

NW Partnerships Briefing Report

Purpose

Despite the disappearance of regional institutions, a number of groups continue to operate at NW level in the environmental field. There are clearly good reasons for this but there is a lack of clarity and understanding across groups about what each other is doing, the potential synergies/conflicts and the opportunities to collaborate.

NW Environment Link and the NW Green Infrastructure Unit, with support from the Environment Agency, therefore initiated this project to look across the range of NW level environmental partnerships to improve understanding, communications, collaboration and effectiveness in the ever-changing environment in which they all work.

The objectives are to:

- a. Provide clarity on the role and scope of the various partnerships to key audiences.
- b. Increase knowledge and understanding of who is working in which partnership.
- c. Identify and promote the aims and function of each partnership.
- d. Identify synergies and potentially overlaps – organisational and themes.
- e. Identify how groups can work together to achieve environmental improvements and strengthen the organisations that work in the sector, and deliver activity to create these improvements.

The criteria used in identifying the key partnerships to involve were that they should operate on a NW wide footprint with at least part of their focus on natural environment issues. The following ten groups were selected:

- NW Environment Link (NWEL)
- Natural Economy Investment Forum (NEIF)
- NW Green Infrastructure Forum (GIF)
- NW Biodiversity Partnership (NWBP)
- NW Forestry Forum (NWFF)
- NW Environmental Evidence Group (EEG)
- GreenSpace North West (GSNW)
- NW Climate Change Partnership (now Climate Change North West - CCNW)
- NW Coastal Forum (NWCF)
- Environmental Sustainability Technical Assistance Group (ESTA)

In the course of the project, a small number of other NW-level groups were identified, as well as the impact of the creation of 8 Local Nature Partnerships based wholly or partly in the region, and these are considered later in this report.

Method

The project involves four stages:

- i. An informal and exploratory discussion with chairs and other representatives of each group to obtain initial information and views.
- ii. Using this and other relevant information to prepare a Briefing Report summarising existing partnerships, providing an initial overview and identifying the key opportunities and challenges they face.
- iii. Bringing chairs and other representatives together for a meeting on 29 October 2012 to explore the opportunities for better understanding, communication and closer working.
- iv. Preparing a Next Steps Action Plan covering activities which all agree should be taken forward.

The first two stages were undertaken by Neil Cumberlidge Associates on behalf of the project sponsors. Face to face meetings were held with chairs and other representatives of nine of the groups and a telephone discussion with the remaining one. This Briefing Report brings together the information and views collected. It aims to provide the context and identify issues for consideration at the meeting on 29 October.

Structure of report

This report is in two parts. Part 1 seeks to provide an overview and high-level analysis of the information collected and highlights some key issues for consideration at the 29 October meeting. Part 2 provides summary information on each of the 10 partnerships covered and is designed to improve awareness and understanding between groups of respective roles, membership, objectives and working arrangements.

Part 1

The information and views collected from the NW environmental partnerships can be summarised and explored under a few headings.

Roles in a post-regional world

It is useful to begin by seeking to understand why so many NW-level partnerships continue to function in a landscape where the key regional institutions – 4NW, GONW and NWDA – have been abolished and replaced by “localism” - in which the agenda is primarily driven by local authorities and locally-based groups such as LEPs and LNPs.

The reason in essence is that influencing regional decision-making/investment was only one of the roles of the NW environmental groups: other roles such as lobbying national government, networking,

information sharing, collaboration and delivery remain important, perhaps even more so in the new climate.

When looking across the partnerships, we can identify three broad roles – influencing, networking and delivery – which all groups are involved with to a greater or lesser extent. As can be seen from the table below, most partnerships are focussed primarily on networking with influencing as a secondary role, a couple are delivery-focussed, while around half have a mix of all three roles.

	Influencing	Networking	Delivery
CCNW			
EEG			
GSNW			
NWBF			
GIF			
NWEL			
NWCF			
NWFF			
NEIF			
ESTA			
Primary role			
Secondary roles			

This is understandable: with the demise of regional institutions, the need to influence and inform decision-making/investment and to deliver projects/programmes at NW-level has diminished.

