

# CANDIDATE PACK

## Welcome Note from Keir Mather MP, Minister for Aviation, Maritime and Decarbonisation

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the Non-Executive Director role on the Board of Port of London Authority (PLA).

This is an important time for the Department for Transport. We are investing heavily in infrastructure and public transport to improve journeys, boost connections, level up the country and support economic growth. Central to our mission is delivering transport that works for everyone in our society.

We are recruiting for a Non-Executive Director to join the team on the Board of the Trust Port at the PLA.

PLA is the UK's biggest port, central to the country's economy and ambitions for growth. It connects the UK to the world, but it is much more than a conventional port.

The position will require the candidate to have engineering expertise, and experience of managing and advising on infrastructure and major projects.

The successful candidate will provide challenge and support to a wide variety of management and operational issues and contribute to the effective strategic and operational leadership of the Board. In particular, the Board is looking for knowledge relating to operational safety, risk, financing and project viability.

We strongly welcome applications from all backgrounds. As part of the Department's commitment to diversity, we believe our public appointments should reflect our customers - the travelling public – who come from all walks of life

and have different experiences. We very much welcome fresh talent, expertise, and perspectives, to help us better understand the needs of the communities we serve and support better decision making for all. This includes people who may have never applied for a public appointment – but could bring new ideas, insights and energy.

If you are interested in the role and work of PLA, I would like to encourage you to apply.

Our dedicated DfT Public Appointments Team would be happy to talk through the process and answer your questions.

Keir Mather MP  
Minister for Aviation, Maritime and Decarbonisation

## About the Port of London Authority

We are the UK's biggest port, central to the country's economy and ambitions for growth. We connect the UK to the world, but we are much more than a conventional port.

We are driven by our purpose to protect and improve the 95-mile stretch of the River Thames which is tidal – from Teddington Lock on the border of Surrey, through the heart of London, Kent, Essex and out to the North Sea.

As a trust port, we reinvest all the money we make back into the tidal Thames region – caring for the river and supporting the communities who live and work along it.

Our people bring together their passion and expertise as harbour masters, workboat crews, river and sea pilots, hydrography surveyors, environmental scientists, engineers, commercial and planning experts, business service professionals, and more.

Working together, we are committed to doing the right thing, championing our customers and their growth, promoting sustainability and the voice and interests of people who live and work on the river – and always putting safety first.

### What we do

Our 470 staff keep river users safe – patrolling the tidal Thames and managing traffic on the UK's busiest inland waterway 365 days a year. We provide highly skilled and experienced river and sea pilots, and we map, mark and dredge the riverbed to ensure safe passage of all vessels and keep river users safe.

We drive growth and investment – working with partners to lead on innovation and the investment in skills, technology and river infrastructure to enable

significant growth. We provide high-quality services to the port's customers making it easier for them to trade, and we advocate on their behalf to create opportunities to grow, build resilience, and decarbonise.

We campaign for a clean river – free of sewage, waste and pollution. We push for net zero emissions, capturing opportunities for renewable energy, and boosting biodiversity.

We champion the people who visit, live and work on the river – helping more people build a fulfilling career on the tidal Thames, enjoy the water for sport, leisure and relaxation, and connect with the greatest river in the world.

We reinvest any financial surplus back into the tidal Thames region – as a trust port, we have no shareholders and reinvest all the money we make back into the river and the people who live and work along it.

### Our History

The River Thames has been the lifeblood of London since Roman Times, shaping the city and the country. For more than 100 years, we at the PLA have served London and the rest of the UK by overseeing its biggest and flagship port – safely bringing the world's goods and products into the country's capital and promoting trade and growth.

We have played various other roles in serving the country: supporting wartime operations, promoting tourism, and hosting longstanding and globally recognised annual events like the Oxford-Cambridge Boat Race and London's New Year's Eve fireworks.

Over the century, our role has evolved from owning and operating east London's docks to managing the waterways – directing traffic, dredging the river, maintaining its banks and protecting the environment – so our customers can efficiently and safely trade.

Now, in addition to our commitment to growth and enabling our customers' commercial success, as a trust port we also operate with a dedication to secure social value and sustainability. This is how we can pay tribute to the Port's legacy and ensure the tidal Thames is protected for future generations.

## Our Future

We want to leave the tidal Thames in a better condition than we found it – more prosperous, sustainable, thriving, and vibrant.

