



BUSINESS PLAN 2017 – 2020

*Industry and Nature in Harmony
in one of Europe's great estuaries*

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HUMBER NATURE PARTNERSHIP

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VISION

By 2020 the Humber Estuary's natural environment will be richer in quality, diversity and more able to adapt to the pressure placed upon it than it is today bringing benefits for wildlife, business and local people.

Our vision for the Humber Nature Partnership is to be:

- A well known and respected organisation, able to demonstrate practical achievements for the environment, business and the community and seen as the voice for nature on the Humber.
- The main coordinating body for achieving positive action for biodiversity on the Humber
- A well recognised and respected organisation with influence on planning and development proposals
- Sustainably funded and able to plan and deliver longer term projects and initiatives.

AIMS

The Humber Nature Partnership will work with its members to:

- Deliver the sustainable management of the Humber Estuary and its surroundings.
 - Increase awareness and understanding of the Humber Estuary amongst the people and organisations around the estuary.
 - Identify practical measures for the integration of biodiversity into commercial operations and to maximise opportunities for biodiversity gain alongside sustainable economic development.
 - Develop and implement strategic solutions to the challenge of achieving sustainable development on the Humber, using excellent quality data and evidence.
- Be recognised as a champion for the environment and a model for best practice in partnership working.
- Provide an environment in which new and existing businesses can grow alongside the enhancement of the estuary's wildlife riches.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Outcomes

- Receive positive feedback from the Humber Local Enterprise Partnership on our relationship and work to develop a strategic approach to the collection of ecological data and the provision of ecological mitigation around the Estuary. Survey approach.
- Receive positive feedback on our input to developing plans and strategies from the Humber Local Authorities and other strategic organisations e.g. Environment Agency. Survey.
- Provide a practical, timely and impartial advice and information service to members on matters relating to the Humber's natural environment. This includes involvement in pre-application discussions relating to permit and development applications. Receive positive feedback following our involvement. Survey.
- Ensure no slippage in delivery of actions in the Humber Management Scheme.
- Continue to act as the Catchment Host for the Humber Estuary and hold an annual Catchment Partnership review meeting.
- Develop three new projects on the management of protected species and habitats on industrial sites and receive positive feedback from our members.
- Hold three Humber Nature Forum meetings, including one site visit for Members, co-host three Environment Managers' meetings with HCFCatch and organise annual Humber Estuary Conferences.

People

- No reportable Health and Safety incidents.
- All staff to undertake a minimum of four days CPD per year
- Implement annual personal development reviews for all staff

Financial

- Meet budget targets, and financial and other business obligations.
- Maintain Humber Nature Partnership's income gained from membership fees.

1 INTRODUCTION

The waters of the Humber Estuary create a dynamic landscape. Its attraction lies in a constantly changing appearance and mood due to the tide, changing coastal weather and human activity. The river corridor has a rich and visible cultural heritage and a sense of remoteness and peace close to major urban areas that have grown around the Estuary. Wildlife of international significance, nature reserves, country parks and major visitor attractions are significant destinations and sites of particular interest for visitors. The estuary is a unifying presence: a special resource for access and enjoyment and has a significant potential value to the area, to the wellbeing and health of the people who live in and around the estuary, for recreation and critically as the bedrock of the local economy based on its with its ports, industry, agriculture and settlements.

In *The Natural Choice: securing the value of nature 2011*, UK Government made a commitment to the establishment of Local Nature Partnerships (LNPs). The Government's vision for LNPs was that they:

"...will enable local leadership and may operate across administrative boundaries. They will raise awareness about the services and benefits of a healthy natural environment. They will contribute to the green economy and complement Local Enterprise Partnerships, with which we are encouraging them to form strong links."

The Humber Nature Partnership (HNP) is one of 47 LNPs around England announced by the Government during 2012. Formally established in November 2013, HNP builds upon the strong the foundations of the Humber Management Scheme Partnership and Humber Industry Nature Conservation Association. These two organisations have a track record of delivering positive results for the environment stretching back to 2002.

