

**BIOSPHERE RESERVE PARTNERSHIP MEETING MINUTES**

**8<sup>th</sup> February 2022,  
Via ZOOM 13:30pm to 4:00pm**

<p><b>Members via Zoom:</b>  Mel Austen (MA) (Chairperson) -UoP  Mark Wallace (MW) Beaford  Andrew Butler (ABut) - NFU  Ian Rowland (IR) TDC  Jenny Carey-Wood (JCW) – AONB  Claire Moodie (CM) – PFND  Mike Moser (MM) – Nature Improvement Group  Phil Byers (PB) – Vice Chairperson &amp; NDBF  Cllr Derrick Spear (DS) – BPC/NDC  John Balls (JH) - NDFA  David Hoare (DH) – Saline Saxby MP Office  Tim Jones North (TJ) - NDBF  Eirene Williams (EWill)- AONB  Chris Fuller (CF) - TDC  Emma Richardson (ER) DWT  Robert Down (RD) Coastwise/ NDBF  Peter Howard (PH)  Kate Hind (KH)  Pru Maskell (PH)  Ewan Wallis (EWal)  Mark Saunders (MS)</p>	<p><b>Biosphere Team Present:</b>  Andy Bell (AB) – CEO  Emily Willoughby (EW) – Pledge for Nature  Nicola Corrigan (NC) - Operations Manager  Kay Willmott (KW) - (Minutes) Admin Support  Sarah Jordan (SJ) - BCHT Business Partners  Gemma Worswick – Devon Woods  Jane Hart – TVFF</p>
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**Apologies:**

Phil Metcalfe, Sophia Craddock, Michael Winter, Martin Batt, Mark Prior, (Forestry Commission).

ITEM	NOTES	ACTION
1) Welcome and Introductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MA welcomed everyone to the 40<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Partnership on Zoom due to continuing changes in Covid restrictions.</li> <li>A minute's silence was held to remember Andrew Austin who had sadly passed away since the October meeting..</li> </ul>	
2) Minutes of last meeting	Minutes of last meeting approved	
3) Matters Arising	<b>Matters Arising:</b>	

	<p><b>Vice Chairs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MW will continue as VC until the North Devon Cultural Strategy has been completed</li> </ul> <p><b>Joining Foundation Board</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Board Trustees requested a member of the Partnership join the Foundation Board. AB encourages people to be proactive circulating this vacancy</li> </ul> <p><b>Shell fisheries initiatives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>JB impact of laying pipeline to fisheries of Norfolk coast.</li> <li>TJ to talk to XLinks about their intentions and managing impact on fisheries</li> </ul> <p><b>App and visitor change information</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AB asked if partnership members could help with test phase of the visitor app in the next couple of weeks.</li> </ul> <p><b>Draft of ESG standard</b> Due diligence/ process regarding ESG customers commitments as customers. DS will continue to report of CCMA</p>	<p><b>AB</b> to write/circulate job description</p> <p><b>TJ</b> speak to Xlinks</p> <p><b>AB</b> will contact everyone when it's available</p> <p><b>DS</b> will continue to report</p>
4) Updates from working groups (Verbal updates)		
Green Economy (Phil Byers)	<p>There has been an agreement to revitalise the Green Economy Group, as there have been no meetings over lockdown. In the past year a number of GE focused organisations have been formed which GE group will be able to support and co-ordinate. Partnership support as a mapping and consultation exercises continue. NC will have more capacity to work on business support and linking the biosphere with the inter-engagement of the partnership covering Devon wide and biosphere</p> <p>Greening &amp; sustainability Biosphere – administration, website, events page North Devon manufacturing areas Link with groups and circulate. MA, MM helping to revitalise groups and co-ordinate between groups.</p>	NC to resend paper
Biosphere Business Partners	<p>BBP SJ – 52 active members with eco accreditation The recent webinar with SJ, MM and EW was viewed by 40 businesses online and more views since it was uploaded onto YouTube. Workshops have been organised for March with nature-based theme for businesses.</p>	
Catchment Group	<p>ER to update a full list of projects, which she'll share with the chairs, to avoid overlapping. A new Project Manager has been appointed Ewan Wallis on a 5 and half year contract to the ND Natural Solutions project The action plan is being updated to dovetail with the nature recovery plan for Wetland sand Waterbodies. With the beavers on the River Taw it was suggested that a beaver management group should be set up. MA said more information on the projects would be good, and AB &amp; NC would provide a spreadsheet potentially using Monday.com to update partners. EM was please that NC was co-ordinating.</p>	<p>ER to provide a full list of projects</p> <p>AB/NC Spreadsheet update</p>

