

## Some key points from the breakout groups

### Group 1

- Benefits are not just financial: people like to live and work in areas in a high quality natural environment and it helps their physical and mental health (so also reducing the burden on the NHS).
- There needs to be nature near to work places, including those in urban locations.
- A case needs to be made for the Cambridge area to be a priority for a global organisation to invest in the natural environment. Large organisations will often use brokers to identify suitable projects. It is easier to encourage and support staff to volunteer on local projects.
- Climate change is high on organisations' agendas; environmental projects that might contribute would need some form of accreditation.
- There is a need to audit where investment in biodiversity is needed and to measure and record the benefits. Successful projects should be publicised locally to demonstrate success and build trust.
- Natural Cambridgeshire should develop high-quality projects and then consider using an intermediary to approach local companies for funding. Innovative projects will be more attractive to potential philanthropists. There is scope to develop partnerships amongst developers, businesses and conservation organisations and for blended finance drawing on both private and public funding.
- Farmers and landowners should be helped to understand the risks of not maintaining a high-quality natural environment.
- There is a need to understand how to maximise the benefits from biodiversity net gain.

### Group 2

- In the short term, destruction of nature produces more gain than does enhancement, so incentives to invest are needed, such as tax credits. Measurable targets are essential.
- Some will invest to get direct benefit, others for kudos. Peer pressure can be an important driver. Many will want to feel that they are not solitary but contributing to a deluge of investment. Accreditation will be important, for example from the British Retail Consortium.
- The Biodiversity Net Gain requirement is a good opportunity, but it must be strategic. Good green spaces will increase land values and enhance the prices of houses, but the risk is that less enthusiastic developers will just make token small-scale improvements.

- They need support with clear advice, and a strategy for the best investment locations. There is a risk that investment will attract people to new parts of the priority landscape areas, to their detriment: access to nature should be improved near to where people live.
- In-perpetuity stewardship is essential; it must have a simple framework and be monitored. Most developments will need good long-term water management.
- There should be disincentives to doing harm, such as polluter pays.
- A range of ecosystem services can attract different investors. For example, tree planting can improve soil permeability, helping both with flood risk management (so reducing insurance premiums) and maintaining the aquifer to give better water availability. And the NHS should be encouraged to divert some of its funding because nature benefits health.
- Those already known to be philanthropic should be encouraged to invest more, including small investors. There is need to identify what projects will interest different investors, and often innovative projects will have most appeal. Crowd funding should be explored for local projects, including those in towns.
- There should be engagement with the universities to encourage using their research funding to improve nature, and the tenants of farms owned by the colleges (and by the County Council) should be targeted.

### Group 3

- We cannot wait for ELMS, so must identify other sources of funding and tap into them all: biodiversity net gain; other government funds; government-funded major infrastructure and investment such as the OxCam Arc; private sector funding; carbon offsetting; funding related to planning.
- Even wildlife-friendly farmers could do more for nature if all the different ways to invest were clear to them and brought together in one, easily accessible place, with one simple investment system,
- Evidence is needed of any biodiversity enhancements. They must be measured and possible trading methods identified, focused on habitat delivery.
- A local approach is important, to identify the natural capital of the area and then target investment opportunities. A crucial role is seen for Natural Cambridgeshire as a hub for various private investment streams and for collating evidence, setting priorities for landscape and environmental enhancement .
- Farmers must receive value from delivery of additional benefits, such as organically farmed produce and flood prevention mechanisms. They should look at the natural capital on their land and push new options for investment. They may need support for this, and help with capacity building.
- Many environmental investments have payback only in the long term. Risks need managing.
- There is a need to understand *why* they want to invest: to make a return, because they need to offset carbon, to discharge corporate responsibility, or maybe for environmental benefits for their own sake.

- Discussion with potential investors is an iterative process: they may not know what they want and may need examples of ready-to-go projects.
- Partnership working is important, and sharing best practice, knowledge and bought-in expertise. It is important to organise this as part of an investment plan.

