



Meeting Minutes

Board Meeting Friday 11th April 2025

10.00 – 12noon Online

Approved

Members of the Board

Name	Initial			Present
Richard Murphy	RM	Professor Emeritus, University of Surrey	Chair	P
Bill Biddell	BB	Estate Manager, Hampton Estate	Board Member	A
Carolyn McKenzie	CM	Head of Environment, Surrey County Council	Board Member	A
Gordon Jackson	GJ	Chair of Surrey Hills Society	Board Member	P
Jason Gaskell	JG	CEO, Surrey Community Action	Board Member	N
Rob Fairbanks	RF	Director, Surrey Hills National Landscape (AONB)	Board Member	P
Ruth Hutchinson	RH	Director of Public Health, Surrey County Council	Board Member	-
Or Carrie Wood	CW	Senior Public Health Lead –Environmental Determinants of Health	Board Member	A
Stephen Rudd	SR	Principal Manager, Thames Solent, Natural England	Board Member	A
Zoe Channon	ZC	Director of Business Development and Partnerships, Surrey Wildlife Trust	Board Member	A

Officers

Adam Brown	AB	Surrey Local Nature Recovery Strategy Lead	Officer	P
Lisa Creaye-Griffin	LCG	Director of SyNP	Officer	P
Mike Waite	MW	Director of Research & Monitoring, Surrey Wildlife Trust	Officer	P
Vivienne Greenough	VG	Natural Environment Strategic Lead SCC	Officer	P

P – Present, A – Apologies, N – No Contact

Agenda	Discussion	Actions Owner
1. Welcome and Apologies	Meeting started 10:00 Apologies: Stephen Rudd, Carrie Wood, Bill Biddell, Zoe Channon, Carolyn McKenzie. Meeting recorded via Teams.	

		RJM: Huge Thank you to Lisa, Board Members and Sophie for making the conference such a success. Thank you for all the meeting suggestions.	
2. Previous meeting minutes		<p>Minutes of the Meeting held 24th January 2025 Minutes approved.</p> <p>Matters Arising Plan to boost new board members. Reissue the board member recruitment information.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RJM – Dr Tara Pirie – Surrey University • MW - Approach Royal Holloway University. • Approach younger members of organisations. <p>Board Workshop planned to include new Board members in a workshop for the next business plan Noted to cover in more detail under 3. Masters students – contact RJM if interested.</p>	
3. Director update	Lisa Creaye-Griffin – Director	<p>Directors Report Report circulated in advance.</p> <p>a. Board Refresh Information</p> <p>Focus on Business, run suggestions past Richard and Lisa. Younger people – Universities or SCC Lead on Young People. Propose discuss with SDF & SYF.</p> <p>Action: Look up Young People Attendance list from LNRS Engagement Workshop – send to Lisa. SH</p> <p>Action: Surrey Wildlife Trust – Business Breakfast Mandalay – Invite list. LCG</p> <p>Action: Interview for Trustees for SWT – SJC felt there were some potentially suitable candidates for the SyNP Board. LCG</p> <p>Action: Resend Information about becoming SyNP Board Member. SH</p> <p>Workshop Date – September 2025.</p> <p>b. SLA between SWT and SyNP (Update)</p> <p>SWT: Nearly complete. Annual SLA currently – to become a three-year agreement for more stability. Format includes cash and in-kind contribution. Once finalised, to be circulated to the board. Additional money is required if we wish to stay solvent. Consider delivery services.</p> <p>c. Debrief after the Biodiversity and Planning conference</p> <p>Presented highlights. Online stream now available to purchase.</p>	

