



BOARD MEETING

10:00 am – Thursday 3 September 2020

Via Video Conferencing

Board Members Present: David Hill (Chairman); Chris Woodley-Stewart (North Pennines AONB Partnership); Gary Smith (Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority); Amanda Anderson (Moorland Association); Richard Betton (Northern Hill Farming Panel); David Gray (Open Seat); Elliott Lorimer (Forest of Bowland AONB Partnership); Fiona Morris (Environment Agency); David Alborough (Northumbrian Water); Jim Cokill (Durham Wildlife Trust); Neil Kilgour (Open Seat); Crispin Thorn (Forestry Commission); Christine Venus (Natural England); Jim Wardill (RSPB); Iain Mann (Nidderdale AONB)

Others present: Robert Mayhew (Northumberland National Park Authority); Ian Proudler (LNP Curlew Project Funding Officer); Jo Traill-Thompson (Natural England);

1. Apologies

Ben Lamb (Tees Rivers Trust); Laurie Norris (NFU); Pauline Wall (Northumberland NPA); Adrian Shepherd (Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority);

2. Local Nature Recovery Strategy pilots

Jo Traill-Thompson gave an introduction via a presentation on the Local Nature Recovery Strategy Pilots. The LNR Strategies are being introduced in the Environment Bill. Natural England is leading on the design and delivery of LNRS pilots in 5 locations in England during 2020/21. Pilot areas include Northumberland and Cumbria, both of which are partially within the LNP.

The steps set out in the process for creation of an LNRS will be legally-required elements in the Environment Bill.

Noted that the purpose of the pilots is to test out and learn from the process rather than producing a final document.

Action: JW to collate any further questions for Jo Traill-Thompson and send them on to her.

JW to agenda an update on the Cumbria and Northumberland pilots for the meeting in December.

3. AONB / NP Nature Recovery Plans

Chris Woodley-Stewart gave a brief report on the AONB/NP Nature Recovery Plans paper. The two National Park Authority partners in the LNP have agreed to work with the three AONB Partnerships to develop and create an approach to nature recovery planning across the LNP. This is one of five pilots.

The National Association for AONBs (NAAONB) has secured some funding from Natural England to provide some co-ordination around the five pilots. A short-term post will be created to support production of the plan, and support the more detailed local plans for the 3 AONBs (the local plans for the two national parks will be developed by existing staff).

It is now proposed that the LNP Board act as a consultative 'sounding board' for the development of these nature recovery plans. If the board has any comments or suggestions, they would be welcomed in writing by the end of September and could be taken into account in the final specification for the work. Further progress reports would then be brought to future Board meetings.

Action: All to let Chris W-S have any comments by 30 September.

4. Curlew Project bid

Ian Proudler gave an update on the progress of the Curlew Project to date. In August, the contract for the Funding Development Officer was extended from the end of September to the end of December 2020. The Project has continued to develop from March 2020, albeit at a significantly reduced rate due to Covid-19.

There is a need to reinvigorate the project during this next 4 months and re-engage with the staff and stakeholders who have been, prior to lockdown, instrumental in shaping and supporting the development of the project.

A work plan has been prepared for September to end December upon which the contract with the project officer finishes. It is noted that there is currently no certainty that NHLF funding will re-open. So we may need to pursue other funding options.

Action: Ian P and Curlew Project Group to put together a final set of proposals and costings for the board meeting in December.

5. England Tree Strategy Consultation

Crispin Thorn reminded the board that the consultation on the England Trees Strategy ends on 11 September.

The consultation can be found [here](#) if any board members wish to give their views.

6. Tees-Swale Project

Gary Smith gave an update on progress in the development of the Tees-Swale: *naturally connected* programme, which aims to demonstrate how farming can be at the heart of nature recovery in the northern uplands.

In July, NLHF confirmed that it would provide £5.7 million, as part of what will now be a £8.5 million, 5-year programme of investment. In addition to the investment into the area, it is hoped that the programme will influence the development of national policy on Nature recovery and ELMS.

Work is underway to recruit a Programme Manager, with interviews taking place on 4 September. Awaiting formal permission to start from NLHF.

