



## **BOARD MEETING**

**10.30 am – Friday 6 December 2019**

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

**Board Members Present:** David Hill (Chairman); David Alborough (Northumbrian Water); Amanda Anderson (Moorland Association); Richard Betton (Northern Hill Farming Panel); Jim Cokill (Durham Wildlife Trust); David Gray (Open Seat); Neil Kilgour (Open Seat); Ben Lamb (Tees Rivers Trust); Elliott Lorimer (Forest of Bowland AONB Partnership); Gary Smith (Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority); Crispin Thorn (Forestry Commission); Jim Wardill (RSPB); Chris Woodley-Stewart (North Pennines AONB Partnership).

**Others present:** Ian Proudler (LNP Curlew Project Funding Officer); Robert Mayhew (Northumberland National Park Authority); Adrian Shepherd (Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority).

### **1. Apologies**

Paul Burgess (Nidderdale AONB Partnership); Fiona Morris (Environment Agency); Laurie Norris (NFU); Clare Steward (Environment Agency); Christine Venus (Natural England); Pauline Wall (Northumberland NPA).

### **2. Outline of 'Curlew Focus Area' project**

Ian Proudler gave an update on the extensive consultation and engagement work that had gone into developing the project outline, which was set out in the report. There were four issues where decisions were now needed from the Board, if a bid is to be put forward to the National Lottery Heritage Fund:

**Lead body:** The Board agreed that the YDNPA would act as the lead organisation for the project bid.

**Scale of the project:** In discussion, a number of points were made: the project felt 'overstaffed' in terms of project officers; there was support for the idea of connecting with coastal communities (esp via flagship RSPB sites at Saltholme and Leighton Moss) but it might be more realistic to focus on two rather than four.

**Project timeline:** The Board agreed to submit the EOI before Christmas.

**NUCLNP commitments** Subject to the response to the EOI, the Board agreed to proceed to develop a Stage 1 bid to the Natural Lottery Heritage Fund. It was also agreed to aim for submission of the stage 1 bid in June or September 2020. It was noted that the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation might be able to assist with the initial costs of bid development.

It was noted that the RSPB will be submitting a bid in February to the EU LIFE Fund to continue its national curlew conservation project, primarily focused on RSPB reserves and priority sites, which includes Geltsdale.

### **3. Glover Review**

Chris Woodley-Stewart gave an introduction to the report. It had been brought to the Board to ensure that there was a shared understanding of the main review recommendations, and to consider whether there were any implications for the LNP. A wide-ranging discussion followed, which touched on: the funding disparity between AONBs and NPAs; the quality of Board Members on NPAs; and, the need for a renewed focus on nature recovery in AONBs and NPAs.

It was noted that the NUCLNP provided a good example of collaboration and partnership working between the 5 protected landscapes (and other partners).

Many of the proposals are entirely dependent on significant new funding or legislation (which individual members of the Board might want to lobby for/champion but were not things that could sensibly be taken forward by the LNP itself). However, the Board agreed that the LNP could play a valuable role in driving forward the nature recovery agenda. As a first step, it was agreed to create a short 'prospectus for nature recovery', incorporating the existing LNP commitments (e.g. from the two Natural Capital Investment Plans and the HNV Farming work).

#### **4. What the hills are worth**

Adrian Shepherd and Richard Betton gave an update on the HNV farming group's proposal to undertake a piece of work to demonstrate the value of the hills (in terms of the delivery of an extensive range of "public goods"). In discussion, a number of points were made, including: the need to be clear about what we want to get out of this project (what does the end point look like?); the need to avoid duplicating previous studies and work already underway; to focus on existing valuation methodologies rather than trying to invent new ones; the need to consider the public goods arising from all land management activities, not just farming; the potential links to the 'Natural Assets North' report that was due to be published by Natural England and the Environment Agency.

The HNV Farming Group/NHFP were asked to define what they wanted the study to achieve. The Board agreed to fund (up to £5k) an initial scoping stage.

#### **5. Raptor persecution**

Chris Woodley-Stewart introduced the national 'Tactical Delivery Plan' produced by the Raptor Persecution Priority Delivery Group (RPPDG). The Board was asked to consider which, if any, of the actions in the plan might best be taken forward through the LNP. In discussion, it was agreed that:

- Links should be provided from the LNP's website to RPPDG material (Theme 1, Action 5);
- The Board would promote the work of the RPPDG at the LNP Forum in March

#### **6. Annual Forum**

Gary Smith reminded the Board of the agreed format for the event and the need to secure relevant speakers. In discussion, it was agreed that:

- Chris Woodley-Stewart would contact Alastair Driver (Rewilding UK)
- David Hill would secure a relevant speaker on Nature Recovery Networks from Defra
- Neil Kilgour would do a presentation at the Forum giving a landowners' perspective on nature recovery

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

**Hill Farm Training Initiative** – the first session had been held in Northumberland two weeks ago. A second event was planned for May. Following that, Ema Caskie would 'cascade' the training/lessons learned to the other protected landscapes so that the initiative could be rolled out more widely.

**Curlew advice notes** – new photos were having to be sourced because the originals were not at a sufficient resolution to print well. The 'published' advice notes would now be available around the end of January.

**Adders** – it was agreed not to proceed any further with this work as an LNP project.

#### **8. Financial update**

The Board noted the financial position, which was sufficient to fund all the commitments made earlier once contributions have been received from NNPA and the three AONBs.

## 9. Information sharing

The Forestry Commission launched the [Woodland Carbon Guarantee](#), a £50 million scheme that aims to help accelerate woodland planting rates and develop the domestic market for woodland carbon.

A new organisation, the Northumberland Forestry Partnership, will be established to assist local residents, landowners and environmental groups to plan for the proposed [Great Northumberland Forest](#).

Yorkshire Water is developing the idea of 'land anchor' group – made up of institutions that are large and fixed in their location - to see what they can do together to help deliver change within Yorkshire. The areas of change/ influence are built around the 6 capitals model. The LNP might be asked to be involved.

## 10. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

The minutes were agreed to be a true record. All the actions had been completed, other than nos 7 (curlew advice note). and 8.(Comms for the curlew project work) These would be carried forward.

## 11. Any other business

None.

## 12. Date of next meeting

5 March 2020.

## AGREED ACTIONS

	NAME	ACTION
1.	Gary Smith	To report back to the funding partners on the potential costs of developing a stage 1 bid to NLHF for the Curlew project.
2.	Gary Smith	Subject to action 1 above, to make all necessary arrangements to resource the development of the stage 1 bid.
3.	Ian Proudler	To submit an EoI to NLHF for the Curlew Focus Area project
4.	Chris Woodley-Stewart, Jim Cokill, Jim Wardill	To draft a short 'Prospectus for Nature Recovery in the Northern Upland Chain' for the next Board meeting
5.	Richard Betton, Adrian Shepherd	To define the outcome that we want from the study of 'What are the hills worth?', and commission the scoping work.
6.	Gary Smith	To arrange for a link from the LNP website to the materials produced by the national Raptor Persecution Priority Delivery Group.
7.	David Hill	To secure a speaker from Defra on nature recovery for the LNP Forum
8.	Neil Kilgour	To give a presentation at the LNP forum on the landowners' perspective on nature recovery.
9.	Gary Smith	To format the Curlew advice notes (adding LNP logo etc) and arrange for publication (on the website).
10.	Gill Thompson	To liaise between NNPA's Comms Team and the Curlew project group to produce a communications plan.