

# Stakeholder Engagement Review

## Stakeholder update - May 2022

**As we continue to move forwards with our Stakeholder Engagement Review, we are writing to update you on the key areas of progress since our NNUF meeting on 16 February 2022.**

**The main points are summarised below:**

- We are extremely grateful for all of the constructive input from stakeholders, there were some excellent points raised.
- We have considered all the feedback, comments and ideas to help us refine our proposals
- We have revised the model to reflect the suggestions made
- We have finalised the list of additional national organisations we wish to engage with and will be writing to them all shortly with an invitation to join the new National Waterways Forum (NWF)
- We have determined the National Waterways Advisory Group (NWAG) areas of expertise we will be aiming to recruit
- We have updated our timeline for implementation
- There is still work to do around some key areas, in particular recruitment
- We will be using the EA's Working With Others approach to ensure that our engagement is inclusive
- We are producing a handbook that will contain all relevant information, such as Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct for example.

You can find further information on each of these points in this update.

### Review of feedback

We know that it is going to be difficult to please everybody. It is therefore important to remember the driver for this review: put simply, you have told us that the current model is not working. This is our chance to reset our relationship with stakeholders and to enable effective and constructive engagement.

We have listened to you and taken those views into consideration when refining our proposals. We have collated all of the feedback we have received. We grouped comments into themes and then summarised the main points into general headings.

We have illustrated the outputs of this exercise below:



Creating a better place for people and wildlife

You told us	Our response
<i>Boaters, who contribute most financially to the waterways, must not lose their voice, the focus should remain on Navigation</i>	We acknowledge this concern and have tried to ensure that boaters continue to be well represented. We will be recruiting an individual focussed on general navigation issues to the Advisory Group, alongside numerous other individuals with a remit for more specific navigation themes
<i>The NWF will be too large with no chance for discussion</i> <i>Small organisations or quieter individuals might not get heard in a larger group</i>	The NWF will be just one part of our stakeholder model. Effective running of the NWF and other opportunities provided by the overall model will ensure all voices are heard  We also aim to meet with every national organisation once a year with the agenda set by that organisation
<i>Why follow the CRT model?</i>	The core of the CRT model is similar to our own thinking and there are some elements of best practice from the CRT and other stakeholder models that you told us worked well
<i>The title of 'Task &amp; Finish groups' is not correct - they are not 'tasks' they are 'themes'</i> <i>How will the Task &amp; Finish groups be made up?</i>	We agree and have changed the Task & Finish groups to Delivery Groups  The Delivery Groups will be set up as required. The number of members, Chair & meeting frequency will vary depending on the commission, and there will be an opportunity to co-opt others who are not NWAG members
<i>Must broaden stakeholders represented and increase the diversity of group members</i>	We have finalised a list of additional national organisations we would like to engage with and will be inviting them to join the National Waterways Forum. Our recruitment to the Advisory Group will specifically target a more diverse membership
<i>Don't want to see the stakeholder group members broadened, want the members to consist of fee-paying users and boaters.</i>	To deliver the outcomes from our Navigation Business plan, we need to engage a wider audience that represents the broad interests of everyone who benefits from our waterways
<i>Some areas of interest e.g. sport could sit across several Technical Groups, how will this work?</i>	This is a valid point which we will need to consider as we populate the groups. Our Delivery Groups may span across all the Technical Groups
<i>Structure needs to be simple and not duplicate time and effort</i>	We have revised our model and proposals to reflect this



*There are other organisations we can learn from and other groups that already exist that we can communicate with*

We are following up with those organisations/groups mentioned to share lessons learned and see how we can engage effectively with them

*Concern over clarity of roles and commissioning of each group.*

This will be addressed within the ToR/ members' handbook

*Must have a clear Terms of Reference (ToR)*

*EA should chair the groups initially*

An EA Chair will lead the NWF and the NWAG. For the NWTGs an EA Chair will lead each group for an initial period, before we open this role up to others

*Resourcing attendance of the groups is a concern both for the EA and for stakeholders*

Within the model we have been mindful of our own organisational structure and available resource

We feel that an annual meeting of the NWF is not burdensome, whilst for the NWAG (and its NWTGs) we would hope that individuals only apply to become a member if they are able to commit their time.