The organisation is a not-for-profit private company which works with its members to protect and enhance the Humber Estuary's world class environment for wildlife, the UK economy and people, gaining benefits for all. This business plan outlines how the Humber Nature Partnership will work with its members to achieve its vision.

2 KEY AREAS OF WORK

Humber Nature Partnership's work can be broadly divided into five main areas. These are set out below. The Implementation Plan in Section 3 gives further detail on the current priorities and progress in each area of work.

i. Delivering the Humber Management Scheme and Humber Estuary Catchment Host role

The Humber Management Scheme has been established to help those bodies with statutory duties under the Habitats Regulations to discharge these duties in a coordinated manner. An Action Plan has been developed which contains a series of targets and deadlines to be met in order to ensure the estuary meets 'favourable condition' status.

The Water Framework Directive (WFD) Aims to ensure that all ground and surface waters achieve 'good ecological status'. In order to meet good status, water bodies are assessed against a range of criteria which cover ecology, chemistry and hydromorphology. The Environment Agency is responsible for the implementation of the Directive and is developing a suite of 'River Basin Management Plans' which set objectives and aim to ensure co-ordinated management at a river basin scale.

In 2014 Humber Nature Partnership was awarded the status of Catchment Host under the Catchment Based Approach (CaBA) to the delivery of WFD. The actions needed for the Humber Estuary to meet 'good ecological status' under WFD align well with actions required to meet 'favourable condition' under the Habitats Regulations.

The Humber Nature Partnership's role is to assist in delivering coordinated action to ensure the various targets are met.

ii. Providing Ecological services

The Humber Nature Partnership provides a range of ecological services to its paying members. These services include:

- Scoping of ecological surveys and the interpretation of the results;
- Contributing to environmental impact assessments;
- Advising on the nature conservation aspects of applications for planning permission, discharge consents, Environmental Permits, and other types of permit;
- Assisting with the discharge of planning conditions concerning nature conservation and landscaping;
- Advising on the management of protected or other sensitive species found on industrial sites;
- Monitoring and advice on impacts on biodiversity during construction work;
- Identifying opportunities for the enhancement of biodiversity on industrial sites

iii. Delivering Projects which benefit the Humber's Environment

Humber Nature Partnership seeks to identify, facilitate and / or deliver a range of projects which help to achieve the organisation's aims. HNP also actively seeks involvement in both member and external projects where these help to deliver the organisation's aims. There is potential for some of this work to deliver financial benefits for HNP.

The following current projects are at various stages of delivery:

- South Humber Gateway Strategic mitigation
- Development of a recreation management plan
- Humber Hounds responsible dog ownership project
- Wader tracking pilot project
- Development of an in-combination database to assist with Habitats Regulations Assessments
- Humber Nature Partnership Smartphone App
- Data Audit Project

Some of the above are already well developed and underway, others are still in relatively early phases of development. In some cases HNP has provided the funding necessary to implement the project, in other cases additional partnership funding has been secured. Where necessary separate projects groups have been / will be convened to focus on the delivery each project.

iv. Communicating with others

The Humber Nature Partnership needs to engage with a wide range of individuals and organisations around the estuary in order to achieve its vision. Reasons for wide engagement include:

- Promoting the Humber, its wildlife and sustainable management
- Influencing decision makers
- Educating and engaging others
- Expanding the membership
- Raising the profile of the organisation
- Ensuring coordination
- Publicising best practise

In order to engage effectively, the Humber Nature Partnership must communicate effectively. A range of different communication tools are available each with its own benefits and differing levels of effectiveness at engaging target audiences:

- Website
- Newsletter
- Social media
- Press and traditional media engagement
- Production of leaflets and other marketing material
- Attendance at influential meetings / networks
- Presentations to interest groups
- Organising events (inc. Seminars and workshops, Humber Estuary Conference)
- Annual Award scheme

The HNP Communications Group has been established to oversee this work and to seek to influence the work of others.

v. Administration

(i) Staff

Humber Nature Partnership currently has the following staff:

- a Manager who leads the organisation
- a Project Manager for the Humber Management Scheme.
- a Conservation Officer who works on practical projects and gives advice to members.
- a Project Manager who works part time (0.4 FTE) across all HNP's work areas to develop new projects.

