



Making Space for Nature in Kent and Medway

Developing the County's Local Nature Recovery Strategy

MS4N Species Recovery Technical Advisory Group meeting 19th December 2023, 2.00-4.00pm, MS Teams MINUTES

1. Summary of actions and items agreed

1.1 Items agreed

- The number of records and age of record should not be a deciding factor for inclusion on the long list – instead species specialists to advise on records accordingly.

1.2 Actions

Action	Who	Status
Provide details on how an increase in species abundance is defined?	Natural England Lorraine Boast-Millar	
Find out if there will be any guidance on species monitoring for the LNRS.	Natural England Lorraine Boast-Millar	
Advise which red list species appear to be missing from the master list so Natural England can be informed.	Species Recovery TAG	
Advise on invertebrate recording schemes that could assist.	Buglife	
Advise if they can provide a list of species associated with designated sites in Kent.	Natural England Ben Thompson Kate Fidczuk-Sterry	
Advise how we account for recorder bias in species abundance.	Natural England Lorraine Boast-Millar	
Advise on the marine species identified for the Kent MCZs.	Natural England Becca Turley	
Review longlist and submit amendments and additions to KMBRC by 15th January 2024. <u>POST MEETING NOTE:</u> Please could all comments go to KMBRC via the identified rep for the Kent taxon group. List and emails attached to minutes for reference.	Species Recovery TAG	
Follow up with TAG members not attending meeting to alert them to action and deadline.	KMBRC	
Submit detailed species pressures by 17th January 2024.	TAG	

2. Attending and apologies

Attending:

Geoff Allen, Kent Field Club
Lorraine Boast-Millar, Natural England
Lee Brady, Kent Reptile and Amphibian Group
Sue Buckingham, Kent Botanical Recording Group
David Carey, Kent Tree and Pond Partnership
Ken Chapman, Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory
Tom Cook, Environment Agency
Kate Fidczuk-Sterry, Natural England
Chris Gardner, South East Rivers Trust
Laura Gardner, Wildwood
Alfie Gay, Countryside Management Partnerships
Ian Hunter, Kent Moths
Will Maiden, Forestry Commission
Lesley Mason, Kent Mammal Group
Liz Milne, Kent County Council MS4N
Richard Moyse, Kent Field Club
Murray Orchard, Kent Ornithological Society
Sophie Page, Environment Agency
Tom Reid, Environment Agency
Heather Richards, RSPB
Jamie Robins, Buglife
Robbie Still, Kent Wildlife Trust
Ben Sweeney, Plantlife
Ben Thompson, Natural England
Becca Turley, Natural England
Tony Witts, Kent and Medway Biological Records Centre (plus fungi and beetles)

Apologies:

Thea Cox, ZSL
Nikki Gammans, Bumblebee Conservation Trust
Chas Holt, Adonis Blue Environmental Consultants
Sherece Kesner, Adonis Blue Environmental Consultants
Geoffrey Kitchener, Kent Botanical Recording Group
Rebecca Levey, Butterfly Conservation
Steven Lofting, Butterfly Conservation
Karen Rigby Faux, Natural England
Kirsty Swinnerton, Kent Wildlife Trust
Clair Thackray, Kent Bat Group
Ian Titley, North East Kent Coastal Science Advisory Group
Dan Tuson, Natural England

3. Introduction to the Making Space for Nature project and the role of the Data, evidence and mapping technical advisory group

MS4N provided an introduction to the project and the role of the technical advisory group. A copy of the presentation is attached to the minutes.

For those unable to make the meeting, the presentation can be viewed <https://youtu.be/8TNEAncnO5s>

4. Natural England advice process for creating LNRS species priorities

MS4N provided an overview of the NE advice on creating LNRS species priorities. A copy of the presentation is attached to the minutes.

