

## BIOSPHERE RESERVE PARTNERSHIP MEETING MINUTES

6<sup>th</sup> October 2022

Winkleigh Community Centre

<p>1) Welcome and Introductions</p>	<p><b>Present:</b>            Tim Jones (TJ) NDBF            Emma Richardson (ER), DWT            Mark Wallis (MW), Beaford Arts            Mel Austen (MA), Plymouth University, Chair            Nicola Corrigan (NC), NDBF            Eireene Williams (EW), AONB            Ian Roland (IR), TDC            Brett Grosvenor (BG), EA            Sarah Jordan (SJ), NDBF            Andrew Butler (AB), NFU            Derek Spear, NDC            Claire Moody (CM), PFND            Kate Hind (KH), DCC</p> <p><b>Apologies:</b>            Mike Moser, NIWG</p>
<p>2) Minutes of last meeting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Item 7 – The culture strategy has been launched which includes outdoor arts and possibilities to link through global partnerships with other Biospheres.</li> <li>• Recommendation that we adopt strategy as ND Biosphere Partnership subject to ratification on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2022. The strategy will help to inform other documents such as funding bids and the future Biosphere strategy.</li> <li>• Link to Strategy document: <a href="https://www.torridge.gov.uk/culture-strategy-short.pdf">Flourishing Culture The Northern Devon Culture Strategy_short.pdf (torridge.gov.uk)</a></li> </ul>
<p>3) Matters arising</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>MW</b> will remain as Vice Chair which is fixed until 2024 to tie in with <b>MW's</b> culture strategy role.</li> <li>• New members are joining the Foundation Board</li> <li>• Other items on agenda</li> </ul>
<p>4) Governance review of the Foundation and its CIC (TJ)</p>	<p><b>AB</b> gave a presentation and update on the recommendations from the Institute of Directors advisory work for the Biosphere Foundation which was funded by the CRF.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key points included that               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ the UNESCO designation should be front and centre of the partnership and its subsidiaries. The relationship of the partnership is as the steward of the designation, the Foundation should have over all control of the CIC and its business plan. However, the CIC can operate nationally such as with services like NCM but within the parameters of Biosphere's principles and ethics. There should be an agreed dividend going into the Foundation.</li> <li>○ An aim is to create an investor impact fund of £50million</li> <li>○ The CIC has to develop its capacity such as recruiting a CEO and executive team fit for purpose i.e. the CIC management</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<p>structure will be separate to the management of the Foundation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Core management group works as an appointment committee to the charitable board.</li> <li>○ Company to be limited by share on the commercial side. There are VAT and financial implications.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>ACTION:</b> The management of the CIC needs to be agreed within certain operational and ethical parameters as to how it does business. Key asset development such as the Natural Capital Marketplace, and sales of Biodiversity Net Gain Credits need to be protected through due diligence to avoid green washing by companies seeking to invest.</li> <li>• <b>ACTION AB:</b> to organise a presentation by the IOD for partnership members to consider the detail of the proposal and ramifications of decisions such as due diligence of green investment funding from potential investors.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>TJ:</b> Gave an overview of the proposed new government investment zones, which are intended to bring new money and investment into specific locations such as through business rate reliefs, tax incentives and relaxed planning rules. <b>TJ</b> explained that further zones are planned which could include Devon and it is proseed by a conglomerate of regional and local organisations this should be a 'Green Investment Zone'.</li> <li>• <b>TJ</b> is working on an EOI for a natural capital development project to create a 'Green Investment Zone with the LEP, DCC, TDC/ NDC. Project funding would be matched by Government with private sector investment to leverage the market.</li> <li>• The submission aims to provide employment generation and natural capital growth activities e.g., aqua culture to supply chains, carbon sequestration, regenerative farming, sustainable food and drink, nature on prescription as well as creating marine and land-based employment opportunities. The evidence base is from Smart Biosphere as well as working with Crown Estate to attract new money from international sources.</li> <li>• Responses from partnership members included concerns raised over relaxation of planning and environment rules. This was particularly highlighted by the recent reaction of many prominent environmental organisations to the government announcement.</li> <li>• In principle the partnership agreed to the EOI at this stage but partners such as DWT would not be able to endorse it until more detail was included.</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION:</b> TJ Talk to key partnership members not present at this meeting such as the National Trust before the formal endorsement of the EOI.</p>
