



	<p>regarding training for implementation of the Env't. Bill. Mole Valley: between Reg. 18 & 19 drafts of LP. Intends to use 20% net gain in Reg. 19 - watching Guildford's example on this. 'Pilot' case in point emerging where impact of a proposed development has been valued in terms of its net loss, and requires an off-set project to counter this as well as to realise its 'measurable net gain..'. Will prove an interesting test case. Extract of findings of research by Wildlife Link circulated with agenda (Will Biodiversity Net Gain improve English biodiversity?) is pertinent. Worth emphasising that the requirement is for a <u>minimum</u> 10-20% net gain (altho' see SE's partner update below). Spelthorne: current eg. for IS is Shepperton Studios who are interested in BNG in their proposed redevelopment. Commented on the degree for subjectivity in use of the metric, eg. habitat type and condition, and also lack of species considerations. Training for operatives will be key to controlling this. Hopes to incorporate BNG guidance in an update to Sp's BAP. MW – perhaps wait on this action until we are clearer re. our 'responsible authority' to produce Surrey-wide Local Nature Recovery Strategy. MH – very early days, but LRC's have been asked nationally to explore potential ways of spp. input to metric. Waverley: LT reports Wa has requested training from SWT Ecology Services in interpretation of Bio Metric. SWT has responded, and indeed will supply to further boro's + SCC. Tandridge: Local Plan policy – inspector's preliminary views are to either pause/wait for Bill, or withdraw plan completely. Woking: put forward as NE pilot BNG districts, but not successful. LB will confer with colleagues and report back. Epsom & Ewell: net gain policy is embedded in revised BAP – implementation into planning still under discussion. Meanwhile Local Plan is on hold pending outcome of possible <i>Planning for the Future</i> 'shake-up'. Elmbridge: Local Plan here also currently on hold, pending planning reforms/response to consultations to date re. Green Belt releases etc. DP will also confer with colleagues and report back.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>Partner Updates:</p> <p>Ross Baker, Lynn Whitfield (Surrey Bat Group)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This winter's hibernacula checks all cancelled – more to do with risk of spreading COVID into bats, not just lockdown. • Involvement in M25 J10 scheme; placement & specification of bat boxes, for both mitigation and compensation. • Late in 2020 an unfortunate wildlife crime offence was committed involving the only SNCI selected for its hibernating bats, at Godstone Mines in Tandridge. Its land-owner had permitted development approval to create an access track, involving imported material which buried one of the mine entrances. Although the LPA's control function is limited in such circumstances, and regardless of the strict requirements of planning law there was clearly some disconnect with procedure to enable application of SNCI protective policy here. Surrey Police was involved, also local speleologists who first raised the alarm. Restoration of the mine entrance was enabled despite complete surface destruction. Mine interior appears unharmed, but only time/monitoring will tell. MW will follow up with Surrey Police WLO to find out more. <p>Simon Saville (Butterfly Conservation)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Had filed an earlier agenda question concerned with visitor pressure in the Surrey countryside, particularly the AONB – what can be done? AS has observed AONB website hasn't been amended to reflect changes from its emphasis promoting visits. Approach Rob Fairbanks (Director) on this? • Work-parties have been cancelled; frequency of transects last season obviously down, but many sites were monitored in the end. • Straw Belle moth on Box Hill – monitored 2020 numbers above average (best UK site of 10 total), despite fears over trampling under lockdown conditions. Heart Moth also a rare Surrey speciality, also did well. • Stats now available to support carbon sequestration case for undisturbed grasslands (vis à vis woodland planting). <p>Ann Sankey (Surrey Botanical Society)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recording on golf courses profitably using lockdown constraints. Observing both good and bad practice. • Semi-improved Grasslands Inventory – progress here, whereby SBS data-base cross-referenced with 'indicator species list' to provide a short-list of sites from a desk exercise. Ground-truthing to follow.. <p>Dave Page (Elmbridge)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observing massive over-use of borough open spaces. Impact on wildlife so far unknown. Constraints on countryside management also problematic. Interpretation will only go so far in alleviating pressure. <p>Georgina Terry (Natural England)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On lockdown visitor pressure impacting SSSIs – NE keeping register of issues/examples of damage to SSSI, for eventual national report. Please submit your examples to her? • Up to lockdown was active on 	<p>MW</p>



site visits to ascertain offer of HLS extensions up until incoming replacement ELM Scheme in 2024. If not, can start a CS Mid-tier agreement to operate over similar timeframe. CS application window Feb-July. Higher-tier is Feb-May. • Current NE ban on field work, except on NNR, or SSSI enforcement issues.

