

Environment Board

Wednesday 27th October 2021, 10.00 – 12.30

Via MS Teams

NOTES

1.	Welcome and Introductions	Steve Read, Chair
	Steve Read welcomed all and particularly those joining for first time.	
2.	OxCam Arc climate adaptation & resilience (including Local Natural Capital Project update)	Laura Kitson, Senior Advisor, Environment Agency
	Presentation	
	Laura started by introducing her colleague, Ceri Lewis, who is also part of OxCam team (Oxford to Cambridge Arc).	
	The Oxford to Cambridge Arc is the part of the country that runs through and includes Buckinghamshire, Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire, Oxfordshire and contains the most productive economies. The National Infrastructure Commission published recommendations to government on maximising the area's economic potential through building one million new homes and supporting infrastructure by 2050.	
	The EA are seizing the opportunity to take a joined- up approach to housing and infrastructure development.	
	 The main themes of the Arc Spatial Framework are: 1) Green growth – one big opportunity is that in February 2021 government announced the intention of the Arc Spatial Framework. It will provide the same status as the National Policy Framework and National Transport Policy. In July 2021 government launched a consultation on the Spatial Framework which has just 	

concluded. It offers a cross boundary approach to planning. Environmental evidence is required to show what environmental net gain looks like in practice.

2) Nature Recovery – there are 2 strands 1) Nature Recovery and 2) Natural Capital Planning with several components to the work as set out on slide 3 of the presentation. There are 4 key components of the Natural Capital Plan – 1) natural capital baseline 2) eco systems mapping 3) opportunity mapping and 4) a natural capital account. There is also a funding and investment guide to natural capital. This work is complete and is on the OxCAM LNCP website for you to have a look at.

Sitting on top of 1 & 2 is:

3) Rethinking Natural Resources – particularly in the context of water. The EA has seen the impact of flooding. and are doing a clean air and integrated water management plan. The EA are taking this forward to lead on the water management plan, looking at synergies and interdependencies on different strands, looking at what solutions look like to fill the gap. The EA are bringing together what the water bodies are doing and work will progress into Spring 2022. The next stage would be to take that info and do the "so what", bringing together all activities to provide integrated solutions that can be delivered alongside growth.

Over 20% of Arc is at risk of flooding. EA want to look positively at flood resilience in line with FCRM strategy, ensuring that today's growth and infrastructure is resilient to tomorrow's climate. What this looks like is unknown and so there is a series of scenarios to look at. The EA aim to identify the economic optimum level of investment and at what time that investment should be made to deliver benefits. The Spatial Framework gives an opportunity to see what that looks like in practice.

This project is intended to be an exemplar for other people to take and run with as well as being a pilot for something that will be rolled out in other counties. It has been very resource intensive. The idea is to have a methodology for others to use at a less intensive, less expensive and quicker way. The EA want to influence decision making in OxCam. The pace that government is pushing gives the opportunity to be on the front foot and it is desired to take this and apply more widely and also learn from other counties. There is a peer group of

	other projects doing similar things.	
	The Environment Bill is setting up processes around the new statutory requirement for LNRS. The EA want to build on the approach being built on in the Environment Bill and want to develop a consistent evidence base for the LNRS. Bucks was a pilot LNRS and will be of benefit in the OxCam Arc. Defra are unlikely to agree to a single overarching LNRS for the Arc. They will be set at a county level, but the EA and LAs will link as best as possible to get common principles and themes running through them.	
	What happens if there is a conflict with the framework for the Arc and the National Planning Policy Framework? The EA are influencing the work but not leading on it. The NPPF is led by DLUHC. The EA want to identify opportunities for OxCam to sit alongside the National Policy. The Spatial Framework will look at risks and identify solutions within the	
	Arc.	
	Any questions please send them to:	
	OX.Cam@environment-agency.gov.uk	
3.	FCERM Strategy delivery and flood investment programme	Julie Foley, Director FCRM Strategy &
3.	FCERM Strategy delivery and flood investment programme Presentation	
3.		FCRM Strategy & National Adaptation,
3.	Presentation Julie informed that the context of the work is set out in the National Strategy which involved contributions from many partners. It is looking at the nation being ready for and resilient to flooding and coastal change. You are all encouraged to read the strategy, especially if you are working	FCRM Strategy & National Adaptation,

looking to 2025.

