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To: Nature Connected
Local Nature Partnership Board

Meeting: 10th May 2016

Topic: Liverpool City Region Green Infrastructure Framework

1 Purpose

This short paper provides a further update on the delivery of the Key Activities identified in the Liverpool City Region Green Infrastructure Framework.

2 Background

The Liverpool City Region Green Infrastructure Framework was launched at the Nature Connected event in December 2013.

The Framework, mandated by Nature Connected sets out the priorities for green infrastructure planning and delivery across the city region, informed by key economic, social and environmental issues.

Overarching Policy	Priorities	Long term vision
Green infrastructure will be established as a critical infrastructure through plans, strategies, proposals and schemes as a comprehensive framework contributing to the sustainable development of Liverpool City Region and Warrington through the delivery of six priorities.	Setting the Scene for Growth	As a low carbon economy, Liverpool City Region and Warrington maximises the benefits that are delivered through strategic GI planning to support sustainable economic growth.
	Supporting Health and Wellbeing	The natural environment is seen as a key health asset. People in the city region and Warrington state that the natural environment and their enjoyment of it is a major contributor to their wellbeing.
	Adapting to Climate Change	The city region and Warrington has adapted well to climate change and supports others in making their change.
	Providing Recreation, Leisure and Tourism	The city region and Warrington is a playground, with paths and green routes offering opportunities for sustainable recreation and leisure and encouraging visitors to enjoy the natural beauty of the area.
	Enhancing the Ecological Framework	The developing ecological framework is a precious resource, providing critical functions and safeguarding our biodiversity.
	Developing the Rural Economy	An attractive and thriving rural economy is key to the success of the city region, providing valuable fuel and food resources as well as the setting for a high tech and knowledge based economy.

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The Framework identified a number of actions, but more importantly 12 Key Activities that support the delivery of the actions.

Nature Connected has a role to play in supporting and delivering these Key Activities.

3   Progress update

The table below provides an overview of progress.

Overall, of the 12 Activities, five could be said to be progressing well (highlighted in green) and have benefitted from the GI Framework and Nature Connected. The remaining seven (highlighted amber) are progressing more slowly and perhaps have been influenced less by Nature Connected to date.

Some of the activities, such as promotion, require additional resources that are not available at the moment. For others, perhaps the time is not yet right or the opportunities do not yet exist, to make more progress.

At the recent GI Conference, organised by The Mersey Forest with TCPA, over 100 attendees heard a wide range of presentations on the future of GI delivery. Presentations are here.

http://www.merseyforest.org.uk/files/documents/1329/All+Presentations+-+web+version.pdf

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Plan and deliver green infrastructure to help overcome "pinch points" that undermine investment potential. LIFE IP project now underway and includes work on Urban Catchment Forestry ReNatUrb project Continuing discussion with EIB about opportunities to use the Natural Capital Financing Facility to support this action.	**Use the Green Infrastructure Framework to shape the content and delivery of European Structural and rural Development Funds.** Low carbon call now out. This provides an opportunity to test the work completed through the Technical Assistance programme to develop a pipeline of fundable green infrastructure and renewable energy projects across the city region. LEADER programme launched on 10th February – there is a need to revisit the GI links to the programme.
Engage the non-environmental sector more effectively through the Local Nature Partnership and Local Enterprise Partnership link and Community Environment Fund. Ongoing.	**Fully utilise Green Infrastructure Planning, delivery and management to reduce health inequalities, promote positive wellbeing and reduce the prevalence of poor mental and physical health in support of the Decade of Health and Wellbeing.** Natural Health Service developing. Nature4Health programme underway across the City Region Natural Health Service cited in "Natural Solutions" http://www.instituteofhealthequity.org/projects/natural-solutions-to-tac Natural HS centre of research excellence is now up and running, with proposals for research bids being investigated. Bid under development to NIHR.
Use GI to help adapt our area to projected climate change and assist in the creation of a low carbon economy. Good examples of projects across the city region. Alt restoration, Green Streets, Wood Allotments.	**Build the GI Framework into city region and cross boundary plans and strategies.** Ongoing discussions with those shaping the plans and priorities for the City Region
Support the aspiration for the Mersey as the cleanest and most ecologically rich urban river in Europe. Task Force in place.	**Create and develop green infrastructure tourism assets such as our coastal areas, large parks, greenways such as Sankey Valley and the Forest Parks.** Significant progress on Sankey Valley, Bold Forest Park and Sefton Coast (Coastal Community Team Economic Plan with DCLG at the moment). Parks work led by Knowsley has been well received locally and nationally and is now in Ph2 – recently part of presentation to APSE by Caroline Davies.

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	Liverpool Parks Review, Final Report due soon.
Use the green infrastructure of the city region and Warrington to promote and "sell" the area as a great place to live, work and invest. Use it to help bid for Green Capital. This area probably needs some discussion!	**Through green infrastructure planning and delivery enhance the ecological framework through creation of more and bigger areas for nature that are well managed and connected to form an ecological network.** New EN now approved and has been used along with GI Framework to target SUD and STEP funding (or at least to use to support a case of where it ought to be targeted)
Deliver The Mersey Forest Plan, increasing woodland cover in areas of greatest need, deliver "More from trees" and achieve a "Woodland culture". Ongoing. MF Plan being used in the ad hoc discussions about future LCR Strategic frameworks.	**Use the green infrastructure assets of the city region and Warrington to support increased active travel, walking and cycling for work, recreation and leisure.** Good progress through LSTF where in one project alone cycling rate has doubled in one year along newly greened routes. Report on health benefits of the LSTF work showed a significant gearing of investment. (report available). Input to Liverpool Physical Activity Strategy. STEP and SUD funds provide further opportunities to develop this action

Summary

The Green Infrastructure Framework provides a rich source of information that Nature Connected can use to help to influence and shape programmes and policy to deliver.

Many of the Key Activities are underway, some having made significant progress.

There is a need to review progress and opportunities to deliver the Key Activities to help achieve some of the aspirations for Nature Connected.

- Promoting and valuing the natural environment
- Developing, maintaining and using a robust evidence base
- Providing strategic influence

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