

# ADEPT Natural Capital and Heritage Working Group

Minutes of meeting  
27<sup>th</sup> September 2021, 10.00am-12.00pm

## 1. Attending and apologies

Sylvie Allan, Environment Agency  
Don Baker, West Sussex  
Simon Bowers, West Northants  
Quinton Carroll, Cambridgeshire  
Peter Chamberlain, Devon  
Hugh Clear-Hill, North Yorks  
David Dale, ADEPT  
Tim De-Keyzer, Suffolk  
Hannah Girvan, Cumbria  
Hannah Hyland, Environment Agency  
Alice Lord, Queens Green Canopy, Defra  
Allison Jean, Environment Agency  
Liz Milne, Kent (co-Chair)  
Rebecca Moberly, PAS  
Clare Ross, Tees Valley  
Adam Stewart, Defra  
David Sutherland, Bucks  
Daniel Vickridge, Torbay

Apologies: Liz Small (co-Chair), Neil Coish, Hannah Bartram, Peter Moore

## 2. The Queen's Green Canopy: Platinum Jubilee tree planting project

The group received a presentation on the Queen's Platinum Jubilee planting project from Alice Lord, the Project Manager for Queens Green Canopy. A copy of the presentation is attached to the minutes. See also <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4MeAyg57cll>

Some points of note:

- Queen will be launching the start of the planting season for the project on Friday, which will run October 2021 to March 2022.
- Particular focus on supporting urban and most disadvantaged communities to plant trees.
- Quality trees, in the right place that will last. And, where possible, Plant Healthy accredited trees.
- Working closely with Cool Earth charity, plus a number of other partners supporting.
- Various advisors – governance, stewardship (planting), conservation and urban greening.
- Lord Lieutenants – ambassadors for this initiative across the country. Ambassadors also include Floella Benjamin, Peter Rabbit, Dame Judy Dench.

- Delivery through stewardship, conservation (dedication) and education and training.
- Stewardship delivered through:
  - Whips and saplings in schools and communities (Woodland Trust – 3 millions whips for free to schools and communities).
  - Community woodlands and groves.
  - Majestic avenues
  - Large celebration trees
- Conservation: dedicating 70 ancient woodlands and 70 ancient/veteran trees.
- Education and training: junior forester award available from 1<sup>st</sup> October. Also looking to get young 18 people in London into jobs within the green sector – pilot using kick start funding to support this; 80% of roles already filled.
- Corporate and public sponsorship – can dedicate tree.
- Working towards 3<sup>rd</sup> June to 6<sup>th</sup> June, the official celebratory weekend.
- There will be a second planting phase October 2022 to December 2022.
- From Friday can register tree on the Queens Green Canopy website.

#### Discussion and questions:

- Ancient woodlands – half of nominations in; and ancient trees – nominations already in. Sites/trees have been identified so not really opportunity to put forward trees in location (but may already be included). Noted that it would be helpful to know where all the agreed dedicated ancient woodlands and veteran trees are so that we can be aware as part of local celebrations
- Use and impact of plastic tree guards?
- Each city is nominating a school for a large celebration tree.
- Any tree planted, for instance those with government grants, can be dedicated to the QGC – simply log on QGC map online.
- Issue of skills and capacity within this sector raised.
- Risk of trees planted not surviving into future was noted.
- Relevance of coppice or commercial woods/forests planting? Perhaps not relevant to QGC because will be lost and could not be part of that lasting legacy.
- Issues with tree supply noted. Nurseries are engaged with work but is a potential challenge, especially when trying to keep them native grown and Plant Healthy accredited. Also noted that its just first tree in the ground within timeframe – accept that there may be subsequent planting for larger scale projects.
- What about natural regeneration? More difficult to map but could be an area be identified and dedicated to jubilee?
- Potential role of community tree nurseries?
- Hope is that QGC will leave a legacy of awareness and engagement in this agenda as well as the trees in ground.

**Action: Alice to advise on where dedicate ancient woodlands and ancient trees are located – will be announced in spring 2022.**

**Action: Liz to follow up with Alice as to whether any more can be said about ancient woodlands/trees to be included prior to announcement in spring.**

**Action: Liz to forward on details of biodegradable tree guards to group.** (Link to short case study copied below – further details will follow as a fuller case study is currently being written up)

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/environment-waste-and-planning/nature-and-biodiversity/trees/case-study-biodegradable-tree-guards>

### **3. Update on PAS BNG project – Rebecca Moberly, Planning Advisory Service**

The group received an update on the PAS project from Rebecca Moberly. Planning Advisory Service. A copy of the presentation is attached to the minutes.