The Port of London will transport up to 50% more cargo and generate thousands of new jobs by 2050. We are investing in skills, technology and port infrastructure to drive ambitious growth and help to fuel the UK's economy.

Our vision is for a clean river, free of pollution and rubbish. A resilient tidal Thames, adapting to climate change and richer in wildlife, and Net Zero by 2040. A more diverse Thames, providing jobs, learning and enjoyment to the whole community.

To deliver that, we are committed to doing the right thing for the river, championing growth by working with others to embed innovation, dedicating ourselves to sustainability and the people who live and work along the river, and always putting safety first.

## About Thames Vision 2050

Thames Vision 2050 was launched in September 2022. The development framework for the river, created by the PLA with stakeholders, targets the long-term development of the Thames as trading hub, destination and natural haven.

**Our Vision for the Thames in 2050 is:**  
**The UK's leading port, central to the nation's economy, with Net Zero emissions. A clean river, free of pollution and rubbish, supporting more sport, passengers and freight. A resilient Estuary, adapting to climate change and richer in wildlife. A more diverse Thames, providing jobs, learning and enjoyment to the whole community, and always, everyone, staying safe.**

For more on Thames Vision 2050, visit the microsite: Our Vision for the Thames in 2050 - Thames Vision 2050 (pla.co.uk)  
<https://pla.co.uk/thames-vision-2050>

## Finances and Functions

A self-financing Trust Port, the PLA covers its operating costs and legacy pension obligations, and creates a surplus for re-investment, by levying fees on ships and their cargoes; by charging pilotage dues; and from river works licensing and rents on 'works' on, over and under the river. Income is also derived from making the PLA's facilities and services available on a commercial basis, for example hydrographic services, the Denton quayside and a range of marine based services.

Increasingly, income is being diversified through property and other investment for commercial return, in line with the goals of the Thames Vision.

Since 2018, this has included the acquisition of several wharves/riverside industrial sites, and further opportunities are being pursued in line with the Investment Plan.

The PLA has over 120 sea and river pilots who navigate ships in and out of the port, including the world's largest container ships calling at London Gateway. In 2024, the PLA delivered a 99.5% service level for pilotage customers. It continues to invest in its pilotage service, taking on around ten trainee pilots each year. Supporting the safety of

navigation, the Authority operates a 24/7 Vessel Traffic Service (VTS). The fleet of salvage & maintenance, hydrographic and harbour service vessels ensure that navigational aids and other river infrastructure are properly maintained, chart depths are monitored and maintained to fulfil our responsibilities as the statutory harbour authority.

In addition to the commercial side of managing the river, the PLA authorises or co-ordinates almost 700 events every year, including the annual University Boat Races. As the statutory river regulator, the PLA is responsible for ensuring that new developments do not have an adverse impact on river safety and conservancy, or the environmental sites designated within the PLA's jurisdiction.

The PLA plays a leading role within the UK maritime sector on the decarbonisation and environmental challenges facing all ports and the tidal Thames in particular. This includes being the first UK port to introduce a green tariff to incentivise more sustainable vessels calling at Thames terminals and being the first UK port to publish an Air Quality Strategy.

The Thames Vision commitment to be the UK's leading Net Zero port continues. The PLA has established a Net Zero coalition and is working with stakeholders on plans for decarbonising the river. It is also progressing work on the Clean Thames Manifesto, bringing together Anglian Water, Southern Water and Thames Water to fast-track work to reduce sewage and storm water discharges from overflow points and treatment works, and with Thames Water to address wet wipes in the river

The PLA is headquartered in Gravesend, Kent and has an office in the City of London as well as operational centres in several other locations along the river.

## Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The PLA is strongly committed to creating a diverse and inclusive environment. It has significantly improved the gender diversity of its senior management team over the last few years and has achieved a gender balanced Board but remains keen to achieve greater overall diversity. The PLA is a member of Inclusive Employers, who supports the organisation on awareness and training, and to refresh policies and procedures to ensure diversity and inclusion are at the centre of the PLA's culture. All qualified applicants will be equally considered.

**Further information on the PLA, its history, role and wide remit can be found at [www.pla.co.uk](http://www.pla.co.uk).**

## Opportunity and Requirements of the Role

### The Role

- We are seeking to appoint a Non-Executive Board Member with engineering expertise. Likely to be an experienced engineer who has had a notable career in managing and advising on infrastructure and major projects. In particular, the Board is looking for knowledge relating to operational safety, risk, financing and project viability.
- This role will be a Department for Transport (DfT) position on the Board. Appointment will be via a DfT and PLA recruitment process.

