



## **TVNP Board Meeting**

**Amalgamated Agenda, Minutes and papers**

**Tuesday 21st January 2014**

# Agenda

10 am-12.30 pm, Tuesday 21st January 2014

Saltholme Discovery Centre

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|-------------------|----------------------|---|--|
|                   | <b>10.00 - 10.05</b> | <b>Welcome and introductions</b>  |  |
| <b>B/01.01.14</b> | <b>10.05 - 10.15</b> | <b>Matters arising from minutes</b>   |  |
| <b>B/02.01.14</b> | <b>10.15 - 10.30</b> | <b>Report of TVNP business</b>  | <i>(paper B/02.01.14)</i> An update of the work of the Partnership (August - December 2013) by the TVNP Development Manager. Minutes of the Management Group are posted on the TVNP website.   |
| <b>B/03.01.14</b> | <b>10.30 - 11.15</b> | <b>From Vision to Strategy</b>  | <i>(paper B/03.01.14)</i> Discussion on the proposed structure, themes and strategic priorities of the strategic documents for the Partnership that have been developed from the Single Focus meeting held in November 2013.   |
|                   | <b>11.15 – 11.30</b> | <b><i>Coffee and cake</i></b>   |  |
| <b>B/04.01.14</b> | <b>11.30 -12.00</b>  | <b>Implications of the effects of local government expenditure on the Tees Valley natural environment</b> | An Information exchange on the current situation and forecast of the effects of local authority expenditure cuts and reorganisation on the natural environment in the Tees Valley e.g. Management of Green Infrastructure , support of environmental volunteering and green space community groups, loss of personnel with environment knowledge and expertise. Discussion of the implications for the TVNP and natural environment. |
| <b>B/05.01.14</b> | <b>12.00 -12.10</b>  | <b>National LNP news and invitation</b>   | Various updates from Defra and the England network of LNPs and take up of invitation to ministerial event.   |
| <b>B/06.01.14</b> | <b>12.10 - 12.20</b> | <b>Any other business</b>   |  |
| <b>B/07.01.14</b> | <b>12.20-12.25</b>   | <b>Meetings plan for 2014</b>   |  |

# Minutes of the Tees Valley Nature Partnership Board Meeting

## 21<sup>st</sup> January 2014

**Present:** Richard Hall, Natural England (Defra family rep), John Mann, Teesside Environmental Trust (environmental sector rep), Chris Watson, Groundwork North East (environment sector rep), Doff Pollard, Tees Valley Rural Community Council, (community sector rep), Laurie Norris (agricultural/rural affairs rep), Jeremy Garside, Tees Valley Wildlife Trust (accountable body rep), Richard Gunton, North York Moors National Park (countryside access, recreation and tourism sector rep).

**In attendance:** Susan Antrobus (TVNP Development Manager), David Tarttelin, Environment Agency (Chair of TVNP Management Group)

**Apologies:** Stephen Catchpole, Tees Valley Unlimited (economic sector rep), Ivor Crowther, Heritage Lottery Fund (funding sector rep), Damien Wilson, Hartlepool Borough Council (local authority rep).

Richard Gunton was welcomed as a new board member, representing countryside access, recreation and tourism sector issues. He is the Director of Parks Services at the North York Moors National Park, managing the practical delivery side of the operation. He brings a wealth of experience in land based tourism, volunteers and natural environment apprenticeship management to the Board. David Tarttelin was welcomed as the Chair of the TVNP Management Group. As agreed at the last board meeting, it was hoped that his attendance would assist with communication between the Board and Management Group.

### **B/01.01.14 Matters arising from minutes**

No corrections or matters arising. Action points to be dealt with on the agenda items during meeting.

### **B/02.01.14 Report of TVNP business**

*(paper B/02.01.14)*

An update of the work of the Partnership (August - December 2013) was presented by the TVNP Development Manager. Under the item on the Partnership's input to strategic plans under the "Duty to Co-operate", it was noted that an email had been received from Andy Yuille, chairman of the North East Environment Link. He had been commissioned by the LNPs in the North West to research advice and procedures for them to respond to this work. After receiving the terms of reference and examples of work that the TVNP has done in this area he had commented *"from my web-based research, and conversations with a dozen or so LNPs, you're not just top of the league, you're playing a different game! I'm really impressed at the structures and procedures that you've got in place, and how you've overcome barriers (eg around resources, potential conflicts, collective positioning, winning hearts and minds, gaining trust and recognition from LPAs etc) that currently seem insurmountable to other partnerships."*

Under the item on the River Tees Rediscovered Landscape (RTR) Partnership Project, a letter of support for the project from the TVNP was requested to accompany the second round application to the Heritage Lottery Fund in February. As this is the first letter of support that has been requested from the TVNP general procedures were discussed. It was agreed that a simple terms of reference be drawn up based on that which was developed for the strategic planning groups, which considers how projects fit against the objectives of the TVNP. The Development Manager is to prepare such letters which will be discussed and signed off by the person who is currently acting as the Board chair.