		<p>RF: Well done on the conference. Consider the cost of the venue. Comms message on what they are going to learn for online stream.</p> <p>Cost of Venue? Alternative venues: Universities, Surrey CC HQ, West Horsley Place, Horton Epsom.</p> <p>Query over value/cost of videography. Potential for raising Brand of SyNP and promoting next years conference.</p> <p>d. Looking forward - SyNP structure</p> <p>Move to workshop in September.</p> <p>APPG – All Party Parliamentary Group. Set up. Richard Benwell Chairman of Wildlife & Countryside Link led in setting up the APPG. Raising profile of the LNRS. Briefing on P&I Bill. Discussing having an event at Westminster in Autumn. Possibility for all LNPs to have stands. Attract local MPs.</p> <p>Comms Information</p> <p>Thanks for the information shared about the online performance with Director's report.</p> <p>Public Summary/Confidential</p>	
<p>4. Land Use Framework and LUF for Surrey</p>	<p>Carolyn McKenzie</p>	<p>Carolyn unable to attend today.</p> <p>LCG</p> <p>Land Use Consultation – SyNP will prepare a response. Comes with a lot of Technical information as it’s about how the land is used.</p> <p>Land Use Consultation Meeting – Run by Ipsos for DEFRA 16th April.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LCG due to attend. • AB - CM is due to attend. • MW - SWT is also submitting a response. <p>Land Use Consultation going in from the Surrey CC Planning Policy Team. Expect push for local variations.</p> <p>[Note Standing Item – Strategic Update – deferred]</p> <p>Public Summary/Confidential</p>	
<p>5. Surrey Nature Recovery Update</p>	<p>Adam Brown</p>	<p>a. Database / map for projects delivering the Nature Recovery – AB</p> <p>LNRS final draft that has gone out to the Steering group.</p> <p>28 days for RA’s to object – starting Mid May. Mid June – End of July Public Consultation (providing NE agree to it). Mapping currently. Matt using Oxford University Platform. Removes land unsuitable for nature recovery. Polygon map for where nature recovery can go. Grasslands work won’t be refined further.</p>	

		<p>Woodland is quite extensive so will be reduced. Equitable forest/tree cover across the county is an aim. Focus on woodland planting in many LNRS but in Surrey better woodland management is more of a priority . Connecting and buffering ancient woodland target. 4 weeks to complete the mapping. Next steps to be agreed with Matt.</p> <p>AB Actions to be determined with MW. Shortlist of species – translocation to specific sites. Specific things to do, to support identified species.</p> <p>Species and Mapping is done. VG and team are finishing the design. Need photography.</p> <p>MW – SWT photograph database.</p> <p>SH – Wildnet access via Marcus Wehrle.</p> <p>GJ – Making Space for nature illustrations by HMP Send.</p> <p>Action: Send Making Space for Nature information over to VG</p> <p>b. Beaver Management Group – AB Wild Beavers are coming! Need to create a home for the Beaver Management Group. Question of who is going to run it and where it might occur?</p> <p>SWT EOI (Expression of Interest). Requires a Beaver Management Group. Catchment Management Partnerships has been suggested but it doesn't come with additional resource. AW: https://beavermanagement.org/ LCG – Makes sense to sit under the CMP's. MW – Kent Management Partnership – collaboration? MW – Launching a campaign about Beavers – may be in the frame for managing it. Action: Surrey Nature Partnership to go away and discuss with SWT/CMP's.</p> <p>Public Summary/Confidential</p>	<p>GJ</p> <p>LCG</p>
<p>6. Love Dogs, Love Nature</p>	<p>Rob Fairbanks</p>	<p>RJM/LCG Updated</p> <p>Surrey Hills are leading on a Love Dogs, Love Nature campaign (previously run in Dorset).</p> <p>Encouraging good dog ownership behaviour with positive messaging.</p> <p>Hampton Estate – Purple Leads new campaign, purple leads given to good dog owners to encourage others by example.</p> <p>Dr Tom Roberts, carried out observational work over 4 locations. Looking at dog owner behaviour.</p> <p>Workshop occurred at Denbies. Significant issues where Dogs running through the vines, implications of dogs mess. Disengagement of owners with their dogs. Driving, parking, not</p>	

