

The White Peak Partnership

Steering Group meeting

14:00 – 16:00 Tuesday 25 August 2020 via WebEx

Minutes

Introductions & apologies

Attendees

Neil Rudge (NR) – Natural England (NE) - Chair
Sarah Bird (SB) – Secretariat
Mark Haslam (MH) – Environment Agency (EA)
Suzanne Fletcher (SLF) – Peak District National Park Authority (PDNPA)
Andrew Critchlow (AC) – National Farmers Union (NFU)
Dave Savage (DS) – Derbyshire Wildlife Trust (DWT)
Jon Stewart (JS) – National Trust (NT)
Dan Abrahams (DA) – Natural England (NE)

Apologies

Tim Allen (TA) – Historic England (HE)

Minutes from the last meeting

Minutes from the last meeting accepted as true. Actions from the last meeting that are not covered elsewhere have been completed with the exception of

- Note: MA is temporarily in new role. **Action: SB & MH to liaise with whoever fills that role** to incorporate the water vulnerability mapping into the DWPP to guide the use of the options.
- Action: **SLF & SB** review of prioritisation section in ELMs, about potential conflicts between any public goods and between delivery and farming. Keep this under review, suggested further discussion when phase 1 of the Test is complete at the end of October.

Partner and project updates

MH – Still working from home, unlikely to be back in the office until 2021. Trying to work as normally as possible, but restricted in terms of site visits. Not much EA work in the White Peak including project work since the last meeting.

SLF – Most staff that were furloughed have now been unfurloughed. Office is not open to the public, only open to 20 people to maintain social distancing. Max 30 at any one time. All projects and programmes have continued, only essential site visits until mid-June, now operationally essential sites now. 2021 Emergency Fund to cover losses, used amount of reserves. Not heard Defra settlement yet, hoping to hear in September, but likely to be an effective cut.

AC – Working from home. No site visits. If office HQ opens only 30 will return. Some commodities supply chains, particularly dairy and milk supply, collapsed. Largely unaffected in Derbyshire. Demand currently for beef and lamb quite high. As a grass-based county, fared pretty well. Food standards petition has enabled working with organisations that wouldn't normally work with. Trade deals, agriculture bill, consultations including for ELMs. SLF Dairy relief fund – taken up by anyone in the WP? AC – need examples of those that have applied and missed out or realised they are ineligible.

DS – Most staff furloughed until July. Running on skeleton staff. Most staff now back 50% of the time. DS is 2.5 days per week. Focussing on planning, keep obligations going. Heritage Lottery recovery fund to Covid-proof premises and practices. Lots of work with Nestle, some in WP. Taken over management of Lightwood Reservoir site. The badger cull possibly coming to Derbyshire and promoting vaccination has taken a lot of time. Badger vaccination programme did not stop. Peregrine eggs theft from Hartington site. Wild Peak project (Dark Peak) meeting of Wildlife Trusts to have shared vision. SLF & NR – when will this become a wider discussion with other stakeholders? DS not sure, perhaps within the next six months. DWT successful in getting NE licence to reintroduce beavers to Willington Ings reserve in south Derbyshire.

JS – National Trust is going through a reset programme (involving redundancies and other cost-savings). Predicted to lose £200 million across the organisation. Likely to be reduced income stream for several years. Refreshed priorities and programme of cost-savings and priorities to move forward but at reduced capacity. Peak District will be affected, internal consultation currently underway until 11 September. Outcomes communicated October. Lot of Peak District Team still on furlough, concentrating on essential tasks. Large influx of people into the Peak District, new audiences. Shared issue with local communities, issues with litter etc. Land management initiatives, involved more in the Dark Peak. Dove Water Environment Grant scheme grant, will apply to extend into 2022. Tree Safety Survey for ash dieback, waiting for conclusions and recommendations to determine budget.

NR – Not a lot of change since the last meeting. Still largely working from home, prioritisation exercise was carried out and is now coming to an end. Slow work back to normal. CS applications in the WP have been delivered, with help from PDNP. Some site visits are now going ahead. Risk-based approach to returning to offices. NNR offices (Bakewell) will be open first. Increased visitors and new audiences visiting NNRs, provides opportunities for engagement. 150 new posts across England being advertised. Mostly national level senior advisers linked to national strategic roles. Catchment Sensitive Farming Officer is leaving, hoping to have a replacement in post soon.

Successful bid to LIFE fund for Ravine Woodland project, start date 1 September. Five year project, £5 million to restore ravine ash woods, and demonstrating how to manage this type of woodland in the face of diseases such as ash dieback. Partnership project.

Update Defra ELMs – White Peak Test

The Group received the Q1 & Q2 Interim Report before the meeting.

Despite Covid, have kept going in slightly different ways, intending to complete by the original deadline of 31 October. Still intending to move forward to phase 2 to do something similar in the Dark Peak and South West Peak, but need learnings from the White Peak first. Some anxiety around capacity in light of Covid.

Have been working in different ways. Several one-to-ones have been done over the phone or over online conference, will continue with this way of working for the foreseeable future. However, there are limitations including not being able to demonstrate the ready reckoners over the phone and training and guidance for both the Farm Advisers and participants. Final workshop was done on Zoom, still using the Facilitator. Similar to the one-to-ones, took a lot more time with training and communication, so agreed with Defra to carry this out for 10 participants instead of 20. We will therefore overall be approx. 10 participants short, so our engagement target is now 65 holdings instead of 75.