<p>Forestry</p>	<p>Plenty of England Woodland creation going on. AB Uncertainties from ELMS but the credit offer of £300 per Ha per annum will cover costs. Rivers Trust and NT woodlands for water scheme would be great for North Devon and Steve Edmunds is managing the project. AB to engage at Higher levels with Devon Woods Project and GW working on the ground links.</p> <p><b>BIRD Project</b> 11 Ha – EWC partnerships – carbon benefits. ER commented on Devon Woods covering phosphate failing catchments in the North and East Devon are the priority areas. How will the areas interact? JCW asked how the decision is made on the catchments. AB confirmed that it was the Forestry Commission and EA</p>	<p>AB to engage with higher levels.</p>
<p><b>Nature Improvement MM &amp; EW</b></p>	<p><b>The Nature Recovery Plan</b> implementation is to start in 2022 with new projects as necessary. There are 5 sub groups: Coast – Martin Batt Grass &amp; Arable – John Morgan (Creedy Associates) Towns &amp; Villages – To be recruited Wetlands and Waterbodies – Laurence Couldrick Woodland – Andy Bell</p> <p>All groups are now active. With cross cutting webinars from the business section, schools, parish councils and community groups</p> <p>NI group working with DWT regarding beavers on the River Otter, Jake Chant – highlighting the benefits to water quantity, quality and management. Grants in ELMs welcome beavers – DWT management of beavers in Otter catchment and the relationships with farmers are very good.</p> <p><b>Pledge for Nature</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EW 898 total pledges (incl. declaration)</li> <li>• 490 nature recovery declarations</li> <li>• 332 individuals</li> <li>• 34 businesses</li> <li>• 52 Farmers/landowners</li> <li>• 8 schools engagement</li> <li>• 7 local authorities</li> <li>• 14 Visitors</li> <li>• 33 Other organisations</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upcoming is the relaunch of Community Nature Recovery Challenge Fund</li> <li>• Outreach</li> </ul> <p>Pledge for Nature has been in citizen science scheme monitoring water courses in North Devon, has been a lot of interest and a training day. – citizen science JCW is there a central resource? AB for citizen science MM Emily is designing a web page incorporating national, Devon wide and local projects. TJ has there been business engagement? Is interest increasing? Will this involve cross cutting with BBP? How could we engage better with schools?</p>	

	<p>AB – as part of the CRF fulfilment there is a need for Smart Biosphere to connect with the curriculum.</p> <p>AB – There should be some teacher training for A level curriculum.</p> <p>There has been engagement – with Appledore and South Molton schools and there are more visits pending</p> <p>CF – This is an opportunity for us to get a series of curriculum tasks together.</p> <p>CM – CRF – NDB has money for G/B and wider biosphere for developing. Sarah Dellard has 6 weeks work developing the area. Various projects for keystage 2,3,4 and scheme of work, roadshow for Keystage 4 to talk about careers.</p> <p>Delivery for this is later Easter term and Summer term.</p> <p>ER – DWT education and community team are contacting schools so has contact details.</p> <p>PH – secondary schools need more information about green issues not lost in one module or discipline.</p>	
<b>Community Group/Plastic Free</b>	<p>CM – plastic free will send update by email.</p> <p>MW – the consultation for North Devon Cultural Strategy will be completed before the next Partnership meeting (End of May 2022). Its benefits could be increased funding for culture. The Arts Council England wants to increase funding and has shared priorities with the ND Council, NDC will define these priorities throughout the consultation. Chris Fuller &amp; consultants will be doing interviews and meetings. Concentrating on uniqueness, culture heritage and environment.</p> <p>Strategy for Barnstaple to become a cultural hub with funding for the next three years.</p> <p>MW – mandate him to represent the partnership for these meetings? JCW &amp; MM proposed him as the representative for the partnership all were in favour. PH and Alison from Barnstaple Museum are involved in the consultation too.</p> <p>AONB lottery application is to be submitted in March 2022</p> <p>JCW Natures tonic – evaluation – green prescriber. JCW is pleased to see the prescriber element in the new NDB bid.</p>	<p>JCW &amp; MM proposed MW as Biosphere representative</p>
<b>Marine Group</b>	<p>AB Money from 3Cs initiative for developing ND Marine Nature Recovery Plan Which will cover all intertidal areas as far as Lundy – beyond MCZ</p> <p>Projects to deliver – consultation consortium for marine net gain with input from Kovia consultants, Phoebe Russell plus Beccy MacDonald-Lofts and Rose have good knowledge to deliver the plan by March 31 2022.</p> <p>EW – What projects?</p> <p>AB Extending no take zone which could include accreditation schemes.</p> <p>MA Hooper from University of Plymouth – studied marine recovery plans for his thesis and Cornwall's was in his opinion the best, for reference.</p>	

