



**West of England Nature Partnership**  
Joining up the dots for nature

## WENP Board Meeting

Ashton Court, Bristol // 11 September 2018 // 10:00-12:30

### ATTENDEES

Prof Selena Gray (Chair) - SG	West of England Nature Partnership
Richard Kent - RK	North Somerset Council
Catherine Brabner-Evans - CB	Woodland Trust (standing for Ross Kennerley)
Simon Stonehouse - SS	Natural England (standing for Rachel Williams)
Dave Villis - DV	South Gloucestershire Council
Richard Ennion - RE	Bristol City Council
Tom Boden - TB	National Trust
Mark Minkley - MM	Bath & North East Somerset
Richard Cresswell - RC	Bristol Avon Catchment Partnership
Ian Barrett - IB	Avon Wildlife Trust
Claire Lowman - CL	Bristol City Council
John Flannigan - JF	North Somerset Council
Laura Ambler - LA	West of England Combined Authority and LEP
Heather Elgar - HE	West of England Nature Partnership
Anya Tober - AT	West of England Nature Partnership
Sarah Jackson - SJ	Bath & North East Somerset Council

### APOLOGIES

Ruth Barden	Wessex Water
Marion Steiner	Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire CCG
Rachel Williams	Natural England
Ross Kennerley	Woodland Trust

### MINUTES

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**Local Wildlife Sites:** Proposed review of the strategy and processes around assigning and managing Local Wildlife Sites (LWS), and the role of the Local Sites Partnership. Timely as Local Wildlife Sites are successfully retained in the revised NPPF and they play an important role in a West of England Nature Recovery Network. DV noted an offer of potential collaboration with University of Bristol (UoB) on student research to support in the review of ecological status of sites.

**Actions:** HE to convene WENP hosted meeting with the Local Sites Partnership to discuss the above  
HE & DV to explore UoB potential student project

**West of England Green Infrastructure (WoE GI) Plan:** SJ provided update on the development of the WoE GI Plan, including clarity on WENP's role in governance structure and processes to engage and integrate with



other local & regional plans. LA noted that the Infrastructure Advisory Board and JSP Scrutiny Panel are both engaged in this work and requesting updates. WENP welcomes intern Anya Tober who will be supporting the collation of green infrastructure case studies to support the WoE GI Plan.

**Actions:** LA to coordinate & share timeline indicating progress of GI Plan alongside JSP and JLTP  
HE to collaborate with SJ to connect LWS meeting & potential review with WoE GI Plan

**Ecological Networks:** HE provided update on WENP Ecological Network mapping that is informing evidence base for WoE GI Plan. Through Landscape & Networks working group, this work is identifying key functional ecological networks and strategic opportunities to enhance them (habitat creation and restoration). Next workshop planned for October/November to review opportunities and identify Partnership priorities. Intent to build on this work with wider stakeholders to develop a 'Nature Recovery Network' implementation plan for WoE, which could be theme for next WENP Conference.

**Funding Mechanisms:** HE shared initial audit of how developer contributions are used in WoE for the environment and examples across the UK where developer contributions are pooled across authorities or otherwise mutually committed to agreed environmental priorities. Agreed we need staged approach where we first identify, cost and cost/benefit environmental priorities, and then seek funding potentially across portfolio of streams (beyond developer contributions).

**Actions:** LA to coordinate deeper audit looking at funding options across district landscape and where there are gaps

**2019 Year of Green Action:** IB updated on initial discussions with Natural History Consortium. No known funding from Defra and themes have not yet been announced. Regionally we have a strong calendar of events for public engagement around nature. Agreed helpful to align some events to Year of Green Action but not necessarily all.

**WENP Governance Refresh:** Reflected on governance changes. Agreed more streamlined having one Board. Agreed to invite Natural History Consortium to the Board.

**WENP Funding:** Proposed further meeting to discuss current and future funding for WENP.

**Actions:** HE to arrange funders' meeting

## UPDATES

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**Environmental Data Review:** MM provided update from BRERC Board which is keen to move forward with interim Business Development Manager for two years.



**Nature, Health and Wellbeing:** HE provided update on the new WENP Green Care Strategy working group that emerged from the Nature, Health and Wellbeing conference. Wellaware now has Nature, Health and Wellbeing section on its website signposting to green care providers in the region. WENP & Natural History Consortium have bid for Wellcome Trust funding to support some actions identified through the strategy group.

**Spatial Planning:** LA provided update on the timelines for the Joint Spatial Plan and Joint Local Transport Plan. Also updated on the emerging West of England Industrial Strategy.

**Clean Air Plan:** CL provided update on Bristol's Clean Air Plan. Expected that green infrastructure is understood as supporting cleaner air.

**Bristol Tree Strategy:** RE provided update on emerging Tree Strategy towards target to double Bristol's tree canopy cover. Successful Talking Trees campaign to raise awareness over the Summer. Action plan being led by Forest of Avon Trust and Bristol Tree Forum.

**Parks Foundation:** RE updated that the Foundation Coordinator is now in post. NHC is supporting on communications strategy.

**River Frome Reconnected:** RC updated that the Bristol Frome project is now up and running and coordinator is in place.

**State of Nature reporting:** IB mentioned that AWT are in discussion with Bristol Naturalists Society and BRERC on how to measure and report towards One City Plan target of doubling abundance of wildlife by 2050.