



## **BOARD MEETING**

**10.30 am – Friday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2019**

**The Morritt Arms, Greta Bridge, County Durham**

**Board Members Present:** David Hill (Chairman); Richard Betton (Northern Hill Farming Panel); Paul Burgess (Nidderdale AONB Partnership); Elliott Lorimer (Forest of Bowland AONB Partnership); Amanda Miller (RSPB); Laurie Norris (NFU); Gary Smith (Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority); Rob Stoneman (Yorkshire Wildlife Trust); Christine Venus (Natural England); Pauline Wall (Northumberland National Park Authority); Graham Warren (Environment Agency); Chris Woodley-Stewart (North Pennines AONB Partnership); Stuart Pudney (Northumbrian Water);.

**Others present:** Adrian Shepherd (Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority); Tom Dillon; Allie Hesketh (NFU);

### **1. Apologies**

David Alborough (Northumbrian Water); Ben Lamb (Tees Rivers Trust); David Gray (Open Seat); Crispin Thorn (Forestry Commission); Amanda Anderson (Moorland Association); Neil Kilgour (Open Seat)

### **2. Wild Mile Initiative**

Tom Dillon gave a presentation on his proposal to develop the 'Wild Mile' – a project to create a belt of re-wilded and natural grazed land running parallel to Hadrian's Wall. An expression of interest had been submitted to the Endangered Landscapes Programme Innovation Grant fund. Three key elements of the project would be: grazing strategies; co-operation between landowners/farmers; and developing a wildlife-based economy. In discussion amongst the Board, the following points were made:

- The potential value of the trial as one of a range of potential options for supporting land management post-Brexit;
- The importance of the trial taking account of potential impacts on the landscape and cultural heritage (e.g. boundary walls);
- The strong links to the work being done by the LNP through its High Nature Value Farming group, and the Northern Hill Farming Panel.

It was agreed to put Tom in touch with HNV farming group and Northern Hill Farming Panel, and with Abi Mansley at Northumberland NPA to check the LNP's habitat network mapping for the proposed line of the Roman Mile and consider habitat opportunities and constraints.

### **3. Promotion and follow-up to ADAS Report**

The Board noted that the final report had now been received and recorded their thanks to ADAS for the work that had gone into it. It was recognised that this was an important and timely report that should help to steer Government and local thinking about what needs to be done to make 'producing public goods' a viable option for farmers in the Northern Upland Chain area. It was agreed that there should be an active programme of publicity, starting with a LNP press release in early April, and supported by a wider 'Advocacy Plan', which would be developed with support from the NFU.

It was also agreed that the HNV Farming Group/Northern Hill Farming Panel should now consider what role the LNP could play in taking forward the range of opportunities identified in the report.

#### **4. ELMS Tests and Trials**

The Board considered the report collated by Gary Smith. The Board noted the range of initiatives in development in the Northern Upland Chain area (and the variations in the 'status' of each). It was noted that there were at least two further tests in development (National Trust and Foundation for Common Land). In discussion, it was agreed that – at this stage - the LNP's role was primarily one of seeking to share learning across the various tests. It was, therefore, agreed to collate a brief summary of each of the relevant tests, and to make this information available on the LNP website.

#### **5. Draft Natural Capital document**

This item was carried forward to the Board meeting in June.

#### **6. Update on other LNP projects**

*Curlew project* – recruitment of project funding officer is well underway, with interviews next week. NNPA has produced a framework for a Communications Plan. Amanda Miller would let the Secretariat have a detailed note of progress to be circulated with the minutes. It was also suggested that it would be useful to get some feedback on the application of the new Forestry Commission advice on afforestation and waders.

#### **7. Financial update**

The Board noted the financial update in the paper from Gary Smith.

#### **8. Information sharing**

The IUCN is holding a Parliamentary event on peatlands on 30 April. It was noted that there are issues where landowners refuse to enter voluntary burning agreements, which means that graziers cannot roll-over their existing HLS agreement;

The IPPR has published a report [Natural Assets North: valuing our northern uplands](#).

Paul Brennen (MEP) has taken over as Chair of the North East Nature Partnership.

A joint workshop of the Landscape Partnership (NT, Woodland Trust, TWTs and RSPB) and the NNR partnership (led by NE) has been looking at the skills needed to deliver landscape-scale conservation projects. This may turn into a 'skills framework'.

#### **9. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising**

The minutes were agreed as a true record. The following actions are still outstanding:

- CW-S/RS/GW/DH to produce a first draft of a natural capital document for the Northern Upland Chain.
- Rob Mayhew to convene a meeting of the GUFG to consider whether there are any practical proposals for action by the LNP to support more woodland creation – and report back to the Board.

#### **10. Any other business**

A recent report by the [Amphibian and Reptile Groups of the UK](#) had highlighted the decline in Adder populations. It was suggested that the LNP might consider this issue as a potential area for action. It was agreed, as a first step, to dig out the piece of work done for the LNP by Peter Robertson looking at species and habitat needs.

It was also agreed that the next Board meeting should include an item on data (e.g. habitat network mapping and curlew data) and how it could be made available to others to use.

## **11. Date of next meeting**

14 June 2019.

### **AGREED ACTIONS**

	<b>NAME</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
1.	Adrian Shepherd	To put Tom Dillon in touch with the HNV Farming Group and Abi Mansley at Northumberland NPA.
2.	Richard Betton, Laurie Norris, Adrian Shepherd, Gary Smith	To issue a LNP press release in early April to promote the ADAS 'Future opportunities for farming' report; and develop a wider 'advocacy plan'.
3.	Richard Betton, Adrian Shepherd	HNV Farming Group/Northern Hill Farming Panel to consider what role the LNP could play in taking forward the range of opportunities identified in the ADAS report
4.	Rob Stoneman; Chris Woodley-Stewart; Pauline Wall	To provide summaries of
5.	Gary Smith	To find and circulate the previous work done by the LNP to look at the habitat needs of particular species.
6.	Gary Smith	To put 'data sharing' on the agenda for the next Board meeting
	<b>Actions outstanding from previous meeting</b>	
7.	Rob Mayhew	To convene a further meeting of GUGF to consider whether there are any practical proposals for action by the LNP to support more woodland creation, and report back to the Board.
8.	Rob Stoneman, Chris Woodley-Stewart, Graham Warren, David Hill	To produce a first draft of a natural capital document for the Northern Upland Chain.