For those unable to make the meeting, the presentation can be viewed <https://youtu.be/JWwffqjEY4>

Questions and comments were invited from the TAG and the following points were noted:

- How is an increase in species abundance defined? Natural England to provide details following meeting.
- What happens to species not identified as a priority by the process; these may still need targeted action. Suggested that if it is a species that needs action, should it not be a priority. Noted that perhaps there is an issue with the use of the term “priority” – any species identified as such under the LNRS does not highlight them as more important than other species but rather will have targeted action identified within the LNRS..
- Is there a risk that species less vulnerable or that don’t have formal assessment might be missed?
- Is there a risk that the LNRS is viewed as successful because species identified as a priority are recovering, whilst other species are declining. And therefore, nature is not actually recovering.
- It was noted that one of the categories that identified species as not appropriate for the LNRS included migratory species. It was clarified that this isn’t a blanket exclusion for migratory species, just those who are facing such notable pressures outside the UK (for instance from hunting activity) that would negate any recovery action in Kent.
- There was a query on whether there would be any guidance from Natural England on monitoring? Natural England to provide details following meeting.
- It was noted that as the longlist is refined, a record of any species removed will be kept.
- A question was asked about consideration of any data beyond that held by the LRC and verification of data. KMBRC noted that within the draft long-list there are some gaps and need recommendations for how to fill them. It was also noted that the long list is being sent to local experts for verification.
- It was queried how we define between species recolonising and those that are “blown across” the channel. KMBRC noted that the guidance requires a species to be present for a minimum of 10 years before being considered recolonised for.
- It was noted that changes in moth species is so rapid; and questioned how to decide if recolonising species is good or a pest. Suggested that the 10 years standard is applied in this instance as well.
- It was queried how we might determine between species abundance improvements and Kent just simply benefiting from what’s happening on continent/being first on climate migratory path?
- S41 – huge number of moths – need to be careful with those that are on it and those that are not.
- Noted that the red list for moths does exist but it is not included in the Natural England list <https://butterfly-conservation.org/sites/default/files/2022-01/S19->

[17%20A%20review%20of%20the%20status%20of%20the%20macro-moths%20of%20Great%20Britain.pdf](#)

ACTION: Natural England (Lorraine Boast-Millar) to provide details on how an increase in species abundance is defined?

ACTION: Natural England (Lorraine Boast-Millar) to find out if there will be any guidance on species monitoring for the LNRS.

5. Review of LNRS species long list

Tony Witts provided an overview of how the Kent species long list was assembled. A copy of the presentation is attached to the minutes.

Questions and comments were invited from the TAG and the following points were noted.

5.1 Data

- Invertebrate recording schemes – many different data flows; need to make sure these are going into the BRC. Buglife offered to suggest recording schemes that could assist.
- Need to ensure that use of KMBRC records are used within planning – consistency.
- Noted that Kent Ornithological Society has undertaken a Kent-wide survey on nightingales.
- Noted that the Environment Agency has data on White claw crayfish.
- Environment Agency has data for Depressed river mussel. There is also data from surveys on Stour.
- KMBRC asked the TAG if there is a minimum number of records we should consider for inclusion or a maximum age of record that should be considered for inclusion. It was noted that number of records and age of records aren't a useful deciding factor – can be dependent on species and how apparent it is (easy to see) and the level of recording effort (and where). Lack of record may be more due to lack of recorders/species specialist – numbers and age affected by this. Agreed that number of records and age of record should not be a deciding factor – instead species specialists to advise on records accordingly.
- The question was asked, how do we account for recorder bias in species abundance?
- Suggested that there should be a cross reference to protected sites/designations – where missing species make it unfavourable.
- There was a query over which red list – England or GB – was being used. It was suggested that it should be the England list, as this is an England based strategy. However it was noted that the guidance dictates the use of the GB red list. It was noted that there appeared to be some missing species from master list; this error needs to be noted to Natural England.

ACTION: TAG to advise which red list species appear to be missing from the master list so Natural England can be informed.

5.2 Initial comments on species longlist

- Will European eel be affected by migratory considerations?
- Suggested more freshwater species should be included.

