



Friday 25th September 2015, 10.30-12.30, Humberhead Peatlands, Natural England,
Unit 1a, Green Tree Warehousing, Tudworth Road, Hatfield, DN7 6HD

Attendees: Paul Duncan (PD), Helen Kirk (HK), Julian Small (JS), Matt Blissett (MB),
Melissa Massarella (MM), Roger Mitchell (RM), Tim Allen (TA)

Apologies: Caroline Steel (CS), James Freeborough (JF), David Hinchliffe (DNH),
John Dunbavin

Support staff: David Hargreaves (DPH), Amanda Lane (AJL)

Discussions/Key Points	For Action By
<p>1. Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising – PD</p> <p>PD welcomed members to the meeting. Apologies were noted.</p> <p>PD invited members to read through the minutes from the previous meeting and the actions were discussed, as noted below.</p> <p><u>Action 1 - Estate Workers working patterns and efficiencies</u> – JS explained that he has looked at the Estate Worker’s Terms and Conditions of Employment. Their base is the HHP Office, for welfare reasons, which means that their working day starts and ends at this base. If the Estate Workers were to have their home as their base it would mean that their travel time to and from the Moors would be classed as part of their working day, further reducing the number of working hours the Estate Workers have on the Moors. JS went onto state that the Estate Workers hours are 09:00-17:00 but were now starting 08:30-16:30. He explained that the Estate Workers (EW) were not a ‘like for like’ replacement for contractors and that they offered added value, particularly as they were being employed to tackle the ‘difficult’ areas which contractors may not wish to take on. JS explained that the ‘added value’ that the EW offered is illustrated in the work carried out on Elmhurst. Although a small area of scrub the EWs had been able to experiment using the soft track with front mounted flail and tractors. HK asked what impact this work has had on the land. JS reported that anecdotal information was that it had not had any detrimental impact.</p> <p>HK asked if lessons could be learned for future funding bids, in respect that an 8 hour working day does not necessarily equate to 8 hours on site. MB went onto say that it could equate to 3 hours spent on works when taking into account time spent on maintaining machinery, getting to the difficult to access areas of the site and tackling hard to handle</p>	<p>Completed</p>



areas of scrub. HK and MB asked if information is being gathered on the average hours it takes to clear areas of scrub, from easy - hard to tackle areas. DPH explained that the Assistant Project Managers (APMs) are capturing this information, with the EWs work day starting from their base at Tudworth Road. In addition, the national team are also capturing and collecting this data for future projects.

Action 2 – JBA pumping station designs – PD explained that he and DPH had attended the last IDB meeting and that the designs had been discussed with Chris Wright (CW). DPH understood that the work was going out to tender either last week or this week. The designs, as discussed, still included the Archimedes screw, powered by solar and wind power supplemented by a generator. He understood that the tenders would be going to the IDB Board for authorisation. RM informed the group that the Board meeting is on Friday 13th October. HK commented that the Finance meeting would take place ahead of the Board meeting. She asked if there was any information on the tender details, including the timeframe. TA also sought clarification on the estimated value of the pumping station and implications on EU procurement thresholds. DPH explained that the tender information should be on the tender website and as the pumping station is capital spend, at an estimated cost of €923,000 it will not have to go out to EU wide procurement as the threshold was £4m (approx. €5m). DPH also stated that the IDB are working to a schedule to complete the Pumping Station within this financial year. JS explained that the plastic piling required for the Pumping Station works would be delivered to the Moors in ‘cut lengths’ and re-constructed to the correct length on the Moors, as the required lengths were too long to transport on public roads. TA asked what planning consents were in place for the Pumping Station. DPH explained that the station was being constructed under the IDB’s permitted development. PD confirmed that he would contact Tim Kohler to see where we are with the Habitat Regulations Assessment for the Water Level Management Plan, in relation to the Pumping Station and its possible impact on the nightjar population on Thorne Moors.

HK sought clarification on where the Pumping Station would be sited. JS explained that it would be located to the north side of the intersection of Blackwater Drain with Swinefleet Warming Drain approximate grid reference (SE751162) and that works had started on clearing the area of scrub.