Heather Richards (RSPB)

• Echoes similar issues with overuse of sites; Farnham Heath/thankfully Tankersford Common area is restricted access. Woodlarks could potentially be impacted, as bespoke habitat intervention is a magnet for picnicking public.

John Edwards (SCC)

• Has heard that NE plan to give a timely refresh to the 'countryside code', given all the new pressures generated by the COVID lockdown. • Good news on the M25 J10 Improvement Scheme - 'Green Bridge' project connecting Wisley & Ockham Commons has been given the 'green light', not as a condition but to realise an opportunity presented by the scheme to right historical wrongs of original partitioning by the M25. Actual SoS decision on the Improvement Scheme has been delayed until May 12th, also delaying some of the forward enabling works inc. habitat enhancements. • In E&E, an opportunity has been presented for chalk grassland restoration near/adjacent to existing SWT Howell Hill NR. Site was originally proposed as potential for SCC Tree Strategy tree planting – thus saved from that regrettable fate.

Mike Hordley (SBIC)

• Very busy at SBIC – ever more data-searches commissioned by sector. • Involved in national discussion with ALERC, CIEEM, Defra & ALGE – to define the role for LRC's post-Env't. Act. • Input to Cabinet Office Geospatial Commission to improve biodiversity meta-data flow throughout sector – will feed into the review of *Planning for the Future* post-consultation. • Data agreement with NatureSpace involved in GCN District Licensing. • MH has recently joined Wildlife Link's NNIS group – interested in improvement of distribution data to help combat threats. Focus in Surrey given geographic placement. • About to access all BTO's data. • No Recorders Meeting this year, but offering an online talk by [Erica McAlister](#) – NHM Dipteran curator.

Lara Beattie (Woking BC)

• Planet Woking programme continues, its website includes a range of case-studies relating to climate/ecological projects in the Borough. The next virtual talk (2nd Feb) is focused on the "Great Outdoors" theme. Now sold out but a recording will be made available via the Events page of the PW website. Event will feature key speakers including Sarah Jane Chimbwandira from SWT and Helen Cocker from Surrey Countryside Partnerships. • Year 4 of Woking's Great Crested Newt (GCN) pilot project is complete. Updated project reports will be available on the Council's website here soon and will include planned works for year 5. • Consultation on Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) closed on 14 Dec 2020 - officers are now processing responses to the consultation. • The second raingarden in WoBC's pilot project with SCC Highways is close to completion at Alpha Road, Sheerwater. • Last mtg. reported that WoBC had applied to be a pilot district in NE's BNG pilot. Whilst not successful, officers would like to thank colleagues including John Edwards and Mike Waite, for assistance. WoBC officers have gone on to have useful conversations with NE since, so a useful link made for future BNG considerations.

Izzy Soane (Spelthorne BC)

• River Ash project – public access still under development. Over-use of esp. Staines Moor, Shortwood Common – camping issues. Incident of persecution of a Mute swan reported also.

Stewart Cocker (Epsom and Ewell Borough Council)

• Signed up to be a delivery partner to NRN Partnership. • GCN District Licencing – approached by NE. • Black Hairstreak on Epsom Common – monitoring underway inc. egg-search this winter. • All volunteering site-work is off under lockdown. • Chamber Mead wetland project is progressing under SERT/Hogsmill CaBA partnership. • Visitor pressure has impacted grazing on Epsom, as electric fencing being compromised. Possibility of using 'invisible fencing'..? • E&E's Peter Howarth is now VC17 bryophyte recorder. • Tree planting strategy underway for borough (see above Matter Arising), inc. consideration of densities for 'dodgy' carbon accounting.

Helen Cocker (Surrey Countryside Partnerships)

• Also signed up to be a delivery partner to NRN Partnership. • All volunteering also put on hold, but essential grazing/looking still going ahead. • Kestrel Field project by the Lower Moles, is now completed.



Simon Elson (Surrey County Council)

• On 20% minimum BNG, has asked the Mineral Products Assoc. (trade body) whether has discussed this at all, & finds it is similarly concerned. Makes parallel with affordable housing % requirement (never a 'suggested minimum' = *always* absolute quantum). Asks is there an intention to discuss issue @ Surrey Planning Officers' forum? **JE** – perhaps too early; wait for Env't. Bill? New Minerals & Waste Plan process has began, combined this round. R&BBC – proposed crematorium on an SNCI at New Pond Farm in Earlswood.

