



**Friday 15<sup>th</sup> July 2016, 10.30-12.30, Humberhead Peatlands, Natural England, Unit 1a, Green Tree Warehousing, Tudworth Road, Hatfield, DN7 6HD**

**Attendees:** Helen Kirk (HK), Tim Kohler (TK), Matt Cox (MC), Tim Allen (TA), Melissa Massarella (MM)

**Apologies:** Paul Duncan (PD), Roger Mitchell (RM), Sue Wilkinson (SW), Caroline Steel (CS), David Hinchliffe (DNH), James Freeborough (JF), John Dunbavin (JD)

**Support staff:** David Hargreaves (DPH), Amanda Lane (AJL), Richard Smith (RS)

Discussions/Key Points	For Action By
<p><b>1. Welcome and Introductions - HK</b></p> <p>HK welcomed members and introduced Matthew Cox, representing the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust to the rest of the members. She advised that in the absence of PD she would Chair the meeting. Apologies were noted.</p> <p>HK went on to welcome and introduce Richard Smith, LIFE+ Project Monitoring Officer to members. She asked if the agenda could be altered so that RS could provide the Group with an update on the science and monitoring elements of the Project. Members welcomed the opportunity.</p>	
<p><b>2. Science and Monitoring Update - RS</b></p> <p>HK thanked RS for taking time out of his busy schedule to provide the Steering Group with an update on science and monitoring. She started the discussion by asking RS to inform members on the invertebrate monitoring, with a question on pitfall trapping.</p> <p>RS started by displaying a map of the sites where he has and is planning to take samples from across the Moors. He also displayed photographs of the pitfall traps. HK asked about the pitfall traps, their construction and positioning in the ground. RS explained how he set the pitfall traps during sampling and how these were repositioned once the sample season had finished. He showed photographs of the pitfall traps, including the sleeves used and explained that the sleeves were above ground when sampling was not taking place.</p> <p>TK explained that he follows a similar pitfall trap construction and positioning, leaving a twig as a ladder in the sleeve when not sampling to allow for any small mammal or reptiles to escape.</p> <p>HK asked for an explanation of the use of the mesh on the pitfall traps. RS showed photographs of the contents that had been caught in one pitfall trap during the 2015 sample season which included 3 shrews.</p>	



He qualified that during 2015 he had caught 1-2 lizards and 5-10 shrews across 10 sites. This prompted RS to introduce the use of the mesh in 2016.

HK stressed the importance of recording the methodology used and any changes, including reasons why.

RS went onto explain that in the last season 500 pots had been sampled and these had now been identified, equating to 1000s of specimens. He said that 100-150 beetles, spiders and flies had been identified. MC asked what sampling had taken place on Crowle Moors. RS said that was no sampling on Crowle as it was not within the remit of the LIFE+ Project.

RS explained that he was focused on the collection of baseline information, explaining the locations of each sample site and why they had been selected for the 2015 and 2016 sample seasons.

HK said that this was useful to understand and that it would have been helpful to have known this earlier, as it had not been made clear in the monitoring section of the mid-term report sent to the EU.

RS clarified that that sampling had been carried out across two weeks in July 2015 and two weeks in October 2015. The 2016 sampling had taken place across two weeks in May and two weeks in June. He said that he was suggesting that a sample would not take place in October 2016 due to resource issues.

HK asked why the science and monitoring sub group had not been approached for help and advice and where it might have been possible to provide capacity through the network and resources of the Forum. TA suggested that volunteers could be used in sampling and that Citizen Science had been used on successfully Crowle Moors. He did qualify that they required sufficient training. RS explained that Claire Hayden, NNR Apprentice was involved in the sampling process.

MC said that the main cost in invertebrate monitoring is the identification of the samples. RS said that identification of the samples in 2015 had cost £8,000. HK asked what species had been identified. RS was unable to provide a list or highlights but assured the meeting that the findings would be available in his next report. RS said that the focus of the work was on monitoring changes and not species. He clarified that the samples taken in May and July 2016 would give a better insight into any changes.

HK asked what provisions were in place with regards to invertebrate sampling post project, particularly with regard to the Moors flagship species, e.g. Large Heath butterfly. RS said that they were struggling



with getting continuity of volunteers and referenced the issues associated with using volunteers in monitoring the nightjars.