Action 3 – Steering Group members to feedback on Communications Stakeholders Analysis Grid – AL explained that HK had suggested sending out a draft pre-populated grid to the Members. This had been sent out with the papers for this meeting. PD suggested that member’s feedback comments on any gaps in the grid to AL. AL said that she

Action 1: PD to contact TK reference the Habitat Regulations Assessment for the Water Level Management Plan

Action 2: AL to send out redrafted version of Stakeholder Analysis Grid to Steering Group



<p>would send out a further updated version to include the local High and Primary Schools.</p> <p><u>Action 4: Establish a Facebook Page for the Humberhead Peatlands National Nature Reserve and LIFE+ project</u> – covered under agenda item 2.</p> <p><u>Action 5: Establish a meeting date for the Science and Monitoring Sub Group</u> – PD reported that the meeting had been progressed on at least two occasions but a date had not been reached that suited all potential attendees. He confirmed that Matt Blissett, Bob Marsh, Richard Smith (RS) and Tim Kohler were interested in membership of the sub group. Matt Blissett agreed that he would take a role, once the meetings commence, to report back to future steering group meetings with a verbal summary on the outcome.</p> <p><u>Action 6 and 7: Mechanism for recording sightings of Red Deer</u> – JS reported that he had met with the APMs and a process was in place to record sightings of Red Deer. In addition, Bryan Wainwright, the newly appointed Reserve Manager was recording and collating sightings of Red Deer.</p> <p><u>Action 8: Casson’s Garden article for next edition of Moor Space</u> – DPH informed Members that he has been in contact with Martin Limbert (ML) reference providing an article on Casson’s Gardens for the next edition of Moor Space. ML has sent DPH four articles and suggested that DPH writes the feature as he is relaxed in terms of Natural England’s approach to Casson’s Gardens.</p> <p><u>Action 9: Apprentice Interviews</u> – covered under agenda item 2.</p> <p><u>Action 10 – Water Level Management Plan Information online</u> – PD said that he had been contacted by CW to ask if he could have permission for the WLMP information to appear on the website, which PD agreed. HK sought clarification on which website CW had requested it to appear on – JBA or the project website, as it had not yet appeared on either.</p> <p><u>Action 11 – DE IDB Budget Sheet</u> – PD still awaiting sight of this document.</p> <p><u>Action 12 – DE IDB Steering Group Representative</u> – PD has requested a representative but will go back to the DE IDB and suggest that Craig Benson sits on the Steering Group. Members felt that Craig’s presence on the Steering Group would be valuable as he has</p>	<p>Members</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Action 3: RS to organise a meeting date for the Science and Monitoring sub group. MB to provide a verbal summary of the outcome of the meeting(s) to the next Steering Group meeting.</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Action 4: DPH to write Casson’s Gardens article for next edition of Moor Space.</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Action 5: PD to double check with CW on which website the information has been placed on.</p> <p>Action 6: PD to chase DE IDB budget sheet.</p> <p>Action 7: PD to contact Chris McGuiness to ask if Craig Benson can attend</p>
---	--



<p>responsibility for sign off of spend and the oversight of project management plans. RM requested that PD keep him in the loop with regards to correspondence in securing Craig Benson’s attendance. PD confirmed that he would copy RM into his email request.</p> <p><u>Action 13 – NIA update and reports</u> – PD stated that he had requested an update on the Final Project report but had yet to receive one. MM advised the Group that the report has appeared in ‘Dropbox’. PD will look at the report and circulate to Steering Group members.</p> <p><u>Action 14 – Circulate Biomass Report</u> – update from UPM Tilhill on Biomass covered under agenda item 2.</p> <p><u>Action 15 – Update on Landscape Partnership progress</u> – TA provided members with an update. The LSP is progressing well with 2-3 drafts produced. The projects mid-term review has been carried out by the Heritage Lottery Fund and they are happy with progress to date, considering the projects late start. The Partnership has approval to submit their bid by the deadline date submission of the 31st December 2015. TA informed the Group that Tim Graham has produced a considerable amount of work for the bid and it will be ready for the December deadline.</p>	<p>Steering Group meetings as the second DE IDB representative.</p> <p>Action 8: PD to circulate NIA report to Steering Group members.</p> <p>Completed</p>
<p>2. Key Milestones/Operational Activities – DPH</p> <p>Project Performance Report</p> <p>DPH took members through the LIFE+ Project Performance Report for 1st March to 15th September 2015, focusing on the project actions displaying a ‘red’ or ‘amber’ rating.</p> <p><u>Action A2</u> – Review of Thorne and Hatfield Moors Site Management Plan. This is currently at ‘amber’ and JS informed members that the originally milestone for this action was 30th September 2015. However, this had been pushed back to the end of November, stating that external consultation would take place in October, inviting steering group members to contribute to the process. HK sought details on the process and dates, including the ‘sign off’ process and where it would be published as she had not seen sight of earlier Management Plans for the Moors. JS apologised for this and said that NE had not been satisfied with the earlier Management Plan and that it would be superseded by this new plan. PD explained the process - a draft of the Management Plan will go to a NE internal meeting on 12th October, as part of a workshop the Plan will be discussed. Any amendments emerging from the workshop will be updated by JS. The Plan will then be sent out to external partners for consultation. Following external</p>	



