



## Management Working Group (MWG) meeting

**31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 - 14.00 – 16.30 Microsoft Teams**

**Chair:** - Elizabeth Milne

**Attendees:**

Kathi Bauer – SERT  
Alan Johnson – RSPB (from 3pm)  
Peter Garrett - Medway Council (from 3pm)  
Hazel Sargent - Folkestone & Hythe Borough Council  
Hannah Simmons - KCC (minutes)  
Chris Drake - KNP Coordinator  
Lawrence Ball - KWT  
Sophie Stiles, Ashford Borough Council  
Stefanie Bramley – Dover District Council  
Tony Witts – KMBRC  
Bethany Pepper – KCC  
Joe Kitanosono - EA  
Paul Hadaway - KWT

**Guest:**

Dr Paul Tinsley-Marshall - KWT

**Apologies:**

Kate Rice- Southern Water  
Sue Beale - Natural England  
Alice Pinfold - Environment Agency  
David Scully - Tunbridge Wells Borough Council  
Claire Tester - High Weald AONB  
Rufus Howard - University of Kent/ Greenfriars, Sustainability Consultants

### Actions

Item	Action	Who	Deadline
4	SQW report on BNG to go on KNP site when available and be circulated	Chris	End April
5	View needed on the value of online letter responses to consultations.		End April
7	Metrics & monitoring for KNP objectives – following initial version of LNRS	All	TBC
7	KNP subgroup on Landscape Tool set up following secondary legislation around the on LNRS and detail on the enhanced biodiversity duty.	KWT	TBC but late 2022
7	SoNiK briefing document for MWG & Board to be drawn up.	Chris	End April

## Minutes

### 1) Introductions, apologies and welcome to new members

2) Minutes of last meeting – November– Paper 1 – agreed as an accurate record. Actions complete.

### 3) Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) (Paper 3)

Dr Lawrence Ball, Conservation GIS, and Data Officer at KWT provided an overview of the one proposed site change KWT had for MWG, relating to a site west of Canterbury. KWT were not sure why a small parcel of land, in someone's garden was included in the LWS originally. This seemed to be more of a GIS glitch than anything relating to habitat that should have been included.

The MWG were happy to recommend this site change, (removing this part of the LWS) to the LPAs on behalf of KNP.

A draft of the Kent LWS "Criteria for Selection and Delineation" (Version 1.6) was also circulated ahead of the meeting, along with some changes Krag have come forward with. In this they have separated out amphibians and reptiles and suggested that 4, not 3 species are needed to qualify for LWS designation.

Stefanie asked how KWT were prioritising LWS site surveys. Lawrence said that it was a case of "easy wins" at present, with the larger sites with lots of landowner detail being prioritised.

Liz asked whether a review of LWS programme still planned. Lawrence said that while he is involved in the data management and operations side, the strategic approach does still need discussion.

Lawrence said that KWT are investing in new resources and staff for LWS, and Jack Stubbins had recently joined them.

Tony asked if entomological data will be included? Lawrence said that KWT will consider including other data. Tony said that KMBRC now had entomological data for North Kent Marshes and the Weald and can provide Lawrence with further information.

### 4) Biodiversity Net Gain Viability assessment for 20%

Liz said that in late 2023, mandatory 10% net gain will apply, but KNP are awaiting guidance.

There is a great ecological argument for 20% net gain and Defra/EA have said that up to 20% would not affect the viability of development, but what about Kent with its more intense development pressures?

With this in mind, KCC and Natural England funded SQW to conduct a viability assessment, the full results of which will be known next week. The differences between onsite BNG and off site (strategic) are key. While onsite will bring great benefits to the immediate people and wildlife, off site is more likely to tackle nature recovery at the landscape scale.

Once the results are known, individual LPA's may need to do their own viability assessment. The question being will all go for 20%? Swale Borough Council have already gone for 20% in their local plan review, Maidstone Borough Council are also considering 20%.

**ACTION:** when the SQW is available it will be posted on the new KNP website and circulated.

### 5. Live consultation update

a) KNP (and SENP) response to Biodiversity Net Gain consultation: Consultation ends 5 April

Liz said that she had completed a KCC response which will also be the KNP response as these will align and she doesn't have the capacity to enter two questionnaire responses.

Sophie asked whether there is a benefit in individual LPA's writing letters endorsing a more detailed response (via the online questionnaire). Liz said that while KNP/SENP had taken that approach in the past, it would be worth getting a view from Defra as to how these letters are dealt with as opposed to the more detailed online responses.

**ACTION:** Chris to get a view from Adam Stewart at Defra, on letter responses to consultations.

**b) KNP response to the government on the Landscape review: Consultation ends 9 April**

Chris said that KNP will write a letter endorsing the Kent Downs AONB response to this consultation. The AONB are concerned at how under resourced they are compared to the national parks but see themselves as having an important role in Local Nature Recovery Strategy and ELM. Both KNP and AONB are calling for more clarity on the role of protected landscapes in this respect.