HK explained how volunteers had been used successfully during the sampling carried out on Inkle Moor. She suggested that the £8,000 used on resourcing the identification of samples could have been used to generate further funding. HK asked what attempts were being made to get volunteers involved in monitoring, particularly in relation to capacity building for the future and post AfterLife recording.

TA suggested that if an idea like this was brought to the steering group it could be addressed and looked at in terms of combining the monies with other funding to help sustain this element of the works. TK said that this element of post LIFE he had not yet thought through, in terms of volunteers. He welcomed the suggestion, as the identification element was resource intensive. TK and RS said that they would welcome the opportunity to look at developing a volunteer base to support the Project's AfterLIFE monitoring works.

RS explained to members that one fifth of his time is spent on invertebrate monitoring, with the rest of his time co-ordinating York Universities work on nightjar monitoring, water level monitoring, socio-economic and eco-systems functioning.

Whilst members recognised this HK had understood that part of the project was to look at capacity building for future monitoring and that the Forum Executive had expressed disappointment that the LIFE+ Project had not sought to use their network or expertise.

HK asked for an update on the other elements of the science and monitoring elements. RS said that D1, nightjar monitoring for 2016-17 was progressing according to plan.

He said that the aerial photograph for D2 had been completed, including Crowle baseline photography, which had cost £4,500.

RS said that with D3, water level monitoring, they were struggling with the existing system of monitoring so there was a need to get the remaining data loggers in place, and this was a priority for the remainder of the summer. He informed members that he is currently in the process of obtaining quotes.

RS informed members that the eco systems cultural aspects of the monitoring were being undertaken by Hannah Curzon, PhD student at York University. However, the carbon sequestration element of D4 still needs commissioning and he has yet to write the specification. He also said that an intern from York University, James Relph had been engaged on a six week contract to work on gathering the baseline

**Action 1:** TK and RS to look at developing a volunteer base to support the Project's AfterLIFE monitoring works.



<p>information for the eco-services work.</p> <p>HK asked members if they had any questions for RS. RS went on to say that the invertebrate data would be analysed by a new software system being produced by NE, called Pantheon. He explained that this would be available publically and by plugging into Pantheon it would provide information on a sample. HK and TK suggested that there were always problems with the interpretation of information. HK asked when Pantheon would be available. RS explained that it was supposed to be launched this year but there had been set backs and it was planned to 'go live' March 2017.</p> <p>RS said that he was planning on scheduling a science and monitoring sub group meeting in autumn 2016 and the meeting had been delayed due to delays in the analysis work.</p>	
<p><b>3. Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising – HK</b></p> <p>HK invited members to read through the minutes from the previous meeting and advise on any inaccuracies. She then took members through the actions from the previous meeting, and the following was noted:</p> <p><u>Action 1 - Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) for the Water Level Management Plan</u> – TK informed members that he has now received a draft HRA from JBA. His next step is to go back to them with comments. HK asked what the timescales were in terms of formal submission. TK advised within the next couple of weeks and the submission will include an 'In Combination Plan'. TK reiterated that the HRA will be assessed by NE by a team independent of the Area team. He also stressed that he has informed JBA that works on the site cannot go ahead until the HRA has been approved. This could mean that works do not start until the end of August 2016.</p> <p><u>Action 2 – Confirmation on associated beneficiary contracts/invoices for LIFE+ project can be viewed by Steering Group</u> – HK informed members that this action has been on the minutes since 26<sup>th</sup> June 2015 and was yet to be resolved. She asked if PD could take this up as a matter of urgency with the DE IDB.</p> <p><u>Action 3 – Suggestions from Steering Group members on ideas for future events</u> – DPH said that following members' suggestion to celebrate International Bog Day an event was going ahead on Crowle Moors on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2016. TA suggested that a Citizen</p>	<p><b>Action 2:</b> TK to advise members when the HRA has been approved.</p> <p><b>Action 3:</b> PD to find out, as a matter of urgency, when the DE IDB associated beneficiary contracts and invoices for LIFE+ project can be viewed by the Steering Group</p>



Science event should be organised to help encourage volunteers to take up monitoring opportunities.

Action 4 – On-site information boards – TK and MC confirmed that they had met to discuss the signage on Crowle Moors. MC said that there was a main sign missing on the Crowle side in the North Lincolnshire car park.