5) Lottery Project proposals (AB/ER)	<p><b>AB and ER</b> reported on results of a scoping meeting with DWT and the NDBF for a major funded programme. They are seeking Partnership approval and help to identify critical gaps.</p> <p>Key items identified included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The themes would be around the freshwater environment.</li> <li>• Feedback has been sought from the Lottery who are looking for projects locally. Lottery would want to have biggest match but other match funding could come from the EA.</li> <li>• River theme for lottery bid concept focused around rivers – great for cultural and environmental heritage, increasing peoples access to rivers, taking on ecocide of rivers which should have rights right to flow and not to be polluted. This could incorporate a declaration of the rights of rivers.</li> <li>• Concepts include getting to stage zero for river restoration</li> <li>• Looking at how can resource stage 1 application</li> <li>• CAVA money to help with engagement stakeholder/ focus meeting</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Plymouth Sustainable Earth Institute could be interested in helping to develop the bid - <b>MA</b> to follow up</li> <li>AONB lottery project has coastal streams as part of their project</li> <li>Include species reintroduction e.g. Beavers / find out if Otters present</li> <li>Opportunity to work with the culture sector</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION: ER and AB</b> looking at resources to progress bid.</p>
6) Biosphere Partnership position in Floating Offshore Wind Development (AB)	<p><b>AB</b> presented the draft position statement from the partnership to agree so that there is legitimacy in engaging the OFW sector. New proposals will mean less visual intrusion from OFW as they will be further out of the Channel.</p> <p>Comments from the partnership included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Impact of shore landing and cable routes – need to ensure net positive impact on environment</li> <li>Impact of pilings – floating wind will reduce that impact.</li> <li>Regen SW looking at how power can lower price for domestic users and in particular for affordable warmth</li> <li>Opportunities for balancing the grid e.g. storing hydrogen</li> <li>North Devon World Surf Reserve concerned about impact on waves</li> <li>Support for the principle of removal of the ban on onshore windfarm moratorium, subject to community engagement</li> <li>Whitecross OFW project currently seeking public consultation on their proposed development. <a href="#">White Cross Offshore Wind - The future of renewable energy</a></li> </ul> <p><b>APPROVED:</b> The partnership should endorse the statement.</p>
7) BR strategy review and periodic review process (AB)	<p><b>AB</b> presented a paper to flag up that the Statutory Periodic Review of the Biosphere which is due in September 2024. The existing strategy will also be reviewed ahead of this.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Agreement for the methodology required.</p>
8) International Biosphere Reserve Day and 20 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary of North Devon Biosphere Reserve	<p>The 3 November 2022 will be the first International Day for Biosphere Reserves. An event showcasing the contribution of the biosphere reserves to sustainable development organised by UNESCO in collaboration with World Network of Biosphere Reserves. November also marks the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the ND Biosphere Reserve designation.</p> <p>The partnership were asked to identify any events and proposed dates to celebrate the occasion. Community led events and projects include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ND parks department are tree planting in Yeo Valley</li> <li>Two generations of professional North Devonian theatre makers join forces to create a new play which asks, “what if the climate changed in North Devon? <a href="https://beaford.org/wheretobegin">https://beaford.org/wheretobegin</a></li> <li>NDPF education partnership working on an education project taking young people out to help them discover the Biosphere</li> <li>International connection for network promotion could include: Cascade Head Biosphere Reserve in south-west of Portland, US and links with our twinned Biosphere Malindi-Watamu Biosphere Reserve</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Send any details of events and activities to be promoted. Please also share and promote on partner socials.</p>
9) Collaboration with other Biosphere Reserves (verbal report AB)	<p><b>AB</b> reported on actions to increase collaboration within the network of Biospheres in the UK and beyond which includes looking at a UK biodiverse landscapes fund. Also, the Mesoamerican transboundary reserve of Peru and Ecuador as well as the lower Congo and Mecon. <b>AB</b> working with Paris to look at collaboration and exchange visits.</p>

