



Surrey Parks and Countryside Forum
Tuesday 21st May 2024
Location: Warren Farm Barns, Surrey Hills Society
10:00-11:30am

Present	<p>Chair- Lisa Creaye-Griffin (SyNP) Steve Harris (SHBC), David Oliver (WaBC), Stewart Cocker (EEBC), Ann Bailey (SCC), Rob Fairbanks (SHS), Andrew Thwaites (AC), David Hatcher (BanC), Hendryk Jurk (GBC), Andi Roy (RBC), Lawie Baker (SCC)</p> <p>Admin- Zoe Williams (SyNP)</p>	
Apologies	<p>Steve Mitchell (SCC), Mathew Godfrey (RuBC), James Herd (SWT), Aimee Clarke (SWT), Victoria Hawkins (NE), James Giles (NE), Lucy Shea (BanC), David Greenwood (SCC), Hamish White (EBC) Alexander Bagnall (MVDC),</p>	
Matters Arising	<p>Minutes from the last meeting to be approved.</p> <p>Matters arising from previous meeting GSP health and wellbeing LCG meeting has been arranged with the GSP Team, to talk about accreditation work, from this a small working group will be set up. Any people who want to join can. Lawrie Baker has offered to be part of this working group. <i>This will be reported at the South East NP meeting this week.</i></p> <p>Dog walking incident The incident was opened in January and then suspended. 10 dogs were being walked at the time and the main damage came from the dog walkers' own dog, an XL Bully. We await this to be reopened to see the consequences.</p> <p><i>No updates yet. Zoe to contact Tandridge.</i></p> <p>Rights of Way will be followed up in the Autumn.</p>	
	<p>Surrey Nature Recovery has started its initial seven themed conversations our first one is for landowners. This is being supported by Resources 4 Change.</p> <p>Surrey Parks and Countryside Forum have been invited to attend.</p> <p>Zoe to send link to all events to the forum. YouTube links and Common place Have Your Say Today - Local Nature Recovery Strategy - Commonplace Surrey Nature Recovery Webinar (youtube.com)</p>	
Ann Bailey Ecologist (SCC)	<p>BNG Biodiversity Net Gain is a mechanism to ensure sites are in a better state for biodiversity than before a development.</p> <p>Environment Act 2021 - 10% net gain</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local Nature Recovery Strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Biodiversity Duty - Maintained over 30 years via observations and legal agreements. <p>Mitigation hierarchy</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Avoid 	



2. Minimise
3. Mitigate
4. Offset

Key points

You cannot get BNG if you remove an Irreplaceable habitat, SSSI, SPA, SAC.

For the baseline, should application come in with aspect of the BNG missing say a hedge, you can look back and check this using area images.

Local authorities can challenge the developers if they feel they have been untrue with their submission.

Town and Country Planning Act (TCPA)

- The developer has to submit a biodiversity gain plan to the planning authority, and
- The planning authority has approved the plan.

It is encouraged that biodiversity plans are submitted ahead.

Surrey Nature Partnership has issued a position statement recommending LPA's to adopt a minimum of 20% BNG across Surrey.

SW- If a land bank is identified in the LNRS, the area would get a 15% uplift I value

AB – 20% doesn't move the goal post.

Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool

Compares the baseline value with your post development value calculating net change. Will then unpinned how you approach, using offsite for example.

Collecting Baseline

Condition assessment tool, preset criteria, set for each habitat.

This is done by an ecologist a suitability competent person. CEEM for example.

SC- This is why we need in house ecologist to scrutinise this.

DH –A cause for concern is developers buying land and neglecting it, as it downgrades, they will be able to use it for BNG. This will depend on the point at which it was allowed to downgrade.

Strategic Significance

it gives additional biodiversity unit value to habitats that have been identified of strategic importance in a local area. An example of this is the BOA's. These are linked there. ([Click here.](#))

Pre LNRS: table 8 in statutory use guide applies

Post LNRS: table 7 in statutory use guide applies

Distinctiveness X Condition X Area (ha) X Strategic Significance

Trading Rules

Any loss of habitat needs to be, "like for like" or "like for better".

