

Draft Minutes
Wales Biodiversity Partnership Steering Group Meeting WBPSG8
8th July 2009, The Environment Centre, Swansea.

Attendance

Nigel	Ajax-Lewis	NAL	WTW
Nick	Bialynicki-Birula	NBB	EAW
Stephen	Bladwell	SB	RSPB/WEL (rep. Tim Stowe)
Stephen	Bromley	SBr	Groundwork Wales
Aethne	Cooke	AC	CCW
Hazel	Drewett	HD	CCW
Gareth	Ellis	GE	South Wales LBAPs
Deb	Hill	DH	WLGA/City&County of Swansea
Juliet	Hynes	JH	WBP Support Team
Janet	Imlach	Jl	LRCs (paper) rep. Adam Rowe
Huw	Jones	HJ	Dwr Cymru
Julia	Korn	JK	CCW/WBP ST (Paper)
Chris	Lea	CL	WAG
Sean	McHugh	SMc	WBP Support Team
Steve	Moon	SM	ALGE
Charles	Morgan	CM	PONT (Paper)
Graham	Oliver	GO	National Museum of Wales
Gerry	Quarrell	GQ	WAG
Pippa	Rayner	PR	Bumblebee conservation trust (Presentation)
Diana	Reynolds	DR	WAG/WBP Support Team (Chair)
Joanna	Robertson	JR	CCW (Paper)
Jan	Sherry	JS	CCW
Dusi	Thomas	DT	Dwr Cymru
Glenda	Thomas	GT	FWAG
Chris	Tucker	CT	FCW
Kate	Williamson	KW	Natur Cymru & National Parks
Robin	Woodyatt	RW	WLGA

Apologies

Mike	Bruford	Cardiff University
David	Parker	CCW
Bill	Somerfield	WAG/WBP Support Team (paper)
Ian	Guildford	CCW/South Wales Police
Alan	Storer	WCMP
Cliff	Benson	Seatrtrust
Ioan	Jenkins	BTCV
David	Jenkins	Coed Cymru

David	Bullock	National Trust
Helen	Buckingham	National Trust
Adam	Rowe	LRCs (paper)

Paper 1: Welsh Water Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUD): Conservation and Biodiversity Strategy - Huw Jones (HJ) and Dusi Thomas (DT)

Huw Jones gave a short presentation on the strategy (PowerPoint will be made available to view with the papers of this meeting). Dwr Cymru is a not for profit organisation, so is able to look at water runoff problems differently from other water companies. They have developed a central campaign “Green Space Wales”, for which a briefing note is available (see <http://www.dwrcymru.com/English/News/displayNews.asp?ID=1308> for more details), Dusi Thomas handed out copies at the meeting.

A customer survey suggested that most people think that runoff is Dwr Cymru’s problem, however, it is something we all need to contribute to if we are to manage water in a sustainable way. Welsh Water are engaging with varied audiences to educate them on how to manage water on their property, e.g. green roof, rainwater collection, rain gardens.

Dwr Cymru suggests that 23 million should be invested by them in this process. They are developing 4 pilot studies (see map on presentation) WAG are developing complementary pilot studies. There are a number of good examples of such systems from around the world for example, planted traffic calming islands, planted pathway sides that can accept road runoff, Glenco School car park improvements, Green roof on the new Cardiff central library, developers creating marshes and ponds as SUDS, Malmo in Sweden where all downpipe flows are kept on the surface in channels in the pavements and the use of Swales (roadside ditches).

Dwr Cymru believe that at the root of the solution is awareness raising and bringing together of key stakeholders.

Discussion of the decision points of the paper:

Pollution in road runoff will mean that collected water will be polluted, what are the plans to deal with this? Plant systems in bio-retention areas can clean the flows. There is a balance to be struck between sustainably dealing with road runoff and making sure pollution is dealt with. Dwr Cymru are looking at running trials, using examples from the USA, to improve water quality. Part of the process is also to consider who would be responsible for maintaining these systems to ensure water quality is maintained.

Will areas for these schemes be prioritised in line with River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs)? Not at the moment, but DT took note of this comment so it will be looked into.

Will Dwr Cymru be consulting Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) coordinators to include biodiversity in these schemes at a local level? Yes, Dwr Cymru would like to involve LBAPs in the pilot projects and will be looking at the Wales BAP to see how Dwr Cymru can be of help.

