

Dr Jane Smart OBE

Nature is at the heart of Jane's career (and spare time!) with a highlight being the co-founding and leadership of Plantlife to create a strong conservation voice for wild plants.

Jane started out as a botanist and plant ecologist (her PhD focussed on peatland restoration), followed by a period as Habitat Management Ecologist for the former Greater London Council. Subsequently she worked for the London Wildlife Trust before her Plantlife role began.

Following 15 years as Chief Executive of Plantlife, Jane moved to Switzerland joining IUCN - the world's oldest and largest environmental network. She progressed from Head of the Species Programme to Global Director, Biodiversity (overseeing work on World Heritage, Protected Areas as well as Species). A high spot was leading IUCN's work on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, adopted at the UN Biodiversity Conference in 2022 (at COP15).

Having spent her whole life in nature conservation, Jane felt it was right to "put something back". She joined Friends of the Dales after moving back to the UK in 2022, appreciating the charity's agility and campaigning "tone of voice". She is also a Trustee of the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust and Chair of the Malhamdale Environmental Group, and is particularly enthusiastic about helping support Friends of the Dales tackle the nature and climate crises through the conservation of biodiversity in the Yorkshire Dales National Park.