10) BREAK	
11) Updates	
a) Nature Improvement Group (Mike Moser /Jack Wolfenden)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delighted to announce recruitment of Martin Batt as new of NIWG Chair to take over from Mike Moser next Spring. Mike and Martin will be working together to achieve a smooth handover through the winter.</li> <li>The five action plan groups that are leading implementation of the Nature Recovery Plan continue their work and are meeting again this Autumn. We hope to assign RAG assessments of progress for all the priority actions and are focusing on catalytic partnership working to achieve progress beyond BAU. The leaders of the groups will also be working with Mike to prepare a short public-facing report on the first two years of implementation for release next Spring.</li> <li>Jack Woolfenden has recently replaced Emily Willoughby as coordinator for the Pledge for Nature project which is now in its final year of Lottery funding. We have conducted a short evaluation to guide implementation in the final year. The main conclusions are that the project has already exceeded most of its “nature” and public engagement targets and has contributed significantly to raising public awareness of the Biosphere. Legacy activities in the final year will focus on schools and community groups who can carry forward public engagement in the long term. In addition, during this winter the project will prioritise engaging volunteers to support tree planting (one of the targets that the project has not yet met) and working with WRT to engage more citizen scientists to monitor water quality in the Biosphere rivers and streams.</li> <li>The NIWG has its next meeting on 10 November.</li> </ul>
b) Update on the Community Recovery Fund (AB/TJ)	<p>The CRF is coming to a close which has achieved a range of projects and outcomes under the blue and green natural accelerator programme for North Devon. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No take zone review with data from Lundy marine conservation</li> <li>Aquaculture investment case</li> <li>Little Dock – clean green propulsion linked to wharf/ aquaculture</li> <li>Woodland Enterprise Zone – assessment to bring back woods into management</li> <li>Soil carbon assessment by Rothemstead Research</li> <li>NHS green prescriptions through One Northern Devon - 100 green prescriptions for vulnerable to experience nature and deepen confidence for employment</li> <li>Models for next round applications</li> <li>Natural Capital Marketplace - 100 farms engaged</li> </ul> <p>CRF is currently gathering final evidence and outputs for wrap up by end November.</p>
c) ELMS T&T Phase 2 (AB)	<p>The ELMS test and trails included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Test and trails ran by Natural England across 4 areas</li> <li>Blended finance work with sustainable investment/ BNG</li> <li>Land management agreements / model agreements</li> <li>Farm advice Robert Dean which will combine farm business advice</li> <li>How NCM can be built in for collaborative offers for natural recovery</li> <li>Project finishes by August 2023</li> </ul>
d) Catchment Group (Emma Richardson)	<p>Natural Solutions and Catchment Partnership update the areas proposed to focus on are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Re-naturalising rivers – how to increase the scale of our activity</li> <li>Re-wilding &amp; natural processes – link this to re-naturalising rivers?</li> <li>CSO spills – how to develop better co-ordination</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Point source pollution – how best to target bigger industry</li> <li>• Beavers – co-ordination across the BR area</li> </ul>
e) DRIP and collaboration potential in the Little Dart catchment (SC/MM)	Not discussed as ran out of time – <b>ACTION move to next meeting.</b>
f) CRITTER update (AB/SC) report	Accompanying paper on CRITTER progress report received on the farms engaged in the catchments and the estuary basin
g) Green Economy (Phil Byers/Sarah Jordan/Nicola Corrigan)	<p>Biosphere Business partners and progress from the GE group included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>SJ</b> has been undertaking a number of activities and events with 170 Torrridge businesses engaged.</li> <li>• The 361 Energy Fair took place on 25<sup>th</sup> September in the Barnstaple Pannier Market with over 30 local businesses and organisations involved attracting over 1000 members of the general public. Displays, information and activities around climate change awareness, renewables, energy efficiency and retrofit, sustainable travel, sustainable food and drink, sustainable recreation and lifestyles.</li> <li>• 361 Energy and PFND Sustainable Resource partnership are working on visiting businesses and farms to help reduce carbon footprints.</li> </ul>
h) Forestry Group (Mark Prior/Andy B)	<p>Devon Woods and Woodlands for water. PAWS challenge fund and the WEZ work. Ran out of time item not discussed. <b>ACTION:</b> move to next meeting</p> <p>Paper received on project progress of Devon Woods.</p>
i) Community Group/Plastic Free Consortium (Claire Moody)	<p><b>NC</b> reported that Braunton Countryside Centre had been successful in a HLF bid for their 'Connect 2 Nature' project. A project officer has been recruited and is organising a number of events to engage locals, visitors and diverse groups who usually face barriers to accessing nature. Partners are encourage to use the Centre as a hub for nature based community engagement activities and events.</p> <p><b>CM</b> reported on PFND activities which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8 repair cafes in Braunton and Landkey</li> <li>• 11 beach cleans</li> <li>• 19 events with VR/ water bar</li> <li>• Visitor toy libraries created</li> <li>• Accommodation - 20 sign ups/ promote explorer app</li> <li>• Sustainable business resource/ 361 Energy activities</li> </ul>
j) Marine Group (Andy B)	<p>Marine Nature Recovery Plan next steps</p> <p>Marine group needs to be reconvened. Follow on from 3 Cs group.</p> <p>Ran out time – <b>ACTION Item moved to next meeting</b></p>
k) Research Group (MW)	CRF research group. <b>ACTION Item moved to next meeting</b>
12) AOB & DONM	Date of Next meeting 19 <sup>th</sup> January 2023.