

DRAFT MINUTES

WBPSG3, 14th November, Chirk Castle, Wrexham.

Attending		
Aethne Cooke (Providing paper)	AC	CCW
Andy Schofield on behalf of Chris Mills	AS	EAW
Claire Fowler (Guest speaker)	CF	WAG
David Cowley (Providing paper)	DC	LBAPs N Wales
David Parker (Providing Paper)	DP	CCW
Dori Gomez Levitt (Guest)	DG	ARENA
Dusitaporn Thomas	DT	Dwr Cymru
Eluned Edwards (Translator)		CCW
Emma Broad (Guest)	EB	Local LBAP officer
Gareth Ellis (Providing paper)	GE	LBAPs S Wales
Glenda Thomas	GT	FWAG
Hazel Drewett (Providing paper)	HD	CCW
Helen Buckingham	HB	National Trust
Joanna Robertson (Guest)	JR	CCW
Julia Korn	JK	WBP Secretariat
Juliet Hynes	JH	WBP Secretariat
Liz Howe (Providing paper)	LH	CCW
Michael Dunn	MD	WAG
Michelle Bromley	MBY	FCW
Mike Bruford	MB	Cardiff University
Niall Moore (Providing paper)	NM	Non-native species directorate
Nigel Ajax-Lewis (Providing paper)	NAL	Wildlife Trusts
Pete Charleston (Providing paper) (attending pm)	PC	N Wales Police
Robin Woodyatt	RW	WLGA/ Caerphilly council
Rod Gritten	RG	National Parks Wales
Roy Tapping (Providing paper)	RT	LRCs
Sean McHugh	SMH	WBP Secretariat
Steve Moon	SM	ALGE/ Bridgend
Tim Stowe	TS	RSPB
Tom Jones on behalf of Ieuan Roberts	TJ	Cymdeithas Edward Llwyd
Tom Lunn (Guest)	TL	ARENA
Tony Thomas (Guest speaker)	TT	Field Studies Council
Trevor Dines	TD	Plantlife
Tristan Hatton-Ellis (Providing paper)	THE	CCW

Apologies	
Adam Rowe	LRCs
Chris Mills	EAW
Cliff Benson	Sea Trust
David Bullock	National Trust
David Jenkins	Coed Cymru
Deborah Hill	WLGA/Swansea
Diana Reynolds	WAG/WBP
Graeme Hays	Swansea University
Graham Oliver	NMGW
Hannah Pitt	National Trust
Ieuan Roberts	Cymdeithas Edward Llwyd
Ioan Jenkins	BCTV
Jill Thomas (Guest speaker)	WAG
Lia Moutselou	WCMP
Nick Bialynicki-Birula	EAW
Peter Birch	British Waterways
Steven Atkins	NWSFC
Steven Bromley	Groundwork

Presentation 1: Real World Learning Partnership and Out of Classroom learning (Tony Thomas and Claire Fowler)

Documents on Out of Classroom Learning (OoCL) that may be of interest:

- Common understanding
- Making the most of first hand experiences of nature and the environment (a guidance document for teachers)
- A review of research on outdoor learning (undertaken by NFER/Kings College and published by the FSC – 2004)

Please contact the WBP secretariat if you would like either of the first two documents.

Discussion: Out of Classroom Learning

What is the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) doing, what does it need to do and what can WBP do to support the OoCL initiative?

TT- In Wales an action plan is being developed to take to WAG but there is currently no baseline measure of what is being carried out in terms of OoCL in Wales.

Need position statements from WAG on each of the identifiable barriers to OoCL.

Need to achieve quality learning, ESTYN needs to assess OoCL up to age 19.

1. Action for All: please let the WBP secretariat know if your organisation is involved in OoCL and we will pass the details on to Tony and Claire. It would help if you could class your OoCL sessions in the following units:

- up to three hours = one session or ½ day
- 3 to 6 hrs = two sessions or 1 day
- 6 hrs and above = 3 sessions or 1 and a half days.

OoCL is already incorporated into foundation learning, 50% learning supposed to be done outside. However in some cases is just standard lessons being carried out outside, others have developed proper tailored OoCL. Is a need to coordinate with the environmental education world to develop good OoCL schemes in order to make the most of the opportunity presented.

