



**East of England Biodiversity Forum Meeting Minutes 19 March 2013**  
**RSPB, Lakenheath Fen, Station Road, Lakenheath, Brandon, Suffolk IP27 9AD**

Present	Apologies
<p><b>Steve Scott (chair)</b>~Forestry Commission  <b>Mark Iley</b> ~ Essex LBAP  <b>Catherine Weightman</b> ~ Natural England  <b>Dominic Coath</b> ~ Environment Agency  <b>Gen Broad</b> ~ Suffolk LBAP  <b>Simon Odell</b> ~ Landscape East  <b>Mike Drew</b> ~ Anglian Water  <b>Michelle Russell</b> ~ Natural England  <b>Jane Herbert</b> ~ Natural England  <b>Nick White</b> ~ Natural England  <b>Richard Barnes</b> ~ Woodland Trust  <b>David Hooton</b> ~ Deer Initiative  <b>David Rogers</b> ~ RSPB  <b>Deb Howard</b> ~ Essex Wildlife Trust (minute taker)</p>	<p><b>Henry Bexley</b> ~ National Trust  <b>Stuart Warrington</b> ~ National Trust  <b>Ellie Henderson</b> ~ Woodland Trust  <b>John Sharpe</b> ~ RSPB  <b>Deborah Marchant</b> ~ Cambridgeshire County Council  <b>Rebecca Banks</b> ~ Essex LBAP  <b>Catherine Wyatt</b> ~ Herts LBAP  <b>Liz Anderson</b> ~ Central Bedfordshire Council/Alge rep  <b>Jennifer Faulkner</b> ~ National Trust</p>

	Action
<p><b>Minutes from the last meeting</b>  Held on 11 October 2012 were agreed as correct</p>	
<p><b>Matters arising and action points from previous meeting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catherine Weightman invited Nick White from Natural England's 2020 team to attend today's meeting to give a presentation.</li> <li>• Mark Iley informed the group that £11981 remains in the East of England Biodiversity Forum's (EEBF) account £210 had been spent on website hosting on 3.1.13</li> <li>• Applications can be made for funding from EEBF as long as the project is to benefit the whole region across the 6 counties involved in EEBF.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Biodiversity 2020 targets – Nick White of Natural England</b> (see attached presentation/FAQs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As no one was meeting the 2010 BAP targets a new 2020 approach has been devised to renew conventions.</li> <li>• To feed into the white paper of 2011 and also feed back to NEWP</li> <li>• There are currently no UK BAP habitats or species, DEFRA has brought to an end funding.</li> <li>• The 2020 approach consists of 4 outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Priority habitat and Eco systems</li> <li>○ Marine</li> <li>○ People</li> <li>○ Species</li> </ul> </li> <li>• An outcome figure of 200,000 hectares has been set, and a discussion took place</li> </ul>	