		<p>interacting with dogs and not connected with dogs (distracted on headphones). Tensions with professional dog walkers on those sites.</p> <p>Farmers and Tenants were also present raising the issues with other issues like Neospora. Surrey Nature Partnership should be an interested party and communication of some of the information. Contributing body to the scheme.</p> <p>Public Summary/Confidential</p>	
<p>7. Surrey Hills Management Plan</p>	<p>Rob Fairbanks</p>	<p>Link to the Management Plan Please complete the consultation Link: Surrey Hills Management Plan 2025-2030 - Surrey Hills National Landscape</p> <p>RF posted (had to depart meeting due to a clash).</p> <p>75 year target to create and restore: Wildlife Rich Habitats (deciduous woodland, Heathland and Chalk Downland) from 14,560 ha to 20,000 in 2100. 5-year Plan target of additional 1000 ha</p> <p>Trees Outside Woodland (under 5 ha, agroforestry and tree belts) From 6.5% of land cover to 10% by 2100. 5-year Plan target of 50 ha</p> <p>Hedgerows From 6,900 km to 10,000 km by 2100. 5-year Plan target of 20km</p> <p>Protected sites (SSSIs) 75% in Favourable Condition to 95%. 5-year target 80%.</p> <p>GJ - Potential target and whether they make sense to the SyNP. Are these realistic?</p> <p>AB – Yes. Used national environment objectives. Environment Improvement plan targets are being watered down to be more achievable.</p> <p>GJ – Big question is over funding. With FiPL funding they could have funded however not available for Hedgerow. They may be able to get some through the Countryside Stewardship Scheme.</p> <p>AB - Surrey CC are looking at Hedgerows – but may be using the same funding pots. Sites in favourable condition under question. National target is 75% - achievable to have an upwards trajectory. Don't have direct control of SSSI's so 100% is unachievable.</p>	

Row Labels	Sum of Area (ha)2	Sum of Area (ha)	Average of Years since last review	Min. of Years since last review
ACID GRASSLAND - Lowland	48.41	0.40%	-9.28	-16.72
ARABLE AND HORTICULTURE	2.42	0.02%	-1.67	-1.67
BROADLEAVED, MIXED AND YEW WOODLAND - Lowland	3105.56	25.37%	-10.05	-19.73
CALCAREOUS GRASSLAND - Lowland	706.30	5.77%	-11.01	-17.01
CONIFEROUS WOODLAND	349.54	2.86%	-7.02	-8.03
DWARF SHRUB HEATH - Lowland	6542.88	53.45%	-6.92	-16.11
EARTH HERITAGE	106.74	0.87%	-3.75	-10.30
FEN, MARSH AND SWAMP - Lowland	73.41	0.60%	-10.00	-12.63
NEUTRAL GRASSLAND - Lowland	425.96	3.48%	-8.06	-16.62
STANDING OPEN WATER AND CANALS	878.93	7.18%	-11.23	-18.64
Grand Total	12240.14	100.00%	-8.86	-19.73

VG – NE survey data are 15 years old so concern over accuracy of the favourable condition. Planning and Infrastructure Bill and EDP’s whether they get resource to update their SSSI reports.

AB – Target 2027 for the updated surveys. Data presented shows a lot of the data is old, however the more recent surveys don’t show a huge drop-in condition rate.

MW – Debate over definition of favourable condition ongoing.

RJM – Impossible to keep up with the survey timeframes. Can the SyNP help with pointing up to get more capacity into this. **Note:** VG/AB/MW please advise if the SyNP can support.

Public Summary/Confidential

8. Biodiversity Working Group

Mike Waite

January Draft Minutes have now been issued. Conference went well.

Surreys Old Grassland Inventory Update – Product 1.0. Due Early May 2025. Long list of qualifying sites. One of the main partners is the SBS. Frame the purpose of the project and make clear the objectives of the project – SBS objective to conserve rare plants. However the inventory is about being a habitat mechanism which can have an influence on the local planning policy. Product 1.1 by December 2025.

RJM – How to access the data? Online only. It will be a nature partnership hosted document hosted on the SyNP website.

MW – Once Product 1.0 is ready then start to promote the update to the local planning system. Strategic Planning group.