### Person Specification

- Recent or current experience in engineering construction and building infrastructure development with proven success in large commercial developments.
- Experience of operating successfully at board or equivalent level in a high-profile organisation with a good awareness of their own strengths and capabilities and how these complement other board members.
- An ability to contribute to discussions regarding the Lower Thames Crossing and the wider commercial growth of the Thames.
- A strong team player and good strategist with high integrity and excellent communication skills, able to offer both support and constructive challenge to the PLA executive.
- An understanding of risk management and how risk assessment is used in decision making, particularly in a commercial context and in relation to safety

### Committee Membership

- Audit and Risk Committee
- People and Remuneration Committee
- Investment Committee

## Port of London Authority Board



### Jonson Cox, CBE - Chair

Jonson has a wide background as Chief Executive and Chair in regulated and commercial infrastructure and public service businesses. He completed a decade as Chair of Ofwat in June 2022 after his term was extended three times.

After an early career with Shell, Jonson joined Yorkshire Water (1996 - 2000) as Managing Director to lead the company out of a significant crisis with its customers and restore Yorkshire Water's high-ranking status. He returned to the sector for over six years (2004 – 2010), as Group CEO at troubled AWG plc, leading a successful turnaround of underperforming Anglian Water Services and Morrison plc.

Jonson led the solvent restructuring of UK Coal plc as Chair (2010 - 2012). He secured the value in UKC's property development business for the miners' pension funds and the PPF in creating and listing Harworth plc, where he served as Chair (2012 - 2018). He chaired Cory Group (2015 - 2018), owner of the UK's largest waste-to-energy plant, leading a restructuring and successful sale to infrastructure funds. In 2022 he was appointed as Chair of the Port of London Authority and is currently a Senior Advisor at I Squared Capital Partners and a Director at OVO Energy.



### Sue Mackenzie - Senior Independent Director / Vice Chair

Sue Mackenzie was appointed Non-Executive Board Member of the Port of London Authority Board in December 2020.

Sue brings a wealth of international, commercial shipping operational experience, having served in senior management and advisory roles for both public and private companies for more than 20 years. She held a variety of roles during nearly 13 years at P&O Ferries most recently as Operations and Business Transformation Director. Prior to that she was Operations Director of London Luton Airport at a time of unprecedented growth following the launch of EasyJet.

Sue's early career was spent in military service and not-for-profit sectors both within and outside the UK. After leaving the Army, Sue spent time as Chief Executive of the charity Cities in Schools, which ran partnership programmes between business and the community to provide education, training and support to disadvantaged young people. Sue currently serves as a Non-Executive Director of BMT Group Ltd and is also on the board of the Logistics UK.

She has degrees in agricultural science and emergency planning management and has completed the general management programme at Harvard Business School. She is a Council Member of the National Army Museum and continues to work voluntarily in support of her fellow servicemen and women and is involved as a Trustee and/or volunteer of several charities in the UK.



### **Toril Eidesvik - Non-Executive Director**

Toril Eidesvik was appointed Non-Executive Board Member of the PLA in September 2020.

She has worked within the shipping industry in various positions since 2006 where she was elected Executive Chair of the reefer shipping company Green Reefers. She later served as CEO from 2008 to 2012. Toril served as CEO for the general ship supply company Seven Seas and more recently for the cargo handling equipment supplier TTS Group (now Nekkar).

Toril has extensive board experience from several shipping related companies and is presently Non-Executive Director of Edda Wind, Eksportfinans, Seam and Evoy.

She holds a Master of Law from the University of Oslo, worked as a lawyer for the first nine years of her career, firstly within a private law firm and later within the legal department of a bank.



### **Vanessa Howlison - Non-Executive Director**

Vanessa Howlison was appointed Non-Executive Board Member on 1 January 2023.

Until March 2024, Vanessa was Chief Finance Officer at National Highways. Prior to this she held Finance Director roles at the Department for Transport, the Department of Energy and Climate Change, and Ofsted. Her early career was in NHS finance and with the Audit Commission. She was previously an independent Non-Executive Director at Ofwat and recently completed an MSc in Carbon Management at the University of Edinburgh.