consultation further amendments will be made. The Management Plan will then be submitted to Robert Burnett, NE Manager for further scrutiny and 'sign off'. It will then be fed into the Countryside Management Online system. JS went onto explain that the Management Plan is split into three parts – Part 1 – description, Part 2 - the important part in terms of what is going to take place on the Moors and how it relates to other areas, Part 3 – Projects and attached budgets to deliver the Management Plan. JS stressed that there is an aspiration to work closely with partners bordering both Hatfield and Thorne Moors and this will feature in the Plan.

Action A3 - Consents and Licences in place. DPH explained that despite a great deal of work and effort by the LIFE+ Project team and the Area Leadership team this still remains on 'amber'. DPH explained that three meetings have been held with the Forestry Commission (FC) and four site visits have taken place, followed by a number of map submissions each with a 28 day waiting period between each submission when NE do not hear anything from the Forestry Commission. Robert Burnett, Manager for the NE Area team has been brought in to subsequent meetings with his equivalent from the FC but progress still remains painfully slow. The recent requirements from the FC are for NE to carry out public consultation and posters are now displayed on the Moors. They would also like endorsement from the Steering Group members in the form of a letter. DPH confirmed that the felling licence has now been submitted by NE to the FC, backed up by a Chartered Forestry report from Natural England's Mark Bentley. DPH reported that from further investigations there are only 70 hectares that require a licence. The FC have assured NE that the licence can be turned round in days. HK expressed concern that a Government Body had not got the paperwork in place and felt that this was not satisfactory. DPH stated that a large part of the scrub clearance work did not require a felling licence. On advice from FC those areas that do require a felling licence would be classified as "thinning" as trees would be left for nightjar etc. MB gave members of an overview of his own recent experience with FC, stating that he too had received conflicting information and it had taken 18 months to secure a felling licence. TA went onto explain their experiences in terms of felling licences and that even though the information may point to a requirement not to have one it was advisable to obtain one. RM asked if there were set timescales in which the FC had to adhere. DPH said that FC appear to re-set the clock every time they ask NE for further information.

Actions C1 and C2 – scrub clearance. This remains on 'amber' but the plan is to complete the outstanding scrub clearance target by the end of March 2016. The EWs have now returned for the new season and



have been on Thorne Moors for three weeks. They are currently clearing pathways so that contractors can get on site to start their work in the coming months. The soft track machine has been upgraded with a new cooling unit on the roof to stop it overheating and deployed it, alongside the tractors on Elmhirst(South).. Anecdotal evidence is that they have not caused any damage to the site.

Action C3 – Control of Rhododendron regrowth. This is on ‘green’ and has been reasonably successful. The second season will help to eliminate any regrowth from year 1.

Action C5 – Construction of pumping station on Thorne Moors. This is currently on ‘amber’ and was discussed earlier in the meeting. JBA have had changes to the project team, with Chris Wright now the engineer, who the LIFE+ project team have met,

Action D1 – Radio tracking nightjars. This is on ‘green’ and progress is positive. A total of 24 birds were caught and 7 tagged, as they had to be breeding birds. Four tagged birds have been recaptured and data secured, revealing the birds travel patterns on and off Hatfield Moors. The average recapture rate for tagged birds is 50% so this is a positive outcome. A report on the work is currently being written and will be circulated to Members once completed.