Comments were made on the difficulties in getting enough quality teachers in schools in the first place. Therefore difficult to get suitable teachers to take children outdoors to learn as to get the best out of the OoCL the teachers need to be interested themselves. TT agreed that OoCL needs to be an integrated part of teacher training.

TD suggested small NGOs like Plantlife would like to contribute but don't have the capacity for large scale involvement, however they would be happy to provide ideas and contacts. SM pointed out the value of working with Guide and Scout groups.

The One Wales document should provide an opportunity to link OoCL with wider aims of WAG such as activity for better health. One Wales has a lot of cross cutting commitments would be good to bring in ministers from both education and environment on OoCL. Jane Hutt already involved and going to launch the Common Understanding document in December.

Easy access to greenspace is important in OoCL, land use plans need to consider accessibility of schools to greenspace.

2. Action for All: anyone who would like any more info on OoCL or would like copies of the document please pass their names onto WBP secretariat.

Paper 4: Section 42 Welsh Priority list

Following the meeting a corrected version of the Section 42 list and other documents will be uploaded to the WBP website.

The steering group (SG) agreed that species that have come off the UK list, because the populations seem to be OK, should be added to a parked list where their status can be kept under review.

3. Action for All: comments on whether the proposed s42 list is satisfactory (reply to Liz Howe [l.howe@ccw.gov.uk]) by 30th Nov 2007.

Annex 3 contains some extra species and habitats that the task and finish (T&F) group would like to add to s42. They would like comments on whether these should be included. If you don't agree please say why.

- 4. Action LH: Liz will write introductory email to explain the consultation process, the secretariat will send out to the SG and wider partnership.**
- 5. Action for All: comments on Annex 3 inclusion of extra species and habitats, please return to Liz by Nov 30th 2007 [l.howe@ccw.gov.uk].**

ONLY COMMENTS ON WHAT IS ON THE LIST, NO NEW SUGGESTIONS PLEASE. THE TASK AND FINISH GROUP WILL PROVIDE THE CASTING VOTE IF NECESSARY.

The s42 T&F group are also identifying the top three actions to parallel the UK signposting process. When the s42 list is agreed it will be available as a pdf on the WAG and WBP websites and as a hard copy. The CCW species challenge fund will also publicise the list.

LBAP partnerships should at least identify species on the list within their area but it is up to them to choose which ones to take actions for. LRC in North Wales is using their system to show LBAPs if species on the list are present in their area, but the information is only as good as the records that have been provided to the LRC. Need more data on invertebrates and bryophytes in particular.

UK standing committee (UKSC) (item brought forward on agenda)

BAP list forward planning process: MD and DP recommended to the UKSC that the forward planning process needs to be sufficiently flexible to reflect the different ways that the 4 countries do things.

UKSC agreed that the recommendation to countries was to establish:

- Country habitat groups (each country will circulate a draft of what they expect the country groups to do).
- 6. Action Secretariat: add draft outline of Wales country habitat group plan to next SG agenda.**
 - Country experts for species; these will, if appropriate, elect lead partners. Country experts will agree targets for species.
 - Wider species actions, these should also apply to habitats and there should be lead actors within the country groups.

Also asked BRIG to look at the question of success criteria to assess the process. BRIG are also going to produce proposals for research and monitoring expectations.

- 7. Action Secretariat: circulate UKSC minutes to WBP when they become available.**

Paper 5: Wildlife Sites Guidance

Another draft (version 3) is in progress this will be available on the WBP website by Friday 16th Nov. Consultation period is extended until 14th Dec 2007. The guidance will then need to be signed off by the WBP-SG.

- 8. Action for All: consult on latest draft of Wildlife Sites Guidance, comments by 14th Dec 2007 please (to Nigel Ajax-Lewis: n.ajaxlewis@welshwildlife.org)**

TS – Well done for such a large piece of work

Paper 6: Outcome 21 T&F group (designated sites into favourable condition)

The communication/engagement plan has been drafted to coordinate the messages to be given both within and between organisations.

Decision point 2: The SG agreed that a communication plan was needed.

Decision point 3: Views on the key messages:

Need to add in the use of BARS to the proposed methods of communication

- 9. Action HD – add mention of BARS to proposed methods of communication**

Could add to third key messages bullet that every effort is being made so that funding will be in place to enable favourable condition to be achieved.

