**Local Nature Recovery Strategy Steering Group**

**Minutes of Steering Group Meeting on 21st October 2024**

**Present:**

Emma Gardner EG Principal Ecologist (HBRC)

Charlie Alfandary LD Local Nature Recovery Officer (HC)

Rhiannon Pierce RP Senior Advisor (NE)

Alan Reid AR Nature Recovery Advisor (FC)

Helen Dale HD Regional Advisor Countryside Management (CLA)

Tim Pickering TP Environment Planning Specialist (EA)

1. **Welcome and apologies:**

Liz Duberley LD Service Manager Built and Natural Environment HC

Andrew Blake AB Wye Valley AONB and representing Malvern Hills AONB

Claire Spicer CS Herefordshire Wildlife Trust

1. **Update on GANT chart**

CA introduced himself as the new LNR Officer for Herefordshire Council and gave an update on the target timeframes relating to the various LNRS work areas:

* an update on who will be writing the strategy will follow once details have been confirmed. Dates have been pushed back but aim is to have everything written by end of February.
* amended dates for final species list - finished by end of December
* mapping opportunities work - finished by mid November
* FAQs and awareness - amended to end of November
* engagement talks have been completed (mostly), survey123 to end mid November
* aim to have draft from consultant by mid January to send off to NE by early March
* formal adoption by end of May

**Actions for Charlie: to share GANT chart- add subsection for additional engagements, add section share mapping from GWT (to be helped by Rhiannon),**

**Check dates on LNRS website to take off deadline date.**

1. **Update on engagement data**

CA provided a breakdown of the current survey123 data, relayed thoughts and information gathered from previous engagements with stakeholders (e.g. Parish summit, Officers training, LMP, etc.), and plans for future engagement:

* 150 respondents to date
* habitats should be priorities - currently woodlands and rivers (most), hedgerows also to be prioritised
* landowners and general public are responding the most so looking to find ways to reach out to others
* species groups - even spread although bird life, farmland birds, and fish are higher,
* pesticides and habitat loss seen as the biggest impact, otherwise even spread
* higher responses in the immediate Hereford area for areas of importance
* additional engagement included officers training, parish summit, LNP, webinar, market town engagement
* future engagement - direct parish council engagement, initial farmer workshop, engagement with landowner estates, contacting marketing agencies for farmers/agriculture to broader message of workshops
* noted that whilst the LNRS will predominantly be based on evidence, information from public engagement will be taken into account

1. **Update on species**

EG reported that the initial longlist of just over 1000 species has been reduced to approximately 600 species following engagement with local taxon experts. May be more that can be removed from the potential priorities list but need to: clarify some confusing feedback; await feedback on over 200 species (mainly birds); and identify species expert for around c. 170 unassessed species (mainly invertebrates).

Species working group proposed to adapt Greater Manchester shortlisting spreadsheet and trial their scoring system to enable us to produce our priority lists. Can then be amended if required. Advised that the most efficient way for us to gather additional information from species experts would be on a 1:1 basis based on current experience.

All agreed importance of keeping an audit trail showing who made decisions etc.

1. **Writing of the strategy**

Looking at use of potential templates and their implication - Rhiannon Pierce

* agreed that in order to gather LNRS habitat priorities and measures we should be looking for input from a wider array of sources e.g. partnership groups or experts, public engagement
* need to investigate audit options to enable repetition of the process in future
* online Sharepoint has shared guidance and template for priorities and measures with examples from other counties LNRS

**Action for group: contact other stakeholders to ensure we capture as much information as possible, keeping a record of who is asked to contribute to enable follow up. Three week deadline for input of comments - much of this will be from already known evidence/data/knowledge.**

1. **Update on mapping**

Draft opportunity mapping has been received from GCER, now taking time to review to ensure that it is understood prior to consultation. CA is trying to establish how to make the data viewable online and for people to be able to comment anonymously/confidentially.

Further investigation required into how the final LNRS information will be published.

**Action CA: finalise plans for online publication of draft mapping**

1. **Confirm meeting for the rest of the year - all TBC**

* 18th November 10-12pm (online) preliminary
* 16th December 10-12pm (online) preliminary
* 20th January 2-4pm (in person) preliminary meeting Shell or HARC

1. **AOB**

None