

Dorset LNP Annual Forum 5 March 2020

Introduction & meeting – Chaired by Simon Cripps

- Purpose and structure of the LNP.
- A game of two halves
 - Continued declines and concerns.
 - A lot of work being done and greater understanding.
- Voices for Dorset Launch
 - A third narrative approach to show the value of nature to Dorset.
 - Support for the implementation of the Government's 25 Year Plan.
 - Local, personal expert views on each 25 YP subject.
- Voices for Dorset recommendations
 - A joined-up approach from government needed.
 - Investment in habitats, soils and sea.
 - An effective nature recovery network needed (this workshop).
 - Support for farmers, landowners to provide public benefit.
 - Application of the net gain principle in all cases.
 - No harm to irreplaceable habitats.
 - Support for sustainability.
 - Sustainable fishing and restoration of the marine environment.
 - Investment in environment through the LIS.
 - Healthcare investment for health benefits.

Workshop Session – Chaired by Tom Munro

Feedback Summary

1. What does a Nature Recovery Plan (NRP) need in it?

- Proper (comprehensive) connectivity of thinking, plan delivery, results between urban/rural areas – ‘fudging’ or removing boundaries.
- Just as much about people as it is about nature.
- Data and evidence are key, baselines from which to work and considering condition of existing areas and networks.
- Yes, include the new and radical but also look at what we’re doing/planning already – give structure legitimacy to this. Look to short/medium/long term aims and get on with the obvious. Focus on the what not the planning.

2. Who should be part of the plan-making process?

- Cross-sector network including experts, stakeholders, delivery agents & beneficiaries.
- Be inclusive (of people and geographies). Involve people at a scale that is relevant to them.
- Partnership approach involving existing partnerships to prepare, plan. Wider consultation similar to Local Plan approach.
- Everyone to ensure cover.

3. How can we ensure that the NRP for the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (DAONB) assists nature recovery across the rest of Dorset?

- It should just be one process, we want something over-arching (i.e. reduce the number of documents, don't increase them).
- Consistency of messaging and approach across plans. Planning organisations → allowing 'bleed-across' beyond boundaries.
- Make model transferable and recognize that need from the start.
- Through people we involve – important to include people outside AONB – the principles should be applicable throughout the county.

4. Do we need to monitor progress in delivery and, if so, how? What are the measures of success?

- Broad range of metrics, qualitative and quantitative which incorporate people's perceptions and experience (e.g. capturing value of nature) but are real and meaningful rather than 'easy to count'.
- Monitor Nature Recovery priorities but use this to tell stories/inspire people and lead to change.
- SMART targets, tangible results, regular reporting.
- Success looks like declines halted & nature recovering, and, it feels like it's recovering so people will be happier. We're not here writing on flip-charts but in nature listening to skylarks.

Detailed Discussion

1. What does a Nature Recovery Plan (NRP) need in it?

Engaging / Collaborative

- Shared vision – should be simple, engaging and bringing in all relevant groups.
- Plans need to be relevant to wider range of people.
- Concise, encourage others to take ownership.
- How do you make relevant to ALL people e.g. how do you change behaviours such as making people walk dogs on leads?
- Ensure partners. Partnership and plans in Dorset join up.
- Need involvement in plan development & importance to them made clear and communicated.
- Need a variety of strategies to engage groups, making the case for each one.
- Need to make clear to landowners ‘why this plan, and NR more widely, is important – will also need to help re-connect people with their own, immediate, landscape.
- Landowners not forced, follow enthusiasm – they should become champions.
- Should help people better understand reasons for restoration and recreation.
- Community involvement.
- Links to communities/local groups e.g. Trees for Dorset.
- Working with neighbouring organisations in partnerships, across boundaries (Note that, Nature does not recognize boundaries).