	<p>JB – NTZ shouldn't be right round the island, half a mile would cause aggravation with the fishing industry.</p> <p>Floating winds farms have an exclusion zone of one mile with no fishing, which is excellent for conservation. But there are going to be other wind farms near the Gower to take into consideration with any decisions being made.</p> <p>DEFRA, MMO and Gov won't move on highly protected areas, floatation would want undisturbed areas, we need to see what is being proposed.</p> <p>MA – Declaration of interest areas in mind 2022 – consultation</p>	
<p>6) Briefing on Community Renewal Fund (CRF) AB/TJ</p>	<p>AB</p> <p>CRF is funded by the Levelling up funding Preparing for natural capital marketplace.</p> <p>Blue green element of Celtic seas</p> <p>SAE Zone – seaweed and multitrophic industry, seaweed, shellfish on ropes and fish.</p> <p>Block license for local jobs and investment.</p> <p>EB – feasibility of introducing species – cleaning up the estuary</p> <p>BC – blue carbon sequestration e.g. kelp and seagrass.</p> <p>Offshore renewable – servicing facility.</p> <p>IMMP – No take in Lundy - how it's going to affect management – methods we'll be using,</p> <p>JB – survey with Thomas Stamp 14.2.22 6pm presentation up to date – Bass fishery</p> <p>Green Woodland Economy – Survey unmanaged woodlands looking at the volume and condition and what can be done to them management and processing in North Devon to getting the economy moving. Failed forestry – animal &amp; disease problems</p> <p>NCMP investors – develop projects to get NCM investors paid back by carbon credits.</p> <p>NCFD Fund investment cases to make it transparent investment.</p> <p>W&amp;S NHS one Northern Devon – referrals – NHS ranger on sites near the communities. The role includes job coaching to get people into a better position to get work, looking at social skills, and equipping them to look for jobs.</p> <p>Smart Biosphere – using smart sensors in the UMBER catchment for the initial project.</p> <p>water sensors in the lower tidal areas of the Torridge with educational resources and farm improvements.</p> <p>Soils – 25 soil farm plans in the catchments, to improve management, supermarkets might be interested in buying into this, looking up and down the supply chain.</p> <p>All to be completed by June.</p> <p>CRF down work within out projects.</p> <p>TJ – Leverage and interest which has been shown already by this project has been amazing. Much interest from Fountain Forestry, University of Bangor.</p> <p>MW Who will manage and administrate this?</p> <p>AB Project management and increased investment,</p>	

	<p>Whole Project management DCC, Program manager, Administration, and operations NCM. DCC has provided a lump sum from DCC for cash flow and we have an accountant to make sure the processes are easily tracked.</p> <p>TJ Do we have the breadth in the Foundation board to support this project? How many businesses to attract into this process. Applegate – looking at project to engage at board level, this process underway.</p> <p>ER – It is an extensive program to manage, how will the biosphere partners be able to engage with the process?</p> <p>NCM – DWT Marine – University of Plymouth are stakeholders and involved. AB The projects have been developed between July and November after the bid went in, before it had been awarded. The projects are more feasibility studies not delivery of a full program and will come back to the partnership once they are completed with useful data.</p> <p>NCM -need to make sure that communication is good with farmers. AButler – the capacity on farmers for net zero before moving forward with projects need a good balanced approach looking at systems holistically. With new projects people need to be informed as to what they are being signed up to, the projects need to be regulated and managed well. Partnership needs to deliver a balanced message. AB NDB is an innovator with this project the NCM has had expressions of interest from a number of areas including Manchester, Leeds, the National Trust, asking how the tool could work in their benefit.</p> <p>MM TVF Fund has developed a valuable network to sustain it, however funding ends in Dec 2022. We need to sustain it and grow it and find funding to continue the project.</p> <p>AB Jane Hart the partner liaison along with landowners are waiting to see what happens with the link with DEFRA and projects, workshops and environmental management at the moment. ELMS stage 1– biosphere taking part in the test &amp; trials and opportunities and problems with ELMS being 12-18 months finance with area benefits.</p>	<p>Re-enforce the board and Inc Partnership member willing to join Foundation Board</p> <p>BR partnership will be kept updated with reports.</p> <p>Message re Carbon and farms own carbon needs will be taken into account</p>
7) CRITTER & Devon Woods Project Briefing	The project entails recreation of saltmarsh and freshwater grazing marsh. Engaging with land owners and looking at schemes with detail. We need to make sure that our spend is up to date, to keep up with funding.	BR team to update for next meeting
	Slide on Land and Intertidal	

