

**Date: Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> September 2024**

**Attendees:** Chair - Ben Stone (Kier), Grace O’Connell (Action Sustainability/School), Mark Turner (Action Sustainability/School), Ross Primmer (Action Sustainability), Alexandra Escott (Transport for Wales), Amanda Porritt (Colas Rail), Don Holmes (Mitie), Ellen Eriksson (Defra), Gaele Bardsley (BAM), Kate Swan (Mott MacDonald), Laurence Cummins (Wates), Lee Heykoop (Homes England), Lisa Palframan (Homes England), Matthew Handley (Jewson), Morgan Price (Willmott Dixon), Mark Sargent (Murphy Group), Martin Krobath (Defra), Michael Kehinde (Environment Agency), Nicola Johansen (Redrow), Terry Wilkinson (ACO Technologies).

Please note these meeting notes are to be read in conjunction with the final slide deck as circulated to all.

### Meeting Notes:

#### **1. Welcome & introductions**

Mark Turner welcomed all attendees to the fifth meeting of the Nature Recovery Group and introduced himself as the Group Lead and Grace O’Connell as the Group’s support. **He also introduced Ben Stone as the new Chair of the Nature Group.**

Mark Turner then covered the Agenda for the meeting which included:

- 1. Welcome & introductions**
- 2. Recap of work programme**
- 3. Business plan priorities**
- 4. Resource update**
  - Resource review
  - New video content
- 5. External reporting and disclosures (GFI)**
- 6. Training programme FY 24/25**
  - Upcoming Virtual Conference - December
  - Event planning
- 7. AOB and DONM**

Every first time attendee then introduced themselves to the Group, including their name, organisation, and job role (see attendee list above).

#### **a) Explaining the Nature Recovery Group to interested parties**

- Mark Turner demonstrated activities the Group intends to do to help maintain School membership and partnership. These include:

- **Legislation and policy updates** – call out to our Partners to inform the Group about any other legislation and policy that may fall through the net or any policy on a smaller scale that is still important for the Group to be aware of
- **Updating resources** – i.e. maintaining the School library and all resources that range through five stages – beginner/ intermediate /expert/ advanced /leader - and making sure the School's resource bank is as rich and up to date as possible
- **Events** – The Group has run a handful of successful webinars so far – find them [here](#).
- **Collecting case studies** – e.g. As Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) in England for certain projects is now a legal requirement, the School would massively appreciate any case studies that showcase examples of Biodiversity Net Gain done well and the art of the possible
- **Topics promotion** - (e.g. Green/Blue Infrastructure)
- **Intervention points framework** – The School Group is very diverse in its approach and how it splits down markets/topics across the built environment and value chain from design through to build/operation, in-use, deconstruction etc.
- **Whole built environment life cycle** - We have to consider the whole built environment and land asset life cycle through our approach including over time, impacts from supply chain, materials and product choices etc. We want this to be a key area of focus in the Nature Recovery Group to help ensure that we do good things here but also positively influence nature recovery and nature positive outcomes elsewhere in the world.

### Key Points

- **The need for water to be higher on the agenda and interlinks with the Nature Group**
- **Also 'wellbeing' could be higher in the chain**
- **We should not neglect more prosaic/operations and site behaviour based content**

