



**NAWG Minutes**  
**02/06/2021**  
**Zoom**

<b>Attending</b>	<b>Fiona Hurworth</b> Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council; <b>Dave Askey</b> Stockton Borough Council; <b>Martin Allen</b> independent ecologist; <b>Rachel Murtagh</b> TVNP; <b>Tom Stephenson</b> Hartlepool Council; <b>Paul Stevens</b> ERIC; <b>Annemarie Mehl</b> Tees Valley Wildlife Trust; <b>Simon Blenkinsop</b> Middlesbrough Council
<b>Apologies</b>	<b>Mike Leaky</b> INCA;
<b>Chair</b>	<b>Jeremy Garside</b> Tees Valley Wildlife Trust
<b>Secretariat</b>	<b>Louise Richards</b> , Tees Valley Nature Partnership

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Notes</b>	<b>Action</b>
<b>NA/01.02.20</b>	Review of the minutes of the last meeting	
<b>NA/02.02.20</b>	<p><i>Ongoing maintenance of sites moving forward</i></p> <p>Wide ranging discussion of the need to review the status and condition of Local Wildlife Sites and other Natural Assets as a basis for Nature Recovery Strategies as well as other aspirations for maintaining and improving biodiversity, enabling biodiversity offsetting, delivering improvements from the Defra LWS reporting, supporting joint working, skills exchange and even shared machinery across the Tees Valley.</p> <p>RM updated on the green recovery fund and suggested that an initial audit could be supported through TVNP funds.</p> <p>Has anything been done on the DEFRA Metric as we haven't been asked to report on this in the past 3 years? Management can be poor as little can be done and counted as positive management - we could do better?</p> <p>General discussion on cut and collect machines for borough councils and information from <b>MA</b> that Hartlepool has a cut and collect machine.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Would be good to have a collective machinery resource for all councils to use</li> </ul> <p>There is scope for us to reflect back some proposals to the local authorities.</p>	<b>JG &amp; RM</b> to draft a study brief which would then be circulated for input from all group members

<sup>1</sup> TVNP is hosted by, and accountable to Tees Valley Wildlife Trust registered charity # 511068 and as such any financial transactions are regulated by the Charity Commission

	<p><b>MA</b> working on mapping areas that can be left uncut as part of their management but this is on a specific mapping programme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ You need a system to inform people who manage the sites of the work they should be doing as each area has their own system.</li> </ul> <p>Summary - we are initially looking at a data audit, but would need to put a brief together which fits the purposes for which the information can be best used.</p>	
<p><b>NA/03.02.20</b></p>	<p><i>Update on proposed LWS sites:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. St Joseph’s Cemetery Grassland <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Update from <b>RM</b></li> </ol> </li> <li>2. <a href="#">Stainton Way</a> Grassland <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Update from <b>RM</b></li> <li>b. While discussing Middlesbrough sites, <b>SB</b> also gave an update on Lower Ormesby Beck (now being called “Middle Marsh”). The Council is now fully supportive of managing the majority of this site as a nature reserve – warmly welcomed by the group. <b>SB</b> gave an indication of how boundaries might differ from the original site selection put forward by NAWG, to take into account an area which was still allocated for commercial use (an implication of the land transfer from Homes England) and an extended area along Ormesby Beck to give continuity to the SSSI. <b>SB</b> was keen to see if this could be covered by a single designation, but there was concern that it might not all fit with LWS criteria. <b>AM</b> agreed to investigate this through her project work.</li> </ol> </li> </ol> <p><i>Outstanding LWS recommendations:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. <a href="#">South Bank Station</a> Black Path Grassland <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Update from <b>MA and FH</b></li> </ol> <p><b>FH</b> had looked into the ownership and circulated information to the Group by email. With the majority of the land in public ownership and the remaining area of (Network Rail) being covered by the Black Path (PROW), it was agreed that the site should now proceed for selection.</p> </li> <li>4. <a href="#">Aislaby Grange</a> A67 road verge Grassland <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Update from <b>DA</b></li> </ol> </li> <li>5. <a href="#">Bishopsgarth Grassland</a> (Hardwick Dene Grassland) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <b>On hold</b></li> </ol> </li> <li>6. <a href="#">Greystones A174</a> central reservation Grassland – <b>on hold</b></li> <li>7. Blackwell Grange Golf Course – <b>on hold</b></li> <li>8. Brass Castle Lane Grassland <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. On hold pending further visits from <b>MA and SB</b></li> </ol> </li> </ol> <p><i>Other Sites</i></p> <p>Billingham Beck Saltmarsh North On pause until site survey this summer</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sent letters and are awaiting a response (no problems envisaged)</li> <li>2a. Also awaiting formal response (no problems envisaged)</li> <li>2b. <b>AM</b> to report back with plans and descriptions of the area proposed for Middle Marsh</li> <li>3. <b>FH and MA</b> to compile the site selection information (boundary map, land ownership and LWS criteria) ready for TVNP Steering Group.</li> <li>4. <b>DA</b> to discuss this with Wilkinsons (landowner).</li> </ol>

