

Local Nature Partnerships

Background

In the Natural Environment White Paper, published on 7 June 2011, Defra invited new and existing partnerships to come together to establish Local Nature Partnerships. These partnerships will work at a strategic scale to improve the range of benefits and services we get from a healthy natural environment. Where necessary, they may join up on cross-boundary issues, such as landscape scale action for biodiversity, water management, green infrastructure, air quality and ecosystem services more widely. They will aim to improve the multiple benefits we receive from good management of the land. Partnerships are invited to come forward and submit funding applications for development of LNPs. £1million is available for this and the government envisage around 50 LNPs being set up, resulting in an average of £20,000 available per partnership to support the development phase.

The vision for Local Nature Partnerships is that they will:

- demonstrate local leadership, raise awareness about the vital services and benefits which a healthy natural environment brings for people, communities and the local economy;
- use their knowledge and expertise to develop a shared environmental vision and set of priorities for their area (this could highlight how protection and enhancement of the natural environment can bring economic and social benefits or could include measures to establish and improve local ecological networks at a landscape scale);
- add value to a local area's development through contributing to local authority plans that affect the environment, as well as local plans and local development frameworks;
- help contribute to the Green Economy by, for example, providing relevant information for Local Enterprise Partnerships in development of their plans;
- bring together a range of local stakeholders, which may include people from local authorities, businesses, statutory authorities, civil society organisations, land managers, local record centres, local enterprise partnerships and people from communities themselves who can align efforts and make best use of available resources;
- co-operate with other partnerships where this results in more efficient use of resources and better outcomes. Co-operation can also be with partnerships that share common interests;
- work at a landscape scale to improve the range of benefits and services we get from a healthy natural environment. They will aim to improve the multiple benefits we receive from good management of the land through, for example, constituent members supporting Nature Improvement Areas, biodiversity offsets pilots or similar schemes; and
- form at a level that can take a strategic-enough approach to deliver integrated outcomes with a wide range of benefits. Defra anticipate around 50 Partnerships across England, however it will not prescribe that Partnerships should cover a particular spatial area or administrative boundary, and want to encourage them to form around the places, areas and natural systems that work best locally.

LNP Establishment

It is acknowledged that highly effective partnerships already exist, and may have some of the elements above already in place. However Defra want them to become even better, bringing in

more stakeholders, aligning to the vision and spirit of the Natural Environment White Paper and working to deliver more integrated, cross-cutting outcomes.

Partnerships which fulfill these visions will be invited to submit applications this winter to be recognised by Government and its environmental agencies, and establish their boards. The LNP fund that is on offer will help new and existing partnerships to build capacity and put in better applications. Partnerships who either do not apply for the funding on offer or whose bids are unsuccessful will still be eligible to apply to become a Local Nature Partnership. In spring next year, Defra will host a Ministerial event (to be repeated annually) at which the first recognised partnerships can come together to share best practice, highlight delivery issues and celebrate success. A partnership database will be maintained on the internet.

Suggested membership from among:

- Local Authorities (county and district)
- Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Parish Councils
- Community Forums
- National Parks
- Arms Length Bodies (Environment Agency, Natural England, Forestry Commission, Marine Management Organisation, English Heritage, British Waterways etc)
- Civil society organisations and Environmental Charities (e.g. Wildlife Trusts, RSPB, National Trust, Butterfly Conservation etc)
- Existing Partnerships (e.g. Coastal Partnerships, Local Biodiversity Action Plan Partnerships, **Local Access Forums**, LEADER Local Action Groups, Rural and Farming Networks, Green Infrastructure Partnerships)
- Land Owners
- Local Businesses
- Local Enterprise Partnerships
- Health and Wellbeing Reps
- Education/Learning organisations
- Community Organisers
- Local Environmental Record Centres
- Local Universities

Relationship with Existing Partnerships

Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and Local Nature Partnerships have complementary roles both of which will help grow a green economy. They are expected to work in a co-operative and constructive fashion to drive forward green growth locally. LEPs and Local Nature Partnerships are encouraged to work together to forge strong links that capture the value of nature. Existing coverage of LEPs is given in the map at the end of this document.

