

# **ADEPT Natural Capital and Heritage Working Group**

## **Meeting**

**21<sup>st</sup> November 2022, 10.00am-12.00pm**

## **MINUTES**

### **1. Attending and apologies**

Elizabeth Milne (Kent)  
Sally Marshall (Natural England)  
Aidan Lonergan (Natural England)  
Peter Moore (Reading)  
Adam Stewart (Defra)  
Don Baker (West Sussex)  
Adam Lathbury (Derbyshire)  
Allison Jean (Environment Agency)  
Sylvie Allan (Environment Agency)  
Tim De-Keyzer (Suffolk)  
Timothy Johns (North Yorks)  
Karen Renshaw (Bath and NE Somerset)  
Krista Patrick (PAS)  
Stuart Gardner (Bath and NE Somerset)  
Clare Warburton (Natural England)  
Natasha Markham (North Yorks)  
Hannah Girvan (Cumbria)  
Tim Simpson (Essex)  
Emily Browne (Plymouth)  
Peter Chamberlain (Devon)  
David Sutherland (Buckinghamshire)  
Mike Oxford (Plymouth)  
David Dale (ADEPT)

Apologies: Liz Small (North Yorkshire), Dave Lyon (Wigan), Lynn Trigwell (Wiltshire), Rebecca Moberly (PAS), Mark Minkley (Bath & North East Somerset Council), Heather Stokes (Nottinghamshire County Council), Quinton Carroll (Cambridgeshire), High Clear Hill (North Yorkshire)

### **2. Natural England Mapping tools**

a) All England Strategic Landscape Mapping Assessment Tool – Sally Marshall, Natural England

- To identify areas for potential new National Parks and AONBs; and areas for alternative landscape approaches.
- Mapping scoring scale based on natural beauty and need.
- Need – human need and environment need.
- High natural beauty hot spots align with existing AONBs and National Parks.
- But also that these existing areas don't score so highly on need.
- Data led and strategic level.
- Important to note that it does not over ride any existing designations and not a planning decision making tool – does not over ride need for LVIA.
- Link for mapping hub - <https://all-england-strategic-landscapes-mapping-hub-luc.hub.arcgis.com/>

b) England baseline green infrastructure mapping database – Clare Warburton, Natural England

- More granular mapping than landscape tool.
- Part of green infrastructure framework.
- Not just maps – long term monitoring.
- Brings together 40 different datasets.
- No tree data yet; and some assets are missing (e.g. village greens and cycleways).
- Version 1.2 will go live in January 2023 with new content.
- Work on version 2 – for December 2023.
- Urban habitat maps pilot – understanding habitats within the green infrastructure.
- Available online.

How does this all link together? NE Urban Accreditation will consider this.

How to deliver multiple objectives.

NE GI framework launch event 31<sup>st</sup> January <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/launch-of-the-national-green-infrastructure-framework-tickets-415969785827>

Agreed - GI standards and accreditation presentation from Clare Warburton in March 2023.

### **3. Nature Recovery Network – Aidan Lonergan, Natural England**

- 25 Year Environment Plan – commitment to establishing a NRN
- Not just about biodiversity and habitats but the services/public goods it provides.
- Partnership is key to NRN programme.
- Successful delivery dependent on local delivery.
- LNRS will set the scene – defining where things are and where they can be – local democracy.
- Funding is a huge challenge – not just public money. Looking at what makes green projects “fundable” by private sector.
- Monitoring and evaluation – looking to develop systems that work together.
- NRN delivery partnership – 650+ partners. LGA rep.
- 12 NE partnership nature recovery projects.
- Shared plans for places – bringing together spatial plans for strategic advice and input.

- Web presence to be developed – expected to be online in 6 months.

#### **4. PAS Nature Recovery Network project – Krista Patrick**

- Looking at how to engage with LPAs on NRN, new duties and LNRS.
- Runs to March 2023.
- Engaging with front runner authorities – spoken to 19 authorities. To be presented in key insights report.
- Case studies – show casing approaches and experiences.