Evidence

- Baseline – where are we now? What are we going to? Countywide? Specific target areas?
- Baseline is that there is good evidence in DAONB.
- Baseline of what ‘Nature’ we have now and what we had.
- Baseline data – needs to be consistent
- Data should lead you to what nature should be recovered so need to include hydrology, geology, soils, slope etc.
- Data is key! Baselines from which to work.
- Improving existing data, encouraging people to get out more and record. Esp. in urban areas not usually looked at.
- Include data on sites already being restored – need continuity.
- Mapping tell the local story, show the territory, Network map is being updated.
- Maps, essential and data behind needs to be reliable.
- Map of the area concerned – boundary of NRN, buffers, consider whether the boundary is fixed or flexible.
- Digital & Interactive maps.
- Link to other maps of Dorset.
- Important to understand land ownership. There is no central system to easily identify this.
- Look at the desk-study/data audit – e.g. existing Econet.
- Consideration of existing best-practice.
- Could make use of landscape character profiles/natural area information.
- Underpinned by guidance for detail.

Themes

- Biodiversity / habitat.
 - Habitat and species, maintain and enhance.

- Gradations and choices – best possible habitat, worst choices and in-between.
- Considering condition of existing areas – many e.g. SSSI in poor condition – need good basis to work from.
- Detail within ecological network.
- Futureproofing, landscape resilience.
- Should include soil and water – essential to nature.
- Soils conservation and enhancement.
- Area by area vision – right habitat in right place.
- Environmental Land Management Schemes (ELMS).
- Land & Policy engagement. ELMS.
- Opportunity for supporting SNCIs examining current status, liaising with Landowners.
- Plans should also take account of people and how they are impacted and use of landscape.
- Marine/sea-scape – Boundary, IFCA =3miles, Fisheries =6miles Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) /MC Area (MCA).
- Marine environment.
- Resources – quantifying, natural capital.
- Links to cross cutting agendas.
 - Climate and Ecological Action Plans.
 - Close links with climate change actions.
 - Health/socio-economic etc.
 - Stock of opportunities, socio-economic as well as ecological. Linking with other agendas e.g. health/welfare benefits.
 - Cross-cutting with health, sustainability, other ‘people’ themes but not lose focus of the Nature improvement – getting buy-in universally.
 - LA economic development.
 - Local Plan.
 - Links with planning process to prepare LNRS.
 - Support for work by urban/semi-urban action groups to deliver – e.g. funding, guidance.
 - Issues, challenges (e.g. DC etc, increased population, high-density developments leading to higher concentration of people).
 - Re-state fundamentals and principles – EIA/Forestry Act etc.
 - Measures and enablers.
- Education and Young People
 - Youth/Schools/Forest Schools.
 - Better links between education (Life-long learning) curricula science of natural history agriculture etc.

Measurable

- Plan must be SMART.
- Should be measurable and deliverable.
- Make clear - How & Who are going to deliver it. Partnership will be delivering including Landowners.
- Timeline? Milestones & action plan.
- Themes against which the actions deliver
- Access long-term targeted sustainable investment
- Actions – updatable, live.
- Clear objectives for the whole area.
- Think also - feedback/collation of action/impact of action. Success and failures – allow adaptive approach.
- Identify short/medium/long term elements. Get things moving quickly. Don’t just sit around ‘planning’.

Outcomes

- Protect what we already have.
- What about conflict between increased population & planning & biodiversity conservation & enhancement.
- Development will happen. Plan should mitigate development impacts and resources be used for a net gain. In biodiversity, eco-system services.
- Getting concrete commitments & embedding with Local Plans, policy and 'normal working' – economic plans (accountability).
- Change is going to happen, either intentionally or by DC therefore plan needs 'adaptive management', i.e. maintain dynamic.
- Set of criteria or standards.
- Aims – what do we want to achieve?
- Cycle of review and updating – AONB Management Plan cycle/LNRS cycle.
- Need to maintain & enhance current network as well as identify potential to add to these.
- Look for potential! Areas not designated but could be valuable, looking for connectivity.
- Look to link small areas by prioritizing easy wins.
- Scoring habitats to monitor progress, improving a habitat from Grade 2 to 3.
- Give everyone encouragement to do anything useful, e.g. in garden, do not need a Plan but it will help nature to recover.
- Needs a people-focused plan, ensure wide engagement.
- Plan can just give structure and legitimacy to what is already being done, doesn't all have to be new, especially short-term elements.