### **Admiral Sir Philip Jones GCB DL - Non-Executive Director**

Admiral Sir Philip Jones GCB DL was appointed a Non-Executive Board Member of the PLA Board in March 2022.

He served as Chief of Naval Staff and First Sea Lord, the professional head of the Royal Navy, from 2016 - 2019. He joined the Royal Navy in 1978, read for a degree in Geography at the University of Oxford, saw active service in the South Atlantic in 1982, qualified as a surface warfare officer and then served in HM Yacht BRITANNIA, in three frigates and on the Maritime Battle Staff. His sea commands included the Type 22 frigates BEAVER (as a commander), and COVENTRY (as a captain), the UK's Amphibious Task Group (as a commodore), UK Maritime Forces and EU Naval Forces for Counter Piracy off Somalia (as a Rear Admiral), and the Fleet (as a Vice Admiral). He also served four times in the Ministry of Defence. He is now a Trustee of the Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies (RUSI) and Chair of trustees at the National Museum of the Royal Navy (NMRN). He is a Senior Naval Advisor at BAE Systems and a member of their Maritime and Land sector board.



### **Priya Nair - Non-Executive Director**

Priya Nair joined the PLA as a Non-Executive Board Member and Chair of the Investment Committee on 1 June 2023.

Priya is CEO of The Housing Finance Corporation (THFC), the UK's largest social housing aggregator. Prior to this, Priya was Senior Director of Infrastructure at abrdn Investment Management, where she held responsibility for financing, capital raising, investor relations and strategy in relation to all its funds and co-investments. Priya has a 27-year investment banking track record at three top tier regulated financial institutions (Deutsche Bank, Citigroup, and Royal Bank of Canada) working across capital markets, corporate finance and securities services.

She is a Strategic Advisor to Good Governance Capital, and Board Trustee at Sported.



### **Martin Rolfe - Non-Executive Director**

Martin Rolfe joined the PLA as a Non-Executive Board Member on 1 June 2024.

Chief Executive of NATS since May 2015, Martin took up the post after having been Managing Director, Operations since 2012, with responsibility for NATS’ economically regulated UK and North Atlantic services.

Martin holds a Master’s degree in Aerospace Systems Engineering from the University of Southampton. He has 30 years’ experience in the defence and aerospace industry, and prior to joining NATS was the Managing Director of Lockheed Martin’s Civil Division with responsibility for worldwide ATM programmes as well as UK Government business.

Martin has also worked for the European Space Agency and Logica plc.



### **Robin Mortimer - Chief Executive**

Robin Mortimer joined the Port of London Authority as Chief Executive Officer on 31 March 2014.

Prior to joining the PLA, Robin had 20 years’ experience in the UK Government civil service across a range of government departments. He was Private Secretary to the Environment Secretary from 1996 - 1997, Deputy Prime Minister from 1997 - 1998 and to the Transport Secretary from 2001-2003. He led the work on the UK Climate Change Bill in 2006 and in 2007, became a Director in Defra where he set up the UK’s Adapting to Climate Change programme, oversaw the creation of the Canal & River Trust and directed policy on air quality and the natural environment.

Robin is currently Chair of Estuary Services Ltd (a PLA subsidiary) and a Board Member of the UK Major Ports Group and Thames Skills Academy. He is a Non-executive Director of the Thames Estuary Growth Board, the Thames Freeport and Red One Ltd.



### **Steve Lockwood - Chief Financial Officer**

Steve Lockwood joined the PLA in July 2023. Steve is an Associate of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants and has over 25 years of experience in finance, primarily in IT and telecommunications.

Prior to joining the PLA, Steve was Finance Director for the International Markets Division outside the UK, and CFO for Continental Europe at BT. During his 17 years at BT Steve held a variety of roles both inside and outside of Finance ranging from Client Delivery Director, Deal Architect and European Head of Commercial Finance where he was successful in winning over £2bn worth of new business (which also included being lead finance analyst for BT's Sponsorship of the London 2012 Olympic Games). Prior to BT, Steve held a number of finance positions in Fujitsu Services, Express Dairies and Finelist Group.



### **James Stride - Chief Harbour Master**

James Stride joined the PLA as Chief Harbour Master on 6 November 2023.