This is the EA's biggest investment programme and just got bigger. It will fund a wide range of projects. Local Authorities lead over 50% of schemes on this programme even though EA run it. There is a need to invest £5.2billion, of which LAs are due to invest over 25%.

A summary of benefits of this programme includes reducing flooding to properties; contributing to wider infrastructure resilience; sustainable farming and agriculture and creating habitat through net gain schemes. There is a desire to cover other aspects of work the EA are doing which are central to delivering the Natural Strategy.

In 2020 budget there was also investment in the Flood and Coastal Resilience Innovation Programme. Local Authorities were invited to make an expression of interest to test and demonstrate innovative practice resilience actions in their areas. This was due to the recognition that evidence on flood resilience was less well understood. The programme intends to build on evidence and inform cost and benefits. Investment of £150million is being made in 25 new flooding and coastal resilience projects around the country (e.g. in South Tyneside, in Bucks for ground water flooding and looking at property flood resilience for ground water; in Slough for spongy road, permeable paving and sustainable drainage options).

Adaptive pathways pilots are central to the national strategy. The EA are world leading within the Thames Estuary and is a world leading example of the adaptive plan. The EA plan to take this approach to other areas... Humber, Yorkshire and River Severn Partnership.

Natural flood management/nature-based solutions to reduce flooding – in 2017 an LNF pilots programme started which finished this year. A document on successes from these pilots will be published on 28th October 2021.

ACTION: Julie Foley to share the document on successes from the LNF pilots programme with the Board.

There is a set up guide and link on how to set up a Natural Flood Management project, giving simple advice on what works, why and how to apply for funding.

Property Flood Resilience Pathfinders – projects led by 3

JF

clusters of LAs – Yorkshire, Devon & Cornwall & OxCam	
benefitted from funding. Pathfinders were there to dispel	
myths and to come up with ways to build back better. Missy's	
Tale at https://www.befloodready.uk/ is an Aardman animation of benefits of property flood resilience.	
animation of benefits of property hood resilience.	
The set Dente to see all sections with Defendence back an allow sections	
Flood Re is in conjunction with Defra to look at discounted	
insurance premiums.	
Fleed visit and planning, the shallonges should	
Flood risk and planning: the challenges ahead:	
This is an important part of the role as statutory planning	
advisor. There are too many developments going ahead against advice. A number of local planning authorities are	
aware of developments recently built that are experiencing	
flooding.	
ACTION: Julie Foley to send links on:	
How to set up a Natural Flood Management project and	JF
apply for funding.	
Asked about linking flood investment with encouragement	
for low carbon/sustainable farming, Julie said that she sits on	
a lowland peat agriculture task force who is exploring	
lowland peat areas like the Fens, Somerset, and how	
sustainable farming practices can be encouraged that are low	
carbon.	
Julie added that at the time the EA undertake the appraisal of	
flood schemes and funding to reduce flooding they need to	
also be looking for wider benefits from the flood investment	
project, e.g. a wetland which might have natural habitat biodiversity benefits. This would also be a great way of	
levering in other partnerships.	
Ariane Crampton shared Salisbury flood resilience	
programme which is being taken to the COP and LGA. There	
are so many co-benefits to this, e.g. to protect homes, plant	
new trees, wildlife habitat, walking and cycling	
enhancements too.	
Salisbury River Park Masterplan gets seal of approval -	
Wiltshire Council	
With regards to how agriculture ties in with LNRS, it is in	
strategy and there is a clear commitment for the EA to work	
with NE colleagues. They are also working with the	
Environment Loan Management Scheme and will get more	