<p>on how best to achieve this outcome. (Nick to circulate a breakdown of the outcome figures to the group <b>see attached</b>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The strategy is to deliver collectively and join up on a landscape scale.</li> <li>• Nick informed the group that although local BAP partnerships were not mentioned in the 2020 strategy 50% of BAP partnerships are in fact still functioning</li> <li>• BARS2 will be the reporting mechanism and organisations are being encouraged to use it.</li> <li>• It was mentioned that currently there is no mechanism to record habitat loss but work is underway to capture this data</li> <li>• The 2020 approach will mean the coming together of organisations to agree an approach and disseminate information. However, there is currently no system to organise this and there is recognition that something needs to happen. Everyone needs to be empowered to make things happen.</li> <li>• Steve Scott thanked Nick White for his presentation.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Disignating Further NIA's – Catherine Weightman</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are 12 national NIAs with funding attached; they are on the DEFRA website.</li> <li>• A few partners locally are being designated as NIA's without the funding.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Update from LNPs/NIAs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Wild Anglia</b> – Gen Broad informed the group that the Norfolk and Suffolk LNP was progressing well. Andy Wood is the chair of the Local Enterprise Partnership. They are working on a manifesto which will be out soon, with input from RSPB and Anglian Water. A workbook is being produced with a prioritised list of opportunities and will include an eco system approach.</li> <li>• <b>Herts</b> - written update from Catherine Wyatt in her absence. The LNP Board met for the first time on 13<sup>th</sup> February. There is representation from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ the National Farmers Union (NFU), representing the farming and landowning sector (Rob Wise)</li> <li>○ the Environment Agency, representing the Defra delivery bodies (i.e. the Forestry Commission, Natural England and the Environment Agency) (Graham Cowell)</li> <li>○ the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, representing NGO's (Jane Durney)</li> <li>○ Hertfordshire County Council and Stevenage Borough Council representing Local Authorities and Hertfordshire Sustainability Forum (Cllr Richard Thake and Cllr John Gardner)</li> <li>○ the Health and Wellbeing Board (Jim McManus), although the representative is currently on extended sick leave so has not attended any meetings to date</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Cllr Richard Thake (Executive Member for Environment and Community Safety at Hertfordshire County Council) was appointed the LNP Board Chair and Cllr John Gardner (Deputy Leader of Stevenage Borough Council) the Vice Chair.</li> </ul> <p><b>LNP strategic plan</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The LNP has identified, through extensive stakeholder engagement over the past year, 4 strategic objectives to ensure it delivers its vision for Hertfordshire. These are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Healthy and resilient ecological networks</li> <li>○ Health and wellbeing through the natural environment</li> <li>○ Sustainable economic growth through the natural environment</li> <li>○ Water for people and wildlife</li> </ul> </li> <li>• We will be looking to develop the strategic plan over the next couple of months and will be using this to prepare a prioritised work plan for the LNP for consideration by the</li> </ul>	