It was questioned whether the order of process is right; should make sure that actions and activities are clearly planned out – how we are going to achieve condition of the sites, then we should roll out and communicate the process? If actions are not ready then we should focus on the action plan rather than communication. However it was stated that the communication plan is for partners rather than private landowners at the moment. It is important that there are no surprises that everyone knows what is going on.

- 10. Action for All: send anymore comments on the Key Messages to Hazel Drewett (H.Drewett@ccw.gov.uk) by 7th Dec 2007.**

Decision point 4: WBP members to consider their role in contributing towards the targets in terms of planned action:- TS recommended a timetable for approaching organisations so that they can plan budgets around actions they might contribute to.

Decision point 5: WBP to consider how to resource the communications and engagement plan in both financial and staff time terms.

- 11. Action WAG and CCW: to consider decision point 5 at their next meeting.**

Decision point 6: Do not need to go overboard with branding but it would benefit from a better title than Outcome 21.

- 12. Action for All: any ideas for catchier title to Hazel by 7th Dec 2007 (H.Drewett@ccw.gov.uk)**

Paper 7: Non-Native Species (NNS)

Work that has been carried out at GB level includes: risk analysis mechanism has been set up for the last year. Stakeholder sounding board has been set up. Results of GB strategy consultation are available on NNS Secretariat website <http://www.nonnativespecies.org/>.

The next annual stakeholder forum is likely to be in Wales.

The SG agreed that non-native species needed to be an open ended working group rather than a T&F group as ongoing actions will be required over the coming years.

13. Action for All: if you would like to volunteer for the NNS working group please register your interest with the WBP Secretariat (Julia Korn [J.Korn@ccw.gov.uk]) by 30th Nov 2007. There has been a large amount of interest shown already and places will be limited, the members of the group will be selected from as wide a range of partners as possible.

In terms of the general aims and remit of the working group, it was suggested that a policy remit should also be added. It was also pointed out that it would be important not to lose the actions during translation into terms of reference for the group.

Action should be aided by including LBAP representatives on the working group as well as NGOs, Government organisations and representatives from industry. This would aid a coordinated Wales approach that could join up the local initiatives that are already in progress around Wales.

14. Action NM: NM to send JK contacts for industry representatives.

DP – stated the important continued role the NNS Secretariat has coordinating the efforts of the Country groups to prevent unnecessary duplication.

Due to the geographical attachment, Northern Ireland is combining with the Irish republic for NNS matters and Niall Moore also sits on the Irish steering group.

Paper 8: Natur Cymru

Natur Cymru is a product of the WBP and support is required from partners to increase the subscription base of this successful publication.

15. Action for All: please let the secretariat know (if you have not already done so) if you can sign up to any of the papers proposals for helping to increase subscribers to Natur Cymru.

DP- private subscriptions are probably due for an increase, as far as organisations are concerned, many staff have their own subscriptions and we wouldn't want to deter these by increasing the subscription relative to the company size.

Assistance with marketing is a key contribution from WBP members including staff time and advice in some cases.

Paper 9: Marine and Freshwater Actions

Proposed action 10 and 11: Running and standing waters – diffuse eutrophication

Some work is already going on in WAG, 2 pilot projects looking at how to extend catchment sensitive farming in terms of the rural development plan. There will be a consultation out on this next year.

The EAW and Dwr Cymru already have land holdings along rivers, the water related recreation strategy has already identified that large stretches of Welsh rivers are in public ownership. The SG considered that it was more appropriate to stress land management as the priority for action rather than land purchase.

16. Action THE: RSPB requested that they be deleted from the land purchase action.

Proposed action 12: Acidification and sedimentation from forestry

Forestry Commission Wales apologised for not having done anything about this action as yet, but offered to go into direct communication with CCW over this action.

Proposed action 13: Freshwater pearl mussels

Suggestion was made that more research was needed into the ecology of freshwater pearl mussels before they are put back into rivers

THE – trial and error is part of the research and monitoring within the reintroduction program. CCW are funding a PhD in respect of this (see Natur Cymru for details).

Proposed action 14: Crayfish

Comment about the use of pesticides to kill signal crayfish, reassurance was given that pesticides had only been used in ponds where signal crayfish had arisen, these ponds were isolated from the river.

