



Developing the County's Local Nature Recovery Strategy

## MINUTES Stakeholder Engagement Technical Advisory Group (TAG) Stakeholder Engagement and Communication meeting 07.03.24, 11:00-12:00, Teams Meeting

### Summary of actions and items agreed.

#### 1.1 Items agreed –

- The TAG felt that the monthly analytics need to be extended, to see how a particular piece of work is being received.
- Communications Planner – to be the go-to tool for the TAG
- Messaging toolkit to be developed as needed, based on sectors identified at MS4N Team focus sessions based on Stakeholder Analysis.
- Don't use consultant to shape messaging for ethnic groups, but reach out and use the existing groups/expertise in the county

#### 1.2 Actions

March

Action	Who	Status
Teams channel for the TAG to be populated	RB CD	In progress
TAG to add own communications activity into planner	TAG	
Messaging toolkit to be developed from the draft document, based on sectors identified at MS4N Team focus sessions linked to Stakeholder Analysis	RB CD MS4N team	Ongoing
Populate table on Inclusive Engagement with communities and make initial contact in terms of then being "gatekeepers" for communications	TAG	
Start to make contact with the above groups	RB CD	
Contact Protected Landscape on ethnic diversity	CD RB	In progress

#### 1.3 Attending and apologies.

**Attending:**

Charlotte Lewis – Kent Wildlife Trust

Karen Rigby-Faux – Natural England

Rachel Boot – Making Space for Nature Project Team

Chris Drake – Making Space for Nature Project Team – TAG Chair

Will Maiden – Forestry Commission

Anne Wynde – Engagement and Consultation Lead, KCC

Laura Taylor – Engagement and Behavior Change Team Leader in the Environment and Circular Economy team. (Chris & Rachel in Natural Environment & Coast team).

**Apologies:**

Kathryn Hearnden – Kent Downs National Landscape

Alyn Thomas - Communications Manager KCC

Sophie Page – Environment Agency

**2. Minutes of February meeting – approved.**

Minutes to be uploaded to the MS4N website and TAG Teams channel.

**3. Outline of communications analytics for February and forward look using Communications Planner circulated with agenda - Rachel Boot**

Rachel talked through Instagram and Facebook reach – for which the number of followers is down slightly on January, visits down slightly too.

On the website the new Biodiversity Net Gain pages were most popular, showing the level of landowner interest in this area.

The shortlisting criteria relating to outputs from the priorities workshops was published on the website – lots of feedback and 70 users.

The newsletter had a standard 50% open rate, down from 60% for the January one.

**TAG comment on the above**

Not unduly concerned, still very impressed with newsletter statistics, one suggestion is that on Instagram and Facebook you might expect a bit of drop off once people have got the main points on MS4N. Also, a lot of Landowner focused Socials this time, which is fine, but previous Socials were broader, so expect a dip.

The group concluded that the Communication Planner is a helpful tool TAG can use in own communications, alongside messaging work.

The TAG felt that for the monthly analytics, it might be useful to be more specific, to see how a particular piece of work is being received, for example the workshops or the tool.

Also, "meaningful engagement" needs to be tabled as a standing item, so a means of assessing how well MS4N is reaching various groups in line with the Stakeholder Analysis. Chris said this was an area being explored at Team Focus sessions and would be brought back to the TAG.

Natural England member suggested TV and Radio should be a priority now too when the opportunities arise; also suggested more imagery and feel-good stories.

Anne said the mapping tool would be good to promote through Let's Talk Kent.

Rachel went on to highlight upcoming activity – as highlighted in the Communication Planner. A series of workshops are being booked for May, the first two on the priorities shortlisting, the other five on identifying measures for these.

Various "world days" and other campaigns, provide hooks for MS4N comms.

Next newsletter due to be published from week commencing 11<sup>th</sup> March, to include the published priorities longlist and to promote the mapping tool.

MS4N team members had just attend the Expo farming event, which put them in contact with many landowners new to the project. Video interviews with CLA and NFU recorded.

MS4N will also be represented at the Design Show – which has a focus on how development can help biodiversity, then the Heathfield Agricultural Show in Sussex in May. The KWT podcast with MS4N and Nonnington Farms will be recorded on the 15<sup>th</sup>.

