

<b>Subject:</b>	Two-monthly update on Land and Nature Working Group (LNG) activities for the attention of town councillors.	
<b>From:</b>	Geoff Griffiths on behalf of the LNG	
<b>Date:</b>	24 <sup>th</sup> January 2023	
<b>Summary of decisions or actions requested (including timing):</b>		
<div><div>1. Tree-felling in Centenary Wood (by Cotswold Wardens).</div><div>2. Hedgehog highways. The LNG would like to make significant progress towards Charlbury becoming a ‘hedgehog-friendly’ town (hedgehogs are a very good indicator of the general health of the environment). Flora Gregory (active member of LNG) proposes that she works with a local stonemason to encourage householders to help with the establishment of the hedgehog highways.</div></div>		
<b>Financial implications:</b> [please explain any costs associated with decisions or actions, and whether these have already been budgeted for] The estimated cost to employ a stonemason (3 x days) for the hedgehog highways is <b>£1300.</b>		
<b>Communications:</b> [do we need to communicate with residents and how will this be done if so] Tree-thinning, Centenary Wood. Peter Kenrick to consult with Cotswold Wardens to ensure public are fully informed about the need for the planned tree-thinning.		

The Land & Nature Group (LNG) continue to meet on a regular basis (generally third Thursday evening of each month in The Friends Meeting House) and informally, both online and face-to-face. Since our last report ( 27<sup>th</sup> Sept 2022), the Group have been active in a number of ways:

## 1. Outreach & Communication:

- 1.1. Geoff Griffiths gave a short presentation (15<sup>th</sup> October) on mapping for nature recovery at parish level organised by Trees Collaborate (a CAG), to people involved with nature recovery planning and trees planting across the county. Christine Elliot led both of the field visits associated with the day to the Millfield and Centenary Wood.

## 2. **Monitoring & Conservation Work.**

- 2.1. **Hedgerows.** Chris Beausire, Christine Elliot and Anne Miller organised the second training day for hedgerow survey on Hundley Way, lead by Roselle Chapman (Wild Oxfordshire). The data were collated by Christine Elliot and uploaded to the TVERC (Thames Environmental Records Centre) website. The day provided a good example of citizen science data collection, of critical importance as a baseline for the Nature Recovery Plan. Recent work headed by Peter Kenrick in collaboration with the Wychood Forest Trust, is developing a strategy for the collection of both species and habitat data across the four parishes of the NRP. A start will be made with fixed butterfly transects at Wigweel this summer. In addition, a number of members of LNG attended other citizen science training days organised by external organisations (for example, the Evenlode Catchment Partnership) including, for example, identification of river flies for monitoring water quality
- 2.2. **Centenary Wood.** David Rees, Bruce Crawford, and Christine Elliot and a volunteer from Woodstock, have completed the majority of the required branch pruning and will finish it during a Cotswold Wardens session in a few weeks' time when they start the thinning.
- 2.3. **The School.** Christine Elliot arranged for the Cotswold Wardens to coppice the 30 year old multi-stemmed hazel growing in the enclosure by the pond in the school at the start of the Christmas holidays. This will allow more light in to the pond and surrounding area.

3. **Working with Landowners.** A key aspect of the NRP will be to work collaboratively with landowners/managers. Frances Mortimer organised a visit to Ollie Stobo's farm between Fawler and Stonesfield to discuss the challenges he faces as a mixed farm in the current economic conditions and the opportunities for working with him to deliver some of the longer-term plans emerging from the NRP. There will be further visit in February and we are planning to repeat this type of visit with other farms/estates this year.

4. **Membership of the Group.** Lisa Wilkinson has written to the inactive members of the LNG listed on Basecamp to determine whether they want to continue to participate in the Group. We expect active members to attend monthly meetings and to become involved in the activities of the LNG, at some level. Members were asked to notify Lisa by the end of Jan 2023 if they do not want to continue with active participation. We have also welcomed two new members to the Group: Graham Terry who was actively involved in writing the Neighbourhood Plan for Charlbury and Martha Crockatt from Oxfordshire Treescapes. The LNG is working actively alongside Oxfordshire Treescapes, now a critically important collaboration towards the development and implementation of the NRP.

## 5. **Nature Recovery Plan**

- 5.1. Peter Kenrick and Geoff Griffiths have now both attended online course to learn how to use the LandApp mapping software to support nature recovery planning at parish level.

5.2. A recent meeting with Oxfordshire Treescaping (Martha Crockatt) to review progress and develop a strategy for next steps, including: the collation of existing baseline data; identification of gaps and the collection of new species/habitat data; writing the NRP. It is anticipated that a prototype plan will be available this summer.

5.3. Funding. A bid to the HLF is being prepared with help from Lisa Wilkinson to fund a 2-yr coordinator post for the NRP.

**6. Future events/activities.**

**6.1.** A Citizen Science Saturday (part of Earth Day) is planned for Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> April at the Wigwell Nature reserve. This is a collaborative effort between the Evenlode Catchment Partnerships (ECP, The Wychwood Forest Trust and Charlbury Town Council (LNG).

**6.2. QR codes.** Further work is planned to develop QR signposting to communicate aspects of modern farming, nature conservation and public access in collaboration with landowners/managers to fund , locate and support this initiative for improved public information.