<p>Board at its next meeting in May.</p> <p>Planning Task Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The LNP does not have the capacity to respond to planning policy consultations but recognises it has an important role to play in informing planning policy through providing advice and expertise on its vision for the natural environment of Hertfordshire. It is setting up a Planning Task Group to prepare draft position statements/advisory documents for circulation to Local Planning Authorities to ensure the LNP's vision and core objectives are embedded in core strategies.</li> </ul> <p>Lea Catchment NIA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The emerging partnership is continuing the development and delivery of the proposed business plan and is keen that the Hertfordshire LNP formally 'adopts' the NIA in support of this. A paper on the NIA was submitted to the Board and there was a lot of discussion and interest around this but they felt they needed more information before they could endorse the NIA. The LNP needs to be very clear about what a NIA is (and isn't) so we are looking to use the criteria drawn up by Defra to develop our own template so the LNP can assess any future NIAs.</li> </ul> <p><b>Essex</b> – Mark Iley informed the group that Defra approached Essex to become an LNP without funding, Essex have agreed to do so.</p> <p><b>Beds</b> – trying to elect a chair and have extended the deadline for nominations until 17 April. They will also be meeting to discuss the next steps.</p> <p><b>Greater Cambs</b> – a board meeting has taken place looking at capacity. Workshops are being set up to produce a work plan.</p> <p><b>Greater Lincs</b> – are working on a planning project with LEP.</p> <p><b>Northants</b> – are working with SEMLEP and are looking at organising a conference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All LNP's have teleconference calls to catch up and share best practice which they find useful.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Government response to the Independent panel on forestry</b></p> <p>Steve Scott told the group that the 3 main points from Government were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protect existing resource ie. plant/tree health.</li> <li>Improve what we already have.</li> <li>Create woodland.</li> </ul> <p>Useful links:</p> <p>Government response to the Independent Panel on Forestry  <a href="http://www.defra.gov.uk/publications/2013/01/31/pb13871-forestry-policy-statement/">http://www.defra.gov.uk/publications/2013/01/31/pb13871-forestry-policy-statement/</a>  Woodland Trust analysis <a href="http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/en/campaigning/our-campaigns/panel/Documents/wt_analysis%20of%20government%20response_ipfreport.pdf">http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/en/campaigning/our-campaigns/panel/Documents/wt_analysis%20of%20government%20response_ipfreport.pdf</a></p>	
<p><b>Chalara (Ash Die Back) – Steve Scott</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A management plan will be issued at the end of March.</li> <li>Do not plant young Ash trees.</li> <li>Do not move trees.</li> <li>If you coppice you will kill the tree.</li> <li>Mature trees can recover; Steve showed evidence of this to the group.</li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See the Forestry Commissions website for guidance.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>AOB</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mark Iley told the group of a Little Tern project being undertaken by Alex Cooper of RSPB. Little Terns are declining and RSPB have put in a Life Bid for a project focussing on Essex, Suffolk and Norfolk. High tides and storms are causing problems on low lying islands where Little Terns nest are being washed away. The Life Bid will provide resources; create new shingle areas, wardens, signage, leaflets and education.</li> <li>• Natural England's Tri-annual review announcement will be on the website at the end of April. It is already known that do nothing will not be the model adopted.</li> <li>• Anglia Water is engaging with customers to find out views on how customer's money is spent on the environment. Mike Drew encouraged Anglian Water customers in the group to fill out the questionnaire on the website.</li> <li>• Michelle Russell informed the group about a free workshop taking place in St Ives about Natural Characteristic Areas (NCAs) on 9 April. The group were sent details via separate email. England is divided into 159 distinct character areas, of which 16 are in the East of England. The profiles include a description of the key characteristic of the area, how the landscape has changed over time, the key ecosystem services provided in each character area and how these benefit people, wildlife and the economy as well as supporting key facts and data. They identify potential opportunities for positive environmental change and provide the best available information and evidence as a context for local decision making and action.</li> <li>• All 159 NCAs are due to be completed by April 2014 and will appear on the Natural England website. NCAs published to date. <a href="http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4282581?category=587130">http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4282581?category=587130</a></li> <li>• Michelle Russell informed the group that a link to Beds Life should be removed from websites as it now directs you to an inappropriate website. Links can now be found on the LRC website. EEBF have removed the link from their website.</li> <li>• Richard Barnes informed the group of the recent Woodland Trust launch of 2 publications, <i>Trees in our towns</i> <a href="http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/en/planting-woodland/Documents/WT-evidence-report-benefits-of-trees-in-urban-water-management.pdf">http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/en/planting-woodland/Documents/WT-evidence-report-benefits-of-trees-in-urban-water-management.pdf</a> <i>Trees on Farms</i> <a href="http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/en/planting-woodland/making-the-most-of-land/productive-farming/Pages/default.aspx">http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/en/planting-woodland/making-the-most-of-land/productive-farming/Pages/default.aspx</a></li> <li>• Mike Drew told the group of a book published jointly by Anglian Water and Rutland Wildlife Trust called <i>Rutland Water Osprey</i> and is available to purchase on Friday 22 March 2013 £25 on the Osprey website.</li> <li>• Paul Wilkinson has informed the forum that SITA will be continuing with the scheme in another form. Money will still be available for potential projects. Catherine Weightman informed the group that EEBF still provides a panel to assess the Sita and WREN applications in East of England. Next WREN panel next week and Sita 8<sup>th</sup> May and if any EEBF members would like to sit on the panel, please let Catherine know.</li> <li>• The EA is proposing to deliver 10,000 hectares of the 200,000 hectare target (Outcome 1B of Biodiversity 2020). This will not be signed off officially until after the triennial review but has in principle buy-in from the Board. It will not be possible, affordable or desirable to deliver this as a separate work-strand so we are looking at how we can deliver this through projects that deliver</li> </ul>	<p><b>CW</b></p> <p><b>MD</b></p>

<p>multiple objectives e.g. biodiversity, WFD and flood risk management. Defra are in the process of reporting on how this can be done through their 'Synergies' project. This will report back at the end of June.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fens for the future partnership has a new person in post. The Strategy is to be set by Natural England and the Environment Agency. Looking at Eco system services in the Fens</li> </ul>	<p><b>DC</b></p>
<p><b>Date of next meeting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wednesday 3 July 2013 –RSPB Wallesea Island Burnham on Crouch</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The meeting closed at 13.00 p.m. followed by lunch and a guided walk around RSPB Lakenheath Fen, led by David Rogers</li> </ul>	