Area

- Whole idea needs marketing.
- Defined area, whole county – eventually.
 - Built environment v AONB.
- Needs to cover all of Dorset if possible, not just the AONBs.
- Would be good to consider areas over county and borders as well.

Practical Considerations

- Legible plan-English summary.
- Context is required – as part of issues and challenges e.g. exit from EU.
- 'Top-down' framework \leftrightarrow 'Bottom-up' also very important to make relevant.
- Mapping, illustrations, make it not too technical.
- Note, urban v rural take care re policies etc. Be aware of power/dynamics.
- Ability to map/commit personal pledges.
- Range of options – flow charts.

Other

- Network central point for volunteers sharing resources across projects/organisations (noting need for Data protection!).
- Central framework for parish/neighbourhood plans to key into.
- Joining up with neighbouring NR plans.
- Part of the plan should be a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).
- Duty to co-operate between BCP & DC to ensure all opportunities are realised.
- Farm clusters are important.

- Understand external effects.
- DCF parallel - iCOAST/Dorset Explorer.
- Present system and aspiration for the future.
- Balance use of local resource.
- Local skills of our workforce – rural skills, need to be valued.
- Beavers!

2. Who should be part of the plan-making process?

- Need to ensure ALL groups are represented.
- Everybody!
- Build a 'coalition of the willing'.
- Expertise in 'mechanics of delivery'.
- Decision-makers.
- Parish/Town & Unitary Authorities (UAs)
 - Planning
 - Green space
 - Communities
 - Transport
 - Record centres - lots of experience and data, needs funding!
 - DAPTC - Maybe use as a conduit to residents.
- Communities / the public
 - Citizens/residents (especially important for BCP. Note may be relevant to gardeners)
 - Neighbourhood Plans / parishes / Neighbourhood Forums
 - Citizen's assembly
 - U3A
 - Sports groups – own/manage a lot of greenspace
 - Diversity
- Schools & young people
 - Schools
 - Universities
 - KMC
 - Youth parliament / Council
- Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs)
 - Dorset Wildlife Trust (DWT)
 - RSPB
 - National Trust
 - Woodland Trust
 - ARC
 - Butterfly Conservation
 - Nature Plan groups
- Other partnerships
 - Catchment Partnerships
 - Dorset Coast Forum
 - FLAG
 - Fishing organisations
- All LNP members
- Health

- NHS
- Health and Wellbeing Board
- Public Health
- Other Public bodies
 - Emergency Services
- Statutory bodies
 - Defra
 - Natural England
 - Forestry Commission
 - MoD
 - Environment Agency
 - Railway
 - Highways England
 - MMO
 - SIFCA
- Business (potential funders)
 - Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) (potential for funding)
 - Network Rail/Highways
 - Utility companies e.g. Water, Telephones, Electricity etc.
 - Portland/Poole Ports
 - Businesses keen to invest in CSR / sustainability
 - Business groups
 - Landowners/agriculture (NFU/CLA) - all types of land including major estates.
 - BID groups
 - Chambers of Commerce
 - Tenants
 - Mineral developers
 - Housing developers
 - Businesses for action social responsibility, employee well-being
- Rural surveyors/professional (Not sure how involved in planning they would be?)
- Local media (e.g. Dorset Echo)
- Academics (White Paper evidence) and students (they are a resource)
- Other matters for consideration:
 - Scale -what is landscape scale?
 - What level of details is required?
 - Communicate impacts.
 - Timescale – e.g. 5, 10, 25-year plan?
 - Scale dictates who is affected.
 - NRP should feed into other Supplementary Planning Guidance.
 - Potential source of funds through CSR.
 - Businesses which have negative impact.
 - Understand overlapping agendas – enables working together.
 - Awareness of what is happening in terms of markets/policy.
 - Communication to avoid duplication of effort.
 - Sensitivity to Woodland Planning by Forestry Commission.
 - Engage everyone via consultation.
 - Similar process to Climate & Environmental Emergency.
 - Reach out to those not already involved.
 - Stakeholder meetings.