**Action: invite Krista to future meetings.**

#### **5. Environment Act (standing item)**

##### *5.1 Adam Stewart, Defra*

- No further progress – working with new ministers to brief them on work.
- Technical training videos on LNRS being developed for RAs. Current topics include:
  1. Principles of nature recovery
  2. Climate change adaptation and mitigation
  3. Policy alignment
  4. Collaboration and join-up (cross-boundary)
  5. Nature based solutions
- Group suggested additional topics for the training videos, including:
  - Communication and, including taking technical detail to the community.
  - Data and mapping.
  - Noted that OXCAM LNCP have lots of info and experience on stakeholder engagement.

##### *5.2 PAS BNG update*

- All the recordings from the recent BNG and NR events are now on the website.
- PAS are holding new biodiversity duties guidance sessions with Defra on 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> November. Please email Richard Crawley [Richard.Crawley@local.gov.uk](mailto:Richard.Crawley@local.gov.uk) if interested in joining one of these.
- Practitioner network session on resourcing BNG on 1<sup>st</sup> Dec. This is about LPAs sharing issues, experience and solutions, rather than Defra re new burdens. If people aren't already on the network and want to join, they should email Meg: [megan.kidd@local.gov.uk](mailto:megan.kidd@local.gov.uk)
- Will be sharing details of a Defra session on BNG guidance on 15th December very soon. Will just go to BNG network as only a few spaces, but will share with this group too. This is just the start of Defra engagement on BNG guidance, so hopefully we'll hear more about other opportunities to feed in soon.
- Looking to focus on helping LPAs with BNG in the DM process and how PAS might target support to different 'LPA groupings' a bit better to meet the range of needs from those that are already doing BNG to those that don't know where to start.

- From conversations with Defra, hopeful that the BNG consultation response will be out early in the new year, but there is no confirmation/official line on this.
- LGA Policy folk along with Garreth from PAS met with Defra to discuss BNG new burdens. Highlighted that these need to be available asap (local authorities setting budgets for next year now/have already set them) and should be joined up with all the other Environment Act requirements, e.g LNRS and new bio duty.
- Defra confirmed that there will be funding before the new BNG requirements come in to top up the £4m that was allocated back in March – this will come through a s31 grant. Defra are working on a way to match funding with likely need.
- Issues raised by LGA included concerns around new guidance coming out without staff being in place to start work on understanding what it means, plus lots of LPAs trying to recruit from a limited pool at the same time.

### 5.3 *Other matters*

Peter raised a query over restrictions on BNG on council-owned land. It was noted that the PAS website had a question/answer that discussed this (see Delivery of BNG section as part of BNG FAQs for LA owned sites).

<https://www.local.gov.uk/pas/topics/environment/biodiversity-net-gain-local-authorities/biodiversity-net-gain-faqs>

**Action: Adam to take to question to BNG officers.**

Liz raised the issue of local government budget concerns and the risk this places on environmental capacity, as this is often seen as the low hanging fruit for cuts and not always a statutory requirement. But need to recognise this resource will be needed as soon as LNRS and BNG requirements come on line. Defra noted that there have been no budget cuts but will need to manage inflation costs within exiting budgets, which is challenging. Defra noted that the LNRS will be a statutory requirement on local government and new burdens associated with this will be funded. The lack of ring fencing for the new burdens was noted as a concern.

**Action: take concerns to Environment Board to discuss more broadly whether there is any action ADEPT should be taking in respect of this matter.**

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

Next meeting(s): 16<sup>th</sup> January 2023; 20<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

Agenda items for 16<sup>th</sup> January 2023

- Update from EA on their natural capital work – Sylvie Allan and Allison Jean
- Green finance and funding mechanisms session – with presentation from Defra (Adam Stewart to confirm speaker)

Agenda items for 20<sup>th</sup> March 2023

- GI standards and accreditation presentation – Clare Warburton, Natural England
- “Areas of multiple environmental sensitivity” – Adam Lathbury