4.	Net Zero Strategy <u>Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener</u>	Aaron Gould, Head of Local Government
	The Net Zero Strategy (NZS) came out last week after a long wait.	Climate Change, DLUHC
	Government strategies are not always as detailed as people think they are going to be. Responses have been positive, a combination of that they are pleased to see it out and noting things that it says. The NZS is a solid foundation to build on and better than what has existed in the past.	
	The NAO report indicated that LG was doing enough with climate change. The NZS addresses some of the points raised by NAO.	
	Spending Review happens this afternoon.	
	A lot of things we need to establish to enable more LAs to do more needs to be working collaboratively.	
	Central government needs to provide an engagement framework for LAs to work with. One of the main policies is for a Local Net Zero Forum to try and collaboratively determine what needs to be established to help close the gaps. Central government has not made it sufficiently clear what the role of the local government is for addressing climate change. This NZS is first time that the local government has elaborated that there are some parts that we can't achieve without the Local Authorities' help.	
	Steve Read commented that he's delighted that ADEPT has been invited to sit on the proposed Local Net Zero Forum chaired by BEIS. All Local Government will be represented and have a part to play. David Dale looks forward to discussions and membership.	
	David Dale acknowledged that ADEPT welcome that the NZS is out and some colleagues may be aware that the Climate Change Committee have already commented favourably on it. Hopefully speed on delivery and some other detail filled in quickly.	
	Concerned to see the NZS say 82% of all emissions within the influence of LAs. Normally it's a figure of a third. Aaron Gould agreed that figure is high at 82%. Government looks at sectors responsible for emissions, but LG are often overlooked as they are not a major source of emissions. So	

	chis figure is referring to emissions where LG has the potential to play a role in reducing them. It is what will fall nto scope. Building sector is about a third of emissions and one could argue that this in scope of what LAs can do. It will nclude building, landstrips, waste etc where there is some degree of influence but LA influence is not absolute. Ariane Crampton would like it to be reinforced. It's potentially a bit misleading as climate activists might think that LAs have more control and influence than they have.	
i	ACTION: Aaron Gould to ask BEIS what definitions/ presumptions they have used to get the figure of 82% for emissions. Also ask about ultimate design of Forum as it will nclude Whitehall. Is it a Net Zero or a Climate Change Forum to include adaptation?	AG
	Peter Moore offered an answer for the 82% - Subset within BEIS emissions data and it extracts the things that LAs have no control on which leaves about 80%. This is the measure used by BEIS for our emissions reporting.	
	Steve Read commented that in ADEPTs view the Forum needs to take a wider view to include adaptation. ADEPT would be willing to be involved.	
1	Steve Read is pleased to see recognition of support to LAs to requirement of food waste collections. Probably picked up on feedback on consultation and will wait on that.	
t 1 1 1	Tim De-Keyzer commented on the frustration that is felt in terms of linked competitive funding streams to these strategies. There is notification of another tree planting funding scheme and it will be a challenge to respond in the short time given. Tim asked if any of the Board has any influence to give more lead time into these, it would be much appreciated. David Dale noted that there was positive in a baragraph about funding in the NZS and the government's intention to simplify funding streams	
1	Aaron Gould is well aware of barriers to local delivery and ack of comms from central government. The approach to funding and so much that does exist is available with little or no notice with short application dates and hoops to jump through and expectations on when funding will be spent by. There was a lot of discussion on how far the DLUHC could commit to this in the NZS.	

	Does ADEPT have initial views on what we are hoping to see from new Secretary of State in this agenda? Michael Gove was previously at Defra and we saw massive strides forward in environment when he had that portfolio. Further to a question as to whether ADEPT have initial views on what we are hoping to see on the new Secretary of State's agenda, David Dale commented that there is a lot of joining up to do and it is helpful to see the Planning Reform, which would be good see the Secretary of State have this at the heart of his agenda. Hannah Bartram has forwarded a letter to ADEPT Board Members that was sent on the levelling-up agenda and helping government deliver the agenda and how to meet the Net Zero challenge.	
5.	Updates from partners and local authorities	All
	WSCC in stable place and not experiencing too many difficulties at the moment. Others were more badly affected.	
	Defra	Joe Wahla
	 Environment Bill The Environment Bill passed Third Reading in the House of Lords on 13 October and returned to the Commons with amendments on 20 October. Consideration of Commons amendments in the Lords is planned for 26 October. The Environment Bill is expected to complete parliamentary passage shortly. The Government tabled amendments in the House of Commons include: Extending powers in England to enable future charges to apply to 'single use items' made from any material, not just plastic. This would ensure we target the unnecessary use of all single-use items, decrease resource consumption overall, and avoid simply shifting use from plastic to other materials. Government guidance will encourage parties to seek legal advice before entering into a conservation covenant and they should draw on that advice in designing the covenant. This will help to ensure that these agreements are robust, at the same time as being flexible tools accessible to a wide range of landowners, and straightforward to enter into. 	

