

Cumbria & North-East England Timber Transport Group Meeting AGREED MINUTES

15th February 2022 at 15:00 via Microsoft Teams

Chair: Mike Yerbury

Present (19 people)

Cameron Smith, David Bewley, David Biott, Ian Everard, James Harrison-Moore, James England, James Richards, John Tunnicliffe, Keith Haywood, Lynne Ryan, Mark Child, Matt Kelly, Max McLaughlan, Mike Yerbury, Neil Gibson, Paul Boobyer, Robin McCartney, Tom Coates, Victoria Upton

Apologies

Andy Powell, Colin Binnie, Marcus Wright

Agenda

1. Minutes of previous meeting

Action Point from last meeting: Lynn Ryan to locate the form used to inform NCC of planned timber extraction and new planting. Paul Boobyer will send the form to all group members. This action will be completed after a review of the form and reporting process has been carried out by NCC. **Lynn clarified that a review of the Agreed Routes Map will also be carried out, in conjunction with RTTG members.**

The minutes of the last meeting were otherwise agreed.

2. Actions from previous meeting

2.1 Completed actions

James England to update council staff on dealing with felling plan / forest management plan consultations. **This was done at the meeting in Hexham on February 3rd.**

James England to share the ash dieback toolkit with members of this group. James forwarded the toolkit to Paul after the meeting and can be viewed [here](#).

2.2 Outstanding actions

Robin McCartney to make contact with the Borderland Growth Deal Forum. **This action has not been completed.**

James England to circulate a one-page document providing information on resources following Storm Arwen. **James will do this soon.**

2.3 New Actions

Paul Boobyer to contact the Highways Department of Durham County Council to ask whether they will join the C&NETTG.

3. Update from Chair/PO on recent meeting with local authorities

Mike Yerbury, James England, Robin McCartney and Victoria Upton had a meeting at the beginning of February to facilitate a level of understanding in councils of processes for information flow, and the details of the Agreed Routes Map. They also discussed how the Group's partnership collaboration will function.

4. Discussion around proposals to review Agreed Routes Map

It was decided that a review of the [2014 TTG document](#) will take place; a working group will be created if details need to be discussed. The Agreed Routes Map (ARM) needs to be updated, particularly to avoid landlocking forests. James England and Cameron Smith offered to be part of a working group. Max McLaughan noted that the industry has advanced since the original Agreed routes were produced. Mark Child added that woodland creation should be considered in the ARM.

5. Update from local authorities (Cumbria and Northumberland)

Cumbria County Council has received a letter from Ennerdale Parish Council regarding speeding and other dangerous behaviour on roads. Community councils have reported other issues relating to timber lorries, such as convoying and a lorry striking a house. There have also been complaints received about timber lorries passing through Ponteland in Northumberland. Some local residents believe the route isn't suitable for timber traffic.

6. Storm update

6.1 Forestry England

There have been some areas of new windblow damage since Storm Arwen. In North Northumberland 50-60,000 tonnes are usually harvested. The expected volume over the next 1½ – 2 years will be three times the usual harvest. Operations will include blocks being felled to windfirm edges, resulting in 2–3 times the amount of timber than just windblow.

FE is now considering how access will be gained to remote forest blocks. Sales of timber have been scheduled. Public footfall is high in many windblown areas; managing footfall alongside harvesting is a consideration. Fixed-wing surveys have partially been undertaken.

There have been a lot of felling licence applications in Northumberland and County Durham. A couple of new woodland officers have been employed.

There has been a discussion surrounding felling licence exemptions. The licence in England is to clear live trees only, with a dispensation to fell live trees around windblown trees. FE is looking to update the guidance to allow felling to a windfirm edge to go ahead without permissions. An email will be sent to FE's North Yorkshire and North-East England contact lists.

6.2 Private sector

Privately-owned woodlands that don't have a management plan are causing a staggered release of timber into the market due to the time it takes to get approval for felling in order to comply with FSC Controlled Wood compliance. Deliveries to processors aren't increasing due to the storm. Perhaps in

Q2 or Q3 there will be more sawlogs, followed by industrial roundwood. This was reiterated by all the private-sector attendees at the meeting.

7. Fragmented woodland issues (Consultation routes / access and egress issues etc)

Some areas of fragmented woodland are hard to access and the ARM review by NCC will take landlocked woodlands into account. As mentioned in 6.1, FE is considering how access will be gained to remote forest blocks.

8. STTS proposal update

A letter will be sent to MP Grant Shapps by local MP Guy Opperman, who will be making the case for a local STTS pilot project for Northeast England. If the UK Government accepts the proposal, Chair Mike Yerbury will arrange a meeting with local processors and local authorities to discuss details. If successful, the scheme could be rolled out to other areas in England.

9. TTF conference

The TTF conference will be held on March 25th. Paul Boobyer needs to confirm numbers with the venue by March 14th. Anyone interested in buying, amending or cancelling tickets should contact TTF Project Officer [Paul Boobyer](#).

10. Date of next meeting

A Doodle Poll will be sent to determine the most suitable date for the next meeting in the last week of April.