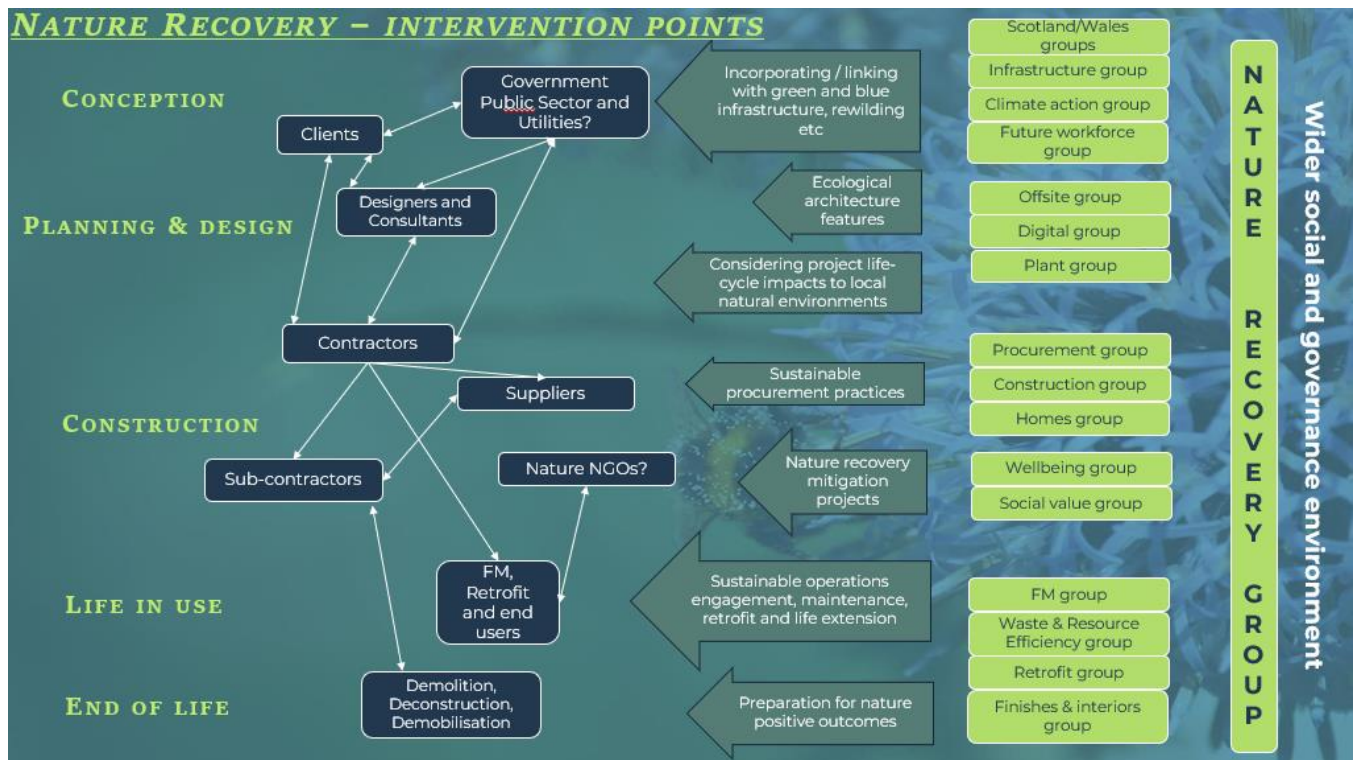
### ACTIONS:

#### Partners to:

- Consider if we can run webinars focusing on water, wellbeing and site/operational based requirements – any partner with a suitable idea or case study please contact Mark and Grace

### b) Nature Recovery Group intervention points framework

- Mark Turner showcased the Nature Group’s intervention points framework (see below) and other various interconnected leadership groups within the School
- All Leadership Groups in the School **should** have an interest in the nature recovery agenda and maintain links and build these up over time
- Mark Turner then asked attendees if there was anything missing in the framework and to offer back any ideas.



**ACTIONS:**

**Partners to:**

- Supply any additional feedback to either Mark or Grace on the intervention framework above – what is missing? Is your organisation’s role properly represented? How can we improve this?

**2. Recap of work programme – initial priorities**

- Mark Turner summarised the overall work programme of the Group so far. This included:
  - **Setting up the group** – Including creating a title, drafting a terms of reference document. Ben Stone – new chair.

- **Confirm cross sector approach** – This relates back to the intervention framework. The Group should refer to all sectors, tiers and the whole value chain. There is a crucial requirement to influence supply chains and associated impacts on local areas, communities and ecosystems
- **Agree scope and work of partnership** – The Group will encompass all aspects of the built environment including planning, design, construction, management & maintenance
- **Resource review** – See **4. Resource update** below
- **Events for BNG** – The Group has run a handful of successful webinars so far – find them [here](#).
- **Raising any future sub groups** – e.g. resource review, events (webinars, workshops), virtual conference (VC) planning.

### **3. Business plan priorities**

- Mark informed the Group of the business planning agenda for the Group and context behind the School and its 7 key action focus to drive impact – through more partners, more suppliers, multipliers, staff learning, improved customer journey, marketing, recommendations – all culminating together to achieve more active companies, more active individuals and people doing more learning
- Mark reminded the group of the business planning agenda for the Group including the main focus:

***“To educate and upskill more people about biodiversity, nature positive solutions and their role in nature recovery”***

## Focus 2024 To educate and upskill more people about biodiversity, nature positive solutions and their role in nature recovery