With regard to the RTR, it was raised that many of the TVNP members were also beneficiaries of the project in terms of funding. However, this was not considered a conflict of interest when the project was considered in terms of meeting Partnership objectives.

**Action 1:** SA to write draft terms of reference for letters of support for consideration of the Board.

**Action 2:** SA to prepare letter of support for the RTR Project for RH to agree and sign off.

### **B/03.01.14 From Vision to Strategy**

*(paper B/03.01.14)*

The single focus meeting in November was successful and has provided substantial basis for preparation of the "Ambition for a Tees Valley Natural Environment" and Work Plan. An overview of framework and content was provided and discussed. It was felt to be a good approach, although board members considered that additional

emphasis was required to show how the natural environment benefits other sectors. It was agreed that the document needed to articulate this clearly to enable others to grasp the role they they can play and see benefits to their sector. This needs to be done in a way that is relevant and understandable to them. The challenge of appealing to different audiences ranging from rural landowners, local businesses and the health and wellbeing sector was recognised, as they have specific and very different interests. In addition to the main document, the production of sector-specific documents was suggested as an option for the task and finish group to explore.

The three themes following Natural Environment White Paper were agreed, but with “growing a sustainable economy” replacing “growing the green economy”. Wider sector engagement was discussed. It is envisaged that board members would enable the partnership to tap into the different sectors. An update was provided by SA on the development of work with the Health and Wellbeing sector. It was recognised that this work would be relationship intensive.

The North Yorkshire and York LNP strategy was discussed as one of the few examples available of a LNP strategy. It was agreed that the Tees Valley had a different character, needs and challenges to that of North Yorkshire and as a result our document would have a different emphasis.

As well as developing the strategy it was agreed that there was also a need to respond in a very live way to opportunities and the multiple timeframes that are operating in different sectors. An example given was the development of the new LEADER programmes.

It was agreed that a task and finish group would take the plan forward. RH responded to the request for a board member to join this group, which will also be composed of three management group members who have already been identified. Board members agreed to contribute specific expertise as and when required.

**Action 3:** SA to coordinate work of task and finish group to produce a first draft document.

#### **B/04.01.14 Implications of the effects of local government expenditure on the Tees Valley natural environment**

It was decided to defer the majority of this agenda item to the next meeting when DT would be able to provide an update from the Tees Valley local authorities.

In the meantime, implications were discussed including the effects on the management of public open space, the availability of strategic natural environment expertise and the potential effect on the future capacity of the TVNP in terms of loss of experienced officers who currently play an active role, and the need to continue develop new relationships with different officers.

RH gave an update on the situation at Natural England, which is undergoing a “refresh exercise” which will develop local teams to replace the current national function teams. DT reported that the Environment Agency is currently cutting 1500 posts across the organisation, including the removal of a regional tier of the organisation. Groundwork noted that while 11 years ago local authorities were their biggest funder of projects, they are now a very small proportion with registered housing providers a growing funder and new projects with a preventative health emphasis.

The role of the TVNP in providing an enabling role for increased community participation was discussed. The TV Wild Green Places project would contribute to this ambition by increasing the skills and capacity and networking of community groups.

It was agreed that the TVNP strategy documents would need to take account of the changing landscape of the public sector.

SA noted that while it may be anticipated that applications to HLF would decline due to a reduced capacity of local authorities to prepare bids, commit match funding and maintain projects, that both regionally and nationally demand was at an all time high. HLF are recognising the challenges facing local authorities in managing parks and

open green spaces and have worked with the Land Trust and Big Lottery Fund to create the Prosperous Parks income generation toolkit ([www.prosperousparks.com](http://www.prosperousparks.com)).

## **B/05.01.14 National LNP news and invitation**

An invitation has been issued to all LNPs to an annual ministerial event. The 2014 event is being held on Wednesday 12 March in central London. There are two places for each LNP (for the coordinator and chairman). Board members were asked to consider if they would like to represent the TVNP.