Have Dwr Cymru consulted any professional institutes about this scheme, or looked at including it in any University courses? Articles have been placed targeting technical and professional groups and part of the project team includes a number of Universities although they are looking at involving more of the Welsh Universities. The scheme is not yet at the stage where it can be included in the University curriculum.

Agricultural land obviously produces runoff, has there been any linkage with Glastir to develop flood mitigation/management on agricultural land? Only in the respect that it is a source of runoff and so is included as one of the pathways for water to enter the drainage system. Dwr Cymru are not currently focussing on tackling the agricultural industry. Chris Lea mentioned that WAG has been working with the environment agency (EA) in this respect.

It was agreed that it would be of benefit to establish a clear baseline of biodiversity for each pilot area and to develop a monitoring program as part of each project. There is some scope for working with local authorities on catchment areas outside the pilot areas.

ACTION 1. Huw Jones, Dusi Thomas to provide support team (Sean McHugh) with a list of Pilot Projects so that they can provide LBAP coordinator contacts for these areas to secure biodiversity baseline and monitoring.

ACTION 2. Support Team (Juliet Hynes) to put Dusi Thomas and Huw Jones in contact with Natur to enable feed-in to professional courses.

ACTION 3. Diana Reynolds to mention link between SUD strategy and RBMP to colleagues at meeting on 9th July.

ACTION 4. Support team (all) to ask LBAPs to provide info on hotspot problem areas that could be potential pilot areas.

ACTION 5. Support team (Julia Korn) to provide Dusi Thomas and Huw Jones with Wales Ecosystem Group contacts for habitat and species work.

Paper 2: Future of BAP: Governance and Resourcing – Aethne Cooke (AC)

The new approach for delivering BAP in Wales builds on the previous BAP structure (including WBP and the 24 LBAP partnerships) through the establishment of a new layer of expertise at a Wales level. The new Wales Ecosystem Groups (ESGs), Species Expert Group (SEG) and Biodiversity Policy Group (BPG) and the Wales Species Lead partners aim to use Welsh expertise to improve communication, guidance and advice enabling more focused and coordinated action on the ground. There has been a lot of enthusiasm and commitment for these groups especially from the voluntary sector. High level commitment from the strategic organisations is particularly important to secure success.

DR confirmed the Welsh Assembly Government's (WAG) commitment to the first decision point and their full recognition of the process. WAG expects the groups to be the primary source of advice on what action needs to be taken for biodiversity in Wales. For example, the mechanism for these groups to feed into the Glastir higher level scheme has been established and there will be further opportunities to feed into the lower level scheme.

The Environment Agency and Forestry Commission reiterated their support for the approach. NBB suggested that it wasn't just the statutory agencies, but also other large organisations such as the National Trust who need to consider how they will implement biodiversity action through the new structure.

The new role for the WBP, as defined in the New BAP Mechanism document, was agreed. JR asked what mechanisms were in place to ensure compliance. DR currently has one to one meetings with the 3 major statutory organisations (CCW, EAW and FCW) and it was suggested that she could extend these to include other larger organisations. WAG is also working with the WLGA to make sure biodiversity becomes part of all scrutiny committees.

There still seems to be some confusion amongst regional staff (of the larger organisation) whom are unsure whether they should be engaging with the Ecosystem Groups and/or Local Biodiversity Partnerships.

Attention was drawn to action 46 from SG7: All to remind regional/local officers that they need to be involved with the LBAPs and should reinstate communications where they may have lapsed due to staff changes (contact the WBP support team if any LBAP contact details are needed).

CCW are setting out their expectation in a paper to their Directors Team and it is likely that other organisations have been doing similarly. JK and JS are also running a workshop at the WBP Conference on September 16th to bring together some of the new Chairs of the Wales groups and partners on LBAP Partnerships. The aim of the workshop will be to develop ways of working between those who deliver action on the ground through LBAP partnerships and the new Wales groups. Bigger organisations are committed to getting regional officers to the ESG meetings.

WAG departments are regularly reminded of their NERC duty and are currently being asked for reports on how they are responding to the duty. Consideration is being given to having biodiversity champions within each WAG department. Biodiversity is also covered through the policy gateway and WBP members are invited to go on these gateways when they occur. Forestry Commission Wales (FCW) are effectively a WAG department so also take all their policies through the policy gateway.