Reflecting the fact that the natural environment is a significant determinant of health, they have the potential to make a valuable contribution to the role of the new local Health and Wellbeing Boards in assessing local health needs. Local Nature Partnerships and the Health and Wellbeing Boards should therefore actively seek to engage each other in their work. Forthcoming guidance will make clear that the wider determinants of health, including the natural environment, will be a crucial consideration in developing joint strategic needs assessments and joint health and wellbeing strategies. Local Nature Partnerships will have a very important contribution to make in developing these documents. Although Local Nature

Partnerships will not automatically be members of the Health and Wellbeing Boards, the two partnerships could have reciprocal representation, with this being determined locally.

A network of 50 Natural Value Ambassadors will be inaugurated to engage key decision-makers and opinion-formers using the latest evidence and materials available. Local Nature Partnerships will be invited to nominate candidates, as will professional bodies from other sectors such as business, health and education.

Timeline

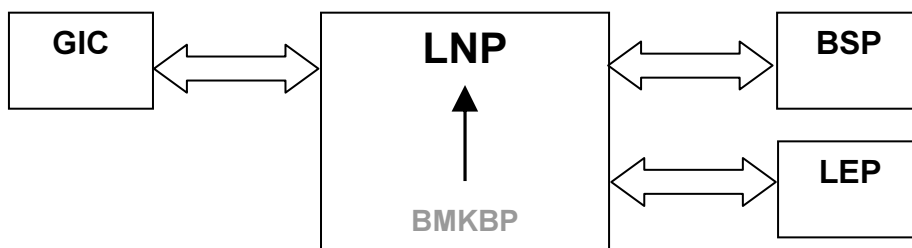
- 31 July 2011: Deadline for application submission to Transition Fund.
- September 2011: Notification of funding allocation.
- Winter 2011: Defra will invite expressions of interest from local partnerships aspiring to be recognised as Local Nature Partnerships.
- Spring 2012: Ministerial event for first tranche of Local Nature Partnerships.

There will be further opportunities to apply to be recognised as a Local Nature Partnership in future. **Once established, Local Nature Partnerships will be expected to fund their own day-to-day running costs.**

Potential Structure

Existing partnerships with affinities with LNPs in Bucks:

- Green Infrastructure Consortium (GIC)
- Bucks and MK Biodiversity Partnership (BMKBP)
- Bucks Strategic Partnership (BSP)



Provisionally the logical way forward appears to be an expansion of the BMKBP in terms of membership and for this grouping to evolve into a Local Nature Partnership with representation from the GIC, BSP and other partnerships where appropriate.

As part of this exercise the purpose and roles of the GIC and an emerging LNP should be examined as there is potential for overlap. It must be ensured these groups compliment each other rather than duplicate - the same is true of elements of the Bucks Strategic Partnership. Equally, a rationalisation of partnerships or reallocation of responsibilities should be investigated.

Local Enterprise Partnerships

- 1 Cheshire and Warrington
- 2 Coast to Capital
- 3 Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly
- 4 Coventry and Warwickshire
- 5 Cumbria
- 6 Enterprise M3
- 7 Greater Birmingham and Solihull
- 8 Greater Cambridge and Greater Peterborough
- 9 Greater Manchester
- 10 Heart of the South West
- 11 Hertfordshire
- 12 Kent, Greater Essex and East Sussex
- 13 Lancashire
- 14 Leeds City Region
- 15 Leicester and Leicestershire
- 16 Lincolnshire
- 17 Liverpool City Region
- 18 London
- 19 New Anglia
- 20 North Eastern Partnership
- 21 Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, Derby, and Derbyshire
- 22 Oxfordshire City Region
- 23 Sheffield City Region
- 24 Solent
- 25 South East Midlands
- 26 Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire
- 27 Tees Valley
- 28 Thames Valley and Berkshire
- 29 The Black Country
- 30 The Marches Enterprise Partnership
- 31 West of England
- 32 Worcestershire
- 33 York and North Yorkshire