- **Establish Nature Recovery Group within School**
    - All elements of School Partnership to engage
    - Ensure that group addresses reporting standards and supply chain impacts as well as biodiversity net gain and its equivalents
    - Develop and share content to engage colleagues at all levels in securing nature positive outcomes locally and globally
    - Support development and delivery of a virtual conference, at least three webinars and two workshops addressing key topics
  - **Collaborate to encourage supply chain and internal team engagement**
    - Partners to engage procurement to help identify or develop content relevant to own colleagues and supply chains
    - Ensure supply chains are included in plans for virtual conference and webinar programme
    - Develop relevant learning pathways for supply chain and colleagues
    - Partners to assign learning (via the School's LMS / Learning Pathways or their own) to their workforce and supply chains
  - **Collaborate on net gain strategies and practice**
    - Deliver training on requirements and best practice across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland
    - Focus on effective practice, highlighting the challenges, pitfalls and showcasing opportunities from successful and innovative implementation
  - **Improve reporting and stakeholder engagement**
    - Work with Partners and external stakeholders to understand then improve reporting standards
    - Partners to input into development of resources including case studies and share their outputs through the School
    - Develop and grow relationships with regulatory bodies, NGOs and corporate reporting stakeholder organisations.
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- **See the full slide deck from slides 11-16 for information on KPIs, targets and intended activity for the Group over the next FY to meet and exceed the School's 50k (active individual users) target**
  - Particular emphasis on work needed for workstreams/content on BNG and wider supply chain related impacts (e.g. different product sources and materials) and delivering webinars/video content on each

### **ACTIONS:**

#### **Partners to:**

- Our next FY business planning work will commence in November - Partners to review the focus areas of the business planning and feedback additional suggestions for additions, improvements or comments to Grace O'Connell/Mark Turner.

#### **4. Resource update**

- Grace explained since the last Group meeting in May, we have added four new case studies to the library supplied by RSK Habitat Management (many thanks) and the following additional resources:
- [Natural Capital Initiative: Biodiversity Net Gain Policy across the UK](#)
- [Biodiversity Net Gain: Beyond Legal Compliance - Virtual Conference Recording](#)

#### **Refreshed Biodiversity e-learning module**

- The '[Introduction to Biodiversity](#)' e-learning module has gone through an update and refresh thanks to Ross Primmer and Julia Baker acting as peer script writers
- This resource now presents a great overview of biodiversity as a concept and how to apply the concepts of net gain to enhance and improve nature in the built environment.

#### **Call out for case studies:**

- Although the case study library is growing, we are always looking for more to be added.
- Utilising case studies in multiple formats (video, report, animation, short summary etc) makes for interesting resources showcasing real life application and examples
- Extra case studies are needed for the School – e.g. on nature based solutions, BNG gone well/challenges, blue infrastructure projects, deeper supply chain impacts

#### **ACTIONS:**

##### **School to:**

- Follow up with Don Holmes on case studies from Mitie.

##### **Partners to:**

- Please send comms around on the School's updated Biodiversity module and circulate the link to all peers, colleagues and your supply chain
- Please do send any additional case studies, relevant to the School's library, to Grace O'Connell.

##### **Resource review:**

- Grace explained that 90% of the resource review has now been undertaken, thanks to all partner peer experts who have kindly supported on it so far.



- Grace then explained the revamped process for resources in the library, where we are trying our best efforts to streamline the library and only keep in the most relevant and important resources to each School subtopic and across the five key competency levels (Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced, Expert and Leader)
- We aim to have 100 resources maximum now per subtopic in the School
- The nature resource library is currently at 70 resources so there is room to add up to 30 more. We especially need resources at the higher competency levels of Expert and Leader.

### Key points of discussion:

- As per the earlier comment on covering all types of topic matter, there should be resources added to the School that revert back to the **basics of environmental compliance** – there is scope to include simple toolbox talks on this aspect for e.g. how to protect nature on-site, keeping the foundations in place whilst enhancement continues
- Also scope for resources that highlight the link between taking action on nature and actions taken on carbon – inextricably tied together
- Don't have to reinvent the wheel - it's a matter of partnership and collaboration
- Could there be an illustration of a roadmap?