## **Action**

TAG to add headlines of own communications and engagement activity into the planner, which will be posted on the Teams channel.

### **4. Messaging Toolkit - sector messaging circulated with agenda.**

Rachel had pulled together existing national messaging on Nature Recovery Network, sent across by Karen, presented with the agenda.

This sector specific messaging would also appear to reflect the situation in Kent, particularly around landowners and businesses.

Having this type of messaging in a toolkit should help both as a backup for the day-to-day work of the MS4N team and for the TAG to ensure information is at hand when communicating with different sectors about MS4N.

Chris said that the degree to which we go down this route with additional sectors needs to be determined by the Stakeholder Analysis, in terms of both prioritisation and progress made against each group of stakeholders, but an approach that looks at the drivers for a particular group and what MS4N should be saying would seem helpful.

At present there are some broad sectors where it is apparent, MS4N need to reach out better, often we know why we need them, but it is more complex to explain which they need us. These sectors include Businesses, Developers, Mineral producers, and waste sites, but others will be identified.

### **TAG discussion**

The group could see the value of having messaging at hand when needed, but this all needs to be fit to go, as the document contained sections on approaches/risks etc.

There was a feeling that the Communications Planner, which contains text for upcoming communications, was the main a tool for the TAG, but that sector messaging needs need to be identified and developed through work linked to the Stakeholder Analysis.

Natural England struck a note of caution on a messaging toolkit, in that national policy messaging can regularly change.

KWT offered to do some work on drivers (why they need us) and messaging with MS4N as needed, so also wanted clarification that messaging can be adapted and not used verbatim necessarily – Chris confirmed this was the case.

Forestry Commission noted that many landowners are still not engaged some don't use social media, so both the means of communication and messaging itself are important.

### **Decision**

Messaging toolkit to be developed from the draft document, based on sectors identified at MS4N Team focus sessions based on Stakeholder Analysis.

## **5. Equality, diversity, and inclusion – discussion paper circulated with agenda.**

### **Inclusive Engagement with communities – NE document and discussion paper circulated with agenda.**

Chris thanked Anne and Karen for background information on this area and highlighted key points from the diversity paper including that the environment sector is one of the least ethnically diverse in the UK and that this also had played out in the range of people who attended the workshops.

Not just ethnic diversity, but age, social group.

Chris felt that the late coming item on “Inclusive Engagement with communities” needed discussing in conjunction with this. This recognised that there are communities experiencing both high deprivation and low access to nature, that MS4N needs to reach. Different & diverse groups are likely to reveal new & compelling reasons why & where habitats or species should be prioritised.

### **TAG discussion**

There are groups that we should approach – adult social care, KCC staff group and various “gatekeepers” that could be brought onboard to get our messages out to communities experiencing both high deprivation and low access to nature.

On the diversity note, Anne is happy to input, and Natural England suggested we bring in, Kent Downs Protected Landscape (TAG member) who are doing work on this.

KWT also have a contact working in this area. Anne said we need to consider the demographic in Kent in terms of how well MS4N is addressing ethnic diversity and targeted social media might work for some group – worth speaking to district council contacts too.

Chris highlighted the table in the discussion paper with suggested contacts (mainly health and access organisations) for Inclusive Engagement with communities, this will be put on the Teams channel with the option for the TAG to add contacts, but some additions were made in the meeting.

### **TAG decision**

The steer was against using a consultant to shape messaging for ethnic groups, but to reach out and use the existing groups/expertise in the county.

In terms of a network to sit alongside the TAG and reach communities, that wasn't ruled out, but initially MS4N need to contact these various gatekeepers and see how they want to work, but a "network" may well be the way forward. In terms of messaging work in this respect, we might only then know if we have to tweak or come up with specific messages for "seldom heard groups".

It was recognised that Rachel and Chris don't have the capacity to attend lots of network but that initial contact should be made to see what can be done.

### **Action**

Populate table on Inclusive Engagement with communities and make initial contact in terms of then being "gatekeepers" for communications.

### **6. AOB**

Next meeting May, because of the Easter holidays, but TAG documents will go on Teams channel, so members can input this way and other actions agreed may involve various members ahead of May.