Moreover, a bigger premium seems to have been attached to the importance of bringing organisations and people together to network, share information and good practice and collaborate across local boundaries. Another factor is the perceived “strategic gap” between local institutions and national government, which the regional groups seek to fill, including where appropriate by articulating a NW-level or pan-local response, views or action to inform or influence local or national decision-makers.

This re-orientation of roles has given a renewed sense of purpose to NW environmental groups and, while some are struggling financially (see next section), there is a real determination on the part of all the partnerships, supported and driven by their members, to continue to play a full role in the new post-regional landscape.

It is worth noting that the levels of formality differ markedly between groups. Some have formal structures, terms of reference, business plans etc. while some are very informal nature with activity restricted essentially to organising regular forum-type meetings to bring members together.

Financial sustainability

Nearly all the groups are operating under financial constraints, having seen funding and other support reduce, partly as a consequence of the changes in regional architecture but mainly because of the impact of the Government’s austerity measures on sponsors, funders and members. In the most extreme case, there are serious questions about whether the group can be sustained beyond the current financial year. Others have had to streamline their work to match a reduced funding profile, and

in a couple of cases it is only the goodwill of individuals that is keeping them going. Those relying on local authority funding have faced particular problems in sustaining contributions.

It is worth noting the role of the “Defra family” – Environment Agency, Forestry Commission and Natural England – in continuing to provide funding, staff time and membership to the continuing partnerships. Seven of the ten groups receive support from one or more of the Defra family, either through direct financial contributions or “in kind” support through the provision of staff time.

Financial issues are likely to be the most serious constraint on the continuing operation and effectiveness of the partnerships. It would be therefore be worthwhile exploring the potential for collaboration between groups to share resources and services to maintain viability and effectiveness. This is considered further on in the report.

Membership

Unsurprisingly, given the different roles and objectives of the groups, membership is variable, ranging from a handful of organisations to several hundred for the more “open” forum-type partnerships, and covering a broad swathe of public, private and third sector organisations interested in aspects of the environmental agenda.

The following table summarises membership on the basis of broad categories:

	Defra agencies	LAs	NGOs	Business	VCS	Others
CCNW						
EEG						
GSNW						
NWBF						
GIF						
NWEL						
NWCF						
NWFF						
NEIF						
ESTA						

As a general rule, the larger and more open the group, the more diverse the membership in terms of sectors covered. It is also worth noting that there is a good deal of cross-membership of groups with some organisations – and certain individuals in particular – belonging to several groups. This can present problems for organisations dealing with reductions in resources, in simply attending all the various meetings. It is also clear that there could better understanding and communication within organisations on which partnerships they belong to and the benefits generated.

Policy messages and audiences

What unites all the partnerships is a strong sense of purpose to promote, develop and embed understanding of environmental opportunities and challenges by their members, and by the key decision-makers, in the post-regional landscape.

Beyond this, policy priorities tend to be tailored to the particular role and objectives of the individual partnerships and the specific audiences they seek to influence. Part 2 therefore contains a summary of each group's key policy messages and audiences. Nevertheless, it is possible to discern a few common themes:

- a strong emphasis on linking environmental priorities to the wider economic and social agenda, to develop integrated "win, win, win" approaches where possible;
- a desire to ensure that work is underpinned by the best possible evidence, intelligence and information;
- using well informed members to influence the "movers and shakers", be they at local, regional or national level;
- the desire to engage effectively with Local Enterprise Partnerships, Local Nature Partnerships and other key partnerships in the new landscape.

Influence and impact

Nearly all the partnerships consider that they are influential and have a good impact. To a certain extent, this is borne out by the fact that they have sustained their roles and membership base in a much changed and often difficult policy and institutional landscape. Essentially, partnerships have two broad targets to influence. The first is their own members, who through networking, information sharing and discussion they seek to equip to promote and cascade key information and messages. The second is key decision-makers at local and national level, sometimes via members but also through direct engagement and lobbying where needed.