Budgets and Funding, the current commitments:

- All the big public sector organisations provide staff time and travel and subsistence
- Arrangements are in place for sharing/ booking rooms
- Travel and subsistence is provided for unpaid volunteers (could expand this to smaller NGOs?)
- Books and Materials (up to £50 per year) are provided for recorders in Wales (this not used that widely yet and could be expanded?)
- We are currently making arrangements for a German student coming to work in the support team, for 3 months, to help NGOs populate the Biodiversity Action Reporting System (BARS).

GT commented that FWAG (small not for profit company) don't have the money to fund an officer to attend the meetings so can't support the ecosystem groups as much as they would like. Unfortunately, it was felt that the WBP budget would not stretch to staff time but it was agreed that travel and subsistence payments might be extended to small NGOs and not for profit organisations.

The steering group agreed that we needed to assess the scale of extra funding needed for T&S to bring people to the full range of WBP meetings. We should also identify which organisations are most in need of assistance in this respect. If we can sort out the situation within the budget then great, if not then this issue will be brought back to the next SG meeting.

ACTION 6. Organisations in need of assistance to attend any WBP meetings, inform Sean Mchugh (s.mchugh@welshwildlife.org)

ACTION 7. Support Team (Sean McHugh) to assess what the scale of extra funding would be needed.

We also need to look at what organisations are not yet involved in WBP that should be involved. This will be addressed in part by the WBP membership review (WBP have to advise Minister Jane Davidson on WBPSG membership by end of November).

ACTION 8. Julia Korn to check the list of organisations that originally expresses an interest in ecosystem groups and if they are not attending, talk to them to identify the barriers.

ACTION 9. Diana Reynolds will feed the results of this into the membership review and will be contacting various organisations to agree their input.

A small number of regional BAP workshops will take place in November. EA Wales, FCW and CCW expressed their commitment to getting their staff to attend these workshops.

ACTION 10. Diana Reynolds, Nick Birula, Chris Tucker and Hazel Drewett to encourage regional staff to attend November BAP workshops.

ACTION 11. Support Team (Julia Korn) to produce short note of what financial support we are offering for which meeting attendees and circulate to all group chairs.

ACTION 12. Julia Korn to make sure that T&S funding support is included in the Wales groups way of working protocol.

The Outcome 21 project is beginning to look at the bigger players, in terms of land holdings, that are currently outside the WBP.

ACTION 13. Nick Birula to supply list of suggested names (large landholdings) to Diana Reynolds to feed into Outcome 21 project.

Paper 3: NERC Duty visits progress report and future needs – Joanna Robertson (JR)

JR was tasked with organising visits to each local authority as a follow up to the 3 workshops that were attended by the Minister. The meetings were themed around: what is biodiversity, what do we do about it and where do our priorities lie. Information from the meetings was collected under the headings taken from ALGE's maintaining the momentum document.

JR has already been contacted by some local authorities who want to arrange their follow up meetings.

It was agreed that the follow up meetings will be lead by JK, SMc and JH.

A training event for biodiversity champions has been organised for the 2nd Oct at Brecon Beacons National Park, run by GE and Margret Underwood (BBNP Biodiversity Champion and professional trainer).

ACTION 14. All – encourage biodiversity champions to attend this event.

ACTION 15. Support team to put in place annual visits with immediate effect.

The SG questioned whether biodiversity champions and NERC duty commitment work should be rolled out to all public sector bodies. It should be possible to expand this from the work that DR is doing within WAG. A start is also being made with this years NERC Duty course at Plas which is targeted at public sector bodies. The case studies on the WBP website are intended to cover the public sector bodies within WBP.

Bill Somerfield is updating the biodiversity Duty implementation plan.

ACTION 16. Bill Somerfield share updated biodiversity Duty implementation plan with Joanna Robertson.

Is there any evidence from the meeting that a particular local authority (LA) approach had made any difference? There have been a number of cases where resources have been increased or made longer term as a direct result of the meetings but the main difference seems to be a reduction in isolation, both for LBAP officers working across all departments and for dedicated planning ecologists.

ACTION 17. Joanna Robertson to provide good practice case studies to inform other LAs.

The first step was to have staff in place, we should measure what impact this is having on the LA dealing with biodiversity and we should promote the guidance that WBP produced for local planning authorities.