- Working with neighbouring organisations in partnership, across boundaries.
- Partnership approach with facilitator. For preparing plan.
- Each key partner has the right expertise to deliver different aspects.
- Consultation on draft plan and ensure diverse people to review it – e.g. similar to Local Plan approach.
- Can use existing skilled workforce – contacts with schools.
- Making sure public understand our aims – no backlash against tree-felling in heathland!
- Marketing is important = consistency of message.
- 2 critical strands are:
 - What do people do? Behaviours/awareness/take action.
 - Where it happens, land management decisions.
- Use of social media.

3. How can we ensure that the NRP for the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (DAONB) assists nature recovery across the rest of Dorset?

Replicable / joint plan

- This should be exactly the same plan for all of Dorset, no reason it should be different.
- Would be good to have a place where all relevant plans are – can the LNP/AONB help with this? Accessible in one place.
- DAONB policy → wider Dorset.
- Whatever happens in DAONB methodology should be replicable to rest of Dorset.
- The principles should be applicable throughout the county.
- Objectives/vision should also be easily transferable.
- Ensure list of partners for AONB also involves those outside the AONB. Be inclusive.
- Not just Dorset but feeding into surrounding counties.
- Ensure link-up with other's agendas.
- Influence other organisations to start preparing now.
- Pilot for Dorset.

Measures to expand area

- Urban as well as rural.
- Corridors beyond and whole catchment.
- Buffer zones around boundary to 'trickle out' the effects of protection beyond the boundary, e.g. along the coast.
- Nature Recovery Network (NRN) in Green Infrastructure (GI) Plans, bio-diversity Plans, Local Plans.
- Embed in Local Planning process.
- Work with the communities note: political will is at different levels.
- Training opportunities is essential. Need councillors on-board (not just the councillors, all residents).
- Use NRP as a blueprint/test.
- Work with other counties – South West, LNRS partnership.
- Break it down to start with: targeted to LCAs but need to work hard to make sure they link.
- Through the people we involve – important to include people outside AONB.
- We have key habitats and key species in Dorset – need to ensure these locally important species as well as nationally important. Locally specific toolkits for each habitat and species.
- The two AONBs (& adjacent ones, New Forest and NP) should work together.
- Work with parks programme (urban areas) and Stour Valley initiative.

- Involve JCT and their plan.
- Work with catchment partnerships – e.g. if includes Stour that cover a large area of Dorset outside the AONBs.
- How does near/in AONBs affect the area outside it? Look at impacts.

Communication

- Consistency of message across plans. Linking and amplifying rather than duplicating.
- Demonstrate success in DAONB, provide examples of best practice.
- Champions can ‘sell’ it beyond AONB – ripple effect.
- Link to visitor/resident experience.
- Simple messaging – what’s being shared. Be clear about how can get involved.
- Tell people about it – raise awareness.
- Workshops to communicate/inform.
- Iterating that everyone is responsible, everyone benefits, everyone can do something.
- Engage everyone in Dorset from beginning not just AONB area.
- Celebrate success.
- Case studies.
- Look for best practice.
- Embed/behaviours change – re natural environment so they become part of lifestyle.
- Lessons learned – can do what worked.

Practical steps

- Don’t create new groups - use existing.
- Collaboration to build funding partnerships.
- Build-in evaluation against targets and soft evaluations.
- Feedback on training.
- Involve partners like Bournemouth University for feedback/monitoring.
- Don’t just preach to the converted.
- Funding – but careful not to put people off!
- Look at central government to support.
- Work out value of what has been achieved.
- Work with retailers to recognise cost of change.

4. Do we need to monitor progress in delivery and, if so, how? What are the measures of success?

Monitor progress?

- Agree, need to monitor.
- AONB targets & LCA targets must be SMART.
- SMART targets.
- Yes, need to monitor.

How?

- UAs – Dorset Environmental Records Centre (DERC) i.e. do once, do well!
- Key Performance Indicators (KPI) i.e. against Plan objectives.
- MEASURES – Use National measures. Need measures to be SMART.
- Measure against baseline.
- Celebrations – community events which are joyful act as a means of collecting anecdotal evidence.