- White claw crayfish was suggested. Noted that it is so impacted by invasive crayfish in Kent, that recovery may not be possible. Or does this actually make it a strong candidate for the LNRS. Opinions that White claw crayfish should be included for freshwater – there is an Ark site for White claw crayfish in Kent. There is also a population of White claw crayfish that has no signal crayfish in the catchment
- Opinion that Depressed river mussel should be included for freshwater Medway is nationally significant population for Depressed river mussel. Depressed river mussel are a huge concern and they seem to be disappearing from previous strongholds.
- Suggested that indicator species should not be the focus of action – as they then become an indicator of that action rather than a measures of the wider health of the environment.
- Noted that Marine Conservation Zones have protected features, with certain species associated with this – suggested that this is used as a starting point for marine species.
- It was noted that Faversham has a global endemic, with only one modern record for *Halobrecta princeps*. It has been IUCN reviewed as globally Critically Endangered and features in Buglife's Endemic Invertebrates report - <https://cdn.buglife.org.uk/2023/11/Endemic-Species-Report-2023-Final.pdf>
- It was suggested that the LNRS species list may give a voice to those not associated with priority habitats.
- Noted that Golden eagle on list but not Sandwich tern and Dartford warbler – these should be picked up during review and added as a species of local significance, if considered appropriate for the species longlist.

DECISION: Agreed that number of records and age of record should not be a deciding factor – instead species specialists to advise on records accordingly.

ACTION: Buglife to advise on invertebrate recording schemes that could assist.

ACTION: Natural England (Ben Thompson and Kate Fidczuk-Sterry) to advise if they can provide a list of species associated with designated sites in Kent.

ACTION: Natural England (Lorraine Boast-Millar) to advise how we account for recorder bias in species abundance.

ACTION: Natural England (Becca Turley) to advise on the marine species identified for the Kent MCZs.

5.3 Species long list review and revision

The TAG were asked to take the list to their respective groups and review the list, to get as wide a input as possible. The TAG were asked to include justification for removal and addition. It was noted that at this stage there is no criteria for inclusion on the species longlist as a species of local significance. If a group advise that a species should be removed, it must be clear why as these will have been included in the master list because they meet the NE advised criteria for the long list.

Noted that Kent Botanical Recording Group have already reviewed plant list and provided suggested amendments.

The TAG asked what constitutes a “short and manageable list” as required by the outcomes of the longlist refinement; is this defined? It was noted that it was not defined but the TAG were reminded that the LNRS itself needs to be deliverable. It was suggested that the refined list should be limited by what achieves nature recovery – and should be ambitious.

It was also noted that by building in species as part of wider LNRS and linking it to wider action, any species that aren't shortlisted should still benefit from the overall ambition of the LNRS to halt species decline and recover nature. And habitat assemblages should facilitate this further. KMBRC noted that they were optimistic about the approach and that assemblages in particular (and when using the pantheon database) should allow us to achieve more with one focus.

It was noted that KMBRC required assistance with marine, bryophytes and freshwater species. It was suggested that Stephen Lemon may be able to assist.

ACTION: TAG to review longlist and submit amendments and additions to KMBRC by 15th January 2024.

POST MEETING NOTE: Please could all comments go to KMBRC via the identified rep for the Kent taxon group. List and emails attached to minutes for reference.

ACTION: KMBRC to follow up with TAG members not attending meeting to alert them to action and deadline.

The next meeting in January will review the species removed, to get the TAG's agreement for the final draft species longlist.

6. Discussion of key pressures facing species in longlist

MS4N noted that the guidance suggested use of the Habitats Directive Article 17 List of pressures and threats as starting point, which themes pressures around:

- Agriculture practices.
- Forestry practices.
- Extraction of resources.
- Energy production.
- Transport systems.
- Development - residential, commercial, industrial and recreational.
- Extraction of living resources (e.g. fishing, hunting etc).
- Human intrusions.
- Alien and problematic species.
- Climate change.
- Mixed source pollution.
- Human induced changes in water regimes.
- Geological events, natural processes and catastrophes.

The TAG will advise on detailed species pressures that fall under these categories, which will be discussed at the next meeting.

ACTION: TAG to submit detailed species pressures by 17th January 2024.

7. Date of next meeting

24th January 2024, 10am-12pm. Agreed to continue the meetings via Teams.