Conservation covenants will also be executed as a deed between parties.

 New measures to better protect ancient woodland in England. These changes will underline the importance of these valuable habitats and make sure planning authorities will have to give same importance as other community assets.

Other Defra Updates

- Together with Defra, the Council for Sustainable Business will run a Business Leader Lunch Event at COP26 on 6th November The Nature Day. The event will promote <u>Get</u> <u>Nature Positive</u> campaign, champion good work on Nature and Biodiversity being done by the business sector and focus on inspiring other businesses and countries to do the same.
- 22 October publications of Defra's 2020/21 progress report for the 25 Year Environment Plan. Our 25 Year Environment Plan sets out our goals for improving the environment, ensuring we protect and enhance our vital natural capital for future generations to enjoy. This second annual progress report describes where progress has been made towards achieving the long-term vision of the plan. It also highlights the serious challenges that still remain in improving the environment within a generation and which we are committed to addressing.
- The most recent (2021) update to Defra's 25 Year Environment Plan Outcome Indicator Framework has now been further developed into an online interactive <u>Outcome Indicator Framework dashboard</u> and launched on 22 October. It allows for an enhanced user experience and facilitates direct download access to the underlying data.
- 29 September launch of <u>a consultation on plans to</u> <u>modernise water abstraction</u> and enhance the Environment Agency's powers to protect groundwater. The consultation seeks views on proposals for amending regulations to include water abstraction and impounding licensing. This will bring the majority of environmental permits under one legal framework and allow people to manage all their permits in one place. A more consolidated system will help the Environment Agency to

	manage water resources in a way that responds to a	
	changing environment; making the best use of the	
	available water for abstraction and continuing to protect,	
	enhance and restore the environment.	
•	29 September - unveiled plans to use gene editing	
	to help better protect the environment.	
	New plans to unlock the power of gene editing to help	
	our farmers grow more resistant, more nutritious and	
	more productive crops have been published as part of the	
	government response to the gene editing consultation.	
•	25 September - launched a new project to plant	
	extensive woodlands along England's riverbanks to	
	improve water quality, manage flood risk and boost	
	biodiversity. Over 3,000 hectares of new woodlands are	
	set to be planted along England's rivers and watercourses	
	with backing from the country's leading environmental	
	organisations.	
Lo	cal Authority Engagement	
•	A draft Local Authority Environment Bill Q&A product	
	has been prepared and is undergoing a format review. It	
	will be shared with ADEPT for feedback shortly.	
Со	TION: Joe to find out the latest with regards to the Waste nsultation, where we are and measures expected, to bring ck to the Board.	JW
AC	TION: Regarding the <u>Outcome indicator framework for the</u>	
<u>25</u>	Year Environment Plan (defra.gov.uk). Joe to find out if	WL
the	ere are plans to make any of the data available at LA level.	
Na	tural England	
		Adam Wallace
•	Staying close to input into the Planning Bill and what the	
	relationship with LNRS and local planning looks like.	
•	Proposed Nature Green Paper that Defra are leading on.	
	ACTION: David Dale to send round a note to the Board	DD
	following attendance at a workshop on the Nature Green Paper last week.	
•	Environment Bill - will wait to see what sticks in terms of	
•	items brought forward as amendments.	
•	People and Nature Survey (annual) was published a	

