

Terms of Reference:

TVNP Natural Assets Working Group

1. Introduction

The Working Groups come under the umbrella of the Tees Valley Nature Partnership which is governed by a board/steering group. Please refer to [Tees Valley Nature Partnership full terms of reference](#)

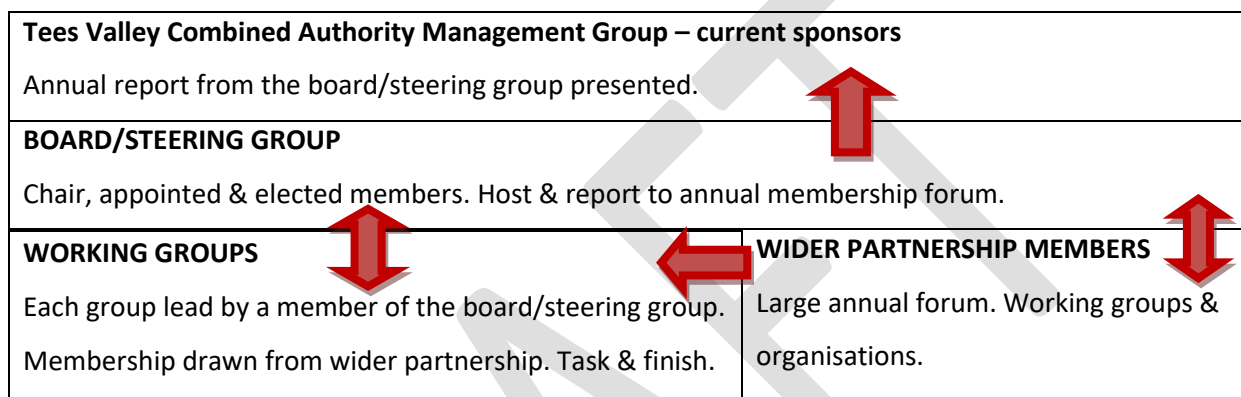


Figure 1: Conceptual Structure of the Partnership

1.1 TVNP board/steering group

As of 22nd September 2016, the new TVNP board/steering group agreed the structure set out above. The board/steering group comprises of up to 18 members, please refer the [Structure of the TVNP for more details](#) The board/steering group steers the partnership & provides strategic leadership and direction for the work of the TVNP. This includes; implementing strategic decisions by developing delivery mechanisms (e.g. ratifying recommendations made by working groups), monitoring, taking action and reviewing progress against the partnerships ambitions and priorities within the TVNP Business Plan, communicating with the delivery groups to ensure effective working and supporting the Partnership with knowledge, expertise and recommendations as required.

1.2 Working groups - general

Membership of the working groups are from the full Partnership members. The number and remit of these groups will be fluid to meet the developing needs of the partnership. It is anticipated that some of these will be able to function effectively as email groups. A Nature and Planning working group was established in June 2016

1.3 Broader context of the work of the group

Formerly the Local Sites Partnership for the Tees Valley. The remit was endorsing and adopting local sites (LWS, Local Wildlife Sites and LGS, Local Geological Sites) as proposed by the Tees Valley local authorities and ensuring that appropriate mechanisms were in place to monitor their management.

Since then the national context for biodiversity and conservation has changed with the publication of the [Natural Environment White Paper](#) launched by the Government in June 2011. Based on the findings of the Lawton report 2010 – [Making Space for Nature](#). The report argues that we need a step-change in our approach to wildlife conservation, from trying to hang on to what we have, to one of large-scale habitat restoration and recreation, under-pinned by the re-establishment of ecological processes and ecosystem services, for the benefits of both people and wildlife.

The move from focused species, habitat and site protection to a more landscape scale approach underpins a whole new set of methodologies. This has given rise to; LNP's, NIAs (Nature Improvement Areas), policies within the NPPF & NPPG (National Planning Policy Framework and associated guidance), and River Catchment Partnerships for example. This in turn has led to major funders, namely the HLF adopting this approach through their Landscape Partnerships grant programme.

The Improved Local Biodiversity Indicator (NI 197) records the proportion of Local Sites where positive conservation management has been or is being implemented. This was (is?) reported annually as part of a suite of indicators local government has/d to report to... (formerly the Audit Commission). Recent research (Jeremy has details) has shown fewer and fewer LA's are making returns on this indicator. This perhaps reflects that there has been a significant decline in Local Authorities resources both in terms of budgets and staff to service this system.

With a change in national context and local circumstances the pre-existing system of Local Site designation, reporting and management has changed to reflect the shift in priority and reduced resources.

2. Proposal

2.1 Remit of the group:

A new TVNP Business Plan is being compiled due for sign off on 19th September 2018. This aims to streamline and refocus the TVNP from the actions laid out in the Current Delivery Plan. We need to identify what we keep from the following 2.1.1, 2.1.2 and 2.1.3.

2.1.1 Actions identified in the TVNP Delivery Plan for the LSWG:

- Produce a report on the distribution, importance and condition of the Tees Valley 's key habitats and species as a baseline for priority actions in the future. (Report 2 - TVNP Plan).
<http://teesvalleynaturepartnership.org.uk/resources/natural-networks-opportunity-maps/> The maps and descriptions on this link could form the basis of this report.
- Identify current and planned projects in core habitat areas – summarising in broad terms what we are already doing (TVNP Plan). A follow on from 'Report 2'
- Identify a 'work programme' based on baseline report (TVNP Plan)
- Work out/examine ideas of how to mutually resource work needed on identified sites (TVNP Plan)

2.1.2 Assist Planning:

- Oversee and progress the Biodiversity Opportunity Areas. The Central Farmland Pilot is complete, East Cleveland needs completing, Middlesbrough mapped in draft,
- Comment on Tees Valley wide large-scale planning applications (need to be more specific)?
- Develop a set of indicators for monitoring local biodiversity that are common to all local plans (oops this is probably too late!)
- local guidance to ensure developers plan positively for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure
- Help develop local off-setting and mitigation policy.
- Inform Natural Capital Investment Plan for the Tees/Tees Valley.
- Help develop supplementary guidance on incorporating biodiversity in developments.
- Support the delivery of CPD workshops for local planners on nature and biodiversity.

2.1.3 Other:

- Reformed Local Sites system to link up habitat islands and green spaces in mosaic – landscape approach and simplify criteria for LWS designation (Phil's proposal)

- Ecological expertise assessing Landscape Partnership bids? What role in the new HLF grants 2019 onwards.

2.3 Communication

E-mail correspondence with quarterly meeting 2 weeks before the TVNP board/steering group meeting is held.

2.4 What next?

- Please high-light the actions in 2.1 that you agree with
- Select/suggest appropriate name 2.2
- Add any further comments on this proposal

TO BE AGREED AT 12th SEPTEMBER NATURAL ASSETS MEETING

DRAFT