

**NATURAL ENGLAND BOARD**



***Meeting 4***  
***18 April 2007***

Paper No: **NEB P07 10**

Title: **Stakeholder Engagement by the Chair and Deputy Chair  
and key Regional Stakeholder Engagement activity**

This paper gives a list of engagements carried out by Chair and Deputy Chair between 21 February 2007 and 18 April and their planned engagements ahead of the next Board meeting (Annex 1).

A flavour of key stakeholder activity in the regions is given in Annex 2.

Annex 3 lists Natural England's Current Priorities for Engagement by sector, showing Account Managers and Key Contacts.

## **Annex 1**

### **Engagements attended - 22 February to 18 April 2007 and engagements due before the June Board.**

#### **Martin Doughty, Chair**

22 February	David Miliband MP
26/27 February	NFU Conference 2007 – Farming for the Future
27 February	ABC dinner discussion – Co-existence: the turning point for GM in the UK
28 February	NFU Meeting – NFU Offices
	Margaret Ounsley, WWF
	Labour Parliamentary Dinner
1 March	Joint NE/EA/CCW Meeting
5 March	David Miliband via telephone
8 March	Gillian Merron MP
12 March	David Miliband via telephone
13 March	Tim Bennett – Sustainable Land Management
14 March	Joint HM Treasury Agencies Meeting
	Sir Don Curry (lunch)
	Lib Dems Parliamentary Dinner (H of C)
15 March	Marine Bill White Paper Launch, Bird Cage Walk
20 March	Jim Paice MP
21 March	Update Barry Gardiner
26 March	Discussion re: EA/NE Board Mtg for 26 April
27 March	Paddy Tipping
28 March	NE External Stakeholders Mtg re: Science Strategy
3 April	Spring Conference for Chairs of Defra's Delivery Partners
4 April	Local Government & Climate Change Summit Green Alliance
17 April	NE Board Dinner
18 April	NE Board Meeting
21/22 April	Kinder Trespass Celebrations, New Mills Town Hall
24 April	Sheffield University
25 April	Chairs Group Meeting
26 April	EA/NE Boards
1 May	NE Stakeholder 6 monthly Review Dinner(TBA)
2 May	David Fursdon, President CLA Lunch
23 May	Cotswold Way Landowners Celebration/Thank you
24 May	Cotswold Way National Trail Launch, Stanway Hse Estate, Winchcombe, Cheltenham
	CIWEM Dinner

## Annex 1 (cont)

### Poul Christensen, Deputy Chair

28 Feb 07	Labour Parliamentary Dinner
05 Mar 07	Gordon Brown
06 Mar 07	Common Purpose Leadership presentation – Oxford University Press
07 Mar 07	Interviewed for Farmer & Grower Magazine
07 Mar 07	Earthwatch Institute 'Absent Leadership and Shrinking Ice: How they are connected and what to do'.
08 Mar 07	Chaired Sustainable Livestock Production, Link Programme
12 Mar 07	David Edwards & Chris Barnes CMi plc (international food safety and assurance company)
12 Mar 07	Vale NFU meeting - Jim Paice & Ed Vaisey
14 Mar 07	SW Chamber of Rural Enterprise (CoRE) Plenary meeting
14 Mar 07	Lib Dem Parliamentary Dinner
20 Mar 07	JNCC Committee/Board
21 Mar 07	JNCC Committee/Board
22 Mar 07	LDA – London Food Strategy Group
27 Mar 07	Natural England Audit Committee
27 Mar 07	Vitacress Lecture, Southampton University
28 Mar 07	Natural England Science Strategy Introduction
28 Mar 07	Hosted Natural England Land Management Policy Team visit
03 Apr 07	Defra Chairs Conference
18 Apr 07	Presentation/paper at British Grassland Society Conference
10 May 07	CLA Centenary Conference

## **Annex 2 Significant Stakeholder Engagement activity in the regions, linked to strategic priorities**

### **Outcome 1 – A Healthy Natural Environment**

#### **Rural Development Programme for England**

A key strategic focus for all regions is raising the profile of the environment and Natural England in the development of the Rural Development Programme for England - Regional Implementation Plans (RIP) and the Regional Economic Strategies. Stakeholder activity in this area has been on influencing the Government Offices, the RDAs, and the Rural Affairs fora.

Significant engagements include a meeting in the East of England to develop the RIP, with the Development Agency, Government Office and FC. The RIP provides an analysis of the state of the environment, rural communities and the rural economy in the region and identifies priority themes for targeting CAP (Axis 1-3) funds. This includes new business and enterprises in the rural economy, resource protection, conservation of the natural built and historic environment, access and recreation. In the North East, we have held a strategic meeting with the Regional Affairs Forum Chair, to discuss governance of the RDPE, (which will be important for us to get right).

#### **PSA Targets**

The PSA targets for farmland birds and SSSIs have been a focus of regional stakeholder activity, specifically in considering how we deliver these targets in partnership with others. Regional meetings have been held with the RSPB, Moorland Association, Rural Affairs Fora, United Utilities, National Parks and AONBs to engage them on these Corporate Plan targets.

In discussing partnership working with United Utilities in the North West, the SSSI PSA target was identified as a key driver for their business case with regards to PR09, and as a result, an account manager has been nominated in the region to take this partnership forward.

#### **Area Based working**

Natural England (through the NEMO Project) is exploring how we increase the effectiveness and efficiency of delivery of multi objectives through area based working and landscape scale delivery. Regions are exploring this approach with partners.

Stakeholder engagement activity in this area has included meetings with the National Parks, AONBs, the Pathfinder Initiative, the RSPB and the Forestry Commission.