<b>NA/04.02.20</b>	<p><i>Invasive Species on LWS'</i></p> <p><b>MA</b> reported seeing few-flowered garlic, a Schedule 9 invasive species, growing on a LWS. He asked whether we needed an action to record and eradicate invasives and whether their presence rendered a site as being in Poor Condition.</p> <p><b>RM</b> reported that the Tees Rivers Trust / Tees Catchment Partnership were producing an Invasive Species strategy. It was agreed that the Group could review this to see if it would be applicable to LWS and non-riparian habitats, too.</p>	<b>RM</b> to share TCP Invasive Non-Native Species strategy when it becomes available.
<b>NA/05.02.20</b>	<p><i>Update from Rachel Murtagh</i></p> <p>Natural Innovation Hub</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Looking at blended finance to help pay for initiatives.</li> <li>▪ It is very difficult to put natural capital value on biodiversity.</li> <li>▪ How can we make this happen in Tees Valley?</li> <li>▪ Involved in 2 bids at the moment</li> <li>▪ 1<sup>st</sup> is the environment readiness fund for the natural innovation hub. It's short term funding channelled through TVWT</li> <li>▪ 2<sup>nd</sup> bid is to the community of renewal fund (central government funding) bid is focused on the net zero plan for Tees valley. Will find out in July about this bid</li> <li>▪ Carbon offsetting is a part of this but should be seen as a second not first resource.</li> </ul>	
<b>NA/06.02.20</b> AOB	<p><b>DA</b> reported on a bid submitted to Highways England biodiversity fund for Billingham Beck Valley. Highways England will make a decision on this on 28<sup>th</sup> of June, the scheme will attract £1.8 million. Delivery will be led by the Environment Agency, but is on Stockton land. Please read over and send in comments</p> <p><b>JG</b> reported on progress with District Level Licencing on Great crested Newts - TVWT is now a pond delivery agent and will be creating 10 ponds in Tees Valley. Have gone to farmers initially as it would be a great way to engage with private landowners (much of Groups previous LWS work has been with Local Authorities and Environment Sector). Despite this, there is a lot of scope so if anyone has a site that could use a pond, please do let <b>JG</b> know.</p> <p><b>PS</b> reported that Natural England is looking to update the Ancient Woodland Inventory for the whole of the North East and to also map ancient woodland under 2Ha as well. This opportunity will be considered by the ERIC board, but <b>PS</b> wanted to gauge interest, support, and data held in Tees Valley. <b>MA</b> and <b>JG</b> had significant amounts of data on ancient woodland sites in the Tees Valley, which would make the task reasonably straight forward here. There was unanimous support for seeing the work completed.</p> <p><b>MA</b> has some more potential wildlife sites that need to be surveyed - A67 road verge and a site near the OK diner near Elwick – which he will report on at a future meeting.</p>	
Next meeting	Wednesday 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2.00 pm over Zoom	