Proposed action 15: Damage by livestock

Highlighted river Wye but actions could be extended to all rivers in Wales e.g. living rivers project and work done by EAW. River Basin Liaison Panels could be used to identify appropriate areas and partners. Should promote to/educate farmers about the careful management of sheep dip.

Proposed action 16: Topmouth Gudgeon

Ornamental NNS. Currently only in Llanelli pond, not high risk site but worried about possible transfer to other sites. **High priority to eradicate this fish while still only in one site.**

17. Action JK: Add NNS actions from the Marine and Freshwater actions to the work program of the Wales NNS working group.

Proposed action 17: Running waters, sheep dip

This particular formulation of sheep dip is particularly toxic to aquatic life if a recently dipped sheep wanders into a river. It is pollution by stealth, the invertebrates are killed

off by the sheep dip then there is bottom up collapse of the food chain. A working group is already looking into this including EA, WAG and manufacturers as partners.

18. Action AS: to find out name of working group and pass it on to SG.

Proposed action 18: Ponds

Add appropriate ponds where possible, many LBAP partnerships are already doing this. Action should be considered for inclusion in agri-environment scheme.

Proposed action 19: Exposed riverine sediments

No comments were made against this action.

Items 10 & 11: Presentation and discussion on the Marine Bill

Jill Thomas sent her apologies as she was unable to attend the meeting at short notice. The Draft of the Marine Bill will be published in Spring 2008, so could be discussed at WBPSG04 in February.

19. Action Secretariat: include Marine Bill discussion in SG4 agenda.

Paper 12: Wildlife Crime

Some UK Wildlife Crime priorities have little relevance for Wales therefore CCW together with the police have developed the set of Welsh priorities to be included in addition to the UK priorities in Wales.

Under the priority of illegal burning the police have a role but they suggest that WAG should be involved in this too.

North Wales Police recognise the police Authority's responsibility under the NERC Duty

MB – brought up the issue of Raptor DNA profiling and the possible removal of the schedule 4 requirement for captive raptor registration.

PC- Wales police are opposed to dropping Schedule 4 as DNA alone is not enough, you also need to be able to ascertain parentage.

If DEFRA make a decision to drop Schedule 4, the Assembly will consider the issue within Wales

20. Action for All: any views on the deletion of schedule 4 raptor registration to be collected by the secretariat and passed on to Mike Dunn to feed into WAG.

JNCC do not see NNS as a wildlife crime priority, police did suggest that the legislation needs tightening but this was not taken forward by JNCC/DEFRA.

- **Schedule 9 review (Wildlife and Countryside Act) and Section 50 review are currently out for consultation on DEFRA website.**

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/naturalenvironment.htm> *Closing date 31st Jan 2008*

The LRCs volunteered to speak at the Wildlife Crime Conference on behalf of the WBP (Will be Roy Tapping or Adam Rowe).

Paper 13: WBP Conference

WBP 2007 Conference was well received; preference from feedback forms was for a continuation of the 2 day format with incorporated workshops.

MD- reported that the UKSC had not decided whether the UK conference would go ahead next year and that it might well become a biennial event. WBP SG agreed that Wales should go ahead with the planned WBP conference on 10-11th September 2008 in Aberystwyth. If the situation changes and a UK conference is agreed it could be combined with the WBP event in Aberystwyth.

- 21. Action Secretariat SMH: confirm 10th-11th September conference booking with Aberystwyth.**
- 22. Action Secretariat: ask wider partnership for suggested conference themes (SG to send in any ideas by Friday 16th Nov).**

Paper 14: LBAP issues

LBAP Guidance for Wales converting Annex H of the Wales Biodiversity Framework into a catchy more reader friendly leaflet.

It was agreed that this was a good idea but that the SG should approve the final version before it goes out. The allocation of some WBP budget to the task was also agreed.

The Minister should be approached for a foreword to give the document greater official impact.

- 23. Action Secretariat JK: to draft the leaflet for WBP approval in spring 2008.**

Sustainable development

The issue of lack of biodiversity inclusion/awareness within the sustainable development agenda was raised. The Community Strategy document is currently out for consultation and is greatly lacking in biodiversity terms.

