

WBP Species Expert Group Meeting 12

Newtown, 18th February 2014

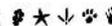
Attendees: Liz Howe, Chair (NRW); Sean McHugh, Secretariat (WBP); Steve Lucas (BCT); Claire Install (British Dragonfly Society); Rob Strachan (NRW); Adrian Fowles (NRW); Lizzie Wilberforce (WTW); Mike Bruford (Cardiff University); Mike Wilson (National Museum Wales Cardiff); Geoff Hobbs (Bridgend CBC)

Apologies: Stephen Bladwell, Chair (RSPB Cymru); Russel Hobson (BC); Rachel Taylor (BTO); Tim Rich (NMW); Sinead Lynch (BBCT); Sam Bosanquet (NRW/BBS); Jean Matthews (NRW); Dan Foreman (Swansea University); Craig MacAdam (Buglife); Dave Lamacraft (Plantlife Cymru); Sian Whitehad (NRW); Liz Halliwell (NRW); Andy Jones (NRW); Reg Thorpe (RSPB Cymru); Gareth Griffith (Aberystwyth University)

The minutes of the last meeting were confirmed as accurate.

No.	Update/Action	Who by/when	Additional comments
1	<p>Partner updates</p> <p>Bats: Rare woodland bats workshops will take place across Wales. Protocols to be developed for woodland bats survey;</p> <p>Landscapes for Lesser's initiative (Lesser Horseshoe bats) pilot project on Gower</p> <p>Dragonflies: Welsh section of BDS website now available; section for places to see dragonflies; habitat management advice given to landowners in Pembs (southern damselfly); ID & recording courses will run in summer; UK dragonfly Atlas out in May-trends will be drawn out for Wales species</p> <p>Water Voles: WTSWW will host a Water Vole Officer</p> <p>Red squirrel: Red Squirrel Project Officer will be appointed to assist with the Mid Wales Red Squirrel Project</p> <p>Fish: Rob Strachan mentioned a rationalisation of NRW fish hatcheries- may close or change focus to research. Affects salmon, white clawed crayfish, freshwater pearl mussel & gwyniad.</p>	<p>All/March 31st Send in short updates to Sean (smchugh@wtwales.org) for inclusion on WBP website</p> <p>Lizzie Wilberforce to request species updates from the other WT's</p>	<p>British Dragonfly Society Welsh section : http://www.british-dragonflies.org.uk/content/new-bds-wales-web-page</p>

	<p>Invertebrates: soft cliff supporting mason bee <i>Osmia xanthomelana</i> at Porth Neigwl has partially survived the storms. NRW are conducting an internal audit on soft cliff erosion during the recent storms</p> <p>Higher plants: BSBI are carrying out species surveillance on SSSI's; Plant distribution database & County Plants register on BSBI website</p> <p>Herptiles: DNA absence/presence test has been developed for great crested newts- protocol will be released; GCN modelling protocol has been developed. Liz will circulate details</p>	<p>Liz Howe to circulate GCN modelling protocol when released by Defra</p>	<p>BSBI County Plants register http://www.bsbi.org.uk/</p> <p>BSBI Plant distribution database http://bsbidb.org.uk/</p>
<p>2</p>	<p>Species- habitat integration work is progressing. Stephen has produced a progress note which will be circulated to all. The overall aims of the work is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm information on the requirements of Welsh s42 (NERC Act 2006) priority species to determine important habitat features. • Produce guidance for each of the WBP Ecosystem Groups on species whose recovery is at least partly dependent upon the delivery of the habitat targets managed within one or more ecosystem group. • Make management recommendations for how the requirements of priority species identified above can best be integrated into work 	<p>Sean to circulate species-habitat integration note with meeting actions</p> <p>All- comments on the wetland integration document by 7th April</p> <p>Liz Howe to check with Stephen and Chris Tucker on the progress with the woodland work by 12th May</p>	



	<p>delivering priority habitat targets</p> <p>SEG needs to sign off the wetlands integration work. Thanks for comments received to date, further input required on the habitat niche/resource descriptors</p> <p>Woodland- integration work needs to be completed. SEG have worked with the legacy body Forestry Commission Wales to develop prescriptions for Glastir (birds & mammals). Need to refine this for non-GT woodland sites. Stephen is meeting with NRW & other colleagues to move this forward.</p>		
3	<p>Wales Biodiversity Strategy Board update (Steve Lucas). The last board meeting board focused on RDP. Glastir consultation is now live & this will be followed by RDP consultation.</p> <p>£6m Nature Fund. Over 460 proposals received. Proposals will be grouped by themes and areas. Awaiting launch of scheme & further details. Ministerial statement in March & launch of scheme planned by end of March.</p> <p>Nature Recovery Plan- no further developments with this although WG are aiming for spring launch.</p> <p>No further updates on the structure of WBP.</p> <p>NGO representatives at WBSB meetings (BCT; BC; WT; RSPB)- influencing role & advisory role to WG on biodiversity issues.</p>	<p>Steve Lucas to send updates from WBSB to SEG</p> <p>Stephen to ask about consultation for Nature Recovery Plan- is there one planned?</p>	<p>The next WBSB meeting of the Board is 21st March</p> <p>Glastir consultation</p> <p>Consultation closes on 28 March 2014</p>
4	<p>Evidence Gaps. Mike Bruford updated SEG on the project.</p>	<p>All Review evidence gaps and comments made by</p>	<p>Mike addressed comments from SEG around a number</p>