#### **Group 4**

- Investing is a very specific activity, different from giving money directly to projects or using their staff for them. Investors normally expect a return over 5 years, including tax relief.
- They may take a lower return on investments if there are clear multiple benefits: enhancing their branding and market image, benefiting staff and involving them with nature, improving health and wellbeing.
- Connectivity and biodiversity offsetting will be key drivers, and they need maintaining over a long period.
- There needs to be clarity on how money is used and what for, and what are the benefits. Projects should be ranked to see which give the best returns or offsets. Investing in projects on some sites may unlock the development potential on other sites where there is little or no potential for biodiversity net gain.
- The Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment is a good model: it does not hold the money but acts as an intermediary, working with landowners and family offices, defines sites and checking the quality of projects to best meet objectives.
- In some sites one should not be satisfied with doubling nature; one might perhaps aim for much more than that.
- Farming is about to go through a seismic change with the Brexit and the loss of CAP, so starting to invest in nature is well timed as many more farmers will be keen to take up environmental schemes to maintain their profitability.
- Nature Parks can create volunteering and experiential activities for business staff as well as hospital patients, which will create an income. Businesses could be invited to pay for membership of the Cambridgeshire Nature Network which would give discounts to staff who then use the site/park/facilities. There would be payback in attracting staff and reducing staff turn-over.
- Public land, such as that owned by the NHS, needs a plan to benefit biodiversity.

## **Group 1**

### **Professor Ian Hodge (Cambridge University)**

Matt Antrobus (Babraham Campus)  
John Bridge (Cambridgeshire Chamber of Commerce)  
Andrew Brown (Anglian Water)  
Trevor Gibson (Opportunity Peterborough)  
John Gourd (Cambridge Network)  
Robert Marshall (Martlet Capital)  
Luke Newbey (Environment Agency)  
Stephen Pritchard (TTP)  
Fiona Riggall (ARM)  
Dan Thorp (Cambridge Ahead)  
Alan Todd (FSB)  
Bill Wicksteed (SQW)  
Andy Williams (AstraZeneca)  
*Phil Clark (Cambridgeshire County Council)*

## **Group2**

### **John Torlesse (Natural England)**

Daniel Clark (Cambridge Water)  
Charles Crawford (LDA Design)  
Andrew Evans (Philanthropy Company)  
Chris Francis (Turners of Soham)  
Sam Goodall (Cambridge Cleantech)  
Christine de Ferrars Green (Mills & Reeve)  
Bruce Huett (cam Valley Forum)  
Polly Neal (Logika Consultants)  
Jeremy Newsum (ex Grosvenor Estates)  
Andrew Newton (Ely Drainage Boards)  
Gareth Price (Gide Associates)  
Robin Price (Water Resources East)  
Jason Snape (AstraZeneca)  
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*Urselle Mumford (Environment Agency)*

## **Group3**

### **Cameron Adams (Environment Agency)**

Richard Anthony (Bursar, Jesus College)  
Richard Astle (Natural Cambridgeshire)  
Tim Breitmeyer (farmer)  
Andrew Burgess (farmer)  
Adrian Cannard (Combined Authority)  
Tom Clarke (farmer)  
Jo Finlow (Fens for the Future)  
Robert Grace (Natural Capital East)  
Martin Lines (farmer)  
Richard Pemberton (farmer)  
John Shropshire (farmer)  
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*Mark Nokkert (Cambridgeshire ACRE)*

**Group4****Roger Mitchell (Natural Cambridgeshire)**

Roland Bull (Bidwells)

Matthew Bullock (Cambridge Ahead)

James Buxton (Pigeon Investment)

James Curtis (Morgan Sindall)

Maureen Donnelly (former chair of Clinical Commissioning Group)

Bob Ensich (Morgan Sindall)

Duncan McCunn (Barclays)

Paul McDiarmid (Lands Improvement Holdings)

Will Nichols (Strutt & Parker)

Martina Sechi (Bidwells)

Andy Sharpe (Grosvenor Britain & Ireland)

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