SB & SLF have been attending thematic group meetings (six themes: land management plans, spatial prioritisation, advice, collaboration, payments, innovative delivery mechanisms), SB & SLF presented at the first Spatial Prioritisation meeting. There have been two rounds of meetings for each theme.

Action: SB share Carbon Ready Reckoner and Budget Ready Reckoner with the group. Note: not for forward transition.

Both ready reckoners are still being tested, receiving feedback and then will look to modify them. Note the ADAS Pilot Farm Resilience Fund running 1:1 and 1:many workshops, consultant (James Dunn) will look through three years of accounts, discuss BPS reductions and options.

ELMs policy consultation

National Park England response submitted. Locally, SLF worked with Land Managers' Forum Brexit sub-group to submit a response, linked with Protected Landscapes/ AONB's response and NE's response.

Action: All that put in a response to share with the group.

English Tree Strategy consultation

SLF – PDNPA undertaking opportunity mapping in line with the landscape strategy. Developing a treescapes strategy and action plan, will share with partners soon.

Community representation on Steering Group

SLF presented to Peak Park Parishes Forum (PPPF) work of the WPP and WP test. PPPF sent representative for the wider Partnership (Butterton PC). Still waiting for representative for the Steering Group.

Newsletter – new stories

SB shared newsletter format and first draft with the Group. Will be in PDF and email format. Aim to compile and send out in October.

Action: SB to liaise with DA - wording for the LIFE Ravine Woods bid.

Action: SB to add in sentence about the WPP at the top.

Action: DS to send through words on work with Nestle.

Nature Recovery Networks (NRN) & Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)

DA – NRN single national network of improved, joined up, wildlife-rich places. Following the Lawton principles, also supporting natural solutions. Protected sites at the heart, alongside Defra target to create 500,000ha of new habitat outside protected sites. NRNs will be enhanced by larger Nature Recovery Areas – distinct landscapes or catchments more effort to deliver more, allow natural processes more free reign. 10-15 landscape-scale areas, not defined yet. NE has developed a number of tools including Nature Networks Evidence Handbook, and spatial tools to assist with mapping. Also helping to develop partnerships to take NRN forward at local level. New post for NRN lead across East Midlands to support partnerships to develop plans, will be in post soon. Trying to integrate policies, e.g. ELMs, peatland restoration, tree planting agenda, Net Gain etc.

LNRSs are in the Env Bill – duty on local responsible authorities to produce LNRS – local contribution to the NRN. Mapping where important sites are and opportunities for creation, important species. No duty on implementation. Statutory duty behind it, also funding. NE leading on pilots, Bucks, Cornwall, Cumbria, Northumberland and Greater Manchester. National model will probably be highly influenced by the pilots. Pilots starting imminently finish March 2021.

Timescales: National partnership for NRN launching Nov 2020. Environment Bill currently going through parliament, Act comes in in 2022. WP have done a lot of work already. Building on the work that has already been done.

Magic Map – mapping of prototype NRN layers. Don't have to use it, but tool that can be used.

SB – LNRS will be the spatial plan. Delivery will be through ELMs, Biodiversity Net Gain, Private financing etc. NRN will be the results on the ground, following the Lawton principles, and the reporting mechanism.

PDNPA are conducting a review of the Local Plan, consultations will be with all stakeholders including with local community. Might fit in terms of timescales, bringing it all together.

Discussed at the last Local Nature Partnership (LNP) meeting that the LNP could be an umbrella to bring everything together, especially for developing LNRSs.

JS - Could we use ELMs Test to promote the opportunity mapping? Significant sustained funding is going to come through ELMs. SLF - Have talked about NRNs through the spatial prioritisation. Can make more of it when going forward to the DP and SWP. New funding source to take it to the next level in the WP. Opportunity mapping takes that local knowledge that farmers have been asking for.

DA compared opportunity mapping to the Magic national maps. Very close correlation. Opportunity mapping sits inside the national mapping, national displays larger areas. They fit together well. National was fact check against what we've done locally. National shows where the priorities are, local opportunity mapping shows where best to deliver this.

SLF - Extend opportunity mapping for the PD wide for each NCA? Cost £3000 to do the WP. Might be a different process for the other NCAs. Look more at natural processes. Only opportunity mapping for habitats and species, so opportunity to look for other public goods e.g. recreation. Mapping needs to incorporate local data but also have areas where a certain type of habitat creation would be favourable.

Action: All think about developing a proposal to get to NRN in WP within context of wider NP. Share ideas and SB pull together for further discussion at next meeting.

Other – funding

Funding: Green Jobs Challenge Fund, Nature for Climate Fund (tree planting and peatland), Green Recovery Fund, Nature Challenge Fund.

NE can't be partners in GRF.

DS – Looking at the Green Recovery Fund, would lead from a WP point of view.

PDNPA also looking at Green Recovery Fund. Sarah Wilks (PDNPA) has explored about engaging new audiences.

NT are also exploring funding but not locally. Nature & Climate Fund NT bids, supporting MftF Partnership.

Wider partnership meeting & farm adviser training

Do newsletter but not a wider partnership meeting at the moment. Wider partnership meeting when we have an ask.

Adviser training – online webinar Early December. Theme – trees. Right tree in the right place. Slot to talk about the Ravine LIFE project. Multiple public goods delivery. Discussions on ELMs and wood/scrub pasture.

Action: SB to coordinate initial thinking around adviser training webinar.

Date, location & chair of next meeting – (Chair in order: DWT, EA, HE, NE, NFU, NT, PDNPA)

Next Steering Group meeting 13:45 Tuesday 1st December 2020. Chair NFU. Via WebEx.
