

The White Peak Partnership

Steering Group meeting

09:45 – 12:00 Wednesday 10 March 2020 via WebEx

Minutes

Introductions & apologies

Attendees

Jon Stewart (JS) - National Trust (NT) - Chair

Sarah Bird (SB) - Secretariat

Neil Rudge (NR) - Natural England (NE)

Dan Abrahams (DA) - NE

Suzanne Fletcher (SLF) - Peak District National Park Authority (PDNPA) - Part

Rebekah Newman (RN) - PDNPA

Dave Savage (DS) - Derbyshire Wildlife Trust (DWT)

Mark Haslam (MH) - Environment Agency (EA)

Tim Allen (TA) - Historic England (HE)

Andrew Critchlow (AC) - National Farmers Union (NFU)

Minutes from the last meeting

Minutes from the last meeting accepted as true. Actions from the last meeting that are not covered below or elsewhere have been completed.

Action: SB to send link to Trials reports for everyone to share.

RN - Have been Defra visits to the Trials, but they have been opportunistic. Struggling to take the Trials wider.

Reports have been fed into the Defra through the Tests and Trials.

Ben Rodgers is looking at doing a webinar to the Grassland Society, and how to promote throughout NE.

SLF discussion with Julian Glover. SLF is promoting the Trials.

A five minute introductory video to the Trials is in production, due to be released to an NE audience web 15th March.

Action: SB to send link to video on the website when uploaded.

Action: All to consider how to promote the Trials to Defra and wider publicity.

Natural Environment Investment Readiness Fund (NEIRF) & other funding for the White Peak

The Group received a summary introduction from RN.

E.L.M. is unlikely to support the actions needed on the improved plateau in the White Peak. Need to find a complimentary funding stream.

Natural Environment Investment Readiness Fund applications in by 26th March 2021. Could address a gap in knowledge, pay consultant to advise and guide on how to tap into biodiversity credits to top up E.L.M. and other funding. Consultant would look at Governance structures needed, marketing to attract businesses to invest, and practicalities on how it would work.

Total fund £10mil. £1.2mil for 2021, £100k each bid, so 12 successful bids. Leaning more towards charities. Would be helpful to have the backing of the WPP. Looking for advanced projects?

MFFP and NT looking at it for carbon.

The fund is looking for projects that expand knowledge and learning to others. Could be a useful learning tool.

Challenge is timescales and lack of resources.

Have a go for the first round, if not successful take learnings for subsequent bids?

Would need three quotes. SLF - 3D Rural, they are doing the Budget Ready Reckoner for the E.L.M. Test.

DA – approach from Derbyshire LEP, interested in how they might invest in the environment. Joint response from NE, EA, FC in production. Emerging link to business might help and be useful addition.

DA – call with Paul Mortimer, now working for NE on Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) program. His role is how BNG might help to deliver some of the Lawton principles, and on the ground examples. He is interested in the Trials.

JS – talk to MFFP, did a pilot for the NEIRF. Might be looking for advanced projects. Connecting real private or business sector investors. Concern about it failing should not stop us if we agree it is worth a go.

DA – webinar hosted by EA. Impression was that it was speculative, looking at the technicalities of how it might work.

RN – moving understanding along.

AC – will Component 2 not deliver these elements? Concerns about private funding used over a large scale. Recognise Component 1 will probably not deliver for the White Peak.

DA – NE did BNG credit pilot, 9 projects nationally how it might work in practice. One pilot was at Whaley Bridge. Might be some lessons to learn from this project. Consultant could tap into these projects.

DS – Would like to expand into Dark Peak. Would support. Gives us a bigger toolkit to gain momentum with nature recovery. Could offer time to help put the bid together.

Action: DS to liaise with RN and SLF regarding time putting a bid together.

RN – Doing detailed income foregone calculations for dairy farms. Looking like E.L.M. payments will not come close to these calculations. Plus do not consider loss of BPS. Nature recovery on productive soils, need more tools. Need to diversify strategy for funding and tools to deliver a nature recovery network across the White Peak.