A second round of evaluation of LNPs has been commissioned by Defra. DP, CW and SA have completed online questionnaires and are taking part in telephone interviews this coming week.

Defra are considering a new scheme of "Account Managers" for LNPs and are proposing to pilot this arrangement over a six month period with several LNPs. An email sent by Kim Martin at Defra was discussed. It was reflected that we had excellent working relationships with local representatives of the Defra family, but that this initiative could have additional benefits and is worth volunteering for.

**Action 4:** Board members to contact SA if they wish to attend the ministerial event.

**Action 5:** SA to circulate results of the first round of LNP evaluation by Defra when published.

**Action 6:** SA to request involvement in the Defra pilot "Account Managers" pilot scheme.

## **B/06.01.14 Any other business**

DT raised the involvement of the TVNP as a stakeholder in the TVU workshops and meetings associated with the European Growth Funds and Strategic Economic Plan (SEP). DT and JG are the named representatives of the TVNP and have taken part in workshops, but have not been available for all the meetings. It was considered important at this stage as the document is being finalised by 31<sup>st</sup> January to ensure that natural environment "hooks" are there to enable projects to be developed by organisations. DP chairs the Social Inclusion group, which is a cross-cutting group which focuses on barriers to employment, training etc. She considered that there were links to the natural environment on this group, e.g. natural environment volunteering links to employment that would be valuable to environment organisations. CW expressed interest in Groundwork taking part.

**Action 7:** DT and JG to respond to the consultation on the draft Tees Valley SEP by 31<sup>st</sup> January deadline.

## **B/07.01.14 Meetings plan for 2014**

RH was thanked for chairing the meeting and John Mann volunteered to chair the next meeting. It was agreed to hold three meetings a year and that Saltholme provided a very suitable and convenient venue.

**Action 8:** SA to arrange meeting for 2014 via Doodle Poll and explore costs of meetings at Saltholme with RSPB.

## **Report of TVNP business and activity July - December 2013**

### **1. Input of TVNP into strategic consultations**

Under the “Duty to Co-operate”, The TVNP Strategic planning group took part in three major strategic consultations:

- Environment Agency Challenges and Choices Consultation (regional)
- Redcar and Cleveland Local Plan (local)
- Biodiversity Offsetting (national)

The group provided comments on Middlesbrough’s Housing Strategy and informal consultation of the second draft of Hartlepool’s Green Infrastructure Strategy.

### **2. TV WILD Green Places development update**

After being awarded a first round pass from the HLF, extensive work has been carried out by the TVNP Development Manager on the preparation of the second round application for this five year project which is being submitted in June 2014. The development work is unusually complex due to the involvement of five local authorities and twenty local community groups and sites. Development funding from HLF was used to bring in the expertise of heritage communication and visitor experience specialist consultants “ Tell Tale” who have prepared a HLF Activity Plan. Five community workshops (in each local authority area) with local groups have taken place and a stakeholder workshop for local authority and other partners have taken place to inform this plan. This is in addition to site visits and meetings with individual groups. The training elements of the project are now well developed and have attracted significant support and input from Cleveland College of Art and Design (CCAD) and Askham Bryan College in the provision of work based training to support level 1,2 and 3 qualifications. Work is currently taking place to develop a detailed HLF Capital Works Plan.

A first round application to the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation for match funding was successful, a full second round application is currently being prepared, with assistance from the TVWT.

### **3. Tees Valley natural network and opportunity mapping project update**

In response to requests by Local authority planners, this project was extended to include a series of data analysis and mapping was carried out by the Wildflower Ark which describes and illustrates all habitats and species of Principle Importance (UK BAP) and designations for each local authority area.

### **4. Vision document**

The TVNP Vision document was launched on the website as both an interactive document and printable version:

<http://teesvalleynaturepartnership.org.uk/>

### **5. Single Focus meeting**

On 26<sup>th</sup> November 2013 a Single Focus meeting took place to build consensus to feed into the development of the TVNP strategic documents. This was a successful event which involved the wider TVNP partnership in strategic planning and contributed towards strengthening the partnership by increasing ownership of the strategies and plans, making use of expertise within partnership. The meeting report is available from the TVNP website at

<http://teesvalleynaturepartnership.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/TVNP-single-focus-meeting-26th-November-2013-MEETING-REPORT.pdf>

## **6. Local Sites**

The TVNP Local Sites Group has been effectively managing the Tees Valley Local system, and additional sites have been included. The group are currently evaluating approaches for a systematic approach to site survey and monitoring.