It is worth highlighting that, while partnerships claim to be influential and make a good impact - and when challenged, can usually provide one or more examples to back this up – few seek to gather and use information about impact in a systematic way. This is something that should be looked at. Tools such as membership surveys, external perceptions studies and case studies of projects delivered successfully can be useful ways of highlighting the group's role and profile and in arguing the case with potential new members and sponsors. Resource constraints will limit the capacity to fund new studies but in many cases the key information is already there and simply needs to be brought together in a readily accessible way.

Communications

Most of the partnerships use their meetings/events, supported by emails in the interim, as the primary means of communicating. Most have websites, although in some cases they have been closed or are maintained with a minimal resource. Some have regular newsletters but, again, in some cases frequency and content have reduced in response to resource constraints.

There is very limited use of social media – Facebook, Twitter etc. – by the partnerships.

Issues for collaboration

There are already effective working relationships between some partnerships, particularly in the Green Infrastructure area involving the GIF, GSNW, NEIF and NWFF. This ranges from being represented at each others' meetings to collaborating on specific initiatives. As noted earlier, there is also cross-representation between partnerships, with some organisations represented on several groups.

At the other extreme, however, awareness and understanding by some partnerships of others is limited and could be much improved. All partnerships supported this project as a means of improving understanding of each others' roles and objectives and identifying potential synergies/conflicts and areas for future collaboration. The way forward must be collaboration not competition.

As noted earlier, most partnerships have flagged up the need to engage effectively with the emerging new Local Nature Partnerships (LNPs). This presents a bit of a dilemma. There is a desire amongst LNPs to collaborate with each other at both strategic and practitioner level, which suggests establishing a new network focussed on supporting the specific needs of LNPs. However, given the number of partnerships already out there, we should perhaps look at other potential solutions before setting up another body. The first would be for one of the existing partnerships to take on the task of providing a LNP support network. The second would be not to establish a specific LNP network but allow LNPs to play into existing partnerships as they see fit. This issue needs further consideration, not least with the LNPs themselves.

A number of suggestions were made for closer and more integrated working between the partnerships:

- Joint funding bids e.g. EU funds
- Joint implementation and delivery of projects
- Using and developing evidence and intelligence e.g. through joint research and better information sharing (with potential role for a revitalised EEG).
- Developing a stronger voice with LEPs – including harnessing ESTA to provide access point
- Identify one or more shared issue (e.g. climate change) in which all partnerships are interested and could work together on
- Explore potential for sharing resources and services e.g. communications
- Using each other to communicate relevant information and policy messages better
- Collaborating on specific spatial footprints on different issues
- Regular meetings of chairs

These suggestions can be considered further at the meeting planned on 29 October.

Other partnerships

As noted at the beginning of this report, a small number of other regional partnerships with environmental interests were highlighted during the project. LNPs have been discussed already. Others put forward were:

- a. NW Transport Activists Round Table: this is one of eight regional groups run under the auspices of the Campaign for Better Transport. It seeks to promote sustainable transport and sustainable land use to government, sub-regional bodies and local authorities. The primary focus of this group is transport issues so it has not been considered further as part of this exercise.
- b. Business in the Community's NW Environmental Leadership Group: established as part of Prince Charles' MayDay Network, this brings together middle to senior level managers from businesses to steer and shape BITC's environmental campaign and share information. Given, its specific business focus, this group has not been considered in more detail. However, the Briefing Report is being shared with its chair and the opportunity provided to link up with this project.
- c. NW Bathing Waters Panel: this is being established to provide high level leadership of action to implement the new EU Bathing Water Directive. There needs to be coordination of the work of this new group with that of the existing NW Coastal Forum, which is being addressed outside this project.