Action: Discuss with SyNP so that we can plan comms around the launch.

Irreplaceable Habitat Review.

Note: Please flag difficult conversations where the SyNP can possibly support.

MW: Plantlife commissioned British Ecological Society to research ancient grasslands. Reported Late last year – referenced in the Old Grassland Inventory. Covers the disconnect on the irreplaceability. Susan Medcalf has fed back to Plantlife on the Surrey Old Grasslands project.

MW

		<p>AB: plantlife.org.uk/our-work/the-grassland-gap/</p> <p>Langley Vale Look at their tree planting and how they are integrating with open habitats and retaining arable for rare arable plants.</p> <p>Public Summary/Confidential</p>	
<p>9. Surrey Local Sites Partnership</p>	<p>Vivienne Greenough</p>	<p>Group last met end of February.</p> <p>3 Sites were agreed to go forward to SNCi status. Huge Backlog so meeting frequently with 15 sites to cover.</p> <p>Next steps are to contact District and Boroughs and Landowners.</p> <p>Action: Next Meeting 29th May. Invite to go out. VG to supply info.</p> <p>2026 In house ecology team at Surrey CC. Updating habitat condition surveys and full species list. Highways are supporting (and have funding). Most surveys happening in May (due to flowering). All data will be shared with SBIC.</p> <p>SyNP Conservation Verges on the website. Ann Sankey expressed interest in receiving the data.</p> <p>Hoping to continue with verge program. Hoping to combine conservation verges with SNCi's – need to look at the data and decide with team in future.</p> <p>MW – No. of sites have come in that are existing SNCI's that need data updating. Revisiting methodology. Some SNCI's look like they've suffered so need a revisit.</p> <p>GJ – Conservation Verges – nothing in the SH Management Plan – Add to Management Plan as constantly raised by the public.</p> <p>Action: Ask RF whether it will be included.</p> <p>VG – Already have existing agreed management actions. Challenge is the reality of contractors cutting back. All reporting comes via Highways.</p> <p>RJM – Conservation Verges on the SyNP website at appropriate time.</p> <p>AB – Wait for the Blue Heart Verges to resolve before launching anything (wait for 2026 season).</p> <p>RJN – Suggested Accreditation for contractors – module on what not to do.</p> <p>VG – Minimum size of a Blue Heart Verge due to management. Highways team are working on set criteria.</p>	<p>SH</p> <p>SH</p>

		<p>AB – Social Side – being put forward by small number of local people but not necessarily known by the community.</p> <p>MW – Local Parish & Town councils perhaps would be a better vehicle for making it happen.</p> <p>Public Summary/Confidential</p>	
10. Round table updates from Board Members	All	<p>MW – Wildfires. Ash Ranges/ Box Hill and Epsom and Lightwater (Turf Hill) have all had fires.</p> <p>Action: Events suggested at SPCF to be sent to AB.</p> <p>GJ - Landscape Connections Bid through SHNL to improve sustainability of the national Landscapes. Professionalise the society and start looking for paid employees to carry out the work. Surrey Hills Trust Fund so it can take advantage of infrastructure funding. RJM – Good luck with it.</p> <p>RJM 2nd Meeting of the Deer Management Group – serious concern over Woodland and Crop Damage. Difficulty in Managing populations. SyNP are keeping an eye on it. Culling may give potential for food supply.</p> <p>AB – LNRS has specific measures to tackle deer population. Surrey hasn't previously had a specific policy.</p> <p>AB – One stop shop for Information Sharing and Best Practice for next meeting.</p> <p>GJ – Wiki for the SHNL</p> <p>Action: Send SH link.</p> <p>Public Summary/Confidential</p>	<p>SH</p> <p>GJ</p>
11. AOB		<p>None</p> <p>Meeting Closed at 11:53am</p>	
Date and Time of Next Meeting		<p>10am – 12 noon</p> <p>Friday 27th June 2025</p> <p>Annual Review TBC - pencil in Friday 12th December 2025</p>	