

## **Biodiversity Briefing Note: General Principles**

Output from workshops hosted by the Local Record Centres and led by the Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing, involving Biodiversity Champions from Local Authorities throughout Wales during June and July 2008.

Participants suggested the following general principles during the workshops:

- Take a truly sustainable approach to the way we act.
- Mainstream biodiversity – take ownership.
- The importance of establishing biodiversity as a regular theme at Cabinet meetings and scrutiny committees
- The importance of engaging people and influencing them to do the right things (and of demonstrating this ourselves in what we do)
- The need for regular communications between members and councillors and the biodiversity experts
- The importance of education regarding quality of life issues.
- The importance of bringing the general public with us and, in particular, letting people know what they can do to help
- The importance of a strong evidence base and need to have LRC SLA in place to underpin this
- The word “duty” sounds like a chore but this needs to be a celebration of opportunity
- Biodiversity needs to be integrated into everything we do and embedded into our thinking in the same way that Health and Safety already is; we need to look for opportunities in all areas of the work that we do
- Funding opportunities might include: Making the Connections efficiency grants, Planning Grant, Tidy Towns, s106 agreements, agri-environment schemes, green dragon standard, landfill tax, aggregates levy, Welsh Housing Quality Standard, Highways budgets, Eco-schools, Coastal Access, CCW post funding for local government posts, WBP website list of grant sources.
- Put the effort in.

## **Biodiversity Briefing Note: Actions**

Output from workshops hosted by the Local Record Centres and led by the Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing, involving Biodiversity Champions from Local Authorities throughout Wales during June and July 2008.

Participants suggested the following actions during the workshops:

- Integrate biodiversity into all areas, e.g. sustainability, waste, education, s106, LBAP.
- Include biodiversity check list in local authority protocols e.g. integration tool kit (Equality, Welsh language, Health & Safety).
- Smarter use of impact assessments thereby enhancing biodiversity from an early stage.
- More innovative use of existing funding
- Checklist proofing early in process to improve efficient use of existing budgets.
- Set targets and sources for funding of biodiversity – s106, Tidy Towns, Coastal, EU funding.
- Set standards or targets for funding of biodiversity within all portfolios.
- Recognise and resolve conflicting pressures – finding a realistic and achievable balance (e.g. s17).
- Communication and training across local authority departments.
- Building capacity – spread knowledge (two way process).
- Establish how much land local authorities own that can be managed for biodiversity.
- Carry out biodiversity audit of existing land holdings
- Provide a paper to cabinet.
- Establish a Biodiversity Champion at executive level.
- Establish Biodiversity “Advocates” (non-executive) Roving role – able to sit in on any committee to pick up/input to scrutiny process.

- Establish buy in at top level  
e.g. cross member sustainable development advisory panel reporting to cabinet.
- Produce annual report on biodiversity issues  
e.g. to environment scrutiny; to cabinet; full council.
- Establish “Duty” as a regular item on SMT, cabinet, committee agendas.
- Organise an annual biodiversity away day for cabinet members and senior managers and scrutiny chairs.  
Include a biodiversity activity session.  
Include examples of local good practice and local poor practice.
- Awareness raising activities by members/officers/partners.

#### Members

Training /seminars/site visits (show off successes)  
All reports must have link to biodiversity

#### Officers

Show that biodiversity is relevant to all areas.  
Show how money can be saved  
Show that biodiversity issues/projects can be achieved with existing resources.  
Not necessarily about spending lots of money.  
Highlight pots of money/grants that are available if biodiversity elements are included e.g. Tidy Towns.

#### Partners

Local service board mechanisms  
Community Partnerships  
Partnerships between local authorities (neighbours)  
Share best practice/ideas/experience.  
Regional projects – GGBAG, GLAMBAG  
Themes – identify lead local authorities.

#### Private Sector

Developers (s106)  
Awareness schemes  
Publicity  
Green Dragon  
Sponsorships.

- Use planning regulations and 106 agreements to establish allotment/compost/nature sites as part of all/major developments.
- Allotments -half size to encourage take up.
- Community engagement - bulb planting.

- Small monetary gifts to community groups encouraging respect of environment and reducing crime.