- Joined-up and sharing data (centralised by whom?).
- Should be done in a way that empowers people.
- Basic target = area covered by functioning map – measures.
- Understand responses – adapt methods that are not working.
- Share understanding – encouragement.
- Link-up with university students.
- Range of formats for a range of audiences.
- Data is really important. Linked to purpose of the plan and/or to stated targets.
- NRP could use AONB baseline.
- Measure negative and positive trends.
- Set against the national picture.
- Tangible results.
- Regular reviews of our own mapping of Econet.
- Scoring (urban Econet) – repeat of this.
- Regular reporting.
- Outreach success/conversion (improving perceptions).
- Look at what it does feel like rather than rigid targets.
- Will still need mapping.
- Measure things that people can get involved in measuring.
- Make monitoring ‘owned’ widely not reliant on one person or one organization and not reliant on short-term funding.

Monitoring opportunities

- Things like natural capital accounting can be used we’d like to think someone, somewhere could quantify stuff in detail if we want to, but don’t get hung up on it.
- Species/habitat monitoring – but, need funding to be realistic.
- Martin Down farm cluster has a set of ‘key species’ – target is just more of these. Not rocket science.
- River fly monitoring useful ‘citizen science’ technique.
- Biodiversity data collections -> connectivity matrix.
 - Routine surveys.
 - Consistent & comparable.
 - Inclusive (value ‘citizen science’).
 - Targeted e.g. indicator species (sightings of etc.).
- Natural Value Report – periodical review every 2-4 years.
- State of the environment.
- State of nature reporting. Habitat coverage, species population, work with local recording groups.
- Quality of Life (QOL) surveys.
- Not just ‘things’ but also people’s perceptions
 - How do you feel? (healthier? happier?).
 - How important is nature to you? (need well framed questions to test understanding).
- Enablers
 - Connectivity measure.
 - High nature value.
 - % of land being managed for NR.

Practical considerations

- Think monitoring from the outset. Consider the difference between outcomes and outputs.
- Outcomes: short learning / medium behaviour / long condition.

- How to be funded? Needs to be long-term.
- Two, linked, elements monitoring and mentoring.
- Not just positives, look at losses and use this to help influence.
- Need appropriate financial mechanisms and use other funding mechanisms to do so.
- Difficult because NR can take time, but we need to show results sooner leading to behaviour change.
- Need to be creative about people's involvement (e.g. use social media).
- How do you decide on what successful outcome is? Different outcomes for different people.
- Consistent methodology.
- Not just monitoring but also the narrative that can be used for behaviour change.

Measures of success

- More biodiversity (against national indexes).
- Greater access to green spaces.
- Improvement against nature deprivation index.
- Purpose = recover nature. This will be quite specific for habitats 2nd tier less specific e.g. increase connectivity via hedgerows.
- Don't just measure decline.
- ELMS success – farmers and wider countryside.
- Need to know what's been lost – but climate change means historic baseline is not necessarily what we are aiming for.
- Changes in practices – land management.
- More skylarks and everyone is happier.
- Keystone/flagship/iconic species are doing well.
- No conferences to discuss what to do about it, just celebrations.
- Be able to look at 2014 State of Nature Report and see real change, real hope.
- To have halted decline. Show increase in habitat and species.
- Water bodies in good condition.

Panel Q&A Session – chaired by Will Bond

Panel members: Tom Munro (Dorset AONB), Julie Melin-Stubbs (New Forest National Park), Mollie Taylor (Bournemouth University), Cllr Felicity Rice (BCP Council) – apologies were given from Cllr Ray Bryan (Dorset Council) due to illness.

Will Bond introduced the session highlighting that climate change gets attention; young people would like to see more done for wildlife – e.g. nature can recover if we allow it to, so there should be more focus. He agreed with Mollie's presentation.

Question 1: What can they do to help (mitigate) climate change and nature recovery? And How can they get more young people involved?

Mollie: Link in with community groups, secondary schools & colleges.

Tom: Local knowledge is important in delivering action, and encouraging broad buy-in. Many Parish Councils encourage a more sustainable way of life locally.