Part 2

Summaries of NW environmental partnerships

1. Natural Environment Investment Forum (NEIF)

Chairman: Paul Roots paul.roots@environment-agency.gov.uk
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Purpose and remit

- An informal open forum for development, funding and partnership managers in environmental NGOs and the Defra network. It aims to stimulate investment in the natural economy at local level, working with civil society organisations, by pursuing collaborative programmes to deliver environmental, social and economic outcomes which meet local needs.

Membership

- Not fixed but includes Community Forests, environmental NGOs, Defra agencies and VCS bodies.

Funding/support

- Annual EA/GIU partnership agreement includes providing Secretariat for NEIF plus £15k project fund.

Objectives

- To identify gaps between current position and desired outcomes for the natural environment, including gaps in knowledge
- To pull together partner's skills in project consortia
- To provide applied research and development through consortia of partners
- To seek out innovative ways to stimulate new investment in the natural economy

Links to other partnerships

- Overlapping membership with NWEL, EEG, CCNW and GIF

Communications

- 3-4 meetings a year
- Email networks

Influence/impact

- Not a lobbying group but information sharing/networking/collaboration one.
- Some initiatives have had good impact e.g. asset transfer work has influenced LAs, and worklessness work has produced good links with social enterprises

Policy priorities/messages

- Asset transfer – exploring mechanisms to enable communities to take on ownership and stewardship of public land in sustainable way that safeguards land quality and functionality.
- Water management in parks – exploring sustainable drainage approaches
- National Health Service – creating a joint approach to health service commissioning, promoting environmental activities as option to address long term health conditions.

- Climate change adaptation – using GI to help cities adapt to projected heat island and flooding impacts
- Enterprise and employment – using environmental activities to tackle worklessness, particularly NEETs, by developing skills and employment options.

2. NW Environment Link (NWEL)

Chairman: Andy Yuille

andyy@cpre.org.uk

www.vsnw.org.uk/networks/nwel

Purpose and remit

- Partnership of environmental NGOs, working with statutory agencies, to meet, network, share intelligence, expertise and good practice, discuss and develop collective views on key environmental issues affecting the NW, and take joint action where appropriate. A “One-stop-shop” for Government departments, Defra family, Leaders Board etc to access the environmental NGO community.

Membership

- Environmental NGOs plus Voluntary Sector North West. Defra agencies and English Heritage are associate members.

Objectives

- To ensure that environmental issues are taken seriously in the NW
- To provide a collective, strategic environmental perspective on and input to major policy initiatives, programmes and projects
- To raise awareness of environmental issues among key decision makers
- To enable environmental NGOs to develop consensus on major environmental issues across the NW.
- To support and facilitate local action on environmental issues, and cascade information out through an extensive network

Links to other partnerships

- Member of CCNW and EEG. NWEL member organisations are members of most of the other partnerships.

Communications

- Quarterly meetings
- Monthly bulletin (Green Bullet) covering key issues, events, new resources etc, sent out to wide network
- Email alerts
- Web presence on VSNW website

Influence/impact

- Influence with Regional Leaders Board via SEEP group. Strong involvement with VSNW re. third sector
- Large reach via 125 individuals in 50+ organisations, with own networks
- Adds weight to voices of individual organisations / campaigns by taking collective action

Policy priorities/messages

- Overriding priority is to embed all aspects of environmental protection and enhancement into decision-making processes of key organisations.
- Provide information/intelligence and challenge to ensure full breadth of environmental issues addressed.
- Key message: need to retain focus on intrinsic as well as instrumental value of the environment

3. NW Coastal Forum (NWCF)

Chairman: Caroline Salthouse
caroline.salthouse@sefton.gov.uk
www.nwcoastalforum.org.uk

Purpose and remit

- Multi-sector partnership to promote and deliver Integrated Coastal Zone Management in the NW for the long term sustainability of the region's coast. Works across boundaries to deliver economic, environmental and social benefits for coastal communities.

Membership

- Wide membership covering LAs, NGOs, business, voluntary sector, academic and Defra agencies.

