

ADEPT Natural Capital and Heritage Working Group

Meeting Notes

21st March 2022, 10.00am-12.00pm

1. Introductions and apologies

Liz Milne, Kent
Sylvie Allan, Environment Agency
Adam Stewart, Defra
Hugh Clear Hill, North Yorks
Tim De-Keyzer, Suffolk
Peter Moore, Reading
Jeremy Pickles, East Riding
Quinton Carroll, Cambridgeshire
Adam Lathbury, Derbyshire
Liz Small, North Yorks
David Dale, ADEPT
Simon Bowers, West Northants
Hannah Girvan, Cumbria
David Sutherland, Bucks
Mike Oxford, Plymouth
Peter Chamberlain, Devon
Rebecca Moberly, PAS

Apologies: Don Baker, West Sussex and Allison Jean, Environment Agency

2. Review of Natural Capital and Heritage Working Group

Chair role

All agreed that the current arrangement worked and no one else expressed a wish to take a turn at Chair.

Work priorities

Work priorities for 2022/23 were circulated before the meeting and reviewed during the meeting. A finalised work priorities document, with working group leads, is circulated with the minutes.

Points noted during the discussion, not captured in the revised priorities document:

- Document in light in respect of the heritage agenda; noted that ALGAO is meeting next month to discuss its priorities. QC will present this in May for ADEPT to consider which they might be best placed to support. Potential to pick up heritage impacts of BNG and LNRS.
- Noted that this is confusion over how all the tools etc will fit into ongoing work, in particular for LNRS. Stat guidance and secondary legislation will advise on what should be used to LNRS. A lot of the tools sit under the NRN umbrella. Agreed that a presentation from NE on NRN would be beneficial.
- Environment Agency noted they were developing a signposting tool for natural capital.

- Need to ensure our work links up with that of ADEPT Flood Management Group (role of natural capital in natural flood management and water course management). Also links to groups concerned with planning, via the Sustainable Growth Board.
- Question also raised about how we and other groups are linking in to the public health agenda. Health disparities white paper noted.
- David Dale will support link between other group Chairs and Environment Board.
- Noted that NE contacts on the GI framework are Clare Warburton, Jane Houghton and Julian Slater. They are also linking it to the Design Code.
- Noted that there is a NE blog on GI this month - [Creating the new homes and the healthy natural environment we need - Natural England \(blog.gov.uk\)](#)

Suggested presentations for future meetings:

- NE's All England Strategic Mapping Tool and how this links with LNRS.
- Green finance and funding mechanisms session – with presentation from Defra
- Natural capital toolkit presentation from EA
- GI Standards from NE – to then inform where and how we engage within this priority.
- Nature Recovery Network from NE/Defra.

Action: LM to invite all to present at future meetings.

Action: AS to advise contact for NRN presentation and green finance team.

Action: DD to discuss with Environment Board potential to link up with public health agenda.

Group membership

- Group would benefit from a NE rep attending; priority would be for LNRS contact.
- Few direct members from London; could Caroline George from LondNet provide that link?
- Noted that we are short on representatives from West Midlands and North East.

Action: AS to advise on NE contact(s) for group.

Action: DD to look at potential members of the group from West Midlands and North East

Action DD and QC to approach Caroline George.

Meeting frequency and attendance

Agreed to continue with 2 monthly frequency.

Noted that members should feel free to invite colleagues to attend and contribute to agenda items relevant to their work.

Effectiveness of group

Agreed that meetings should include a standing agenda item where we share what we're doing locally, so we can learn from each other's experience and connect on common work.

Noted that it would be useful to have an area where we can share documents and thoughts – shared drive/share point.

Action: DD to discuss sharepoint for groups to ADEPT.

3. Current consultations

The following current consultations were noted and discussed:

- Biodiversity Net Gain Regulations and Implementation (5th April)
- The OEP Strategy and Enforcement Policy (22nd March)
- Landscapes review (National Parks and AONBs): implementing the review (9th April)
- Nature Recover Green paper (11th May)
- Environmental targets (11th May)

Noted to group that a representative is required for Defra workshop on climate in protected landscapes on Tuesday 29th March.

Noted that ADEPT response to BNG consultation will be finalised next week. Any comments to be sent to David Dale.

Action: LM to circulate details of Defra workshop on climate in protected landscapes on Tuesday 29th March. Anyone able to attend to let Liz Small know.

Action: All to send comments on ADEPT response to BNG consultation to David Dale by end of week.

4. Update from Rebecca Moberly re PAS BNG project

Rebecca noted the feedback from the PAS BNG consultation workshops:

- Most people happy with general details proposed but concerned around some of the missing details.
- Big concern over resources and expertise. And still no details over burdens funding.
- Supply of skilled workers to meet demand.
- Offsite delivery – questions over this.
- What support there will be for LPAs to set up local offsite delivery schemes?
- Exemption concerns – particularly self build, not clear why this is exempted.
- Minerals and phased developments – unknowns but indications to be looked at differently; more guidance to come on this .
- Want more information, guidance and examples. Still a lot of unknowns.
- Monitoring and enforcement burdens – huge resources and skills issue. Can we charge for it?
- Monitoring and enforcement is a planning issue broader than BNG.
- Legal burdens in terms of agreements.
- How does LNRS fit in with this – and other agendas?
- Questions about interim – what do we do now? And issues with this “journey”.

Points from NC&H discussion:

- The Environment Bank’s messages and approach presented at the planning conference were noted.
- DS noted that with the BNG grants provided in March, unitary authorities have been penalised over two tier areas, if two tier areas decide to pool. Must be considered by Defra for future funding allocations. Should be based on scale.
- Also noted that there were concerns over initial funding and that it was quite low and what this might mean for future allocations; Defra noted that this was some seed money to support preparations. Noted that its difficult to use this funding to capacity build without knowledge of further burdens payments.
- Noted that it looks like the LA will have majority of responsibility for monitoring and enforcement – on site and off site – resources are a concern.
- Supply of skills as we all go out at same time to recruit will be issue.

- Quinton noted they are looking at county farm estates as keen on developing habitat bank. But this can't be the sole option for Cambridgeshire.
- LM noted concerns over issues in identifying and securing offsite options during this interim period and the risk this poses on local area missing out to national credit scheme. Consequently KCC are proposing in consultation response that any credits be held for the a period with an option for them to be reinvested locally before being lost to a national project.

Action: HCH to share links.

Action: DS to send concerns to Adam for Adam to share with BNG team.

Action: AS to take message back to Defra that more clarification on funding for BNG/ LNRS would be appreciated as recent grants have given some concerns over whether burdens funding will be sufficient.

5. Defra update from Adam Stewart

LNRS

Confident that burdens funding for LNRS will be sufficient and data will be sufficient. But cannot give further details at this point.

LNRS data offer will be launched in advance of commencement of duty.

No further consultation on LNRS – secondary legislation and stat guidance to be informed by last years' consultation.

Wider Environment Act

Announcement of Nature Recovery Green Paper and Environment Targets

Defra have published FAQs on the Evt Act.

Planning reforms and biodiversity duty consultation planned.

6. AOB and agenda items for next meeting (5 mins)

ALGAO – report on delivery models for LPAs:

https://www.algao.org.uk/Delivering_Local_Authority_Archaeology_in_England

Items for next meeting:

Natural capital assessment and place making – presentation from Bruce Howard, Director, Ecosystems Knowledge Network

BNG viability assessment – Liz Milne

LNRS