### ACTIONS:

#### School to:

- Grace to work through resources supplied by Partners and check relevance for library and add to the School.
- [Its-Now-for-Nature-Handbook-ENG.pdf \(nowfornature.org\)](#)
- CIEEM BNG Technical Guide [Mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain in England: Technical Guide | CIEEM](#)
- GFI BNG roadmap 2024 <https://hive.greenfinanceinstitute.com/gfihive/biodiversity-net-gain/#roadmap>
- The Nature Connection Handbook (University of Derby)
- Anything on nutrient neutrality? Eg Natural England nutrient neutrality principles [Nutrient Neutrality Principles - TIN186 \(naturalengland.org.uk\)](#)
- [Building for a Healthy Life | Other Manuals and Briefings | Urban Design Group \(udg.org.uk\)](#) – probably on the Resources section but worth tagging with nature?
- [NbS Knowledge Hub \(naturebasedsolutionsinitiative.org\)](#) which includes case studies eg [Nattergal: A natural capital approach to rewilding degraded land at scale : NbS Knowledge Hub \(naturebasedsolutionsinitiative.org\)](#)

- [Nature-based solutions for improving well-being in urban areas in Sheffield, United Kingdom | NetworkNature](#)

**Partners to:**

- Any partners who can supply any further key resources at the higher competency levels and case studies, please contact Grace.

**New video content:**

- As part of the Group's business plan, we aim to produce x4 new videos for the library and developed by the end of the FY
- These include videos on:
  - **Video 1 = Setting the scene on biodiversity – why is biodiversity important**
  - **Video 2 = BNG across England, Scotland and Wales**
  - **Video 3 = External reporting and nature related impacts (TNFD, GRI)**
  - **Video 4 = Supply chain impacts - deeper impacts throughout the whole supply and value chain**

**ACTIONS:**

**School to:**

- Grace to get started on logistics for filming – we have already had some kind volunteers willing to speak on camera to these four video topics above. Thank you to those partners!

**Partners to:**

- Any further partners who are also available to support on video production, please contact Grace.

**5) External nature reporting and disclosures (SCSS x GFI)**

- Ben Stone then led the discussion on the key topic of nature reporting and disclosures and the increasing presence of this on the climate and wider built environment agenda
- A key focus for nature reporting is to move away from just carbon and double materiality assessments and incorporate reporting and disclosures into strategy – and to begin actually making changes and delivering value through those changes



- The TNFD in particular focuses not just on the impacts of climate change to a business but impacts and dependencies. The TCFD (Task force for Climate related financial disclosures) report on strategy, governance, risks, opportunities and metrics and the TNFD align the same way – the only difference is the TNFD looks a lot more at dependencies and impacts due to the complexity of the topic matter
- There are also links to [Defra's Nature Positive Pathway](#) and [IEMA's Nature Positive Business Pledge](#)
- The School offers a great opportunity here due to the scale of its membership and partnership and reach into the supply chain
- The School has started working with the GFI (Green Finance Institute) as the implementation partners of TNFD to begin to attempt to unravel and simplify nature reporting and disclosure for the built environment sector. The GFI are particularly keen to initially work with a manageable number of School partners – including tier 1 contractors and others
- A scoping workshop took place in July 2024 between the School, GFI and a selection of tier 1 contractors to begin these discussions
- The GFI's notes for next steps included:
  - Develop an aligned and coordinated industry approach to performing nature-related risk assessments. Agreement across industry on the top 5 high risk materials and the top 5 metrics to work towards.
  - Coordinate approach to engage suppliers on this subject linked to the agreed high-risk commodities and core metrics. Provide support for suppliers where possible e.g. through workshops and data submission platforms.
  - Develop an average nature impact and risk profile of UK construction sector imports, based on UK government data, to use as proxy in lieu of company-specific supply chain data.
  - Align on consistent approach to defining reporting boundary and sphere of influence across the industry based on, for example, operational control, design influence and asset ownership.
  - Explore how environmental product disclosures (EPDs) could be used to help inform TNFD assessments and evaluate best policy action to support this.
- It is universally recognised that his work is complex and presents a number of challenges to organisations in terms of both what to do and what to report
- A further online meeting with GFI is planned for November to develop this thinking further, determine which areas to prioritise in the first instance and begin to formulate a plan for how School partners and members can be assisted

- Related to this is an upcoming webinar held by the School in December on '**The path to Nature Positive: Getting prepared for Reporting and Disclosure on Nature Related Impacts**'
- Following the work conducted with the Green Finance Institute (GFI) so far, the School's plan is to advance built environment stakeholder knowledge on what is coming our way, opportunities and risks and how engagement with the TNFD fits into this
- We will run a large webinar on this topic as a 90-minute event – with a School partner panel representative of different aspects of the built environment and key presentation from GFI/TNFD.