DR reported that TAN5 is nearly ready to be sent to Ministers and will hopefully be with them before the Assembly goes to recess.

ACTION 18. Diana Reynolds to make sure that awareness of WBP planning guidance is included in the letter that will go out with TAN5

JR suggested that the minister could recommend that there be shadow champions.

GE provided some comments on the paper from the LBAP officers; that they did not agree with the “feeling empowered and supported” statement. It was suggested that it should be reworded to “some of whom feel empowered and supported” as it was still an ongoing process in many cases. It was also agreed that it is a two way process and that the LBAP coordinators and Ecologist also need to put themselves forward and remind the champions that they are there. They also need to come back to the support team if they are having problems so that the support team can assist.

It was also pointed out that WAG failures to respond to the NERC duty (which were identified by some LAs) were a disincentive for council officers to commit to the NERC duty. All such cases should be promptly drawn to the support team’s attention.

ACTION 19. Joanna Robertson to provide a short statement of Key messages from the NERC meetings by email for the Steering Group’s opinions.

ACTION 20. All to respond to Joanna in order to develop these into a set of key messages suitable for public use.

Do we share the information, gathered from these meetings, with DEFRA? It was agreed that we should allow DEFRA to collect their own information first, but that JR could share the WBP paper and raw data with them (though no names) if asked.

ACTION 21. All public sector bodies to contribute returns to the DEFRA Entec survey on NERC Duty implementation.

Paper 4: Traffic lights/UK audit committee recommendations – Diana Reynolds (DR)

The original traffic lights workshop from WBPSG6 focussed on the key things that we should do for biodiversity. All of the actions in the table from this paper have been taken forward to some extent. NBB suggested that the work from this paper should be included in the WBP work-plan so that it can be easily reviewed.

ACTION 22. Support team (Sean McHugh) to include actions form traffic lights exercise in WBP work-plan

The group was asked how we should tackle 2010 and the targets. Things are beginning to happen at an EU level. Principles have also been agreed at England-Wales level and we are waiting to see whether Scotland and NI are committing to this too. DR will be looking back at the Wales Environment Link (WEL) documents relating to 2010 and WEL will be running a workshop at the conference in September.

ACTION 23. Diana Reynolds to share WEL meeting outcomes with WBP Steering Group.

CCW has commissioned a Wales report from the 2008 reporting round.

ACTION 24. All to send Julia Korn any requests for things that you would like to get out of the Wales report.

It was agreed that it was important to identify where we have failed and why, and to identify whether we can address these reasons in Wales or whether they need to be solved at European level. It was agreed that the steering group would do this via a workshop at the November or February steering group meeting.

In terms of halting damage to biodiversity, JR questioned whether we are making best use of SEA, EIA and cross compliance. GT indicated that cross compliance and Tir Cynnal were effective and CL commented that they are looking at cross compliance as part of the heath check and Glastir.

ACTION 25. Chris Lea feed back cross compliance work to ecosystem groups.

ACTION 26. Support team (Julia Korn) to ask ecosystem groups for examples of where cross compliance has worked and not worked.

SB asked whether the weakness in the SEAs etc. is due to problems with the guidance or with implementation. It was thought that it was implementation rather than weak guidance.

ACTION 27. Diana Reynolds and Hazel Drewett to encourage increased publicity and application of the Biodiversity Guidance for SEA.

CL raised the point that there would be challenges to biodiversity if food security (due to climate change) resulted in a push for even higher intensity food production in some areas. The single farm payment currently has no commitment to biodiversity in it.

Paper 5: Issues from LBAPs – Gareth Ellis (GE)

It was reported that Hazel Drewett and David Parker had already agreed that there should be a standardised statement, within CCW comments on Habs Regs issues, indicating that the local authority will need to comment on the section 42 habitats and species issues. HD is taking this to the casework implementation group who will put together some appropriate wording for CCW planning application response letters. It was suggested that it should be worded such that it called on their responsibility to enhance and protect before mentioning risks of damage. A link would also be included to the WBP planning guidance note. Timescale for implementation; the paragraph to be in place no later than October 2009.

ACTION 28. Joanna Robertson to send the paragraphs, already being used by CCW staff to Hazel Drewett.

ACTION 29. Aethne Cooke to send line to Hazel Drewett about the circumstances under which CCW would object or not.