## **CARDIFF ATTENDEES – 10<sup>TH</sup> JULY**

Jane Davidson – Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing

Diana Reynolds – Head of Nature Conservation and Biodiversity, WAG

William Somerfield – Nature Conservation and Biodiversity, WAG

Adam Rowe – Manager, South East Wales Biodiversity Records Centre (SEWBReC)

Juliet Hynes – Wales Biodiversity Partnership

### **Environment Agency Wales**

Bob Vaughan

### **Neath Port Talbot CBC**

Mr W. Watson . Director of Environment.

Councillor C .J.Crowley.

Councillor H.M.Bebell,

Councillor I D Williams.

### **Cardiff**

Councillor Simon Wakefield- Scrutiny Chairperson (Environmental Scrutiny Committee)

Councillor Margaret Jones- Executive Member, Environment

Councillor Tricia Burfoot- Chairperson of Planning Committee

Sean Hannaby- Chief Strategic Planning & Environment Officer

### **Newport**

Stewart Wild, Head of Planning & Economic Regeneration

Councillor Ed Townsend- Cabinet member, Deputy leader, Regeneration and Service Delivery

### **Bridgend**

Ms Louise Fradd – Corporate Director, Communities

Cllr John Spanswick – Cabinet Member for Communities

Cllr Kim Watkins – Scrutiny Chair for Communities

### **Monmouthshire**

Cllr Bob Greenland, Cabinet member for regeneration services and Deputy Leader

Cllr Bryan Jones, Cabinet Member for Regulatory Services

Colin Berg, Chief Executive

Matthew Lewis, Countryside Manager

### **Rhondda Cynon Taf**

Keith Griffiths - Chief Executive

George Jones - Group Director Environmental Services

### **Swansea**

Councillor Gareth Sullivan, Cabinet Member for Economic and Strategic Development

Paul Smith, Chief Executive

Julian Atkins, Team Leader – Environment & Conservation Team

**Vale of Glamorgan**

Rob Quick, Director of Environmental and Economic Regeneration  
Councillor Anthony Ernest, Cabinet Member for Tourism and Leisure

**Merthyr Tydfil**

Alistair Neill - Chief Executive  
Councillor Malcolm Connolly

**Blaenau Gwent**

Mr. Robin Morrison- Chief Executive

**Caerphilly**

Cllr Colin Mann,  
Alison Jones, ecologist  
Paul Cooke, Team Leader, Sustainable Development and Living Environment

**Torfaen**

Leader of Torfaen, Councillor Bob Wellington  
Councillor Richard Clark (Executive Member Regeneration)  
Mr. Bill Hill (Chief Officer Regeneration)  
Mr. Duncan Smith (Chief Officer Planning and Public Protection)  
Mr. Steve Williams (Senior Ecologist – Regeneration)

**BOTANIC GARDENS ATTENDEES – 30<sup>TH</sup> JUNE**

Jane Davidson – Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing

Diana Reynolds – Head of Nature Conservation and Biodiversity, WAG

Delcie Simkin – Nature Conservation and Biodiversity, WAG.

Joanna Robertson – Countryside Council for Wales.

Rob Davies – West Wales Biodiversity Information Centre

Janet Imlach – Biodiversity Information Service for Powys & Brecon Beacons National Park.

**WLGA**

Craig Mitchell

Nick Wheeler

Kate Jones (WWBIC)

Rob Davies (WWBIC)

**Pembs Coast Nat Park Authority**

Mr Richard Howells, Vice Chair of the Authority.

Mrs Fiona Lanc, Lead Member of the Authority on Biodiversity

Mr. Mike Howe - Head of Conservation.

**Pembs County Council**

Dr Steven Jones, Director of Development  
Councillor Myles Pepper.

**Ceredigion**

Ray Quant MBE - Member with responsibility for Highways Property & Works and  
Deputy Leader of the Council  
Ian Dutch – Rights of Way Officer, Principal Planner Coast & Countryside

**Carmarthenshire County Council**

Councillor Clive Scourfield  
Eifion Bowen Head of Planning  
Mark James

**Powys**

County Councillor E Michael Jones - Chairman of Board  
County Councillor Ken Harris - Sustainability portfolio holder  
County Councillor John Brunt - Scrutiny Member for Sustainability and Regeneration  
Jeremy Patterson - Executive Director Organisation and Regeneration  
Stuart Mackintosh  
Steve Burgess - Head of Regeneration and Environment  
Gwyn Gwillim

**Brecon Beacons National Park**

Mr Christopher Gledhill - The Chief Executive  
Mrs Margaret Underwood - Biodiversity Member Champion.