**c) KNP response to the Nature Recovery Green Paper Consultation ends 11 May**

Chris said that the main consultation focuses on Defra's initial policy proposals regarding protected sites and species, then there is a broader environmental targets consultation with the same deadline. The main consultation proposes simplifying designation categories, including a new designation type "Nature Recovery Sites".

The consultation also explores the Defra group's dispersed environmental regulatory functions, site management and protection, cost Recovery for public bodies and the financing of nature recovery.

Liz will be looking at the consultation for KCC, but KNP is likely to go in with a wider SENP response and the group is holding a session on 27 April to agree this response.

**6. Joint Board/MWG meeting on 20 May**

Chris outlined the proposal for this marine and freshwater KNP meeting which he has been working on with the KNP Chair. These areas have not been a primary focus for KNP, but they have objectives in the Biodiversity Strategy which have been peer reviewed and consulted on. These may be migrated into LNRS, but there is a question mark over marine as this is not a statutory part of LNRS.

Chris Gardner, Catchment Manager, South East Rivers Trust (SERT) is lined up to talk about chalk streams and catchment work, along with EA, but we also have a Natural England representative lined up to cover marine along with possibly Kent & Essex IFCA.

NE will talk about their Marine Protected Area work and will come with updates on how marine might fit with LNRS and nature recovery work.

For marine and freshwater, the idea is to revisit our KBS objectives, consider State of Nature Headlines on these areas and to get a better idea of how Defra see the Environment Act working in these areas. This is to start a conversation on these areas and insure KNP are involving the right people from the outset.

The MWG were happy with the above approach and for Chris to bring this meeting together. It will be face to face, venue TBC.

## 7) Taking forward the KNP State of Nature in Kent report

Paul Tinsley-Marshall is the project manager for the report, the content for which is now complete. Paul's presentation is available with these minutes, but here are some key points: -

The report breaks new ground in the measurement of positive management and in the red list data set for Kent. It is wide ranging and looks back over the last 10 years.

Kent's Conservation Landscape Tool has provided information on positive management and was improved thanks to the Nature's Sure Connected project. We can now measure land in management parcel by parcel rather than the previous scenario with overlapping areas risking double counting. The land is tiered as 1 Beneficial 2 Useful and 3 Uncertain depending on criteria ranging from whether practical management is taking place though to telephone advice given. Unfortunately, only 38 out of 70 organisations approached provided data (however a small number were irrelevant – didn't manage land).

Paul covered the issue of data. The Kent Habitat Survey 2012 was relied on but is now 10 years old. He also went through data gaps in the report in terms of reporting on Kent Biodiversity Strategy (KBS) objectives.

Following this presentation, an exercise was provided to consider next steps.

Paul Hadaway initiated this session by asking if the MWG agreed that this report should be the county benchmark for landscape scale work. The group agreed and recognised its importance in terms of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

Liz said that in this respect public authorities will have to report on their activities every 5 years, so State of Nature reporting will be essential, and it will be a useful tool for BNG too. She also said the updates and monitoring will need to be made easier.

Alan said that we need to test out the report, in terms of what it is reporting on. Paul TM said that in terms of KBS/LNRS objectives, we will need a clear metric for each one to determine what data is needed for each one. Paul H suggested we need to measure both climate and biodiversity aspects.

**ACTION:** metrics and monitoring for KNP objectives

In relation to LNRS, Alan said that Kent and Essex integration along the Thames estuary was essential. Bodies such as Greater London Authority and Thames Estuary Partnership will play a role but joining up with Essex Nature Partnership too.

Kent's Conservation Landscape Information Tool was discussed. Liz asked if anyone present had used it and how easy it had been to use. Kathi said that SERT are not specifically involved in ecological monitoring but hold a lot of relevant information about catchments. It was easy to use the tool but SERT didn't hold all of the information required.

Paul TM suggested that in terms of getting more buy in, a request at senior organisational level was needed, then the work itself would filter down to operational level.

However, in the first instance the group agreed we need to be clearer about the exact information we require, and Liz said that both LNRS and the forthcoming enhanced biodiversity duty would inform this. Other aspects of the tool could be improved in its next iteration to, as at present it is reliant on ARC GIS and technology has moved on.

Paul H suggested the KNP needs a session on the tool to determine these areas, Liz agreed and said that this would most usefully be carried out when secondary legislation around the Environment Act/LNRS was published along with further detail on the enhanced biodiversity duty. Paul TM suggested that when these areas are determined, champions should be appointed for different aspects, as have been for the KBS.

**ACTION:** KNP subgroup on the Landscape Tool to be set up following secondary legislation around the on LNRS and detail on the enhanced biodiversity duty.

In conclusion it was recognised that we have a strong and wide-ranging report, but that it needs presenting and promoting well. Chris said that the report will be uploaded on the new KNP site in June and associated pages will be drawn up here too in terms of next steps. KNP would also undertake publicity, supported by KWT. Liz suggested that in terms of next steps for KNP, a briefing document would be helpful.

**ACTION:** SoNiK briefing document for MWG & Board to be drawn up.

**Meeting close**