We will regularly review the frequency of meetings

*Concern regarding the recruitment of members, how will this be achieved? Will it be democratic?*

The NWF membership will be made up of individuals nominated by each national organisation

For the NWAG our recruitment process will be based upon fair assessment of an individual's skills and experience against our member role profiles

*Recruitment must make membership more diverse*

Following the EA's Working With Others approach we will ensure that we are inclusive (see below for more detail)

*When considering terms of office there must be consideration for not losing technical knowledge and expertise of group members and continuity, and that volunteers may be hard to find*

We are considering appropriate terms of office to address these points. We will publish them in the ToR/members' handbook

*You have not undertaken a formal consultation for this review*

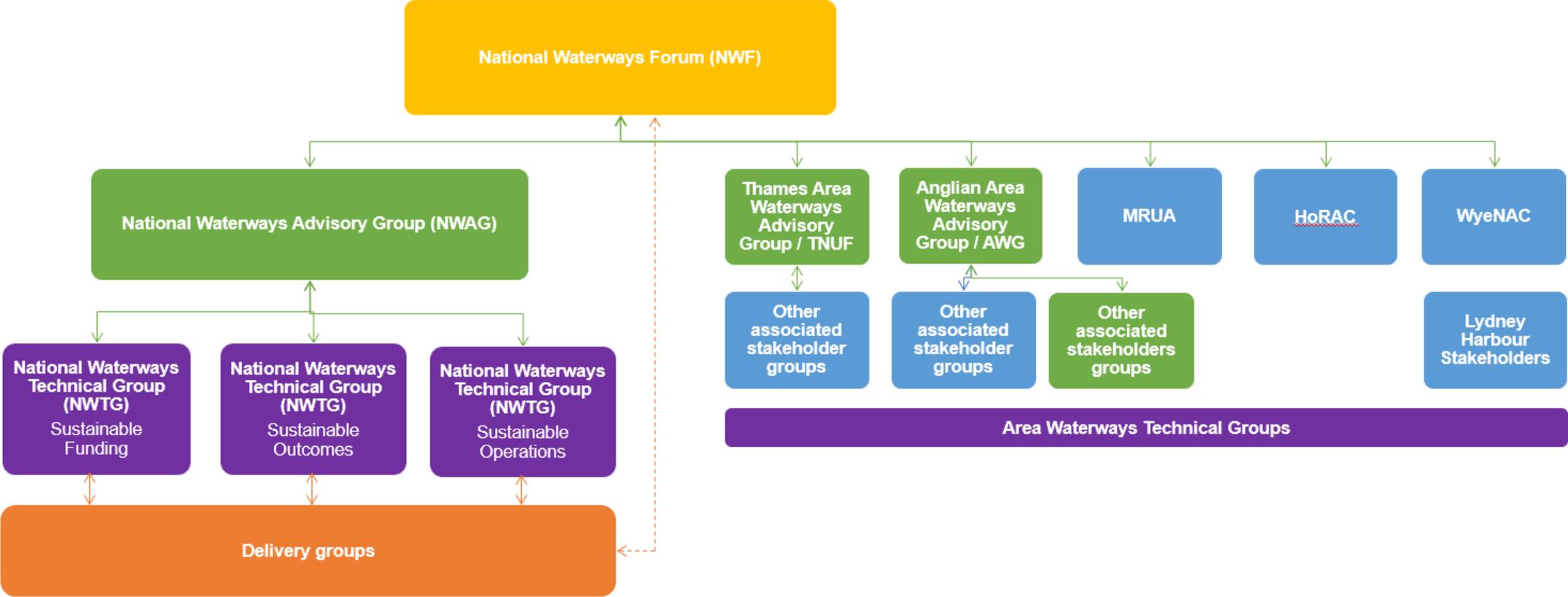
There is no requirement to undertake a formal consultation. However, we have engaged with our key stakeholders and taken all views into consideration

*The proposals are overly bureaucratic*

We have considered the feedback to date and still believe the arrangements will provide a more effective engagement model. We will however monitor effectiveness and make improvements as necessary



**DRAFT – Revised Environment Agency stakeholder engagement model**



## Supporting information

### National engagement pathway

### Area engagement pathway

**National Waterways Forum (NWF)**  
Meet ordinarily 1 x year  
Discussion forum. Chaired by EA. Broadest waterways stakeholder group.  
One representative from each national organisation (boating/non boating beneficiaries).  
In addition, a representative from each EA waterway area is invited - nominated by their Area Waterways Advisory Group / Area Stakeholder Group.  
EA Waterway Manager(s) from each area invited to attend.

