



County Durham Environment Partnership Board Minutes

Tuesday 10th December 2014
Burlison Room, Town Hall, Durham

Apologies

Julian Carrington - Environment Agency
Julie Form - Groundwork North East
Gordon Elliott - Durham County Council
Stuart Timmiss - Durham County Council

Attendees:

Chair: Terry Collins - Durham County Council

Adrian Vass - Natural England
Tara Duncan - Durham University
Jim Cokill - Durham Wildlife Trust
Claire Thompson - Durham Wildlife Trust
Councillor Barbara Graham - Durham County Council
Diane Close - Durham County Council
Oliver Sherratt - Durham County Council
Steve Bhowmick - Durham County Council
Peter Dunn - Durham County Council
Jayne Watson - Durham County Council
Victoria Burrell - Durham County Council
Stella Hindson - Durham County Council
Beverley Clark (Minutes) - Durham County Council

Item No.	Subject	Action By
1.	Welcome and Introductions The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies noted. Introductions were given.	
2.	Minutes and Matters Arising Consideration was given to the minutes of 23 rd September 2014. The group was informed that Tara Duncan had accepted the role of Chair to The Climate Change Group. It was reported that The Limestone Landscape Project had been extended.	
3.	Flooding Scrutiny Report Councillor Graham provided an overview of The Flooding Scrutiny Report which was agreed on 10 th September 2014. The report provided the Board with the key	

	<p>findings and recommendations of the Environment and Sustainable Committee review report on flooding.</p> <p>Councillor Graham thanked members of the Environment Board who had contributed towards the report and asked that members of the Board note the key findings and recommendations contained within the report.</p> <p>It was noted that severe weather is causing more issues and devastation therefore it is in our interest to support this work in order to protect and look after the environment.</p> <p>It was stated that surface water flooding is a big issue – there is a 80% risk from surface water flooding and 20% from rivers and streams. There is a need to look at land use. The infrastructure around the country and county is no longer fit for purpose. It is necessary for farmers to manage streams and ditches.</p>	
<p>4.</p>	<p>Heritage Open Days</p> <p>Peter Dunn circulated copies of the Heritage Open Days booklet. He then delivered a presentation where the following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage Open Days were held between 11th and 14th September 2014. • This year was the 20th year anniversary. • Heritage Open Days is a national event celebrating England’s architectural and cultural sites. • Free entry. • 7,500 copies of the 2014 booklet printed. • 69 venues in 2014. • Venues included Escomb Saxon Church, East Durham Heritage & Lifeboat Centre, DLI Memorial, Old Durham Gardens, Auckland Castle & Park, Binchester Roman Fort, Soho Engine Shed- Locomotion and Raby Park & Gardens. • 9018 visitors showing a 235% increase since 2009. • Heritage Open Days nationally – over 2.1 million visitors in 2013 and over 3 million visitors in 2014. • 376 English Heritage feedback forms returned by visitors at venues. • Feedback postcards returned indicate that 84 visitors are from outside County Durham (22%) and 3 visitors are from overseas. <p>Peter reported that funding had ended in July this year for the support officer.</p> <p>It was proposed that Bowes Museum could be a possible future venue for Heritage Open Days.</p> <p>A discussion took place as to whether a booklet or leaflet should be printed for the event next year. It was reported that a leaflet would have website addresses and this could perhaps limit people who do not use the internet. It was pointed out that if a booklet is produced there would</p>	

