



Local Nature Recovery Strategy

MINUTES

Steering Group- Online – Microsoft Teams 2nd July 2025 14-16:00

Present

Charlie Alfandary	CA	LNRS Officer HC
Emma Gardener	EG	Ecologist HBRC
Mandy Neill	MN	Principal Natural Environment Officer HC
Rhiannon Pierce	RP	Senior Advisor Natural England
Toby Fountain	TF	Herefordshire Wildlife Trust
Alan Reid	AR	Forestry Commission
Tim Pickering	TP	Environment Agency

1. Welcome

MN noted that Georgie Hyde at NFU has been invited to join the steering group (invite sent 30th June), but has had no response yet.

2. Update to the timeframe until publication

MN presented a word document setting out the time line for 'work in progress' and the 'publication process'. This is a summary of the more detailed GANT chart and will be used as a basis for the DEFRA meeting which is scheduled for next week. It demonstrates that Herefordshire LNRS will not meet the deadline of being published by the end of 2025. It does, however, set out a workable timeline through to approx. May 2026. This is based on making a lot of progress on the mapping and text documents over the summer, with a review over September. This is then followed by the start of the publication process in October, as it works through the NE panel, public consultation, NE second review and corporate adoption, allowing for updates between each phase. RP noted that getting to public consultation phase in December is a good milestone of having a workable LNRS.

3. Update on Written Strategy & SLR

CA advised that we have given a lot of feedback and data to SLR on both the baseline area description and the priorities and measures. They have advised that they can issue a second full draft by mid August. RP noted that this is a long time away and suggested asking for an earlier date or at least an interim submission for review and to demonstrate progress. CA advised that he has got a couple of points to go back to them with on the detail of the measures and will also request an update on the timeframe.

4. Wider Environmental Benefits

CA shared HC final list of 11 WEB. RP advised that need to have consistency in the wording. TF suggested adding habitat connectivity, but discussion that this is the main aim of the LNRS anyway, rather than an additional benefit. Discussion around design of symbols to represent each one, based on simplicity and accessibility.

5. Engagement Update

MN advised that the engagement phase has now ended. CA summarised the events and responses, which will add up to approx. 200 altogether. On initial view it looks like there are some constructive comments that are specific to the opportunities mapping and will be incorporated into the update work over the summer. Only 2 or 3 have sent the full details required to remove their land from the mapping, which HBRC will update on the base layer. Discussion around whether the species list may need to be updated if it comes up a lot in the responses, but highly likely that we will have it covered at some point in the work done to date. Discussion around how to present the engagement results, based on now published examples.

6. Update on Mapping and Planned Work

CA advised on the work that we will be asking Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust to update, as well as the engagement responses above, this will also cover creating corridors through addition of medium priority areas and also how to address 'spotty' coverage.

CA talked through the 'customer experience', which forms part of the specification for in-house HC GIS team to carry out the measures mapping and pop up boxes. RP suggested also looking at the recently fully published Isle of White LNRS for ideas.

7. Species update

EG advised on the progress to get the long list of 182 species down to about 55 and then into approx. 6 assemblages and 22 separate species. This includes feed back on biophytes and aquatic species. Final work to be done on birds and a review of data by NE on final species that do not have enough data from other sources. The species review has been based on identifying those that need a bespoke habitat action, checking whether that is already fully or partially covered by the habitats measures, and where not fully covered then identifying what that species specifically needs.

8. ANOB

None.