	<p>Devon Woods which was historical Woods4water is an 18 month project to improve water quality with tree planting.</p> <p>MA A huge amount of work has gone into the scheme and massive credit to NDB team – magnificent.</p>	
8) Round table Briefing	Due to time and technology constraints all but one of the intended items were not discussed but will be followed up in open single item meetings.	
a. Development Control	<p>IR – we have a programme with the council, community and stakeholders. 2023 transforming into a plan, We need to engage within the biosphere to make it innovative.</p> <p>Development control needs significant control. Biodiversity net gain needs to make sure we are keeping high standards, compensation net gain – SE to SW margin for higher than £10,000 per biodiversity unit. What developers have been told is not high enough.</p> <p>When agreements were set up it was professional/ non political. A fair price – fair and equitable which is what levelling up should be.</p> <p>MA/IR – 10 Principles at this point would be a good starting point.</p> <p>TJ Going back what is the partnership in this? What is their role to be policemen to the process? The biosphere should be important in providing the toolkit as the local plan develops.</p> <p>TJ – 2<sup>nd</sup> holiday homes, registration and planning reg to short term lets – we have got a view on it?</p> <p>We need to resolve social issues and work with the planners.</p> <p>TJ – Devon Futures – critical and will feed back to group.</p>	<p>BR team to keep respond to consultations with Partnership and arrange workshops if necessary.</p> <p>Improve the transparency of Net gain via the marketplace</p>
b. Opinions on marine developments scoping	<p><b>Whitecross example</b> – framing concerns we have for it. It will exclude fishing and regional plan.</p> <p>MNC Plan – prospectus of issues and why they are to be addressed.</p> <p>JB- 6-7 years are needed to regenerate coastal communities.</p>	Feed the principles to relevant planning bodies
c. BR contributions to 30 by 30 Aichi targets Convention on Biological Diversity	<p>Biodiversity 30 x 30 30% state protected by 2030 NP and AONB – biodiversity on land.</p> <p>Other environmental conservation measures – Reserves IUCN screening tool.</p> <p>ND Biosphere could possibly fit as an IUCN OECN protected area and overlaps.</p> <p>We think in principle due to NRP and Woodland Trust and governance system and some means of delivery.</p> <p>We have made s good dent in conservation and working on evidence but it's weak and needs documenting.</p> <p>How would OECN make a case, is that desirable to the partnership? Should we go further we want to be</p>	AB to further meetings with Defra, JNCC and IUCN

	<p>able to say what the benefit to the Biosphere is. Would farming outside protected landscapes give gain to make it worthwhile. Is it the right case to make?</p> <p>MA – can't see the benefit.  EW how would protection work.  AB – OECM place your delivering benefits and preventing loss.  ER – shouldn't we be increasing and protecting new sites. How would it be delivered in the Biosphere.  AB – work with stakeholders and landowners, we need make sure we are making a genuine contribution not a paper one.  ABut – It seems like a lot of work for little benefit more constrained.</p> <p>DEFRA is keen on it. Chris Mahon merit to being recognised but not as heavy hand of conservation, protecting area working with stakeholders.  MM – light touch response would be relevant but would need to see some benefit to use it.  MA – Effort required what is the incentive to help DEFRA's goals?  ABut – chuck loads of stuff out and see what interest there is, that's what it seems like to him.  MA – if imbedding in policy would be good for the biosphere.  MW – to have written into policy not to lose the entity of the other landscapes  MA would be good to go to DEFRA and we need some recognition, need to deliver more and then work to deliver benefits to landowners.  MW – passed mandate to continue the discussion.  TJ principal to endorse this is good happy for further discussion.</p>	
9) AOB & DONM	1pm Wednesday June 15 <sup>th</sup> Bishops Nympton Parish Hall	