Action D2 – Baseline survey of Invertebrate assemblages. This is on ‘green’. The first session on collecting invertebrates started over the summer and RS is currently in the middle of carrying out a second session. HK asked what support RS has on analysing the ‘pots’, in terms of the people in place to do this, based on her own experience at Inkle Moors she is conscious of the resource implications. JS reported that the people are not in place yet, and the process they are following is to identify ‘key groups’, with the residual being dealt with at a later date. HK reiterated that lessons learned from Inkle Moor were that a clear methodology, work programme and chart needed to be in place and that what she had seen to date was a ‘little weak’. DPH to obtain details of the methodology. PD also suggested that this is looked at in more detail by the Science and Monitoring sub group and brought back by MB, in verbal summary to the Steering Group meeting. HK sought clarification on how long the invertebrate monitoring would last and DPH confirmed for the duration of the LIFE+ project.

Action D3 – Supply and installation of data loggers. This action is on ‘amber’ due to technical issues associated with obtaining the software to download the data. This is currently being dealt with by NE IT partners, IBM. In addition, RS is in discussions with JBA on where to install further data loggers. To date 50% of the data loggers have been installed, this was carried out prior to the project starting. RS is

Action 9: DPH to obtain details on the methodology being used and to provide Steering Group members with the information.



currently working on the plans for the purchase of the remaining data loggers. HK asked what the date was for installation and DPH confirmed that this was the 31st October 2015.

Action D4 – Socio-economic impact and ecosystem report. This action is on ‘amber’ and progress has been made with York University on the PhD student who will carry out the majority of the research. In addition, the NE socio-economic advisor is on board with the project’s requirements and has met with the LIFE+ team and York University to progress the methodology in line with NE and LIFE+ project requirements.

Action E1 – Engagement with the local community. This action will be completed by the 30th September, with events held at Thorne, Hatfield and Dunsville to promote the LIFE+ project, as part of the NNRs community event schedule. An Open Day is taking place on Hatfield Moors on Sunday 27th September, 11am – 3pm when the APMs will be on hand to talk to members of the public about the LIFE+ project. DPH informed members that he would hold a wash-up review on the community events and to schedule the 2016 events so that they can feature in the next edition of Moor Space. HK and MM asked for clarification on what was meant by a ‘Planning for Real’ event. If this was a community event with a table featuring information on the LIFE+ project then just say that. MM commented that as the project is now in to its second year and a Planning for Real event, as she understands the term may not be relevant, as these are centred round community consultation and the project is past this stage. PD said that clarity was required on what the project wants, needs and can deliver. DPH to contact the EU Monitor about the ‘Planning for Real’ events and establish the requirements.

Action E2 – Networking with other projects. This action is currently on ‘amber’ but it is anticipated that a total of 5 scientific and Peatlands projects will be visited by the 30th June 2016. To date the LIFE+ project team has visited the NE LIFE+ sister project in Cumbria and the NE Fens and Bog conference held in Cumbria. This was attended by three members of the LIFE+ project team and focused on:

- Day 1 - Hydrological introduction,
- Day 2 - Fens and bogs across England
- Day 3 - Site visit.

MM asked who the conference was open to and could it be replicated on the Humberhead Peatlands. JS said it had been open to partners in the Cumbria area, including Cumbria Wildlife Trust. JS suggested that there was the potential to run something similar on the HHP and that

Action 10: DPH to contact the EU Monitor about the Planning for Real events and establish the requirements.



there was probably more that could be demonstrated on site.