ACTION 30. Hazel Drewett to send drafted paragraph to Gareth Ellis to check over with other LBAP officers.

Paper 6: Local Record Centre (LRC) Issues – Janet Imlach (JI)

There are still gaps in LA support and the LRCs are worried that there is still no financial support from WAG. Individual departments would like Service Level Agreements (SLAs) but it is difficult for them to secure funding. It would be helpful to get Biodiversity Champions into WAG departments as they could act as point of contact for LRCs and promote LRCs to funders.

WLGA is enabling LAs to understand that LRCs can support more than just the planning department, so funding should come centrally from finance rather than individual depts.

ACTION 31. Diana Reynolds and Chris Lea to talk to Clive Bates (new head of sustainable futures) to take a similar process forward in WAG.

ACTION 32. Diana Reynolds to get an update on progress from WLGA on how their work to support LRC use within LAs.

The LRCs are very happy with the SLA, for data usage, with EAW; the more partners they have on board the more services they can provide to everybody.

At the moment, out of the large organisations, LRCs are only receiving data from CCW but are in talks with EAW and FCW and RSPB. Some of these negotiations are difficult (e.g. where data is held in number of areas) and have been ongoing for years in some cases.

ACTION 33. All to investigate how barriers to providing data to the NBN and LRCs can be overcome in our own organisations.

CL reported that there is currently a large scale project to coordinate all of the GIS data in WAG. CL is coordinating this for sustainable futures. An initial session with FCW, CCW and EAW to discuss GIS data sharing is already in place and could be used to expand data sharing links to cover the LRCs. This work could also tie in with the Wales Environmental Information Forum (WEIF).

ACTION 34. Chris Lea set up session to discuss GIS data sharing with WAG, FCW, CCW, EAW and LRCs

ACTION 35. Diana Reynolds to put Claire Horton (from CL's team) in touch with WEIF

ACTION 36. LRCs to circulate a reminder of the services that they can provide

LRCs are also working on IT strategy to provide Wales wide data sets and web services to include NBN data.

GO commented that it is very expensive to get old data into a computer format. Next year the National Museum of Wales will have open access on their website to all section 42 species information available in their collection. When the section 42 species are completed it would be useful if WBP could suggest which taxonomic groups they should prioritise next.

ACTION 37. Graham Oliver to talk to Stephen Bladwell to enable the Species Expert Group to provide prioritisation by taxonomic groups.

ACTION 38. Chris Lea and Diana Reynolds to look into whether Agri-environment monitoring data could be passed to LRCs and link this with the existing indicators work.

Presentation: Status of Bumblebees in Wales – Bumblebee Conservation Trust (BBCT), Pippa Rayner (PR)

DR briefly updated the SG on the status of the projects that were funded as a result of previous taxonomic group talks.

Pippa Rayner the BBCT conservation officer for England and Wales gave a presentation on the status of Bumblebees in Wales. The PowerPoint presentation of this talk is available on the WBP website with the papers from this meeting.

One of the 7 UK BAP species has already become extinct so urgent action is needed to prevent further species losses. The Brown Banded Carder bee has key populations in Wales, the Red Shanked Carder bee is just clinging on in Wales and the Shrill Carder, which is one of the 2 rarest bumblebees, has 3 of the 6 UK populations in Wales. The Shrill Carder mapping project is mapping where the shrills are found presently and where their populations could potentially be helped to expand to through habitat management. Bumblebee conservation is tied in with wildflower conservation as they need large areas (10-12km²) to forage, it's also key to have flowers between April and September.

BBCT would like to see an increase in existing habitat safeguarded through recognition as bumblebee sites within site designations. It is also important to get actions into agri-environment schemes. PR is already talking to WAG about Glastir.

ACTION 39. WAG/SEG (Stephen Bladwell and Kevin Austin) to include Bumblebee layers in higher level scheme

ACTION 40. Julia Korn (J.Korn@ccw.gov.uk) to provide Pippa Rayner with contact details for relevant ecosystem group chairs and CCW invertebrate specialist, Mike Howells.

ACTION 41. Pippa Rayner to provide Juliet Hynes (J.Hynes@welshwildlife.org) with a list of Bee locations so that she can be put in touch with relevant LBAP coordinators.