## **7. River Tees Catchment Partnership**

In 2013 Defra invited expressions of interest from organisations wishing to take on the role of catchment partnership coordinators for a new system of 108 River Catchment Partnerships in England and Wales. Groundwork NE and The River Tees Trust made a successful joint application for the Tees Catchment Partnership (TCP). They are planning launch event/activities to take place in February 2014. A key role of the partnerships is to drive forward the Water Framework Directive and to engage with a wide range of stakeholders to improve river quality. There are good opportunities to build on the consultation and engagement work carried out by Groundwork and the River Tees Trust that took place in 2012/13 and to involve Northumbrian Water as a key partner with a catchment based approach. The TCP is anticipated to work mainly as an electronic forum and provide a mechanism for knowledge transfer, collaborative working and coordinating activity on the Tees Catchment. A presentation by Ben Lamb (Tees Rivers Trust) was given to the management group in December 2013. Close links between the TCP and the TVNP will be maintained through Anne- Louise Orange, Groundwork.

## **8. Rural Economic Strategy**

The Food, Farming and Rural Affairs Tees Valley (FFRATV) have published a "Rural Economic Strategy for the Tees Valley (2014-2020)" to focus support through EU structural funds towards the growth of an integrated economy of the Tees Valley.

Members of the TVNP contributed to workshops and the strategy text.

[http://www.teesvalleyrcc.org.uk/tees\\_valley\\_rural\\_strategy\\_sept\\_2013.pdf](http://www.teesvalleyrcc.org.uk/tees_valley_rural_strategy_sept_2013.pdf)

## **9. River Tees Rediscovered Landscape Partnership**

The RTR Landscape Partnership are in the final stages of preparation for the submission of a round two grant. The bid submission is by the 28th February, decision 13th June, with a site visit and the assessment taking place mid April- mid May 2014. The value of the bid is £4M, with £1.9 of that total from HLF. Project Manager, Anne-Louise Orange, is meeting with Tees Valley Unlimited to raise awareness of the bid and how it should support economic regeneration, particularly through tourism initiatives in branding and promotion work.

## **10. ERIC Recorders Conference**

The Environmental Records Information Centre (ERIC) North East held its first Recorders conference in the Tees Valley on the 23<sup>rd</sup> November (in addition to their annual one held in Newcastle). This was very successful in terms of attendance and feedback from attendees. ERIC and the TVNP are currently developing ideas to incorporate an annual conference aimed at developing and strengthening the wildlife recording skills of volunteers, especially "Friends of groups" into the TV WILD Green Places Project as a partnership initiative with the TVNP.

## **11. National LNP Evaluation**

Defra are to publish an evaluation study of LNPs in the New Year. The purpose of the evaluation is to take stock of progress to date and facilitate learning and knowledge sharing among LNPs with common priorities. A pre-publication copy of the evaluation has been sent to LNP Coordinators. The TVNP is one of six selected as a case study. A second round of evaluation has been commissioned by Defra, to be completed by July 2014.

## From Vision to Strategy and Work Plan

### 1. Where we are now

The TVNP has a vision statement and a set of objectives. Our vision and objectives are very broad and non specific as you expect them to be for a partnership with a wide remit and membership. They are not significantly different from those of other LNPs. They were developed through workshops during the development of the TVNP so they are very much owned by the partnership. These provide the partnership with a clear and strong sense of purpose.

A web based vision document provides a vehicle for communication for the TVNP. This is a concise and attractive publication which gives introduction to the TVNP; its remit, structure, vision, aspirations, and objectives. An interactive Ecosystem Services diagram provides background with a range of specific examples and case studies from the Tees Valley: <http://teesvalleynaturepartnership.org.uk/>

To be an effective partnership that makes a difference locally we need to have a strong focus to maintain momentum, a clear understanding of the natural environment that we are seeking to campaign and strengthen, a clear ambition for what an improved natural environment looks like, identify opportunities for a range of sectors and organisations to contribute and have clarity in what the TVNP can contribute to achieving this. A robust mechanism to measure and monitor progress is also required.

The TVNP Board and Management Groups have been considering how to build on the vision and objectives to develop a strategic/work plan, with various approaches suggested. To take this forward a “Single Focus “ workshop was held on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2013 to which all Board and Management Group members were invited. This was attended by 22 people representing 17 organisations. The output of this meeting was discussed and further developed at the TVNP Management Group meeting on the 11<sup>th</sup> December.