Rod Shaw (Mole Valley DC)

• MV Draft Local Plan. Forward Planning team working on Regulation 19 draft. Timing uncertain due to local govt. elections and purdah imposition. • Surrey Hills AONB boundary review. Natural England has approved process. Will be first post-Glover boundary review of any AONB, so an opportunity to address Glover's recommendations to go beyond landscape preservation considerations – ie. engage more in nature recovery. • MV intends to review its community engagement strategy, for community to feel more involved in important decision-making.

Vivienne Riddle (Tandridge DC)

• Will have a clearer view of strategy re. Tandridge Local Plan 2033 after 25th January. • Decision to make soon on GCN District Licencing in Tandridge, re. which of two alternative strategies to deploy.

Susan Medcalf (SBS)

• Observation that consultancy sector is largely unaware of BOAs, perhaps more profile required on our website? • Sad news of recent passing of both Rob McGibbon and Mike Thurner; both have made important contributions to nature conservation in Surrey - Rob as founder of the Heathland Project and Mike associated with SWT, and wildlife recording generally. • On BNG, see useful discussion here; <https://post.parliament.uk/research-briefings/post-pn-0636/>

Leigh Thornton (SWT)

• All volunteering stopped too. Challenge (COVID recovery) Fund – awarded funds to support posts in grazing team. • Partners in Surrey Heartlands Project – environmental health & well-being project. • SWT also building its response to introduction of BNG – preparing registers of potential project sites, offering training to sector, etc. • SWT is working on its contribution to TWT 30-by-30 Campaign – ie. 30% of country managed for nature by 2030, see [here](#). • James Adler, Director of Biodiversity has recently left the Trust, at NY – has gone to join Ashdown Forest Conservancy as Director.

in absentia:

David Watts (RBBC)

Reports that new Management Plan for Earlswood Common LNR/SNCI is underway. Thanks to all members who have contributed survey data.

John Devonshire (RBC)

As an update G& BI SPD remains in draft but hopes to move forward to consultation in the near future. Clearly this could include future-proofing document (prepared by consultants) for delivery of BNG to align with Env't Bill.

AOB:

RB to SE – any progress to report on Molesey Reservoirs management agreement? Yes, is moving inexorably in the 'right direction'..

SE to MW – any further thoughts on our Bio2020/Surrey BOA targets reporting? Yes, and in doing so has discovered that NE/JNCC has already formally reported into the CBD on UK's Aichi achievements 2010-20. Was officially announced (quietly) in November. For the key document see; <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/biodiversity-indicators-for-the-uk>. Unless he missed it at the time, MW unaware of any consultation eg. around LNPs for their contributions. Hopes to issue a reporting protocol for use by SyNP in the next month or so.

Jay Doyle reports that **Forestry Commission** is to appoint an Area Ecologist for SE & London Area able to contribute to the BioWG in more active capacity. Role within Forest Services; a really welcome & positive development for the Forestry Commission (hitherto contacts largely with forestry beat officers).



	<p>HR RSPB; has discovered this Exmoor NP vision, and proposes we could do something similar to develop a vision for nature recovery in Surrey, as apt. to Surrey/SE, particularly around the ‘before & after’ graphic. MW said we/SWT have this campaign already (& as attached), but agreed this could be developed further for the SyNP, and/or even SENP. Brief group discussion gained support for this idea. MW to discuss further with SJC/LC-G.</p>	MW
<p>6.</p>	<p>DoNM: Wednesday 12th May 14:00-16:30, Video Conference using Zoom. Then 8th September 14:00-16:30 – hopefully in forum, but tbc.</p>	
	<p>Abbreviata: ALERC – Assoc. of Local Environmental Record Centres; ALGE – Assoc. of Local Govt. Ecologists; BNG – Biodiversity Net Gain; EEBC - Epsom & Ewell; EBC - Elmbridge; GBC - Guildford; GCN – Great Crested Newt; MVDC - Mole Valley; RBBC- Reigate & Banstead; RBC - Runnymede; SBC - Spelthorne; WoBC - Woking; SCC - Surrey County; NFM - Natural Flood Management; NNIS – Non-Native Invasive Species; NR - Nature Reserve; NE - Natural England; NT - National Trust; RAWI - Revised Ancient Woodland Survey; SANGS - Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space; SJC - Sarah Jane Chimbwandira (SNP Chair); SLSP - Surrey Local Sites Partnership; TBH - Thames Basin Heaths</p>	