Some points of note:

- Two year project funded by Defra supporting LPAs in implementation of BNG.
- 50% of LPAs engaged but confidence is patchy.
- Need for a coherent local strategy for BNG.
- Emerging themes for LPAs:
  - Implementation through privately-led development
  - Working within a new national system – still some unknowns
  - Assessing the wider planning balance – questions around viability
  - Impact on plans at various stages of development
  - Stacking or additionality – and limited land to provide for this
  - Capacity and capability
- Until we have secondary legislation difficult to address some of these issues.
- Developing the “journey” for BNG, embedding BNG – corporate place-making principles and governance.
- Defra consultation on BNG secondary legislation expected in Autumn 2021 and also further details on how new burdens will be met.
- PAS project doing some more work on capacity and capability building on ALGE/ADEPT/Defra project.

**Action: Rebecca to send link for planners training next month** (link copied below).

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/biodiversity-metric-3-for-local-authority-planners-registration-170269888821?aff=ebdsoporgprofile>

Discussion and questions:

- Suggested that it would be useful to undertake a stress test of authorities’ readiness – what are they doing already?
- Noted that there is a concern over progressing work now but it being found to not be in line with secondary legislation etc as it emerges. It may even prove as tricky for those already doing BNG as those authorities starting from scratch because their systems/approaches are not complimentary with new legislation, guidance etc.
- Suggested that it would be useful for the project to advise on what can be done now (with limited risk of becoming outdated/superseded) and what might be better waiting till secondary legislation and guidance is published.
- Kent BNG viability assessment work noted.

- Noted that when delivering training to planners that the message isn't lost that this process still needs professional ecological advice on the LPA side. Questioned what training is being made available for LPA ecologists?

**Action: Liz to discuss where training for LPA ecologists will come from with PAS, ALGE and ADEPT.**

## 5. Local Nature Recovery Strategies

The LNRS pilots and consultation were discussed; some points of note included:

- Lessons being used to build LNRS policy further – there is more than is in pilot report. And engagement continues with those pilot areas. Pilots have given indication of resources and burdens funding required – pilots showed that more funding would be needed. Also pilots showed that more than the 6 months the pilots had is needed; instead 12-18 months is expected timescale for development of LNRS (depending on complexity of local administration).
- Secondary legislation and statutory guidance will be required before instruction of LNRS. Also national mapping/data needs to be in place. Working on April 2022 as date of commencement.
- 50 LNRS, roughly county based.
- Letters have been sent to Chief Execs at upper tier authorities to start conversation about who should lead and the scale.
- Question about the balance between the NE resource and what actually comes to responsible authority as new burdens funding; noted that the NE resource is additional to burdens funding.
- Noted that the issue of not having responsible authority confirmed makes it difficult to ensure money is committed for 2022/23 at the authority level.

ADEPT response to LNRS consultation:

- Interface of planning with LNRS – ADEPT planning group LNRS meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> September. Members of NC&H group invited.
- ADEPT/Defra confidential workshop on LNRS in October (date to be confirmed). Tim De-Keyzer and Quinton Carroll volunteered. Noted that Liz Small would also likely want to be involved if available.
- ADEPT will be doing a joint response to LNRS consultation with Blueprint.
- Defra LNP LNRS workshop also noted.
- LNRS consultation – comments outside of set questions welcomed but would be better through ADEPT forums and meetings.

**Action: David Dale to send Claire Ross details of LNRS planning meeting.**

## 6. Dasgupta Review

Item delayed to November meeting

To discuss government response and any action the group may wish to take in respect of this. Ref: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-economics-of-biodiversity-the-dasgupta-review-government-response>

## **7. Environment Bill update – Adam Stewart, Defra**

No amendments to nature elements of Bill following Lords passage. So will be no further amendments and can move to third reading. Aim for Royal Assent before COP26, in late October.

ADEPT will be writing to Michael Gove to work with team in respect of his new brief including what levelling up means. Will make reference to the environmental agenda in respect of levelling up.

## **8. ADEPT Environment Board**

A volunteer was requested to represent the group at the next Board meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> October 2021, 10am-12.30pm. Tim De-Keyzer volunteered.

## **9. AOB and agenda for next meeting**

22<sup>nd</sup> November:

- BNG skills and capacity project report – Liz Milne, Kent County Council (if approved for release)
- Dasgupta Review – to discuss government response and any action the group may wish to take in respect of this.
- LNRS and BNG as standing items, including anything known on secondary legislation and guidance.
- Update from PAS BNG project

For 2022 - Discussion on approaches to make the most of Environment Bill “new burden” funding and potential of pooling resources (if details announced).