ACTION 42. Stephen Bladwell to contact Pippa Rayner regarding establishing a suitable link for SEG meetings.

Gardens are key stronghold for the commoner bees and planting of appropriate flowers should be encouraged. Also encourage seeding of flowers in road verges, e.g. clover rather than ryegrass seeding of new verges; the Welsh beekeepers association are encouraging this. There are Co-op farms working with bumblebees in England proving the scope for links in with food industry.

ACTION 43. Pippa Rayner to talk to Len Wyatt (Wales Trunk roads agency) about including bee provisions in their Trunk roads BAP (the TREBAP).

ACTION 44. Glenda Thomas to put Pippa Rayner in contact with Welsh Beekeepers Association

ACTION 45. Hazel Drewett put Pippa Rayner in touch with CCW invertebrate specialist

ACTION 46. Charles Morgan put Pippa Rayner in touch with MOD at Pendine

Identification of bumblebees is not as easy as it looks. There are plans for ID training including PR being back in Wales this summer doing some bee walks.

ACTION 47. Pippa Rayner to give summer events details to Sean (s.mchugh@welshwildlife.org) to put on WBP website.

AC questioned whether those bees closest to extinction should be on Schedule 5 of the wildlife and countryside act.

ACTION 48. Pippa Rayner find out whether work going on to get bumblebees closest to extinction on Schedule 5

ACTION 49. Diana Reynolds to check whether JNCC doing anything about bumblebees on Schedule 5

Paper 6: Ecosystem Services: The programme map – Chris Lea (CL)

Outside Wales, the UK government Chief Scientist has set up two foresight projects on issues indirectly relating to Ecosystems: 1) land use project, 2) food security project <http://www.foresight.gov.uk/index.asp>.

CL currently involved in a stock take of where we are with ecosystem work at Wales and UK level, including looking at links with the UK and the rest of Europe. There will be devolved country reports from this. The second phase will be looking at managing ecosystems at a UK level.

Glastir is to be an agri-environment scheme that allows a wider collection of water and climate change issues to be tackled.

Wales has an Ecosystems Group, Chaired by CCW which is pulling together matrix data for Wales Ecosystems. The group is also piloting work linked to the Cambrian Mountains Initiative which is identifying catchments to develop ecosystem services work (links in with the Wildlife Trust's Pumlumon project). FCW also have representatives on Wales Ecosystems Group.

We agreed that we should establish a link between the Wales Ecosystems Group and the Wales BAP ESGs and WEIF.

ACTION 50. Chris Lea will attend next ecosystem group chairs meeting (currently scheduled 8th Oct) to establish these links.

ACTION 51. Diana Reynolds to put Chris Lea in contact with Martin Parkinson and Helen Wilkinson who are leading WEIF.

CL is also working more closely with DEFRA to influence research spending in Wales from DEFRA joint England-Wales research budget. Wales ESGs are working to identify priority areas for research on BAP species and habitats in Wales, can feed this back to DEFRA through CL.

ACTION 52. ESG chairs to feed research priorities back to DEFRA through Richard Evans (in Chris Lea's team)

Is a link being made between ecosystem services and wellbeing? This is being picked up and WAG is setting up a strengthened office of social science to take this aspect further.

There are currently a range of different interpretations of ecosystem services from different organisations. CL welcomed the fact that the policy group are planning to looking into this to develop a joint interpretation of the concept.

ACTION 53. Policy group (Diana Reynolds) to develop a clear definition of ecosystem services and feed this back to the steering group and to Chris Lea

Spatial planning (SP) work also has ecosystem links; looking to roll out SP work from an ecosystem perspective.

There is a lot of work going on about how you value ecosystems and biodiversity. We need to consider how biodiversity gain is built in, where a habitat is managed for something other than biodiversity, but should also look at it the other way round; in some cases biodiversity will have far greater economic value especially in the longer term.

ACTION 54. Chris Lea to look into provision of a coordination portal on this topic, possibly via the Environment Hub

ACTION 55. Hazel Drewett to ensure that biodiversity representatives are included in the Wales Ecosystems group.

We are beginning to increase coordination between EAW, CCW and FCW on science and could extend this to, e.g., a science strategy, so that they can identify science research priorities to take to DEFRA.