	<p>be an opportunity for sponsorship within it. A suggestion was raised of adding age profiles to the feedback form to ascertain the ages of attendees. Adrian Vass made Peter aware of The Heritage Environment Forum. Booklets are circulated in libraries, council offices, Durham University and the venues themselves. Information is also available on the internet. It was stated that there is a greater need to promote Heritage Open Days. Peter requested members of the Board assist with the wider circulation of next year's booklets.</p>	
<p>5.</p>	<p>Presentation – Natural Environment, Health and Wellbeing Claire Thompson delivered a presentation on the Natural Environment, Health and Wellbeing which looked at opportunities to influence The Joint Needs Assessment and The Joint Health and Well-being Strategy. She gave background information on the work and role of the Local Nature Partnership. Claire has had a busy 6 months working on scoping and planning, relationship development, promotional and communications planning and mapping. A workshop was held in September regarding improving communications. Claire is exploring the link between health and the natural environment. She is looking at how the natural environment can create more daily movement in people. The Government suggests that LNPs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to shaping the priorities in 'joint health and wellbeing strategies' (JHWS). • Incorporating the value of the natural environment to people's health and wellbeing in 'joint strategic needs assessments' (JNSA). • Contribute to local delivery of Public Health Outcomes Frameworks. <p>Claire is to circulate the Health and Wellbeing document electronically to all for feedback. Jayne Watson to liaise with Victoria Burrell regarding the JNSA.</p>	<p>Claire Thompson Jayne Watson/Victoria Burrell</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>Updates from Group Chairs and Questions <u>Coastal, Heritage & Landscape Group</u> Oliver Sherratt circulated copies of The Coastal Heritage and Landscape Steering Group Newsletter. He reported The North Pennines AONB have been granted over £400,000 by The Heritage Lottery Fund for a new five year programme to begin in early 2015. The project is called 'Cold Blooded and Spineless' and will deliver training to improve identification skills and understanding of invertebrates in the North Pennines. The group is working on refreshed projects which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extending wildflower meadows – extending to 	

road verges.

- A pilot programme in the AONB looking at reducing highway verge cuttings.
- Woodlands – woodland estate. Scrutiny committee looking at their management.
- River Skerne – now called bright Water. Initial approval has been received from Heritage Lottery Fund.
- Heritage at Risk.
- Durham City Riverside and Riverbanks.
- Destination development plans – opens up tapping into tourism.
- Launched 'Operation Stop It' which is a new flytipping campaign. Leaflets regarding this were circulated by Oliver as well as a 'Caught on Camera' poster.

Environment in Your Communities

Victoria Burrell stated that the group is realigning its focus and looking at its membership. A meeting was held on 25th November where it was decided that the key focus should be on two themes.

1. Growing Projects – community allotments.
2. Waste – which includes commercial waste, flytipping, recycling, litter, etc. The group will be focused on the waste hierarchy and litter projects.

Julian Carrington will lead on the Waste group and Ian Hoult will lead on the Growing Projects. The group is much more positive and focused.

Local Nature Partnership

An update was given by Jim Cokill who reported that:

- He had recently attended a meeting with the LEP.
- The LNP is working with the Sustainability group to look at the funding application process.
- Liaising with Natural England and Durham County Council on mapping.
- Working on the River Skerne Project.

DEFRA

Adrian Vass reported that he had attended a meeting last week regarding the Upland Chain and 70% of farmers had issues with the scheme.

DEFRA has £100 million shortfall this year and the year after.

The Environment Agency is looking at the Rural Base Management Plan.

In terms of Natural England there is a national audit on the red squirrel programme being carried out.

Climate Change Group

Tara Duncan provided an update on the work of the group. She has had meetings with key members of the Sustainability group and the Environment Partnership

	Chairs. The group is trying to keep focused on the strategy document and aiming to involve the community more. They are concentrating on community buildings and looking at building surveys. Looking to build up ideas.	
7.	Environment Partnership Communications Stella Hindson presented the winter edition of The Environment Partnership newsletter. Stella is to circulate the newsletter electronically to all for comment. Send all positive news items to Stella to include in future editions.	Stella Hindson
8.	Environment Awards Feedback Terry Collins reported that the Environment Awards event was very successful and positive. The event was enjoyed by all and there was a great deal of publicity. There were three outstanding awards presented. Steve Bhowmick stated that the Environment Awards are in the service plan for next year but sponsorship is required. A retrospective publication charting the improvement of the environment of the County over 25 years of the Awards is still in the pipeline but further discussion is needed. Steve and Stella to discuss.	Steve Bhowmick/Stella Hindson
9.	AOB Terry Collins informed the Group that Lumiere will be taking place on 12 th to 15 th November 2015. Terry to bring more information to the next meeting. For Lumiere it was suggested that a map giving walking distances to the installations could be used for around the city.	Terry Collins