

Tees Valley  
Nature  
Partnership  
Briefing No 1  
March 2012

# The relevance of the developing Tees Valley Nature Partnership to the role and work of the Tees Valley Local Enterprise Partnership



*Photos: Stockton Borough Council*



## What are Local Nature Partnerships?

### Potential roles of LNPs include:

Local Nature Partnerships (LNPs) were launched in the Natural Environment White Paper (2011) and the Government “invited new and existing partnerships to come together to become Local Nature Partnerships” to create a vision and plan of action to improve the natural environment locally.



*Raising awareness about the vital benefits of a healthy natural environment*



*Developing a shared environmental vision and set of priorities for their area*



*Working at a ‘landscape’ scale to improve the natural environment*



*Contributing to local planning and local development frameworks*



*Helping to contribute to the green economy by, for example, providing relevant information for Local Enterprise Partnerships*

## What do we have at the moment?

Two key partnerships operate on a Tees Valley wide basis:

**Tees Valley Biodiversity Partnership** – brings together up to 60 organisations, including local authorities, conservation organisations, and public bodies such as the Environment Agency and Northumbrian Water, and covers the whole of the Tees Valley. Its activities include:



*Preparing and monitoring action plans for habitats and species*



*Coordinating practical projects and bringing in grant funding*



*Local wildlife site designation and monitoring*



*Contributing to the local planning process*

**Tees Valley Environment Forum** – established in 2007 as a mechanism for the ‘environment sector’ to feed in to the Tees Valley LEP’s Economic Statement of Ambition. Its function has evolved over time as partners saw the value of presenting a larger collective view and a joined up approach to the Tees Valley environment.



# What is the potential for LNPs to do something different?

Involvement with the natural environment is often seen as a fringe activity by businesses and those charged with improving local economies. There is however now a lot of evidence to demonstrate that a healthy natural environment is essential to underpin the economy. The ambition for LNPs is that they will be a partnership of local organisations and people who will:



*Drive positive change in the local natural environment, taking a strategic view of the challenges and opportunities involved and identifying ways to manage it as a system for the benefit of nature, people and the economy*



*Contribute to achieving the Government's national environmental objectives locally*



*Become local champions influencing decision making relating to the natural environment and its value to social and economic outcomes, in particular through working closely with local authorities, LEPS, and Health and Wellbeing Boards*

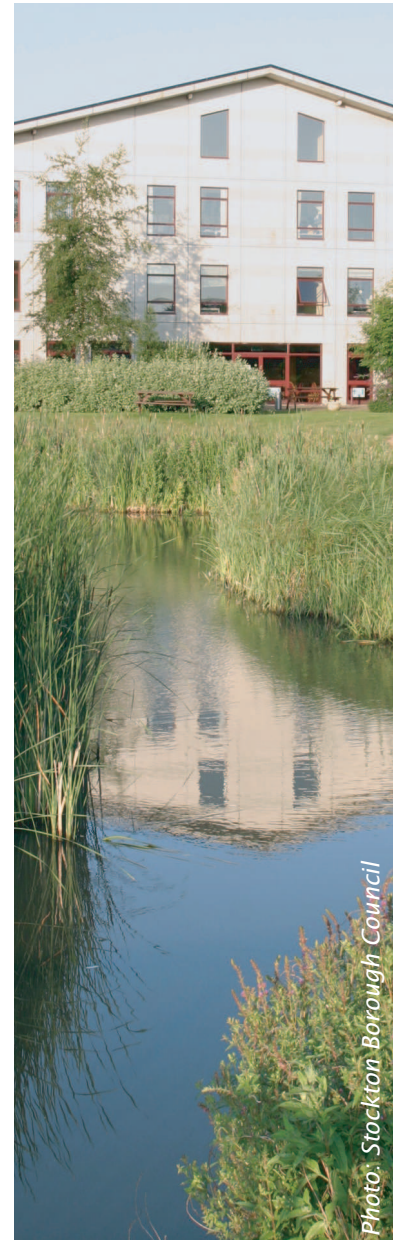


Photo: Stockton Borough Council

It is not Defra's intention to try to prescribe how LNPs and LEPS might work together. However there are enough people in the Tees Valley who recognise the important relationship between the environment and a healthy economy – and the potential of new technologies and new ways of doing things that could be a real driver for economic prosperity while maintaining and looking to improve the environment.

## The Developing Tees Valley Nature Partnership

Environmental organisations are working together to create the Tees Valley Nature Partnership. We have been awarded capacity building funding from Defra to develop this partnership. We are now consulting widely with other sectors, including regeneration and economic, health and wellbeing. We want to find out what people want from a Tees Valley Nature Partnership and how we can make a difference – the things that would make it a useful partnership for people living, working and learning in the Tees Valley. Our intention is to develop this information to make formal application to Defra to receive LNP recognition in Spring 2012.

# What could a Tees Valley Nature Partnership offer the Tees Valley Local Enterprise Partnership and the business sector?

**Putting a value on biodiversity and the natural environment** – there is an increasing need for the value of the natural environment, biodiversity, and eco-systems services to be reflected in monetary terms. This can inform decisions about investment and policy priorities. The TVNP can help demonstrate the value on the natural environment to the local economy, especially eco-activity tourism and leisure.

**Many businesses depend on a healthy natural environment** – the natural environment provides goods and services such as clean air, water, soils and waste disposal, as well as many of the raw materials that industry depends upon. The TVNP could help demonstrate the importance of the natural environment and eco-system services to show the impact on the economy and the business sector.

**Reducing the potential for conflict** – the TVNP does not want environmental issues to be seen by businesses as a barrier. There have been problems in the past and there will be issues in the future, but the TVNP wants to work with the Tees Valley LEP and other key stakeholders to identify potential conflicts at an early stage and work in partnership to find solutions.

**Contribute to resource efficiency** – resource efficiency could be a key measure of economic success (and of human wellbeing). Promoting low resource consumption could not only help slow the depletion of natural and biological resources but could also help businesses to become more competitive.

**Delivering environmental improvements** – securing and facilitating environmental improvement and enhancement will be a key part of the TVNPs work, and will support the Tees Valley LEP's aim of promoting the Tees Valley not only as a place to do business but as a place to live as well.

**Unique selling point!** – Tees Valley already has many strong environmental assets that can play a part in encouraging more people to live, work and invest in the area. Putting a value on landscapes and an attractive, healthy environment is not easy but they clearly have a strong role in encouraging investment and economic development decisions. The juxtaposition of industry and wildlife in the Tees Valley offers a unique selling point which many businesses could take advantage of in terms of image and marketing.

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## Next Steps

The developing Tees Valley Nature Partnership would welcome an opportunity to engage with the Tees Valley Local Enterprise Partnership to discuss how it could contribute to the green economy and sustainable economic growth.

We welcome feedback on how you consider the local authorities and the Tees Valley LEP should be represented on the governance arrangements of the TVNP at a strategic level.

Visit the new website, and register to receive updates of the development of your local nature partnership:

<http://teesvalleynaturepartnership.org.uk>

