

South Yorkshire Local Nature Partnership

MINUTES: BOARD MEETING – Wednesday 17th February 2021

Board Members Present: Liz Ballard (Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust) – Chair, Dave Aspinall (Sheffield City Council), Jenny Barlow (Environment Agency), Daniel Hartley (Sheffield City Council), Alison Holt (Natural Capital Solns), Melissa Massarella (Doncaster MBC), Crispin Thorn (Forestry Commission), Brian Tinnion (Independent), Paula Tweed (Barnsley MBC)

Also present: Gareth Bruff (Sheffield MCA), Sam Cooper (Forestry Commission), Ian Cracknell (Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust), Anthony Downing (Environment Agency), Lisa Kerslake (Yorkshire Wildlife Trust), Tim Myatt (Yorkshire Water), Matthew North (Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust), Rachel Wade (Natural England), Chris Wilson (SCC), Mike Winstanley (Yorkshire Wildlife Trust)

Apologies: Andy Godfrey (RMBC), Catherine Hammond (SHU), Kate Wheeler (NE), Tom Wild (University of Sheffield)

2. Minutes of last meeting, actions and matters arising

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a correct record.

GB responded to action – new SEP approved by board in January. Is there to see how well LNP comments were included. Also new Transport and Environment Board chaired by Cllr Reed in Rotherham. To set up meeting on how LNP links in – not done yet but work in hand.

LB replied she has previously met Cllr Reed so will make contact.

PT responded to action that Trevor Mayne has found SY woodland data from 2008 – will send to Matt North.

LB raised GCN – there are still ponds available until end of May, with NE potential for another lot of sites so if anyone is interested do get in touch with Wildscapes.

Source to Sea meeting – LB and IC to follow up with JB

MN spoke to BT re: number of sites, resource to develop together over time. Lot of info on where to move forward, tip moved on to Hague.

TW water pollution report - to carry over

GB is leaving Sheffield MCA - Laurie Heykoop will attend future meetings in his place.

DA is retiring – Chris Wilson will be attending in his place.

LK is leaving YWT – welcome to Mike Winstanley who will attend in her place.

Actions:

LB/IC – to arrange Source to Sea follow up meeting with JB

PT – to send IC update from TM re: SY Forest data

TW – to share water pollution report

3. Approach to woodland felling – Sam Cooper and Crispin Thorn (EA)

SC gave a presentation on illegal felling in SY.

There was a short discussion about the issue. Points raised included issues on weight/presumption for felling in sites where planning consent has been granted, the importance of documenting sites to show what was there previously or damage caused, restock notices, monitoring, factors influencing a rise in illegal felling, protected species and the difficulty in proving illegal felling being easy for unscrupulous developers to get around and that the police – i.e. in regard to protected species disturbance – often do not have the expertise or ability to respond effectively.

4. Woodland Creation – Matt North

MN talked through a short presentation on work so far – South Yorkshire-wide, and linking into Northern Forest. SCR/MCA, DMBC and BMBC on steering group, but not SCC and RMBC. Role is developing – to act as an honest broker supporting landowners, managers etc. MN talked through approach, plans and resources. The SY Natural Capital mapping is to be finished shortly and this will really help with targeting. Otherwise no confirmed targets as yet. Developing a project pipeline - any potential projects please refer to MN and signpost. SCR looking for exemplar sites re: techniques, NFM etc. Also quick win sites to publicise the start of the SYWC project with stakeholders.

And if anyone needs and trees, contact MN - spare trees via Woodland Trust, MN has list of tree species - SC asked for list.

LB – MN also engaging with wider SYLNP woodland creation forum, great to have MN with us.

Actions: MN to provide Sam Cooper (FC) with tree species list

5. Dasgupta Review

LB, Dasgupta Review published on gov.uk site, highlighting importance of investing in natural assets and biodiversity, written for economists. Should we send a letter to highlight the report to the LEP, any thoughts? CT and LK both agreed good idea.

GB, Will pick up in meeting tomorrow with Laurie Heykoop - also under natural capital project?

Action: GB to pick up Dasgupta Review with LH - to raise with LEP

6. Approach to Biodiversity Net Gain in South Yorkshire

MM - Task and Finish group met before Christmas, presentations from Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Environment Bank. LAs working on local plan policy guidance, potential tariffs, habitat bank. Checklist being used to review work so far - seems good framework for discrete piece of work.

CW - Good understanding now of what not done/ need to do, checklist has helped with deliverables timeline.

MM - If to be rolled out as best practice, we are using correct framework.

7. SCR Mapping

GB - Mapping originally driven re: planning response on BNG, attempts to map the natural assets across 4 LAs, NE, NT, Peel Group contributing. Work going well, base map being created for first draft of all assets in SY, looking at to ensure correct. AH to look at ecosystem services, natural capital approach. Re Dasgupta Review - Will get idea what natural capital value is for economists. AH starting to look at opportunity areas, will need more engagement from LNP re: what needed in future.

AH - produced first draft, some steering group checking. Phase 1 habitat for SY from data gathered, priority habitats, National Forest Inventory and other data, LAs + WLTs on LWS Phase 1 level to ensure it is what it says it is. Combined info GIS base map for SY to be natural capital resource going forward. Once steering group respond re: fact checking, model ecosystem services on, water flow, quality, carbon sequestration, access of natural green spaces, level/provision of services to SY, value (monetary). Creating natural capital account for SY to set baseline - can then experiment to see if scenarios change. Nature Recovery Networks - Opportunities for biodiversity - where can we also increase ecosystem services to be the most cost efficient? Workshop to prioritise, policy priorities at SY level.

LB - will be such a milestone to have natural capital and biodiversity NRNs in place. While not the answer to everything, will be key evidence base.

GB - are aiming to do quickly - report towards end April with teaching sessions, balance will be speed and doing well so useful product, accepting that ongoing work to keep live. Not going to be perfect for everyone, but will be best available data.

8. GCRF SY Nature Networks

LB – project funded by Defra Green Recovery Challenge Fund to start to shape the process for developing Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) in our area. Recruitment underway, the post holder will report into this group, bring steering group together. RMBC have two delivery sites on ground, SRWT also have two sites.

Very much an opportunity for extra capacity to help us all take LNRS forward with natural capital focus.

9. Roundtable updates

DA - momentum in Sheffield re: ecological emergency, interesting time - natural capital work and NRN all needs throwing into melting pot, setup steering group if agreeable, not just for SCC to do - needs all parties round table to input. Think this is quite exciting!

GB confirmed Mayor also called a climate and environmental emergency.

MM - DMBC also declared both, now have document headline on biodiversity and climate emergency, just published. Setting up Environment Board - looking at structure, how to link with LNP without duplication, quite a complex landscape.

LB - LNP probably overdue a review, good time to look at. Should help and not hinder - if change in TOR needed let's discuss and reflect on what LNP's role is within that.

KB - Rotherham declared climate emergency but not ecological. Is a lot of movement on ecological, so expect something to go ahead.

CT - Ran SY tree health event. 50-60 attended, around ash dieback, resilience, phytophthora, tree wardens etc.

LB expressed thanks and best wishes to DA, LK and to GB.

Future agenda items:

LNRS
BNG update
Mapping update
Woodland creation
HS2
Water pollution

Date of next meeting:

Doodle Poll of potential dates to be sent out following the meeting by Lynn Campbell.

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