(ii) Finance

The Humber Nature Partnership needs to be adequately financed to meet its aims. Current funding comes from members paying fees in return for receiving services such as ecological advice or as a mechanism to discharge their statutory duties under the Habitats Regulations.

Opportunities also exist to generate income for HNP via involvement in external projects where these contribute to the organisation's aims. These opportunities will be discussed with the HNP Board to ensure that there is agreement on HNP's involvement in external projects.

HNP will maintain a financial reserve equivalent to six months of operating costs based on the annual expenditure budget and an additional minimum of £25,000 for cash flow purposes.

The HNP Finance Group has been established as a sub-group of the Board to oversee the organisation's finances and review fee structures where necessary.

Details of HNP's current and projected financial position are provided in Section 3.

(iii) Accommodation

Humber Nature Partnership is currently based in North Lincolnshire Council's Waters' Edge Visitor Centre. This location is relatively central to the area covered by Humber Nature Partnership and fits well with its environment policy. The current lease runs to December 2018.

3. Financial Position and Outlook

| | Outcome 2015 | Outcome 2016 | Budget 2017 | Forecast 2018 | Forecast 2019 | Forecast 2020 |
|--------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Income | £130,840 | £111,792 | £106,530 | £120,550 | £122,860 | £125,216 |
| Expenditure | £116,218 | £115,013 | £135,450 | £136,625 | £137,710 | £138,810 |

The above figures assume a 10% increase in membership fees in 2018 and 2% increases in future years. The figures also assume a successful major project funding bid with a 5% management fee

4 RISKS

The following broad categories of risk to the successful achievement of the Humber Nature Partnership's aims have been identified:

- Reputation
- Funding
- Policy and legislation change
- Staff resources
- Operational

Reputation

One of HNP's main strengths is its reputation with its members and externally. The organisation must protect its reputation with others to ensure that it can continue to deliver effectively. This can be achieved by ensuring that HNP provides relevant and timely input where required and that a professional and practical manner is adopted in dealing with both members and other organisations.

Funding

Failure to secure adequate funds to operate HNP is an obvious threat to the organisation's future. The HNP finance group will keep the level of funds and fee structure under review to ensure that the organisation is adequately financed. Ongoing changes in both public (budget cuts) and private sectors (foreign competition and oil and gas prices) pose a threat to income from membership fees. HNP must be seen as a valued service by its members to help ensure continued involvement.

Policy and legislation change

Changes in policy and legislation and both national and local levels have the potential to both negatively and positively impact on HNP. A recent positive impact has been the implementation of the Water Framework Directive which has seen HNP gain the status of Catchment Host for the Humber Estuary which further solidifies HNP's position on the estuary. 'BREXIT' and ongoing discussions on devolution also have the potential to impact upon HNP. Staff and Directors should keep abreast of these issues in order to assess likely impacts arising from them.

Staff resources

HNP has a small staff and relies upon its staff to deliver increasing workloads. In order to reduce risks to HNP arising from staff turnover, HNP must ensure that its staff feel valued and appreciated. This can be achieved by maintaining the existing close working arrangements within the team and ensuring that the staff's work for HNP is properly recognised.

Staff must also be properly trained to carry out their work and meet the demands of members. Necessary training will be identified to ensure that staff are able to effectively complete their work and to carry out professional development.

Operational

Operational risks are managed via HNP's Health and Safety Policy which is reviewed annually by the HNP Board.

Humber Nature Partnership maintains a risk register to record details of risks within these broad categories and how they are managed and minimised by staff and Directors to ensure that they do not pose a threat to the successful future of HNP.