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	month ago but there has since been a follow up additional survey from children's perspective on their engagement with nature.	
	ACTION: Adam to forward links for both surveys.	AW
	 Countryside Code – work is happening to produce the Code along with video clips in 15 languages in order to reach a wider suite of communities. 	
	 Nature and Place Making roles. Link to job adverts: <u>Nature and Place Making - Senior Adviser(Ref: 3639) -</u> <u>Civil Service Jobs - GOV.UK</u>. New closing date will be 18th November. 	
	LNRS - Adam informed of the intention to try and put in place supporting roles to relate to responsible authorities. There's a clear plan to put resource through NE and pull together local evidence and learning from the 5 pilots. The learning will be fed into LNRS activity. There will be 25 roles placed into this activity to enable progress.	
	ACTION: Please pass on to interested partners/colleagues	ALL
6.	Board business and Working Group updates:	
	Energy & Clean Growth	Ariane Crampton
	 The group met the day before 2 key strategies were published. The main focus of the meeting was round the table updates and discussion about heat networks. Key points and good practice: Surrey CC have just taken a Climate Change Delivery Plan 	
	to Cabinet which has been fully costed up with a finance strategy.	
	• Devon and Bucks CCs have both been focusing on tree planting and offsetting and shared some of the learning from that.	
	• Essex CC are working on solar on schools which is difficult to crack in terms of roof liabilities.	
	 Suffolk CC have a climate commercial ask of suppliers - <u>https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/business/tenders-and-</u> <u>supplying-us/climate-change-commercial-ask/</u> 	
	• Cantor Mocke from BEIS attended to talk about heat networks and the challenge associated with this. Govt	

Flood and Water Management	Alys Bishop
The Group last met on 5 th October. Highlights:	
Environment Agency:	
Launch of the Flood Risk and River Basin Management Plans which went live last Friday for 3 months. There is a statutory duty on LLFAs to support the consultation before the FRMP Plans are formally adopted. Both consultations are currently open for comments on the EAs citizen space portal. Picking up on points raised today about responding to consultations, it is unclear what kind of collective response these might warrant, the FRMPS are quite local in their focus so likely to be individual responses. Haven't been as involved as a group on the RBMPs – Max and Alys to look into this.	
The group is due to input into work being done by the EA to update the National Strategy Action Plan, which Julie covered in her item, with some engagement workshops coming up in November.	
Guidance for the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy is evolving, and a 'live framework' is to be hosted on the LGA website. It's currently being tested and should be available to LLFA's in late Autumn.	
Agency's planned approach to improving the surface water maps, a task and finish group is to be created including members of the group, to look at surface water mapping and modelling.	
 This Comes following an overview of the Agency's planned activity around improvements to the national surface water maps in terms of messaging and communication of risks, and the NAFRA 2 road map to improving the quality of the maps through new data. 	
 In recognition of the limitations of some LLFAs to procure detailed modelling, the EA are developing a process for sign posting from the maps to technical reports. This was welcome by the group and anticipate seeing further pilot areas emerge. 	
 The group raised issues of insurance and conveyancing using data from the surface water maps as fact, and the EA and the group committed to working with these companies to understand the issue. 	

DEEDV	
DLI INA.	

- Environment Bill update. It is thought that a policy Q&A product would be well received by LAs, from Alys's knowledge of how their own council is gearing up for this.
- Progress delivering the Government's July 2020 policy statement which links to the DEFRA investment plan was also given. This includes a commitment to improving land use planning towards sustainable flood risk management and looking to strengthen these policies. This may overlap with Julie's slide looking at the future challenges in this area for planning compliance with conditions and development of the flood plain. The group are keen to input in to this further.
- A new advisory group is also in the process of being set up, which the group is to be involved with, the aim of which will be to inform future policy proposals to reform local flood risk management planning through a catchment-based approach, the aim is to complete this by 2026.
- It is understood that Schedule 3 of flood and water management act is again under review alongside the right to connect. The group are working with DEFRA leads to better understand how to inform both parts of this review, with many local council's making individual representations on the right to connect to their local water companies and WaterUK following widespread sewer flooding in the last 12 months.

National Audit Office report (published Nov 2020) presentation from Keith Davies:

- This gave some insights into recommendations around better understanding local authority funding and approaches to delivering flood management, as well as ensuring capacity and skills shortages do not prevent delivery of the EA programme. David and Aaron touched on this in comments in today's meeting regarding the need to streamline and improve accessibility to environmental funding.
- While DEFRA accept the NAO report they have not made a formal response to the points raised. Further work by the Public Accounts Committee has resulted in similar recommendations and Defra are likely to respond formally to this.