Biodiversity Offsetting

Developer could pay an offset provider to make up their BNG; or make habitat enhancement on other areas of land they own to increase the offset.

Habitat Banking

Carrying out habitat creation/ enhancement works to improve the biodiversity value of land, and then selling this uplift as units to those that need offsite BNG.



	<p>They need to be registered on the national register hosted by Natural England. Onsite gains do not need to be registered. To be registered you need to have a legal agreement in place.</p> <p>Section 106 agreement can be independent of a planning authority and a developer that ensure that certain extra works related to a development are undertaken. Conservation Covenant is a private voluntary legal agreement, made in writing, between a responsible body and a landowner.</p> <p>Offset providers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Environment Bank - Surrey Wildlife Trust - LPAs - Private Land Owners - In the absence of a local market, Natural England sell statutory units (Last resort.) <p>Site selection: Low base line value, poor condition Sites that are well connected to existing nature conservation designs. But not designated themselves.</p> <p>Design: Evidence based habitat design Underpinned by soil type, topography, hydrology Consideration of protected species, for example ground nesting birds.</p> <p>Stacking and Additionality BNG units and nutrient credits can stack. BNG units from the same land as carbon credits but you would need to demonstrate the BNG as 'additional'. You cannot sell an enhancement fund by an agri-environment scheme as a biodiversity unit.</p> <p>RF – With developer offsetting how does this work? AB – There are different amounts for commercial. There is also the small site metric.</p>	
<p>Round table</p>	<p>Andy Thwaites Ashtead Common</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently exploring a Water Restoration Fund grant application to create a wetland on Ashtead Common. • Have introduced Nofence virtual fencing with our grazing partner – Surrey Wildlife Trust. • Saproxyllic invertebrate survey has ranked Ashtead Common joint fourth in the UK (alongside Richmond Park) in the Index of Ecological Continuity. • Natural England surveying fungi and veteranized trees. • Breeding bird survey results encouraging – two nightingales recorded. <p>Lucy Shea, Banstead Common</p> <p>We had an exciting discovery of two adult Great Crested Newts on Burgh Heath last week under litter (cardboard). We were concerned we'd lost them from site and it is a timely discovery. Banstead Common Conservators is working with Newt Conservation Partnership to create and restore pond networks on Burgh Heath and Banstead Heath. NCP have also found GCN eggs on Banstead Heath.</p>	



	<p>I am also working on a £40K grant for 3 pond restoration projects, volunteer tools and resources to support pond conservation work and interpretation board on Banstead Heath.</p> <p>Fantastic results with reptile surveys on Banstead Heath this year - 6 adders found on one day, 4 adults and 2 juveniles. AS well as Common lizards, grass snakes and slow worms.</p> <p>Meeting Ross and Liz to put up bat detectors on Banstead Heath tomorrow - 16/5.</p> <p>Conservation grazing on our chalk grassland sites has been expanded this year and we're working with Downlands Partnership Grazing Team and Surrey Botanic Society to carry out regular surveys of the sites.</p> <p>Excited to be hosting Nature Detective Days on Banstead Commons aimed at families that are all fully booked with limited promotion - https://bansteadcommons.org.uk/visiting/wildlife-detective-days/</p> <p>We are hoping our SMPs will go to public consultation in June. Publicised on our noticeboards, social media pages and website.</p> <p>Opportunity to recognise and say thanks to all the wonderful volunteers who give their time and knowledge to support us!</p> <p>Rob Fairbanks, Surrey Hills</p> <p>The Surrey Hills National Landscape is developing a 75 year vision for its Management Plan by getting communities to describe a thriving vision for people and nature. Please help to engage and promote, we need your input: Postcards from the Future - Surrey Hills National Landscape</p> <p>The team also has funding available for Environmental Land Management and Access for All projects available for land managers. Please get in touch with fipl@surreycc.gov.uk for more information.</p>	
<p>Topics for Future Meetings</p>		
<p>Dates for next meetings</p>	<p>Next Meeting: 11th July 2024 2:00- 4:00pm 10th October 2024</p>	