- 24. Action Secretariat JK: circulate community strategy consultation to WBP, consultation deadline 23rd Nov 2007**

ARENA used to advise on waste and energy but are now building biodiversity into their advice. They could be approached to supply a paper for SG4.

- 25. Action Secretariat: approach ARENA about SG4 paper**

JK- would be useful to know who are on what policy groups so that we can cover any gaps and develop core messages on Biodiversity

- 26. Action for All: please let the secretariat know what strategic policy groups you sit on and any other groups that you might be aware of so that we can check the coverage by WBP members.**

Paper 15: LRC issues

Wales has the first full network of LRCs in the UK but the paper pointed out the fragility of the network.

There is very little strategic coordination in the way that the LRCs are developing.

They need more data, it is important for everyone to share their data with the LRCs as the outputs are only as good as the data held.

27. Action RT: Roy to follow up with Dwr Cymru about records.

28. Action TS: to help RT (and other LRCs?) have access to RSPB data

Verification procedure needs to be in place as there is still huge confusion over what to do with records from individuals.

There is no new generation out there recording in a consistent manner and this is a huge worry for the future.

Item 16: UK standing committee (UKSC)

Remaining issues not covered earlier in the meeting were international issues and reporting. Note that the 2008 BAP reporting round (based on the old UK BAP list) will contribute to the UK 2010 report but if any updated indicators become available these can also be include in 2010 report.

Decision made that UK Biodiversity Partnership publication covers will continue to use the format of the recent “conserving biodiversity: the UK approach” document with 4 photographs, one from each country.

Item 17: Minutes and Actions

Should be Deb Spillards NMGW

Add confirmed dates for WBW (7-15th June 2008)

BARS update: correct that Loraiza Davies works for BARS and is only hosted by Natural England.

Action 1: ongoing

Action 18: Deferred to Feb meeting

Action 29: not going to produce detailed guidance until the BARS process has been agreed with organisations

Action 37: NERC duty, offer withdrawn

Action 40: reword to “Local Authority Performance Indicator (England) relates to management of local sites and is to be measured by LBAP Partnerships”

Action 41: recommending Mike Bruford as a Wales representative on BRAG - Secretariat to check progress this action

AOB:

Date of next meeting has been moved to 20th Feb 2008, the location is still Broneirion.

Date of July meeting suggested within first two weeks of July before the school holidays start. Should be a South Wales location this time.

29. Action for All: if anyone can offer a location for the July meeting, please contact the secretariat. The room needs to be able to accommodate up to 40 people.

Translation

30. Action for All: as no one chose to use the medium of Welsh at this meeting, please could Welsh speakers let the secretariat know if you would like the translator available at the next SG meeting in Feb.

Wales Mini NBN workshop takes place on 24th Jan in Mid Wales (contact: Helen Wilkinson, H.Wilkinson@ccw.gov.uk)

Purpose:

- To form a task and finish group of relevant individual's to develop and implement a strategy for access to environmental information resource for Wales for WBP partners to sign up to.

Aims

- Partners to gain and understand environmental information initiatives operating in Wales and UK
- Identify key (biodiversity information) partners in Wales and elsewhere in UK
- Agree a broad strategy for access to environmental information in Wales with buy-in from key partners
- Agree the next steps to be taken to implement the strategy
- Assess whether Wales would benefit from a mini NBN of key partners in Wales
- Agreement from partners to commit to shared standards and guidance for environmental data management in Wales
- Agreement from partners to commit to supporting and using environmental information sharing initiatives

Plantlife would like WBP endorsement and to use the WBP logo on the new red-list of vascular plants in Wales.

31. Action Plantlife TD: circulate red list of vascular plants in Wales to WBPSG so that they can check whether to approve WBP endorsement.

New forum in Wales – Plant Link Cymru – for plant and fungal organisations, includes lower plants strategy for Wales. Minutes from the last meeting are available (trevor.dines@plantlife.org.uk)

Biodiversity outcomes TS – suggested we should have reports on how well species or habitats are doing as a standing Item at WBP meetings so that everyone could get an idea of how successful biodiversity action in Wales is.

32. Action for All: It was agreed that a presentation on progress/outcomes for a particular taxonomic group should be provided at each Steering Group

meeting. Please let the secretariat know if you would be able to provide such a presentation and on what topic.