


New chair of Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh appointed

The Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and the Environment  today announced the appointment of Sir Muir Russell as the new Chair to the Board of Trustees of the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh.

Richard Lochhead, Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and the Environment, said:

“I am delighted that Sir Muir Russell has agreed to become the Chair of the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh. The Garden brings international visitors to Scotland and shares its expertise with many other countries of the world.

“I am confident that Sir Muir’s expertise and extensive leadership experience at the highest levels in the public sector will ensure that the RBGE continues to make an important contribution to the current challenges facing the environment of biodiversity loss, climate change and low carbon living.”

The Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh is a Non-Departmental Public Body established under the National Heritage (Scotland) Act 1985 and is mainly funded by the Scottish Government. Its mission is “to explore and explain the world of plants” and its primary functions are: science, horticulture, education and information and visitor services.

Sir Muir has wide experience as a Chairman and extensive experience of giving direction and leadership, building and leading teams and of change management. He has been the Chair for the Judicial Appointments Board for Scotland since 2008 and was reappointed by Scottish Ministers for a further 3 year term in 2011.

He joined the Scottish Office in 1970 where he held a number of positions in policy and administration, legislation and other parliamentary work leading to senior management responsibility. He was the Permanent Secretary from 1998 to 2003. In 2003 he was appointed Principal and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Glasgow and served for 6 years.

Sir Muir said:

“I am delighted to become the Chairman of Trustees of the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, an organisation I have admired and supported for many years.

“I attach particular importance to the continuing international excellence of its scientific work, as well as to its roles in education and in providing a fine experience for those who visit, from Scotland and elsewhere. There is huge potential in all these areas and I look forward to working with my Board colleagues and with the Regius Keeper and staff to help realise that potential.”

This appointment will be for four years and will run from December 19 2011 to November 30 2015.

This appointment is part-time and attracts no remuneration. The total time commitment is approximately 20 days per annum and includes preparation for and attendance at up to four Board meetings.

Sir Muir is also Chairing Member for the Judicial Appointments Board for Scotland which attracts a remuneration of £17,500.

This Ministerial public appointment was made in accordance with the code of practice published by the Public Appointments Commissioner for Scotland.

All appointments are made on merit and political activity plays no part in the selection process. However, in accordance with the original Nolan recommendations, there is a

requirement for appointees' political activity within the last five years (if there is any to be declared) to be made public. Sir Muir has declared no political activity within the last five years.