



## Local Nature Recovery Strategy Steering Group

### Minutes of Steering Group Meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2025

#### Present:

|                   |    |                                |
|-------------------|----|--------------------------------|
| Charlie Alfandary | CA | LNRS Officer HC                |
| Emma Gardner      | EG | Ecologist HBRC                 |
| Liz Duberley      | LD | Nutrient Mitigation Lead HC    |
| Nickie Frost      | NF | Senior Ecologist HC            |
| Jamie Audsley     | JA | Herefordshire Wildlife Trust   |
| Alan Reid         | AR | Forestry Commission            |
| Rhiannon Pierce   | RP | Senior Advisor Natural England |
| Tim Pickering     | TP | Environment Agency             |

#### 1. Welcome

##### Apologies:

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| Helen Dale    | Regional Advisor Countryside Management (CLA) |
| Andrew Blake  | Wye Valley National Landscape                 |
| Claire Spicer | Herefordshire Wildlife Trust                  |

#### 2. Update on written strategy- Charlie Alfandary

CA provided an update on the LNRS written strategy. There has been an amendment to the contract with SLR who are now doing the written description and P&Ms.

Priorities and measures ("P&M's") initial shortlisting has been processed and have sent to SLR, along with description of priority area, to be written up. No date yet as to when first draft will be returned.

#### 3. Update on species- Emma Gardener

EG provided an update on the species shortlisting. Still awaiting for feedback on birds. List of plants has now been reduced from 1055 to 63 (to be converted into 3 assemblages). There have been discussions about whether species should be discounted where there are no records from the last 30 years. There may need more details on measures from species experts once there is a finalised list of shortlisted species.

#### 4. Update regarding engagement and planned next steps- Charlie Alfandary

A webinar was run with business' in Herefordshire with Green Footprints along with two workshops with the farming and agricultural sector which provided feedback. Farmers are keen to have field boundaries on mapping.

Further workshops have been planned throughout May. Smaller workshops with a 2-way discussion have been much more beneficial to engage with farmers this way rather than through presentations. There are plans for wider engagement with parish councils.

RP raised the questions if workshops are going to be with a smaller amount of people can we provide another way we can engage or raise awareness with social media as we wouldn't be reaching as many people as we would be with big workshops

**ACTION:**

CA: To look into other forms of engagement to capture a wider audience.

## **5. Discussion and plans for design of final piece, explore existing designs and what works best- Charlie Alfandary**

CD opened the discussion by informing the group that they are looking to put the final LNRS on a platform that is easily accessible for a wide range of audiences so the strategy is not just a large PDF. Previously technical and simple document was suggested however he will be looking at other local authorities about how they have produced their LNRS and get feedback.

The steering group looked at some examples of LNRS strategies. The steering group preferred simpler more colourful pdfs. How-to-guides are helpful for those using the guidance. It was suggested that the HC LNRS could be created on a digital platform primarily with the pdf to support but there were questions as to where it would be hosted as HBRC may be better than via HC website.

JA suggested having a visual fly through to make it more interactive, or have farmers talk about their landscape to show the habitats within the county to give people a vision of what we are looking to achieve. It was suggested that TWIGS or Shooting Reels would be able to do this.

It was decided that the strategy would be created as an engaging and publicly accessible summary document, a technical pdf document, and an emotionally engaging story concept video.

RP suggested the StoryMaps platform for an interactive summary document.

**ACTIONS**

RP: To collate videos that other local authorities have made. Could be hosted on NE website but needs to check.

TEAM: Start to shape and write a specification for the video and the executive summary document to go out to procurement. Sharepoint to be used to collate ideas.

## **6. Feedback relating to other RA's in NE initial consultation- Rhiannon Pierce**

RP informed the steering group that a document that NE central team have prepared to support local authorities with improvements which can be suggested prior to going out to consultation which provides examples of re-occurring issues. The documents contains information on common issues or improvements for:

- Mapping
- Measures
- Species
- Wider Environmental Benefits (WEBs)
- Miscellaneous / narrative
- Consultation period

LD suggested next actions are to identify what we see as WEBs and decide how much they will contribute to the strategy by looking at what national data we use and local information that the council holds. Currently there might not be all the evidence to provide all of this (such as nutrient mapping which is currently a work in progress). LD raised concerns about the limited number of resources in HCs wider resources in providing this information.

**ACTIONS**

RP: To provide examples of how other areas included WEBs in their LNRS and provide link to data sets which are available for different WEBs i.e flooding /air quality / carbon.

Emma: To ask GIS team what data sets are available and if we can share them.

Liz: To talk to different teams i.e. open space, flood management to see what data they have.

## **7. Update of Mapping and GWT- Charlie Alfandary**

LD suggested that our timelines need to be amended due to GWT having to amend their mapping and so will have to amend ours too with similar changes. Feedback from workshops and surveys identified issues with the integrity of the ground truthing such as areas of fen which haven't been included and some farmers do not want their land in the mapping - this will affect how long this the map amendments take.

Current time of August for taking the LNRS to consultation doesn't seem feasible.

### **ACTIONS:**

LD: Discuss with GWT what they need to do and identify our outstanding actions and then we can come with an amended GANT chart.

## **8. AOB**

HD has raised concerns about engagement with farmers and landowners so she has stepped back from steering group. HD was seen as most appropriate group for a broad spectrum of farmers. We need to think how we get the landowner / farmer representation going forward i.e. Herefordshire rural hub, NFU, Farm Hereford, maybe engage more to other farmers. Get draft copy out. Young farmers. The Dutchie.

LD is leaving the council end of June for a new position at Wessex Water. HC are recruiting internally for a principal natural environment officer and hopefully will be taking a more leading role in the LNRS. Will be drawing in Ben Boswell until they identify how they're going to progress with the service lead role.