Funding/support

- Currently drawing on reserves to supplement substantially reduced contributions from LAs, agencies, VCS and business but reserves will be used up by 2014/15. Potential involvement in marine spatial planning but two years down line so short term funding gap needs to be addressed.

Objectives

- Well integrated planning and management of coastal zone
- Economic potential of NW coast achieved in ways to safeguard, enhance, restore and sustainably use natural and cultural assets
- A high quality natural and built coastal environment able to adapt to climate and other change
- Improved recreational opportunities and visitor experience
- Improved wellbeing of coastal communities
- Raised appreciation of the coast, its value and needs

Links to other partnerships

- Could have stronger relationships with GIF, NEIF, CCNW and NWBP.

Communications

- Website
- Periodic e-newsletter plus emails on specific subjects.
- Conferences, workshops, seminars

Influence/impact

- Evidence of good impact in influencing key audience - bodies making management decisions affecting coast e.g. tourism impacts study, broadening coastal towns work to look at smaller communities.
- Also useful role in highlighting good practice at home and abroad and bringing in expertise where needed.

Policy priorities/messages

- Influencing policy and responding to consultations
- Publishing regular e-news reports to inform stakeholders on relevant issues
- Working with partners across EU to develop coastal sustainability indicators
- Active participation in NW and North Wales Coastal Groups
- Leading delivery of NW Coastal Trail and supporting rollout of national coastal access
- Raising awareness of bathing water and beach litter issues
- Holding a biennial stakeholder conference and 6 monthly networking and communication events

4. NW Green Infrastructure Forum (GIF)

Chairman: Martin Moss

Martin.moss@naturalengland.gov.uk

www.ginw.co.uk

Purpose and remit

- Not a formal organisation but a diverse grouping of organisations interested in GI. Event based, with meeting twice a year to facilitate objectives set out below.

Membership

- Open to all public, private and third sector bodies with an interest in GI. Attendance is predominantly from the GI community across the NW of England but also attracts contributors and participants from across the UK.

Objectives

- Facilitate improved knowledge of recent developments in GI (particularly in the worlds of planning and practical project delivery) from across the NW but also nationally and internationally.
- Being open to anyone with an interest in learning or communicating about GI, including public, private and voluntary sectors.
- Provide opportunities for networking and informal discussion.
- Provide a means of exploring topical issues through structured workshops etc.

Funding/support

- No specific funding. Events are arranged and funded by goodwill from Mersey Forest.

Links to other partnerships

- Because the forum is event based and informal, there are no formal links to other networks. However, representatives from other NW environmental groups do attend events.

Communications

- Events are main form of communication, backed by website and email database.

Influence/impact

- Attendance figures have been consistently 40 to 70 people and informal feedback has been positive. Forum seeks to influence via its membership but impact has never been measured.

Policy priorities/messages

- The Forum seeks to advance the GI debate via events but has no policy priorities as such.

5. GreenSpace NW (GSNW)

Chairman: Kirsty Rhind
krhind@green-space.org.uk
www.green-space.org.uk

Purpose and remit

- A forum of predominantly but not exclusively local authority partner organisations to support all who work, volunteer and make decisions about public parks and green spaces across the NW. Affiliated to national charity, GreenSpace Forum Ltd but set up to operate autonomously within NW.
- Role is to champion protect and enhance green space across the NW by providing the links and opportunities practitioners to promote green spaces, influence and promote national policy and share knowledge, skills, expertise and good practice through research, surveys, learning events and data reports

Membership

- Primarily all 41 LA practitioners, and 25 likeminded organisations from across the NW with 500 plus individuals representing almost 90 organisations.

Funding/support

- LA partnership funding (formerly membership) cover majority of operating costs with the remainder coming from projects, survey research and other sources, including donations and small grants.
- Operating/ staffing costs recently reduced in line with available funding
- Currently reviewing GSNW's role and operations to ensure remains fit for purpose

ObjectivesThe vision for GSNW is high quality, popular and valued parks and all types of publically accessible green spaces across the North West.