Often we look for delivery through agri-environment, what are the aspirations for Glastir? There is not enough money to do everything so the biggest challenge is to

prioritise biodiversity actions, with water, carbon and organic farming included in the scheme, the money will be spread more thinly this time. If Wales becomes warmer and wetter it may become more of a bowl for food production for the UK and Europe, this all needs to be considered very carefully.

ACTION 56. Dai Harris to send Julia Korn the draft program plan and details of how he wants to get the ESG chairs involved so that Julia can update the chairs as soon as possible in preparation for their meeting in October.

Paper 7: Lichenology Project: potential for expansion into other areas – Diana Reynolds (DR)

About 24 people have been identified for training which is focussed on BAP action or BAP information gathering. KW suggested that we check whether there is a good geographical spread of trainees and also inform the LBAP officers who, in their area, is doing this training.

ACTION 57. Bill Somerfield to check geographical spread of lichenologist trainees and inform LBAPs.

ACTION 58. SEG (Stephen Bladwell) to provide Bill Somerfield with the next two or three taxonomic groups for which we might attempt similar schemes

Natur have more money available for training that needs to be used this year. JR also suggested that Keep Wales Tidy have identified training needs.

ACTION 59. Diana Reynolds to ensure that Juliet Hynes has latest contact details so that she can follow up this link with Natur.

GO questioned what knowledge we have of people in Wales that do have expertise? The Linnaean Society are going to promote training in identification and taxonomic skills. We should also differentiate between those people who can identify species and those that do taxonomic research.

In Wales we have been identifying lead partners for BAP species but there is no list of expertise, we need to identify where gaps and risks are.

The LRCs provide training for recorders, which can be extended to practitioners, e.g. CCW staff, Ecologists etc where funding can be provided for people to come to courses.

ACTION 60. Graham Oliver and Joanna Robertson to send Diana Reynolds paperwork on what was done previously to identify expertise in Wales.

ACTION 61. Chris Lea and Julia Korn to encourage the Environment Hub to look into this issue

ACTION 62. All- let Graham Oliver know any training initiatives that are going on so that he can pass them to the Linnaean Soc.

At this point in the meeting Gerry Quarrel, the Head of Nature, Access and Marine Unit in WAG, introduced himself. Gerry replaced Mike Dunn. He will be chairing the

first day of the WBP conference and stated how much WAG values the input it gets from the WBP.

Papers to Note:

A: WBP Planning and Budgeting

The group agreed the budget and the usual approach to Wales Biodiversity Week, the dates for which were decided to be 5th-13th June.

The WBP Conference booking form will be available on the website soon. We will put a link on the actions for all from this meeting.

UK BAP conference 7-8th Oct will also be included in actions for all.

Location and date for 2010 WBP conference suggested as Bangor or Wrexham, dates chosen; 15-16th Sept 2010.

ACTION 63. All – any suggestions for WBW events to Sean McHugh (s.mchugh@welshwildlife.org)

ACTION 64. Support team (Sean McHugh) to select suitable location in North Wales for 2010 conference

B: New Biodiversity Funding Mechanisms

The aim is to establish the fund by early 2010, with a possible pilot scheme in the Autumn 2009.

There was discussion that the scope; bullet 2, should include habitats and species. Even though the majority of work for species should be carried out through habitat work, there would be exceptions and these should not be excluded from the funding mechanism.

ACTION 65. Joanna Robertson to change the second bullet in the scope to say ‘species and habitat targets’, add SEG in the fourth issue point, replace ‘recruitment’ with ‘involvement in the second bullet under scheme management and replace ‘prescriptions’ with ‘outcomes’ in the sixth bullet in this section..

Could we could build into this scheme funding for the BAP structure? Possibly but we ought to complete actions 6 and 7 above first and then discuss further if needed.

It was agreed to establish a small working group to take this work forward, with membership of:

Diana Reynolds (key meetings)

Nick Birula (EA)

Member of RSPB (Stephen Bladwell to confirm who)

Member of CCW finance team (Hazel Drewett to confirm who)

Someone from local delivery (Kate Williamson to confirm who)

Charles Morgan (on the ground view).

ACTION 66. Hazel Drewett and Joanna Robertson to arrange a first meeting of the T&F group as soon as possible.

SB asked whether it was worth exploring biodiversity offsets to assist LRCs, as they provide data to the construction industry. DR replied that a number of things are going on, e.g. the climate change commission looking at community benefits. A small group is being established to look at this in Wales.