#### **Key points of discussion:**

- The amount of guidance and technical nature to the reporting is very challenging – however what will help is examples that come through early and which organisations are early adopters showcasing how they have approached the TNFD. This is likely (but not for certain in all cases) to be the larger organisations at first and then trickle down to SMEs
- Great opportunity for something to be done here through the GFI which makes this accessible for all.
- Some helpful resources include:
- <https://tnfd.global/knowledge-hub/example-tnfd-reporting/>
- <https://tnfd.global/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/GPT-2023-Climate-and-Nature-Disclosure-Statement-1.pdf> - these especially showcase good first examples
- <https://www.mottmac.com/download/file?id=45208&isPreview=true> – thought piece by Mott Macdonald.

#### **ACTIONS:**

##### **Partners to:**

- If any Partner is interested in more closely supporting the School's work with the GFI and TNFD in the lead up to the December virtual conference, please let Mark or Grace know
- Insights and information to share from any early adopters would be particularly helpful.

##### **School to:**

- Add the resources above of example TNFD early adopters.

**6) Training programme FY 24/25 – since launch**

- The Group has delivered a range of successful webinars so far:

Title	Date/Time	Type of event	Number of attendees	Recording link
<b>An Introduction to Biodiversity Net Gain and the TNFD with Mott MacDonald</b>	January 23 <sup>rd</sup> 2024 13:00-14:00pm	Public 1 hour Webinar	<b>236</b>	<a href="#">Recording link</a>
<b>Biodiversity enhancement policies across the UK: similarities and differences with Mott MacDonald</b>	February 22 <sup>nd</sup> 2024 12:00-13:00pm	Public 1 hour Webinar	<b>120</b>	<a href="#">Recording link</a>
<b>Biodiversity Net Gain: Beyond Legal Compliance – Virtual Conference</b>	May 22 <sup>nd</sup> 2024 14:00-16:00pm	2-hour Virtual Conference	<b>550</b>	<a href="#">Recording link</a>
<b>Speedy Hire: Nature Positive Roadmap</b>	12 <sup>th</sup> September 2024 14:00-15:00pm	Public 1 hour webinar	<b>91</b>	<a href="#">Recording link</a>
<b>The path to Nature Positive: Getting prepared for Reporting and Disclosure on Nature Related Impacts</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> December 2024 10:00am-11:30am	1.5 hour Virtual Conference	<b>TBC</b>	

- You can find recordings to all four webinars listed above [here](#)
- There are also aims to put together webinars focused more on the basics of environmental compliance, site practice etc.

**ACTIONS:**

**Partners to:**

- Anyone willing to contribute webinar content, or topics, please contact Grace – use the opportunity to showcase you and your suppliers’ expertise and let’s develop a really exciting programme!
- It would be great develop and deliver more case study webinars such as the one delivered recently by Speedy Hire, who are early adopters of the TNFD and who showcased their new Nature Positive Roadmap with support from Mott MacDonald.

**Partners to:**

- Feedback any more ideas to Mark Turner and Grace O’Connell on training programme content and if you would like to be involved in the production of any webinars or the virtual conference.

**7) AOB:**

- An idea shared by Don Holmes of Mite – where constraints restrict what can be done on sites and assets, develop ideas focused on moving away from old school “neat

- and tidy” to changing techniques to encourage nature, maintain and improve habitats - a piece on scale. What you can practically do even on a small scale
- How we communicate complex jargon into simple actions people can take. Away from science and into comms
  - Getting delivery right on site. Designs are great but what about the practicalities of species choice, maintenance etc?
  - Understanding connectivity and what fits together well. Properly understanding the links between carbon and nature. The small scale literacy around carbon is good (for e.g. people are adopting net zero households) however it’s not that easy with nature. Hard to quantify as there are so many aspects with nature – e.g. biodiversity, connectivity of habitats, ecosystem services, natural capital, carbons sequestration from sites
  - There is a line to be toed keeping it straightforward and simple but also looking holistically
  - Upstream supply chain impacts - procurement team advice and advice for subcontractors on what to buy and what to not buy. Consider materials and impacts coming to projects from other sides of the world – think about impacts upstream and not just in finished projects that you are leaving
  - Nature value of soils – trying to do a more focus on it (Kier) – nutrient neutrality and carbon
  - Management of soils - retaining the characteristics - DNA, seeds etc – pressure together that right as construction pressure builds
  - Keen not to forget smaller businesses in supply chain!

**The date of the next Group meeting is 28<sup>th</sup> November 2024, 10am-12pm.**

**END OF MEETING NOTES.**