Of particular note was a workshop held in the West Midlands with the FC to explore approaches to area based working around Growth Points, biodiversity areas and areas of deprivation. A consensus has emerged from the workshop on joint delivery efficiencies.

In the South West a meeting has been held with Exmoor National Park, where we explored the potential for landscape approaches to eco-system services.

In the South Pennines, (Y&H Region) a multi functional partnership has been established, with which Natural England is heavily involved, which facilitates delivery across landscape scale geographical areas.

In the East Midlands, engagement with the Peak Park has examined how area based initiatives such as Moors to the Future might fit with agri-environment delivery.

## **Environmental Stewardship and Agri-Environment Funding**

Much of our regional stakeholder activity is focussed on our core delivery areas. Our key partners in this area are for example, FC, the National Trust, the National Parks, RSPB and the Environment Agency.

In the East Midlands, a strong partnership has been established with the National Forest and FC, to gain greater understanding and join up in targeting and funding streams in particular geographic areas.

Several regions have been engaging with the FC on aligning Environmental Stewardship with the England Woodland Grant Scheme and our contribution to the Regional Forestry Strategy.

## **Outcome 2 Enjoyment of the natural environment**

### **Improving places for people to enjoy the natural environment**

In the *Strategic Direction*, we recognise that there are many organisations working within this field already, especially with communities. Regional engagement has begun to concentrate on building capacity with others and joining up our delivery. Examples of important stakeholders are the Rural Community Councils, Green Arc, the National Trust, the Woodland Trust and Big Lottery.

In the North West for example, we have hosted a visit to an NNR for the former Bishop of Blackburn to consider aspects of NNR management and community relations.

In the East Midlands, partnership work with the National Forest has been a focus, to examine different access options which attract people from all local communities. We are considering how to expand the contribution the forest makes to the wellbeing and satisfaction with where people live and environmental investments to secure this. In Yorkshire and Humber, a successful meeting was held with Big Lottery to discuss how we need to work together on the Access to the Natural Environment programme. In the London Region, a key meeting has been held with the Development Agency and Adviser to the Mayor to discuss the promotion of London's green spaces, via the public transport network. A multi-dimensional partnership will be established, in which Natural England will play a key role.

In addition, we have addressed a "Where the Wild Things Grow" seminar. This event launched a new partnership publication "The Natural Estate – making space for nature on housing estates" which concentrates on the value of biodiversity. This has been produced through a partnership of Natural England, the Peabody Trust, the Notting Hill Housing Association and CABE Space with funding from DCLG.

In the South West, we have met with the Government Office to plan our strategic relationship, which has included realising opportunities in Local Area Agreements for access to local environmental quality.

### **Heritage/Historic Landscapes**

Outcome 2 highlights the importance of the use of natural environment for cultural activities. In the East Midlands, we have addressed the Heritage Link Forum, where we were able to reach voluntary organisations and NGOs including CPRE, the National Trust and the Historic Houses Association. The full range of Natural England's business was covered, raising awareness in our objectives and the need for partnership working to achieve outcomes.

## **Outcome 3 Sustainable Use of the Natural Environment**

### **Planning**

In order to build joint influencing capacity, several regions have been focussed on aligning Natural England's desired outcomes with those of our partners in this

important area. Partnerships are being forged with Development Agencies, Government Office, Regional Assemblies, National Parks, Wildlife Trusts, Local Planning Authorities and the Environment Agency.

An example is in the West Midlands where a meeting with the Wildlife Trusts considered, among other issues, a co-ordinated approach to regional planning and strategy development.

In the East of England, significant engagement has taken place on our response to the Regional Spatial Strategy. Natural England has made substantial recommendations and representations, especially on the Habitats Regulations Assessment.

In the South East, the Local Planning Authority have been targeted for engagement. We are developing the LPA's understanding of opportunities to increase our alignment of work programmes around shared objectives, in particular through Local Area Agreements.

In London region, a key priority is our work on the Olympic Park development. We are working in partnership, including with the Environment Agency and the ODA to agree an approach to the planning application for the Park, ensuring that the construction is sustainable and does not compromise any future legacy.

### **Coastal Access and Coastal Change (outcomes 2 and 3)**

Coastal access has been a national priority for Natural England since vesting (and previously in the founding bodies). The regions affected have been engaging with partners to put our messages across, in accordance with the agreed national policy and lines to take. An example of this is in the East of England where we have met with the CLA regional committee and clarified and promoted Natural England's position.

Coastal change is also a regional strategic priority. Engagement in the East of England has been with the Government Office and Environment Agency where we have been working together to raise the profile of coastal management at a regional level and stressing the need to join up regional policy agendas in support of coastal change and increased realignment. This is also leading to an acceptance that Flood Risk Management should be part of the national-regional-local spatial policy axis of government.

### **Outcome 4 – A secure environmental future**

#### **Carbon Management and Alternative Energy, Growth and Green Infrastructure**

Regions are all involved in engaging others in the debate on how our decisions now will affect the natural environment in the future. For example, a conference was recently held in the Y&H region on climate change, which stimulated and motivated regional players. Since then we have been concentrating our efforts on joint activity and developing joint projects, including with the Development Agency on carbon sequestration schemes and the use of biomass.

In the East Midlands a meeting has been held with Derby Cityscapes to discuss their approach to masterplanning and how they could incorporate more environmental benefits.

In the North East, a significant meeting with the RDA, identified climate change as a key area for joint working, including with the National Trust on a Carbon Demonstration Project. Green Infrastructure was also a key issue.

Growth Areas are also driving our work with stakeholders in London region where we are exploring a natural environment workstream within the Thames Gateway Parklands, with DCLG.