Action 5 – Joint DE IDB and LIFE+ Project meeting and onsite visit – HK suggested to members that this action should be discarded and cited that there were a number of opportunities in the coming months through the mid-term event being held on the 16<sup>th</sup> September and the Making Moor Space workshop, for both groups to meet. However, HK said she had serious concerns about the lack of openness and transparency of the DE IDB Water Level Management Group, given that PD chaired that Group she felt that this is not what PD would want. She also expressed concerns about the quality of financial information readily available for scrutiny, given that it was public monies. Members agreed to drop this action – action now recorded as closed.

Action 6 – Review paper produced by Roger Meade – TK said that he had yet to locate and read the report.

Action 7 – Suggestions on people to invite to monitoring and science sub group meetings – AL confirmed that RS had added MC to the science and monitoring sub group.

Action 8 – Details on the visitor (foot) counters being installed on Thorne and Hatfield Moors – TA confirmed that he had received details on the visit counters from Janet Canning.

Action 9 – Completion date of the Management Plan – TA informed members that the next version of the Management Plan would be available from 30<sup>th</sup> September 2016, and he would be loading it on to NE's electronic system.

Action 10 – Reference EOn monies in EU Mid Term Report – DPH informed members that on advice from the EU Monitor he had not referenced the EOn monies in the Mid Term report. The EU monitor suggested that it may raise questions from the EU Desk Officer on why we required funding for this particular element of the project.

HK asked about the amount of 'Way Leave' funding and if it was additional to the funding received from EOn. TK confirmed that the 'Way Leave' funding is £50,000 and forms part of the Project's match funding. He explained that because of the fall in nightjar numbers it had triggered a process for EOn to do further work. TK said that he was facilitating work between EOn and DMBC and that a suitable

**Action 4:** TK to locate and read the report written by Roger Meade.





he had just recently obtained and sent to the EU.

DPH said that the requirement for an extension to the project was evident from reading the Mid Term Report but a formal extension will not be submitted until feedback is received from the EU Desk Officer.

DPH informed members that he had found out that a request to defer the project could have been requested before the start of the project, of at least 3-4 months. In light of the impact on the three year nightjar monitoring this would have been helpful. He suggested that this should be seen as a lesson learned.

He also said that a possible extension to the project of 9 months would be requested, taking account of the fact that no project conclusion phase had been built into the original project plan. He stated that it was not envisaged that all project staff would be employed up to the end of the project extension, for example the project estate workers. DPH said that a formal extension to the project would probably be submitted within the next three months. An extension to the project would require another interim progress report, potentially at the end of August 2017.

DPH suggested that as Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty had not yet been triggered that Britain's decision to leave the EU would not impact on the project or even a potential extension to the project.

DPH informed members that at the same time that the Mid Term Report was being finalised an internal audit of the LIFE+ Project took place. This was carried out by the auditors KPMG who requested a sample of contract documents and staff contracts, along with bank statements.

AL reported to members about the amount of paperwork that DPH had to contend with running an EU project. She stated that this could not be overlooked if others contemplated running similar externally funded projects. She stressed that there is a tendency to underestimate time required and that this should form part of the lessons learned. SG members thanked DPH for his diligence and commitment to the 'administrative' elements of project.

### **Project Performance Report - DPH**

DPH took members through the LIFE+ Project Performance Report for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April – 30<sup>th</sup> June 2016 by providing an update on progress. He stated that he would focus initially on progress that was on amber or red.

Action A2 – Management Plan. DPH commented that this had been covered earlier in the meeting but the action being on 'red' did not