Action E4 - Project website and publications. This is on 'red' as the project is behind schedule on the site notice boards and the number of newsletters distributed. DPH explained that the onsite notice boards had been discussed with the EU Monitor who was not overly concerned. Banners have been placed on Thorne and Hatfield Moors to promote the LIFE+ project as an interim measure, and they will be replaced by permanent onsite boards. In addition, sandwich boards have been produced detailing the LIFE+ project. These are mobile so that the EWs can carry and locate them close to where they are working. HK asked whether the EWs were handing out leaflets to visitors to the Moors as they passed by. DPH explained that as the EWs were working on remote areas of Thorne Moors they had not had need for them. DPH confirmed that Moor Space had been delivered to over 17,000 homes via the Thorne Times, Arrow and hand delivered by the EWs. To date a number of positive comments had been received about its contents. Janet Canning is planning to host a 'wash-up' session with the partners to plan the next edition. DPH informed Members that the unit cost of the leaflet was about 9.5p , excluding distribution. Steering group members felt that this was good value for money. HK advised that the 'Yellow' route on Thorne Moors that features in Moor Space needs checking by Steve Hiner (SH) and Bryan Wainwright (BW) as it may be incorrect. MB suggested that in future editions of Moor Space the species need identifying in the photographs.

Action F2 – Purchase of equipment and vehicles. This is on 'green' but DPH advised members that the tracked chipper that had recently been purchased was a higher specification than first envisaged which meant that a second tracked chipper was no longer required. HK asked what contingency was in place should it break down. JS advised that it would probably be under warranty, dependent on the nature of the break down. In addition the smaller version could be deployed and if a larger machine was required then it could be hired.

Action F4 – AfterLife Plan. The project is not required to report on this yet but DPH advised that the Management Plan would form part of the AfterLife Plan, and that the AfterLife Plan will need to be delivered three months after the end of the project.

EU Monitor Visit – 22nd September 2015

DPH provided members with an overview of the visit, or as the EU Monitor refers, the 'Mission'. DPH in his description of the visit referred to it as the Curates Egg, with something's going well (green end of the spectrum) and some things not so well and (red end of the spectrum) with something's somewhere in the middle (orange end of the

Action 11: DPH to ask SH and BW to check the 'Yellow' route and feedback any amendments to Janet Canning.



spectrum). The highlights that she seemed pleased with were the tracked chipper, the works on the ground, Moor Space, general LIFE/UK2000 acknowledgement, time sheet production and processing and the nightjar work. She had concerns about the DE IDB match funding in relation to invoices supplied to date. Her concerns were not with the physical works taking place on the ground but with the contract for the Water Level Management Plan and works undertaken by JBA pre-dating the start of the LIFE+ Project – the contract appears to have been established in 2011. The EU monitor is currently pursuing this and will write formally in due course. In the meantime DPH has informally flagged this with Chris McGuinness chairman of DE IDB. DPH went onto say that, hopefully, it was not as bad as it sounded as the possibly ineligible invoices related to project management fees which in terms of the LIFE budget amounted to around £50,000 (€68,000) so if the Pumping Station comes in over budget by the same amount then it will not be an issue (as far as the LIFE Project is concerned) but if it comes under budget then there is potential a match funding problem. HK asked what the eligibility of JBAs fees were. DPH confirmed that these were €68,000. HK asked if the supporting paperwork for eligible expenditure was available for scrutiny by the Steering Group. PD confirmed that he saw no problem with this and would seek clarification from the legal team about accessibility of Associated Beneficiary financial information. TA asked what the implications are on the project with regards to fluctuations in exchange rates. RM explained that the within RSPB's Bittern project the exchange rate fluctuations had been positive as far as the project was concerned and the project had managed to end up with a €90,000 surplus which was used to fund further works before the project finally concluded. Of course the fluctuations could have a detrimental impact and additional resources would need to be sourced. TA sought clarification on how any extension to the LIFE+ project might impact on the LSP project as it was using the LIFE+ project as match funding. JS explained that as the LSP project was not due to start until April 2016 and the amount of funding spent by the LIFE+ project would, by that date provide the match required.

DPH explained that he had gone through the letter received from the EU in response to the contents of the HHP LIFE+ Inception Report with the EU Monitor, Lynne Barratt. The Monitor felt that there were no real areas for concern. She advised that a covering letter would need to accompany the mid-term report to address the points emerging from the Inception Report feedback. DPH explained that the point raised in the letter about the amount of funding that had to be spent by the mid term stage was not what NE had to spend directly but the whole project. In addition, the mid term (not the point in time) was reached when this spend had been achieved and not the actually mid-point of

Action 12: PD to seek clarification from the legal team about accessibility of Associated Beneficiary financial information.



the project. HK asked whether the timing of the next EU Monitor visit could coincide with a Steering Group meeting. DPH said that there was no reason why this could not be facilitated and advised that the EU Monitor would make three 'missions' during the life of the project. However, he does not set the External monitors schedule.