	<p>Address evidence gaps (biodiversity & ecosystem related) & how they can be addressed by academic community. Evidence Gaps website now has over 200 projects with a broad range of questions that can be addressed by the academic community including undergraduate & postgraduate student projects. Some of these have been worked up into proposals ready to be taken up. Mike & Geoff Proffit working with academics to get buy in.</p> <p>Ministerial launch of project 30th April or 2nd May in Cardiff which will raise the profile of the project. Morning will be the launch event followed by an afternoon workshop focusing on aquatic environment.</p>	<p>Mike Bruford (columns I.J.K) in 'List of Evidence Gaps' Excel spread sheet on WBP Evidence Gaps web page</p> <p>All Volunteers required to review & refine SEG evidence gaps Group's priorities in 'List of Evidence Gaps' Excel spread sheet before the Evidence Gaps project launch. Liz Howe has volunteered, more volunteers required.</p>	<p>of points: project uptake; funding; 'high input' papers priority? public access to data; data management & credibility; collaboration with other UK institutions; WERH involvement. Mike: discussions are on going; refinement will follow; project has opened up dialogue, potential to add value and be a useful tool in providing evidence base.</p> <p>Evidence Gaps project link: http://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/en-GB/WBP-Evidence-Gaps-Project</p> <p>Contact: Tracey Lovering (tracey.lovering@cyfoethnaturiolcymru.gov.uk)</p>
5	<p>Consultations</p> <p>SPA consultation (birds) open. The proposed changes may extend three Special Protection Areas (SPAs) at Aberdaron Coast and Bardsey Island, Skokholm and Skomer, and Grassholm.</p> <p>Glastir consultation is open until 28th March 2014. Noted that there may be scope for commissioning surveys & educating GT advisors. GT advanced may be broader than in previous scheme so targeting will be important.</p> <p>RDP consultation is open until 14th April 2014</p>	<p>All to note the SPA, Glastir & RDP consultations</p> <p>Liz Howe to draft SPA consultation key response points & circulate to the group</p> <p>Sean to draft GT consultation key response points & circulate to the group</p>	<p>SEG members will be responding as part of their own organisations response to the consultations. SEG will produce a high level response.</p> <p>SPA consultation http://naturalresourceswales.gov.uk/our-work/news/consultation-launched-birds/?lang=en#.UwYYk_ItyU</p> <p>Glastir consultation http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/environmentandcountryside/proposals-for-glastir-scheme-consultation/?lang=en</p> <p>Wales Rural Development</p>

			<p>Programme Consultation 2014-2020</p> <p>http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/environmentandcountry/wales-rdp-2014-2020-final-proposals/?lang=en</p>
6	<p>SEG workshops/WBP conference input</p> <p>Priority habitat workshops have taken place in previous years, opportunity for SEG to take part & offer species advice.</p> <p>LBAP species workshops idea is popular with LBAPs, has not been taken forward formally. Carmarthenshire have invited a series of species experts to give talks at LBAP meetings to raise awareness & promote action.</p> <p>WBP Conference 10-11th September, Cardiff</p> <p>WBP have canvassed for ideas & species-related topics received-marsh fritillary, terrestrial mammals, cetaceans, pollinators & sea grass.</p> <p>SEG could potentially run a workshop on species habitat integration for those that have been signed off by the group.</p> <p>Note: Environment Bill White Paper Consultation response from SEG member organisations. Liz Howe, Mike Wilson & Geoff Hobbs also attended the consultation workshops.</p>	<p>Liz Howe to check with Jan Sherry re: the status of priority habitat workshops</p> <p>Sean to canvas LBAPs about their species needs to inform potential workshop</p> <p>All to note conference date & suggest ideas for presentations/workshops to Sean (smchugh@wtwales.org)</p>	<p>LBAP workshops- speed dating event often do not work for the less charismatic species. LBAP workshops seen as a good idea but there are capacity issues. Could spatially target based on species priority, promote common management actions or use as an awareness raising opportunity.</p> <p>Established Species Lead Partners may cover the majority of these objectives.</p>
7	<p>SEG workplan/membership review</p> <p>SEG agreed to review work plan. Actions for s42 species progress report was suggested as an addition.</p>	<p>All review work plan by 31st March</p>	

	Add SITA funding panel species expert representatives to work plan		
8	<p>AOB</p> <p>Resilient Ecosystem Fund projects. Some projects have not claimed payment. Mike Wilson updated on OPAL citizen science project which is being extended to Wales, Scotland & NI. Project officers will be appointed in N Wales (2) & 1 in S Wales. Existing projects operating in England will be extended to the new areas e.g. Bugs count, lichens & air quality</p> <p>OPAL Project http://www.opalexplorenature.org/</p> <p>WBP BARS officer has been appointed- Holly York (hyork@wtwales.org) BARS</p>	REF funding recipients send your claims in asap to Julia Korn	
Standing Items			
9	<p>SEG work programme. Covered in item 7</p> <p>Actions from Chairs meeting largely covered in items 5,8.</p> <p>Agenda items for next Meeting</p>	<p>Stephen Bladwell and Sean McHugh to share Planner with Species Expert Group to facilitate SEG rep attendance at these events.</p> <p>All to send in agenda items for June 2014 SEG meeting</p>	<p>This requires input from Ecosystem Chairs to inform SEG of planned priority habitat workshops</p>
	Date of next Meeting June 2014		Field meeting is planned. Teifi Marshes meeting room was suggested.
On-going actions and items			
i	All partners to send Sean a brief update of projects they are	All/end of March 2014	WBP website SEG link: http://biodiversitywales.org

	involved in for circulation to SEG. A rolling update can also be included on the WBP website under the SEG section		g.uk/en-GB/Species
ii	BARS BARS 2 is now live - user friendly, spatial representation of actions, priority mapping from ecosystem groups is available on BARS	All are encouraged to Visit new BARS & look for opportunities to input/comment	BARS link & further information: http://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/en-GB/Biodiversity-Action-Reporting-System-BARS WBP Priority mapping link: http://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/en-GB/Ecosystems--Species-Expert-Groups