It aims to achieve this though:

- Supporting all those engaged in public green spaces with shared expertise, knowledge and information via the network, learning events and direct services or facilitation of others.
- Promote North West parks and all types of public green spaces, their activities, events, purpose and the endeavours and practices of those who work for and in them either employed or voluntarily.
- To represent as one regional voice the parks and green spaces and the people working for and in them; raising awareness of the issues faced, advocating on their behalf and enabling improvements and new partnerships to develop.

It does this by:

- Managing and facilitating communications and information sharing across a NW network Delivering training, events and conferences
- Research, surveys and report production: Good practice notes, guidance and case studies on all subject areas of the public environment/ public green space

- Government watch and updates on legislation, draft legislation, regulation and current agenda
- Direct support and services to 'member' / partner organisations on any subject relating to the public environment, parks and green spaces from national, sub-regional and local strategic to delivery.
- National liaison, promotion of news for national media coverage, local and regional news and direct influence with central government via politicians and departmental staff
- Supporting community organisations engage and share management with local authorities advising and via the NW Community Forums
- Supporting those new to and seeking engagement in public green spaces and the public environment including promotion of education, green skills, apprenticeships and employment.
- Supporting new sectors now engaging more in public green spaces such as leisure and housing and education, care, health and commercial services
- Providing a single contact point for all information, people and places in respect of NW public parks, environments and green spaces; brokering information exchange and relationships.

Links to other partnerships

- Main links are to GIF, NEIF, NWFF and NWEL.
- National links with GreenSpace, GreenLink partners, central Government, national agencies and NGO's
- Direct links to the Consortia delivering and developing the Green Flag Award

Communications

- Website – national and regional
- Newsletters supported by email bulletins and briefings,
- Cascading information via affiliated groups such as AGMA and sub-regional groups and feeding information from these back up to the National GreenSpace Forum, incl. government and national agencies/ organisations
- Events, workshops et all including annual 'open forum' conference style event
- Speaking for other organisations such as APSE and for community organisations/ NGO's
- Network circulars/ network queries etc.
- Member/ partner circulars, data sheets and bulletins
- Contribution to national magazine 'Green Places'

Influence/impact

- Influence and impact greatest for LA practitioners and through them to portfolio holders, community organisations and other disciplines/ directorates
- Events are well attended, demand is high, with repeat business, which suggests good impact.
- Seek to influence national policy makers direct, by direct contact/ relationship, consultations and via GS National Forum
- Current review seeks to determine impact via survey including questionnaires, direct contact and interviews

Policy priorities/messages

- Ensuring existing assets, services and expertise are maintained during austerity.
- Continuing to support LAs and others - offering stability in changing environment

- Continual 'single point contact' for all NW local authorities/ public green spaces
- Continual advocacy of NW green spaces and securing funding opportunities and income
- Delivery of annual events programme and other core business outputs
- Continual delivery of direct requests for support, expertise and guidance services
- Development of broader engagement and brokering new relationships/ partnerships
- Reviewing position and future role, developing a working agreement with GreenSpace centrally

6. NW Biodiversity Forum (NWBF)

Chairman: Sarah Peet

sarah.peet@environment-agency.gov.uk

Purpose and remit

- Originally funded by Defra to oversee regional delivery of Biodiversity Strategy through Local Biodiversity Action Plans.
- Funding withdrawn following 2011 Natural Environment White Paper and its focus on LNPs as the primary means of local partnership working to deliver biodiversity targets. But partners wished Forum to continue to provide networking, sharing of information, best practice etc.
- Also two sub-groups to advise SITA and BAF on allocation of Landfill Tax funds for nature enrichment.

Membership

- Defra family organisations, NGOs, local authorities, farming groups and others

Funding/support/viability

- No funding but use of (limited) EA and NE staff time.