Biomass UPM Tilhill update

Before DPH gave an update on the visit made by UPM Tilhill, HK asked who had funded the RSPB biomass report which had been circulated with the Steering Group minutes. JS explained that it was a report that had been commissioned prior to the LIFE+ project and had been authorised by Mark Cleaver through the Humberhead NIA project. HK asked how much the report had cost to produce. TA said the whole of the biomass project, including the report, potentially cost £15,000, and Tim Graham and Pete Short would be able to provide further detail, if required.

DPH went onto read the email response received from UPM Tilhill following their recent visit to advice on the potential for Biomass on Belton Moor, Hatfield, which housed some of the larger trees on site and therefore probably one of the best as far as biomass production. The summary was that they felt that it would not make economic sense to cut and extract from the site. HK asked how it would be treated on the site and its impact. DPH advised that judgements would need to be made as work progresses taking in to account the potential impact that it may have on the land and species. JS went on to say that sensitive areas would be avoided but there is a trade-off. It was agreed that the issue should be raised and discussed within the Science and Monitoring Group.

HHP Apprentice update

AL provided the Steering Group members with an update on the HHP apprentice appointment. A number of people had enquired about the role, with six people submitting application forms. Through the shifting process, three were rejected, as two had not completed their personal statement and one candidate already had a degree which made them ineligible for an apprenticeship. The three selected candidates were interviewed on the 17th September through an informal interview with PD and Mark Outhwaite. In the afternoon the candidates took part in a practical assessment observed by Steve Hiner and Ed Brightman. The assessment was used to assess their communication, team work, commitment, maturity and practical skills. It was clear at the end of the day that there was one candidate stood out over the other two, in terms of their skills, knowledge and experience. The apprentice role has been offered to a local woman, Claire Hayden. It is anticipated that she

Action 13: RS to raise the issue of the treatment of residual from the scrub clearance and it impact on the land and species.



<p>will start on 19th October, dependent on HR checks going smoothly and swiftly. PD explained that the current NE recruitment process is not fit for purpose when selecting for an apprentice role. The lessons learned from the recruitment experience have been fed back to the training and organisational development team so that they can consider improvements. HK asked how long the apprentice would be in post. AL advised that it is a 15 month work based environmental conservation apprenticeship.</p> <p>JS informed the members that a new reserve warden, David Blackham, a local man, currently working for Leeds City Council, would be starting with the team mid-October. He had previously been a volunteer on the HHP. The Reserve Warden will spend 50% of his time on the LIFE+ project.</p> <p>Facebook update</p> <p>PD informed members that a Facebook has been established for the HHP Nature Reserve that also encompassed the LIFE+ project. AL to send a link to the Steering Group members. HK suggested that the project still required a serious website. PD explained that if a website was established for the project then Cabinet Office rules meant that it would need to be hosted by another organisation. MM reminded the Group that it was still an aspiration of the LSP to have a website and potentially this could support the HHP requirements as well. However, the website would require funding. DPH advised that as there was no funding in the LIFE+ project for a website, and if members felt a website was still required, above and beyond a facebook page and Gov.uk, monies would need to come from other areas of the project. DPH did note that this had been raised by the EU Monitor who felt that a project website was a necessity. DPH to look at where funding might come from, within the project. HK advised that cheaper website options are available, including WordPress.</p>	<p>Action 14: AL to send facebook link to Steering group members.</p> <p>Action 15: DPH to look at where funding might come from to fund a website.</p>
<p>3. Any Other Business – PD</p> <p>PD asked members for any other items of business. None were received.</p>	
<p>Date of next meeting</p> <p>The next meeting of the Group will take place at the Humberhead Peatlands office on 22nd January 2016 from 10.30 – 12.30.</p> <p>The meeting finished at 12.45.</p>	