ACTION 67. Juliet Hynes, add offsets/climate change commission group to list of future agenda items.

C: Invasive Non-Native Species Action Plan and Exceptions report.

This is a redraft of the plan which includes the changes made at the last meeting. The format was approved and the T&F group will now pull out the gaps and issues and bring them back to a subsequent SG meeting as and when appropriate.

ACTION 68. INNS Group (Bill Somerfield) to keep action plan updated on the WBP website.

D: WBP Input to DEFRA Biodiversity and Agriculture Research Programme

It was agreed that it would be useful for WBP to link into this work.

ACTION 69. Julia Korn to ensure that ecosystem group chairs are provided with contact details for Richard Evans (WAG technical services division)

ACTION 70. Ecosystem group chairs to feed research priorities to WAG technical services division on regular basis (times to be arranged)

ACTION 71. Richard Evans to use the information received from ESG chairs to fill in gaps in table (Annex 1 of this paper)

ACTION 72. Julia Korn to invite Richard Evans to the ecosystem group chairs meeting.

E: West Wales Grazing Animals Scheme – Wales wide projects from the ESGs

The SG approved the concept of this grazing scheme which will be trialled in Carmarthenshire.

ACTION 73. Charles Morgan to take this pilot forward in parallel with CCW considering wider application

F: Progress with Biodiversity Action Reporting System (BARS) use in Wales and an update of NERC duty case studies.

Now that we have a strategic approach to the use of BARS in Wales we need to get as many organisations using it as possible.

ACTION 74. All WBP members to contact Juliet Hynes email: j.hynes@welshwildlife.org if they want to discuss BARS use, or arrange any BARS training.

ACTION 75. All Wales Ecosystem Groups, the Wales Policy Group and Species Expert Group please identify a member who will be responsible for

maintaining their data on BARS and provide their name to Juliet Hynes email: j.hynes@welshwildlife.org who will coordinate training.

ACTION 76. Partners, who have not already done so, provide a NERC Duty case study for distribution on WBP website (contact S.mchugh@welshwildlife.org).

Wales Coastal & Marine Partnership Update

Alan Storer has replaced Lia Moutselou. He is currently working on a work plan which will be made available as soon as it is completed. The main objective of the plan is an ecologically coherent network of marine areas. Their website will be updated to reflect the new work plan. With Alan's support, Steve Moon will be the WBP link at the WCMP meeting in October and Alan will attend the next WBPSG meeting in November. The marine and coastal ESGs can also feed into the WCMP through SM as he attends both ESGs.

ACTION 77. Diana Reynolds to put Alan Storer and Steve Moon in touch to enable these links to be put in place.

Update from the UK Standing Committee

DR reported that, at the last meeting, they adopted the global plant strategy and approved the new structures and relationships between the UK and country BAP groups.

Minutes from the last Meeting

The minutes were approved with these two minor changes:
Change Steve Moon to ALGE representative not WLGA.
Add Deb Hill to the list of Apologies.

AOB

Natur Cymru would like to bring a paper to the next SG meeting.

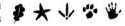
Sadly the ARENA network has gone into liquidation, the Business T&F group will bring a paper to one of the next two SG meetings to set out their way forward following this news.

RW noted that there is a large river mayfly hatchery on the Wye this year.

NBB – the Environment Agency UK now have a new Corporate Strategy and Chief Executive: Paul Leinster

ACTION 78. All please comment on the new EA strategy, deadline 17th July <http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/aboutus/work/35708.aspx>

Making the connections North Wales – a decision over whether to recommend a collaborative or shared services approach should be used, will be made at the meeting of chief executives in July. DR and CCW are involved. There is already a lot of useful collaboration taking place between North Wales biodiversity staff.



ACTION 79. KW send list of outcome based examples of North Wales collaborations to DR before the meeting.

Current consultations are listed on the Actions for All note from this SG meeting.

DEFRA climate change impacts program meeting 24th July

ACTION 80. WBP are looking for a volunteer to attend this meeting on 24th July, if interested please contact Diana Reynolds.

Date of Next meeting:

Thursday 12th November North Wales (Wrexham, venue to be confirmed, to include a social event the evening before)

Wednesday 10th February, South Wales (venue to be confirmed)

-----meeting ends-----