Julie: The New Forest asked 40 Parish Councils if they wanted to be involved in the community project. This resulted in buy-in from the Parish Councils and worked with residents to up-skill them in conducting surveys etc. There are lots of keen naturalists, so need to find a way to focus their attention.

Felicity: BCP are holding Youth and Community Assemblies. She noted that facilitation is important. Need to build up a list of individuals and businesses who may have declared climate and ecological emergencies – noting that while some businesses haven't declared this some their staff might be keen, so that could be a way in.

Question 2: Who should be paying for plan delivery and how can we get them to pay?

Tom: Investment will come from many sources: Environmental Land Management System, corporate social responsibility, carbon or biodiversity credits/offsets, volunteers, private effort. There are many opportunities.

Question 3: How do the panel feel about thinking more positively? We always mention the declines but don't mention success stories.

Tom: We should use Nature Recovery Plans (NRP) to demonstrate successes and recognize where there are good news stories to tell. We shouldn't use these to let us off the hook, however.

Felicity: It is appropriate to talk of the loss as part of the journey to nature recovery.

Question 4: What do the panel feel about the use of pesticides, especially Glyphosate?

Julie: If used extremely carefully it does have its place in habitat restoration work, especially in managing Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS). Other mechanisms are available, but it is sometime less disturbing to use pesticides though we have to be very cautious about how and when they are used.

Tom: Food production/industrial agriculture are at a turning point, investing in sensitive, sustainable agriculture/regenerative agriculture will create a long-term legacy.

Will: Agritech advances mean applications of herbicide can be micro-targeted or replaced: some robots can identify and kill weeds electronically.

Julie: New Environmental Land Management Schemes (ELMS) are looking to reward farmers for not using chemicals or, at least, low inputs.

Question 5: Dorset Youth Council are talking about climate emergency – what ways are there to bring in younger people? Highways are an issue. Communities pledge to look after places without the use of chemicals.

Felicity: A discussion at BCP council concluded that, you can buy harmful chemicals as a member of the public, 70% is coming from residents! We need a huge engagement exercise on this (to educate the public).

Julie: The New Forest has tried to move forward a road verge project, but the Council has said that if you don't cut verges then you have complaints and vice versa.

Tom: There is a very good Verge Management policy at Dorset Council; reinstating road-sweeping to clear soils etc. This is much more effective at stopping weeds than treating with chemicals once they have grown.

Conclusions – Simon Cripps

Overarching / stand-out conclusions from the workshop sessions:

- Important to include a diverse range of inputs to the Plan.
- Young people despair at the inaction of older, but have energy, passion and views to be included.
- Look for overlapping agendas and shared visions.
- Consistency of messages is important.
- Robust data and evidence base is needed.
- People as well as nature.
- An instant response to changes so recovery is possible.
- There is great enthusiasm.

Acronyms

AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
ARC	Amphibian & Reptile Conservation
BCP	Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole Council
CLA	Country Landowners Association
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DAONB	Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
DAPTC	Dorset Association of Parish and Town Councils
DC	Dorset Council
DCF	Dorset Coast Forum
DERC	Dorset Environmental Records Centre
DWT	Dorset Wildlife Trust
ELMS	Environmental Land Management Schemes
FLAG	Fisheries Local Action Group
GI	Green Infrastructure
IFCA	Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority
INNS	Invasive Non-Native Species
JCT	Jurassic Coast Trust
KMC	Kingston Maurward College
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
LA	Local Authority
LCA	Landscape Character Area
LEP	Local Enterprise Partnership
LIS	Local Industrial Strategy
LNP	Local Nature Partnership
LNRS	Local Nature Recovery Strategies
MCZ	Marine Conservation Zone
MMO	Marine Management Organisation
MoD	Ministry of Defense

NFU	National Farmers Union
NHS	National Health Service
NP	National Park
NR	Nature Recovery
NRN	Nature Recovery Network
NRP	Nature Recovery Plan
QOL	Quality of Life
SCI	Statement of Community Involvement
SIFCA	Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely
SNCI	Site of Nature Conservation Interest
UA	Unitary Authority
U3A	University of the Third Age