TA – Inappropriate management of nationally important cultural heritage assets. Consultant needs to understand the significance of sites that are important, holistic approach to considering cultural heritage. Significance and potential of site, what's the most appropriate thing to do.

MA – EA are administering the Fund, might have to be neutral. Missing an opportunity to incorporate water quality?

RN – All target areas would have a positive impact on water quality. Consultant must also consider the impacts on contributions to other public goods, e.g. water quality and carbon.

Consensus of support in principle from the SG members, with the exception of MH (EA) who are administering the fund and are therefore neutral.

Update on Defra E.L.M. – Phase two Dark Peak & South West Peak

Took a while to agree funding changes with Defra.

Started with the workshops, similar format to White Peak. Two Dark Peak workshops done, South West Peak ones will be complete by end of March.

When restrictions ease, will engage with hard to reach farmers and land managers, over the phone and/ or face to face.

Farm Advisers will do Land Management Plan deep dives from April, working to develop a template based on the input to the Tests so far.

Have modified the ready reckoners for the Dark Peak and South West Peak, incorporating feedback and comments from the White Peak Test.

Lots of interest in the carbon ready reckoner (CRR). Beginning to explore development of an online version, but lack of resources an issue.

Soil analysis tab for CRR in SWP, funded mostly by EA.

Demand is high for more interaction with those that have taken part in the White Peak Test, but have limited resources to take this forward. All that have taken part will be offered the opportunity to visit the Trials when Covid restrictions ease.

Advocacy and Farming in Protected Landscapes

Advocacy: £44k for PLs. Was about building contacts and advice with farmers and land managers. £7,200 for PDNP. Came from the Glover Review. Stage two of this is the Farming in Protected Landscapes Fund.

Farming in Protected Landscapes Fund: Soft launch in April, full launch in June. Programme of projects across the 44 Protected Landscapes (PLs). Developing a scoring matrix. 3 years up to 2024 and start of E.L.M. Helping upland farmers (70% of upland farmers are in PLs) get ready for E.L.M. Improving access, infrastructure to help businesses to access different pots of money, may be diversification. Lots of potential. Could include carbon advice, business advice. Might be able to do more on the practical field trials. Might be soil testing, restoring semi-improved habitats. Pop up campsites, car parks. Upgrading facilities for existing diversification. Eligibility unknown.

Farm Advisers already raising it with farmers and land managers.

Action: SLF to share more when we know more.

DA – will upland PLs get more of the funding? SLF – Likely.

SLF – probably looking for oven ready projects from farmers and land managers.

Nature Recovery – A Peak District Plan?

Four Delivery Plans for National Parks (NPs), shared with organisations at a national level. Wildlife/ nature recovery; farming and land management; access; climate change. All work together.

Action: SB to send link to Delivery Plans.

Roni Craddock developing template for NPs for a Nature Recovery Prospectus to provide more information how NPs will work together to form the backbone of nature recovery. Starting point to develop a nature recovery plan. Funded by NE.

DA – how the prospectus will work with the LNRS? SLF – document for now, using with Government and partners. Might not be for six months time. LNRS will be the next stage.

DA – will the map incorporate the WP opportunity mapping? SLF – not to fine enough scale to do this, although it has been fed in.

Action: SLF will share when we have final versions.

SLF and SB working with Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) Pilot. Looking like spatially will probably be county based for LNRSs. Pilots have two month extension, now running until May/ June. NPs will do collective report on what's worked and what hasn't.

Lots of work going on about LNRS, Natural Capital (NC) assessments, nature recovery mapping. PDNPA discussing NC assessment with Derbyshire County Council and use of Green Infrastructure Plan with Staffordshire Moorlands District. Also initial discussions with Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust (S&RWT)/ South Yorkshire LNP on their Green Recovery Challenge Fund bid to do mapping.

Action: SB to liaise with S&RWT re GRCF bid/ nature recovery mapping.

Want to work with partners to have one version of a nature recovery plan for the PD.

JS – not much information about LNRS.

DA – not clear in the Environment Bill.