Objectives

- To establish and maintain a broad biodiversity partnership by engaging all relevant sectors.
- To deliver regional biodiversity objectives with SMART targets for habitats and species, taking into account national and local Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) targets and linking with social and economic themes.
- To maintain an overview of LBAP funding within the region and provide support to LBAP partnerships to help them raise funds for coordination and delivery, particularly leading on collaborative funding opportunities that benefit several LBAPs.
- To report and monitor progress through using the Biodiversity Action Reporting System (BARS) for the implementation and delivery of actions initiated regionally.
- To integrate biodiversity objectives into relevant regional policies, programmes and strategies.
- To facilitate LBAP networking in the region, including promoting best practice and ensuring joined up approach to regional objectives.

Links to other partnerships

- Strong links with NWFF, NWCF, NEIF and ad hoc dealings with CCNW.
- Some Forum members belong to other NW environmental groups

Communications

- Emails to members

- Meetings/workshops

Influence/impact

- Recent membership survey confirmed continuation of Forum as a networking/information sharing/discussion group was valued. Meetings well attended and members enthusiastic.

Policy priorities/themes/messages

- Maximising habitat creation and restoration in the right places across the NW by informing and supporting local decision-making.
- Providing consistent messages across partners about policy developments.
- Optimising utilisation of Landfill Tax funds.

7. Climate Change NW (CCNW)

Chairman: Dan Griffiths

dan@climatechangenorthwest.co.uk

<http://www.climatechangenorthwest.co.uk/>

Purpose and remit

- One of 12 regional/national partnerships set up under Climate UK, CCNW brings together a family of projects/groups in the NW including the old Climate Change Partnership, CLASP, NWBLT, ESTA and Enworks focused on aspects of the climate change agenda.
- Aims to provide a platform to enhance collaboration and delivery of shared vision of a low carbon and well adapting Cheshire & Warrington, Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Lancashire, and Liverpool City Region.

Membership

- Open to all organisations committed to climate change agenda, including Defra family, local authorities, Local Enterprise Partnerships, business networks, NGOs, delivery bodies and Climate UK.

Funding/support

- Defra core funding and part of EA's "climate readiness" role. Seeks to lever in other resources.

Objectives

- To catalyse action across the North West on climate change mitigation and adaptation, and low carbon economic development;
- A well adapting North West, actively involved with the National Adaptation programme;
- A smarter use of carbon to meet local and national carbon reduction targets;
- Assist local economic bodies to capitalise on the opportunities for economic growth from low carbon and resilient economic development;
- Promote the availability of sustainable, affordable, clean and secure energy across the region.

Links to other partnerships

- Good links with NWEL and GIU and some links to EEG.
- Some links with environmental evidence group.
- Need closer relationship with NWCF and links with ESTA.

Communications

- Revamped CCNW website to be launched.
- Newsletters
- Workshops, seminars, briefing packs etc.

Influence/impact

- Difficult to assess as new arrangements but good building blocks in place and the right members to be influential.
- Primary audience is higher-level practitioners but need to engage leaders and movers/shakers and develop influence with Climate UK and at national level

Policy priorities/messages

- Promoting adaptation to climate change
- Actively contributing to meeting national carbon reduction targets
- Promoting cleaner, renewable energy
- Promoting the low carbon economy and challenges/opportunities for business

8. NW Environmental Evidence Group (EEG)

Chairman: Stuart Mousey

Stuart.mousey@environment-agency.gov.uk

Purpose and remit

- Originally developed on back of ECOSEG project to support RS2010/FNW process. Aims to maintain and develop regional environmental evidence base to inform decision-making.
- Meetings currently suspended pending development of new LEP and LNP-based landscape. However, conversations and partnership working still happening between key players.

Membership

- Defra agencies, NWEL and Green Infrastructure Unit

Funding/support

- Funding for research programmes and in-kind support from Defra family (including secondments).