Alys would be happy to share this presentation with anybody interested.

Natural Capital & Heritage

	The group last met at the end of September. Items discussed:	
	Queen's Green Canopy to celebrate the Queen's Platinum	
	Jubilee. This has links across lots of other initiatives. It	
	stimulates interest/engagement in trees and tree planting.	
	Links available to delve more into that if interested.	
	Challenges on lead time on schemes and funding.	
	Biodiversity Net Gain within planning authorities - there will be challenges for LAs and wider sector to deliver ambitions	
	around that policy. One to revisit at a later Board meeting for	
	an update.	
	Environment Bill and LNRS – have been informed that there	
	are no changes to the clauses and so this is stable.	
	LNRS consultation from Defra – working on response and	
	developing LNRS on a joined-up basis. Will feed into statutory	
	guidance and regulations to put in place.	
	With regards to the LNRS consultation and the deadline for comments being next Tuesday, 2 nd November, David Dale	
	informed the Board of an informal consultation workshop	
	with Andy Holden and colleagues a couple of weeks ago	
	which was probably a more constructive engagement than	
	writing a response. Tim is surprised that we are not planning	
	written response. He attended another workshop where	
	affirmation from LAs on the level of support was sought. LAs are compelled to share data.	
	ACTION: David Dale to draft an ADEPT response to the LNRS	
	consultation at a higher level rather than on every point.	
	ACTION: David Dale to send copy of Blueprint Coalition	
	response to Board in prep for next Tuesday's deadline, 2 nd	
	November.	
	Waste	
	No update during meeting.	Steve Palfrey (apologies)
	No update during meeting.	
	Environment Board	
		Steve Read/David Dale
	ADEPT response to "My Society" survey. David Dale informed	
	the Board that David Hickman is drafting a response.	
	ACTION: To be discussed outside this meeting and the draft	
	response to be circulated to the Board.	DD/DH
7.	ADEPT business	Hannah Bartram

	Highlights	
	<u>Highlights:</u>	
	• LNRS Consultation Workshop held on 8 th October.	
	 Glover review – the consultation and government response has been delayed until early December. However, there is a catch-up booked for 25th Nov (some Board members will be involved). 	
	Net Zero Strategy	
	• The Blueprint Coalition response to the Heat & Building Strategy: <u>A good start, but councils still need more long-</u> term certainty - Blueprint Coalition response to Heat and <u>Buildings Strategy ADEPT (adeptnet.org.uk)</u>	
	 ADEPT has been invited to sit on the new Local Net Zero Forum 	
	 ADEPT letter to Michael Gove on Levelling up Locally: Levelling up locally - a letter to Michael Gove, SoS, DLUHC ADEPT (adeptnet.org.uk) 	
	Events:	
	 CIPFA/ADEPT Webinar "Measuring a local authority's carbon footprint to help delivery climate action plans" – delayed from 22nd October to 12th November. ACTION: Hannah to send a revised registration link. 	НВ
	• ADEPT Autumn Conference "Climate, Recovery and Renewal: looking ahead to a decade of action" - 18th and 19th Nov 2021. See draft programme here .	
	• LiveLabs Expo on 1st Dec 2021, Derby. Free registration. Strong environmental decarbonisation theme to projects being delivered. Free in Derby.	
	• Excellence in Place Leadership programme 2022. Deadline for applications is this Friday, 29th October. More info and how to apply is here. Welcome session for new cohort and programme team is 09:00-11:00, Thurs 9th December 2021.	
	The Leadership Programme will then launch early 2022 with four one-day sessions.	
8.	Any other business	All
	None reported.	
9.	Notes of last meetings (full – 28th July 2021; catch up 28th	Steve Read

	September 2021)ADEPT Environment Board update – July 2021ADEPT Environment Board Update – September 2021.	
	All agreed.	
10.	Dates of future meetings, and close.	Steve Read
	Wed 24 th Nov - monthly catch-up (10:00-11:00) Wed 26 th January Q1 (10:00-12:30 via MS Teams) Wed 27 th April Q2 Wed 20 th July Q3 Wed 19 th Oct Q4	