SB – Environment Bill blocker at the moment to PDNPA leading on LNRS is section 97 (4) of the proposed Environment Bill, which states: "The area of a local authority, other than a county council, may not be split between local nature recovery strategies". Essentially cannot split District Councils or Unitary Authorities (e.g. Greater Manchester), which makes the situation in the Peak District difficult due to the way the boundaries overlap.

DS – action plan for nature for South Derbyshire District Council. GIS modelling. Quality of habitats and opportunities. Living Landscape Advisers will be trained. High Peak Borough Council interested.

Action: DS to set up webinar/ slides to share with the group when ready and liaise with SB and DA.

DA – NE responsible to make sure there is one Nature Recovery Network.

Water projects and developing case studies

NFU report circulated by MH. NFU have developed case studies. Is there opportunity to develop case studies in the White Peak?

AC – more focus on water usage and availability than water quality. No case studies from the White Peak suggested.

MH – climate change and more droughts, farmers suffering from lack of water or grassland suffering. Farmers and land managers wanting to do something different that we could use as case studies?

AC – water costs are a major input for lots of farms. Rainwater harvesting is something White Peak farmers have been doing.

Bob Marsden has returned as CSF Officer for the Wye. Considering extend the catchment to include some of the Derwent. Ben Rodgers has been discussing the Trials with him. Dove and Wye. Working closely with Ben. Useful for this group on what his focus is for the project.

Action: SB to liaise with NR and DA to invite Bob Marsden to next Steering Group meeting.

AC – much reduced area compared to the past. Much more targeted and focussed on certain areas.

NR – used to be 1:many engagement, now focussed on 1:1 with farmers and land managers.

DA – STW becoming more of a player in the WP and PD. STEPS scheme for farmers and landowners, now Boost for Biodiversity funding. Interested in the Trials. Should they be invited to this group?

RN, AC, MH agree.

Action: SB to invite STW to Steering Group (Zara Frankle or Ben Young?).

Farm adviser training

Organise training for September/ October. Theme: Trials and nature recovery.

Action: DA and/or Ben Rodgers liaise with SB to be involved in organising.

Partner and project updates

PDNPA & NT – Tideswell Dale NFM project – led by Parish councillors. Early stages, co-ordinated by Derwent Catchment Partnership.

NFU – consultations and lack of detail.

DWT – GRCF successful. Employed staff, 1 project manager, 4 new practical staff. 2 new Living Landscape Advisers working in Dark Peak, Chesterfield area etc. STW have given match funding for Life bid for Ash Dieback project. WTs end of furlough 1 April, everyone back full hours.

Action: DS share DWT GRCF summary. Purpose, outcomes and partners.

NE – Explore working relationship with STW. STW match funded LIFE in the Ravines project. Recruiting for posts, Becky Plunckett managing LIFE in the Ravines project, recruiting access and engagement officer, and finance officer. Delay with start due to Covid, but underway now. 70% owned by conservation orgs, Chatsworth, DDDC. Delivering woodland work in advance of serious impacts of Ash Dieback. There will be opportunities for farmers to get involved. Limited by actual distribution of ash woodlands.

Action: DA to liaise to write up summary of LIFE in the Ravines for the group.

NE – Marion Andrews moved into national role. Replacement freshwater specialist is Charitos Zapitis. He will cover the Peak District but have a wider East Midlands role.

RN – Farming in Protected Landscapes to fund work on historic features? PDNPA funded two projects for structural engineer.

NT – Ash Dieback work, large amount of staff time and contractor time, in line with safety policy. DCC lead for Ash Dieback in Derbyshire.

NT – CSS woodland scheme in WP. Similar to Ravines project, diversifying woodlands. Five year project.

NT – River Dove WEG, NT and PDNPA. Final year.

Date, location & chair of next meeting – (Chair in order: DWT, EA, HE, NE, NFU, NT, PDNPA)

Next Steering Group meeting 14:00-16:15 9 June 2021. Chair PDNPA. Via WebEx or similar.

Any other business

None.