Objectives

- Agree protocol for the Defra network to fully access data, to report, coordinate, analyse and share evidence.
- Establish task group to support and oversee regional environmental evidence to inform the RIU and maintain the validity of the ECOSEG work and ensuring other environmental consequences are understood within economical and social growth issues.
- Secure effective integration of the evidence base into policy and decision making
- Take forward the Public Benefit Recording System (PBRS) approach and develop the Natural Environment Index (NEI) further

Links to other partnerships

- NWEL, GIU and NWCF represented on/attended meetings of group
- Group supplied/developed evidence to other NW environmental groups

Communications

- Key material and studies published on RIU and Enviroeconomy websites
- Emails and meetings, using members to cascade information

Influence/impact

- Provided decision-makers with best available information/evidence to ensure well informed policies and decisions.

- Group regarded as expert and credible source of information and analysis (e.g. role in RS2010/FNW process)

Policy priorities/messages

- Main priority was to inform and shape RS2010/FNW process through strong environmental evidence and integrated analysis incorporating economic and social objectives and intelligence.
- Need to develop “offer” for new post-regional landscape.

9. NW Forestry Forum (NWFF)

Chairman: Ian Taylor
itaylor@peel.co.uk
http://www.northwestforestry.org.uk/

Remit/mandate/purpose

- A broad partnership of public, civil society and private organisations committed to delivering the NW Forestry Framework to make woodlands and forestry a proactive player in the regeneration and sustainable development of the NW. By working collaboratively, sharing information/ideas, challenging each other and monitoring progress.

Membership

- The Forum has a large membership covering Defra agencies, LAs, NGOs, business groups, VCS and others but is supported by a smaller, 12 strong Strategic Group, derived from the Forum membership plus invitees.

Funding/support

- Community Forests NW provide secretariat and Forestry Commission other support. Members provide venues.

Objectives

Forum:

- To identify and action ways and means of promoting Manifesto and Agenda for Growth.
- To deliver the Manifesto and Agenda for Growth collectively and individually
- To monitor progress to encourage delivery.
- To challenge each other, and share information and ideas for common benefit.

Steering Group

- To ensure good governance, promote membership and increase reach of the framework and membership of the Forum to maximise influence and usefulness.
- To direct the work of the Framework Secretariat and website management to ensure support and smooth running of the forum.
- To identify and action ways and means of promoting the forestry framework, the manifesto and the strategic aims set out in Agenda for Growth to help deliver framework objectives.

Links to other partnerships

- Close links with GIF and NWBF
- Need better links with Climate Change NW

Communications

- Website
- Email to members, to disseminate further

Influence/impact

- Long standing and respected body, which works through its membership to take forward issues and provides credible voice on forestry and related issues in NW.

Policy priorities/messages

- developing and supporting our woodland and forestry businesses;
- using woodlands and forestry to promote and improve the image of the region;
- maximising the benefits that trees and woodlands bring to our region's biodiversity and landscape;
- using woodlands to improve our health, well-being and quality of life;
- the role of trees and woodlands in adapting to the impact of climate change; and
- supporting and resourcing the woodlands of the NW to deliver a more sustainable region.

10. Environmental Sustainability Technical Assistance (ESTA) Group

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Purpose and remit

- To support Local EPs in building capacity, knowledge and expertise to address environmental sustainability issues in developing ERDF projects and programmes.
- Steering Group met for first time in September and will exercise oversight and transparency of TA project. A wider stakeholder group may also be established.

Membership

- Local Enterprise Partnerships, EA and CLG (ERDF)

Funding/support/viability

- ERDF-funded Technical Assistance project, with match funding from EA and support in-kind from Enworks

Objectives

- To be developed

Links to other partnerships

- To be developed in light of identified LEP priorities

Communications

- To be developed but likely to be email between SG members.

Influence/impact

- Impact too early to assess but will want to influence LEPs and central government – DECC, CLG, Defra

Policy priorities/messages

Will be LEP driven but will want to:

- Supporting strategic input of LEPs and other local partners
- Supporting applicants in developing ERDF projects
- Supporting delivery of ERDF communications
- Capturing lessons learned and best practice