He has over 30 years' experience working in the maritime sector. His first 24 years was as a Warfare Officer for the Royal Navy during which he qualified as a Navigator, Hydrographic Surveyor, Meteorologist and a Principal Warfare Officer before taking Command of HMS DUNCAN and taking the Type 45 Destroyer out from build.

Joining Carnival Corporation and plc's maritime team in 2015, he undertook a number of operational support, maritime governance and leadership roles in both Southampton and Hamburg. This included as Carnival Maritime's Nautical Director being responsible for the Corporation's European Fleet Operation Centre supporting over 30 cruise ships deployed globally and latterly as Carnival UK's Vice President Maritime Governance/Designated Person Ashore being responsible for Captains' line management, governance, nautical, operational support and crisis management.

He holds a BSc (Hons) in Oceanography and Physical Geography and an MA in Defence Studies from King's College London.

## Terms of Appointment

The Board meets eight times a year in formal session. The Board has established several sub-committees, namely:

- Audit and Risk
- Licensing
- Nominations
- People and Remuneration
- Investment

The fee payable to Non-Executive Board Members is currently £28,971 per annum. The appointment, commencing in September 2026 will initially be for three years, with a required time commitment of up to 24 days per annum.

## 2026 Board Meeting Dates

- 21 July 2026
- 22 September 2026
- 13 October 2026
- 17 November 2026
- 8 December 2026

## 2027 Board Meeting Dates

- 23 February 2027
- 27 April 2027
- 18 May 2027
- 20 July 2027
- 21 September 2027
- 19 October 2027
- 23 November 2027
- 7 December 2027

## How to Apply

Veredus is acting as an executive search and selection advisor to the PLA on this appointment. Candidates should apply for this role at [www.veredus.co.uk/jobs/](http://www.veredus.co.uk/jobs/) quoting reference 764.

Click on the 'apply' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV, cover letter and Candidate Supporting Information Form.

The closing date for receipt of application is **5pm on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2026**.

If you would like to discuss the role confidentially before applying, or require more information about the recruitment process, please contact Veredus:

[james.griffin2@veredus.co.uk](mailto:james.griffin2@veredus.co.uk) or  
[laura.spurgin@veredus.co.uk](mailto:laura.spurgin@veredus.co.uk)

Please include a daytime, evening and mobile telephone contact number, and your preferred email address for correspondence in your application, which will be used with discretion.

The PLA is committed to the principles of appointments based on merit with independent assessment, openness and transparency of process.

**Your application will not be considered without the following:**

- A letter outlining how you meet the requirements of the role, evidencing the knowledge, experience and competencies required.
- A full CV giving your education and professional and life qualifications and a full career history, paid or unpaid and any relevant achievements.
- A completed Candidate Supporting Information Form

- An account created on the Public Appointments Website for equality information and outside interests declarations (see below\*).

The key qualities which need to be clearly demonstrated (by factual information and concrete examples) in your application are outlined in the 'Opportunity & requirements of the role' section of this document.

You should also set out your reasons for wishing to be considered for this appointment. Your application should make clear the level and depth of your management or specialist expertise and any other experience which demonstrates your knowledge and interests relevant to this post.

All submissions will receive an on-screen acknowledgement when you apply through the Veredus website.

\* For your application to be considered you are required to create/have an account on the Public Appointments Website. Once you have created an account, you will be asked to complete some personal information, including equality information and declarations around outside interests. Any information you put into your account now or in the future will be stored so that you can update it whenever you need to and you won't need to re-register each time you apply for an appointment. Your account information will be securely stored, and you can decide to close it at any time.

[Create an account on the Public Appointments Website](#)

*NB. Within your equality/diversity information, you will have the option to select 'prefer not to say'.*

At Veredus, we take care to protect the privacy of our candidates and clients. To read more about how

we collect, store and share your data please read our privacy notice which can be accessed here:

[Veredus | Privacy Policy](#)

Should you encounter any issues with your online application please get in touch with us via:

[centralgovernment@veredus.co.uk](mailto:centralgovernment@veredus.co.uk)

## Candidate Assessment

Candidates will be evaluated on the extent to which they meet criteria set out in the 'Opportunity & requirements of the role' section. Candidates will be evaluated on merit at all stages.

The closing date for receipt of applications is 5pm on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2026. Longlisted candidates will be invited to an initial stage interview during January/February 2026. Final panel interviews are expected to take place w/c 9<sup>th</sup> March 2026.