nature.

I confirm that no new external income generating projects were entered into by JNCC in the year to 31st March 2025.

Losses and special payments

All losses and special payments requiring disclosure under the requirements of Managing Public Money have been included in the Annual Report.

Unadjusted Errors

The following unadjusted errors have been brought to my attention:

Title	Error Type	Description	Account line	SoCNE (£'k)		SoFP (£'k)	
				DR	CR	DR	CR
Accured Income	Extrapolated	One item of accrued income was reported gross of VAT rather than net, resulting in an overstatement to accrued income. This error was individually trivial (£3,466.50) but related to a residual item. The error evaluation tool therefore extrapolated this error to a likely error of (£27,731).	Debtors				28
			Turnover	28			
Test of Accruals	Extrapolated	Several trivial differences were noted in our accruals testing, so we used the AIMS sample evaluation tool to determine the impact, and we have recorded the extrapolated error here	Administrative Expenditure			1	
			Creditors		1		
Expenditure	Extrapolated	Several trivial differences were identified as a result of our expenditure testing. We have performed a sample evaluation and noted a most likely error	Cost of Activities		28		
			Balance Sheet (P/L Reserve)			28	

I consider the effect of these unadjusted errors to be immaterial, both individually and in aggregate, to the financial statements taken as a whole.

Events after the Reporting Period

All matters regarding events occurring subsequent to the date of the financial statements, and for which UK GAAP requires adjustment or disclosure, have been adjusted or disclosed.

Restatements of comparative information

There was no restatement of comparative information.

Other information

I confirm that any documents comprising the annual report which will be available only after the date of the auditor’s report will be provided to you when available, and prior to issuance by JNCC Support Co.

[Name]
[Position]
[Date]