**National Waterways Advisory Group (NWAG)**  
Individual members appointed based on their specific skills/experience (inc. boating/non boating) to help us deliver the Business Plan and influence/develop/advise upon new activities and actions and to take on ideas/issues raised at NWF and commission action. Communicate outcomes to NWF.  
Meet 2 x year. Chaired by EA. An EA Waterway Manager to attend.  
Each member of the NWAG will have the opportunity to sit on a NWTG(s) / Delivery Group(s) below (dependant upon skills/experience).

**National Waterways Technical Groups (NWTGs)**  
One group for each theme of the Business Plan.  
Chaired by EA lead initially for 1 year then Chair elected by group.  
Fixed membership from members of NWAG.  
Meet 2 x year to fit with NWAG mtgs. EA representative to sit on each group.  
Commission comes from NWAG.

**Delivery groups**  
Delivery groups set up as required to address a specific issue.  
Number of members, Chair & meeting frequency will vary. Commission comes from NWTGs.  
Members to come from NWTGs as appropriate, plus members of NWF/additional experts can be invited to join delivery group(s) where agreed.

**Area Waterways Advisory Groups**  
Area led (follow NWAG format but freedom within a framework)

**Existing Area Stakeholder Groups**  
Not EA led

**Area Waterways Technical Groups**  
Focus on Part C Business Plan (Local Outcome Plans)

#### Additional national engagement

**Plus: EA Meet individually with every\* national organisation**  
1 x year – Organisation to set agenda. Discussions on topics relevant to organisation/group.  
\*orgs TBC

**Plus: E-newsletter**  
EA national update - circulated 2 x year to tie into timings of NWAG

## **National Waterways Advisory Group (NWAG) - proposed areas of expertise we aim to recruit**

We can share with you that for the NWAG the areas of expertise we will be considering seeking representation for are as follows:

Navigation issues (e.g. dredging / vegetation management / assisted passage / navigation safety)

Residential boating

Powered boating

Disability boating

Canoeing

Rowing

Paddle boarding

Sailing

Outdoor swimming

Walking/Running

Cycling

Boating trade

Commercial development

Finance/Funding

Volunteering

Youth Engagement

Community Engagement

Mooring/Marinas

Riparian ownership

Water quality

Climate change

Health and Wellbeing

Water safety

Wildlife and biodiversity

Angling

Cultural and Heritage

Partnerships

Asset management

Compliance and enforcement

Technology



We are now scoping role profiles for these areas. It is important to note these may be subject to change.

We are producing a Waterways Stakeholder Engagement Handbook where these role profiles will be available for all to see.

We still have plenty of work to do, especially around recruitment and how this will work in practice, where we will advertise for example, and the frequency and timings of meetings etc.

We will circulate further updates when we have information to share.

## Working With Others for inclusive engagement

It is important to note that we will be following the Environment Agency's Working With Others approach to ensure that our engagement is inclusive and that we incorporate the following:

- Equity means removing barriers and biases to participation.
- Equality means that everyone has the same opportunity to participate.
- Inclusion means that everyone feels valued and safe.
- Diversity means recognising the range of people you are seeking to engage.

We will expect all our members to show commitment to the principles of these in their roles.

## Revised timeline

Date	Action
Early May 2022	Update to stakeholders, including revised model
Spring- Summer 2022	Invitations to stakeholders we wish to join the National Waterways Forum
	Scope role profiles for National Waterways Advisory Group
	EA lead for relevant groups assigned
	Production of 'Handbook' and Terms of Reference for groups
	Establish National Waterways Advisory Group and National Waterways Technical Groups
	Commence recruitment of members
	First meeting of National Waterways Advisory Group
Autumn 2022 (Date TBC)	First meeting of National Waterways Forum