<p>impact on the project.</p> <p><u>Action A3</u> – Consents. DPH stated that the HRA had been covered earlier in the minutes and that the conclusion on the requirement for Eels Regs on Hatfield was much more relaxed and based on whether we could afford to put them in.</p> <p><u>Action C1 and C2</u> – Scrub control. DPH informed members that the scrub clearance tenders for 2016/17 were currently being put together. He was pleased to say that the scrub clearance would start in September 2016 and would hopefully be completed by the end of January 2017. The works on Thorne had been changed slightly due to the water levels which meant that Goole Fields would now form part of the clearance works in 2016/17 because areas previously planned for were now too wet.</p> <p><u>Action C3</u> – Rhododendron spraying – DPH reported that the spraying is going well with big areas being covered. He informed the group that there had been discussions with Kathryn Arnold, York University, about the potential impact of using Roundup near nightjars, specifically in relation to it being carcinogenic. DPH informed members that KA is an expert in pesticides. This was being mitigated by the estate workers and assistant managers liaising with Lucy Ryan on where the spraying takes place. HK asked whether the spraying could be left till the end of the breeding season but DPH said that this would be too late.</p> <p><u>Action C4</u> – Plastic piling and steel dams on Hatfield Moors. DPH confirmed that the installation of the plastic piles would be complete by 19<sup>th</sup> July. However, the steel dams would have to go out to tender and this will potentially impact on timings. HK asked about the quality of the plastic piles and that she had seen examples of them buckling. TK said that JBA were carrying out quality testing of the plastic piles on Thorne Moors, along with the NNR staff. TK said that he would check with JBA on the process to put right, at the contractor's expense, the buckled plastic piles.</p> <p>TK said that last year the tracks on Thorne Moors were left in a bad state due to poor weather and contractors' traffic. He was currently identifying a limited strategic network of access tracks for contractors. The information would then be placed in the tender documents, along with track and maintenance that contractors would need to undertake, e.g. possible use of track logs.</p> <p><u>Action D1 to D4</u> - Monitoring. DPH said that this had been covered earlier by RS in his update to members. However, DPH said that he was concerned about the delay in the installation of data loggers and that this may delay the pumping station. TK assured members that the</p>	<p><b>Action 8:</b> TK to check with JBA on the process to put right, at the contractor's expense, the buckled plastic piles.</p>
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<p>original network of dataloggers are still producing data and they had overcome the issue of collecting the data.</p> <p><u>Action E1</u> – Engaging with the local community. DPH gave an overview of the three planning for real events. TA said that the event in Crowle had not been well attended and a market day should have been chosen. DPH said that he had requested to the EU Monitor that the number of planning for real events is reduced from 9 to 6. HK reiterated the importance of community engagement and its importance in engaging potential volunteers. DPH suggested that the local community may be getting fatigued with the number of planning for real events and focus groups, as the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust had a series planned throughout the year. HK suggested that events, such as a Species Roadshow might help to engage the local community, run on similar lines to the Antiques Roadshow. MC suggested getting local colleges involved in volunteering activities. TA suggested that this might breakdown the barrier of it being a nature reserve and not a place they would want to visit. MM commented that Hatfield was much more accessible for staging community events.</p> <p><u>Action E2</u> – Engaging with other projects. DPH gave an overview of the recent visit to Denmark made by himself and RS. He said that at the next meeting he would provide members with a slideshow.</p> <p><u>Action 3</u> – End of project conference. DPH suggested that the end of project conference will take place in autumn 2017; dependent on whether an extension to the project is granted. He suggested that there might be the potential to do a joint conference with another organisation to reduce costs and boost attendance.</p> <p><u>Action F1</u> – Project supervision. DPH reassured members that due to the late start of the project there was sufficient budget to cover an extension to LIFE+ project staff contracts. He reiterated that staff will finish at different times due to the roles that they have on the project and he was not yet sure how this would overlap with the Landscape Partnership project, particularly in terms of scrub control works. He felt that they could carry on with this work during this period.</p> <p><b>Mid Term events and website</b></p> <p>Covered earlier in the meeting under minutes of the last meeting and matters arising.</p>	<p><b>Action 9:</b> DPH to provide a slideshow on the visit to Denmark at the next meeting.</p>
<p><b>3. Any Other Business – HK</b></p> <p>HK invited members to put forward any other business items.</p> <p>TA informed members that they had received approval/permission to</p>	



<p>start the HLF project, along with approval to advertise the project posts.</p> <p>HK said that the Forum had carried out work on Inkle Moor and that they were currently working with NE on a site in North Lincolnshire.</p>	
<p><b>Date of next meeting</b></p> <p>HK asked, at the request of Paul Duncan, if the steering group members were happy for the meetings to move from a Friday to a Monday. Members agreed.</p> <p>The next meeting will take place at the Humberhead Peatlands office on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> October 2016 from 10:30 – 12:30.</p> <p>The meeting finished at 12:55.</p>	