7. Nature North

Jim Wardill gave a verbal introduction to Nature North group. Jim Wardill, Chris Woodley-Stewart and Jim Cokill all sit on the Group. The initiative was kick-started back in December 2019 in an NLHF sponsored workshop for leaders of Nature Conservation/Environment organisations in the North of England. The steering group consists of RSPB; National Trust; Woodland Trust; Wildlife Trusts, Natural England; Environment Agency; AONBs; NPAs; NLHF.

The Nature North coalition has come together to positively influence high-level policy and decision-making to bring about a green recovery in the North that addresses the climate and ecological crisis whilst boosting the

health and well-being benefits of nature, under-pinning a sustainable economy and making the North a more attractive place to invest, work and live. The current target audiences are the LEPs (through the NP11 group chaired by Sir Roger Marsh) and the Metro Mayors and heads of Combined Authorities. Nature North has had its first few external meetings with Mayoral teams in recent weeks. Operating at a Northern level and with a strong collective voice across a number of key organisations, Nature North hopes to be able to influence national policy and funding decisions as well as regional strategies. The Steering Group has received funding from NLHF to recruit a Nature North Development Manager and bring more capacity and focus to the group's activities.

Jim W, Jim C or Chris W-S can give updates at future NUCLNP meetings as the initiative progresses.

8. Update on other LNP projects

HNV Farming / Northern Hill Farming Panel: Recent meeting of NHFP – much discussion on how the weather has impacted throughout this year. Extremely dry spring months followed by many weeks of rain during the summer.

Gary Smith pointed out that the meetings of the NHFP were a bit out of sync with the NUCLNP Board Meetings meaning there wasn't enough time to produce papers for the Board to consider.

Hill Farm Training Initiative: The first training session was held in Northumberland in November of 2019. The second session scheduled for May 2020 was cancelled due to Covid-19. Planning to reschedule the second session for sometime in spring 2021 based on low carbon farming.

Action: Richard B / Adrian S to reschedule future NHFP meetings to be at least 2 weeks before the Board meeting.

9. Information sharing

It had been announced today that 60 Hen Harrier chicks were successfully reared across Lancashire, Cumbria, the North East and Yorkshire.

10. Financial update

The Board noted the current financial position and existing commitments. The five protected landscape bodies have agreed that no financial contributions will be made to the LNP this year in light of the financial impacts of Covid-19, and the amount of funding already in the pot.

Commitments are in place to fund the Curlew Project and the 'What the Hills are worth' report. It is likely that the current balance will be needed to fund the production of Nature Recovery Plans (Item 3).

11. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

The Chair asked that the actions (3, 4 and 5) from the last meeting be checked to see whether they had actually been carried out. Josie W to follow this up.

- Action 4 – Part 1 in progress, Part 2 is done. ✓
- Actions 3 & 5 - [Awaiting confirmation on these] ✓

12. Any other business

It was suggested that it might be helpful to provide a diagram or similar to show the current framework of strategies and plans and this could be an agenda item for the December meeting.

13. Date of next meeting

3 December 2020

Agenda items to include: 'What the Hills are worth' (Richard B/Adrian S); Curlew Project (Ian P); Local Nature Recovery strategies; Nature Recovery Plans (Chris WS); Initial learning on ELMS Tests & Trials (Elliott L/Rob M/Adrian S)

AGREED ACTIONS

	NAME	ACTION
1.	Josie Wilson	To collate any further questions for Jo Traill-Thompson and send them on to her. To agenda an update on the Cumbria and Northumberland pilots for the meeting in December.
2.		Update on Local Nature Recovery strategies to next meeting.
3.	All	Comments and suggestions on AONB/NP Nature Recovery Plans in writing by 30 September to Chris Woodley-Stewart.
4.	Chris Woodley-Stewart	Update on Nature Recovery Plans to next meeting.
5.	Ian Proudler	Proposal and costings for Curlew Project to next meeting.
6.	Richard Betton / Adrian Shepherd	Reschedule future NHFP meetings to be at least two weeks before the Board meetings.
7.	Richard Betton / Adrian Shepherd	Proposal on 'What the Hills are worth' to next meeting.
8.	Elliott Lorimer / Rob Mayhew / Adrian Shepherd	Initial learning on ELMS Tests & Trials to next meeting.
9.	Josie Wilson	Check actions 3, 4 and 5 from last meeting have been carried out. ✓
10.	Iain Mann	Paper on strategies