### 2. Proposed strategy and work plan framework

It is proposed that two separate but interlinked documents are produced:

- A. A statement of ambition for the Tees Valley’s Natural Environment
- B. TVNP work plan

#### A. A statement of ambition for the Tees Valley’s Natural Environment

##### Purpose

This is planned as an outward facing medium to long term document that will help partner organisations to develop projects that contribute to the ambitions of the TVNP and create an understanding of the natural environment and the role it plays in the Tees Valley across different sectors.

The purpose of the strategy statement is to show how the ‘vision’ can be taken forward, in particular it will:

- Describe what we want the Tees Valley’s ‘natural environment’ to look like in 5, 10, 15, 20+ years
- Demonstrate how a ‘healthy natural environment’ complements and is linked with sustainable development and growth in the Tees Valley – economic and social objectives
- Explain the benefits of a healthy natural environment – obvious ones such as more birds, plants and animals (diverse biodiversity) and less obvious ones such as air & water quality (and other ecosystem services), better health and wellbeing (mental and physical), opportunities for education, improved quality of place



(which in turn can encourage more people to invest and live in an area), more opportunities for recreation, leisure and tourism

- Help different sectors to understand what the natural environment ‘can do for them’ (i.e. answer the question “what’s in it for me/us?”)
- Demonstrate the potential role of different sectors and players – can range from a simple change in attitude and way of thinking to small scale and large scale investment
- Show how the LNP can/will work with other sectors, agencies etc.
- Show how we can build on what the Tees Valley has already got, i.e. existing natural assets
- Identify the key priorities and activities to inform the development of the TVNP work plan (that will be regularly reviewed and updated)

## **Proposed structure, ambitions and priorities**

The following format and broad content is suggested:

### **1. The purpose**

### **2. Who are the TVNP and the natural environment sector?**

- Short description of TVNP, its role and structure set in national context of LNPs and the Natural Environment White Paper.
- Briefly describe environmental sector (in diagrammatic format)

### **3. Our natural assets**

- Taking a landscape scale approach, provide a clear overview of the varied natural assets (illustrated with maps) using the Tees Valley Natural Network and Opportunities Mapping project. Focus on habitats and species of England of principal importance (England version of UK BAP), their distribution and connectivity as well as urban green infrastructure.
- Focus on what is special and distinctive in Tees Valley

### **4. The value of the Tees Valley’s natural assets**

*-This is an important section as it provides the hooks for other sectors*

- Describe multiple benefits of a healthy natural environment in broad terms then focus on key strands of the value of natural environment in the Tees Valley as contributing to health and wellbeing, economy and inward investment, mitigation for climate change, the visitor economy ( with some brief examples).
- Diagram/ box of ecosystem services

### **5. Working for a better natural environment for the Tees Valley**

- 3 ambitions (broad themes) taken from the Natural Environment White Paper.

#### **a. Natural Assets - Protecting and improving the natural environment**

#### **b. Natural Health - Reconnecting people and nature**

#### **c. Natural Growth - Growing the green economy**

For each of these themes;

- Conduct a SWOT analysis
- Describe current situation, rationale and opportunities
- Identify broad priorities , anticipated outcomes
- What the TVNP will contribute

-The Single Focus meeting provided much material for the SWOT analysis and ideas for priorities that can be used in this section. These are currently being developed and prioritised and can be discussed at the meeting.

## 6. Table - Pursuing strategic objectives

	Evidence & need	Our activities	What we will achieve	Lead and key partners	Contribution to national and local policy
Protecting and improving natural environment					
Reconnecting people with nature					
Growing the Green Economy					

### B. Purpose of work plan

This would be a short and medium term plan that will set out the activities of the Partnership, who is doing them, time frames, milestones, and outputs. It will enable us to review the effectiveness of the partnership. We will use the five themes agreed by the board in 2013:

1. Developing a strong partnership
2. Championing the role of natural environment
3. Clear, knowledgeable voice for natural environment
4. Opportunities for people to experience, access, enjoy and benefit from the natural environment
5. Partnership working for an improved natural environment

The TVNP is a partnership not an organisation. We need to decide if the plan is that the work is done by partners through the TVNP, or if in addition it captures work that is being delivered by partner organisations which contributes to the Statement of Ambition document.

### 4. What is asked of the Board

- To review the framework for the TVNP strategic documents.
- To provide additional strategic steer for the production of the Statement of Ambition and Work Plan.
- Agree the establishment of a task and finish group to produce the plans, composed of three members of the Management Group and at least one Board member.