

Title

Business & Biodiversity – a way forward

Background/Progress

In July 2008 a subgroup of the Wales Biodiversity Partnership (WBP) was established to look at how to engage the business sector with the work of WBP. In the first instance, a paper was prepared by Arena Network Wales and Wildlife Trusts Wales with a number of potential ways in which business could engage with WBP (and vice versa).

As a result, WBP steering group asked for the sub-group to meet including business representatives and take this further. That meeting was held in November 2008 and a number of action points were agreed. These focused around developing the WBP business area to act as an information point and signposting service for businesses seeking to engage with biodiversity action. There were further actions relating to using the Arena Network regional groupings to get more businesses engaged with biodiversity work.

Some case studies have been put up on the website as has the introductory section. Other actions have been shelved with the demise of Arena Network. WBP are currently looking to incorporate much of the text into the new WBP business and biodiversity area.

The work done to date has had a useful output: we have identified that business would like a central information portal on engaging with biodiversity. WBP website is on the way to delivering that: providing information on drivers, case studies and links to WBP members who provide services for business.

However the sub-group has not tackled a number of key areas. There is still no formal mechanism for engaging businesses with WBP – no ‘business members’ as such. There are also very few businesses who see the merit in engaging with biodiversity issues.

Plan/Proposals

These fall under two categories: product development and marketing.

Product: WBP to continue to develop the website area to provide a useful resource to business.

Marketing: with the closure of Arena Network Wales we are without their excellent network of business advisors who could have been directing people to the website. Therefore, we propose that the business & biodiversity sub-group develop a series of opportunities for marketing the website to businesses. One example came from the Business & Biodiversity workshop in the recent Wales Biodiversity Partnership conference where it was

highlighted that there are very few initiatives actively encouraging business to engage with biodiversity. We are currently scoping the potential for running a series of business breakfasts to look at NERC duties and other regulatory requirements relating to biodiversity that businesses should be considering. The group will look at zero or low cost options for raising the profile of biodiversity and WBP through existing networks.

Decision Points

1. To endorse WBP developing a central information hub on drivers, products and services relating to biodiversity for business.
2. To endorse WBP business & biodiversity subgroup focusing on raising biodiversity up the business agenda, rather than seeking to create a business membership category for WBP at this time.
3. To agree that WBP will be non-partisan in its promotion of its members products and services.
4. To volunteer to provide information on products and services and case studies (ready formatted as .pdf files) for the WBP website on business engagement.
5. To volunteer to be part of the business & biodiversity sub group looking at marketing biodiversity. Existing members need to confirm they are happy to continue.

NB – current members of the business and biodiversity sub group:

Bangor University (Synnwyr Busnes/Business Sense)

CCW

Coed Cymru

DE&T

EAW

Natur

Shared Earth Trust

Visit Wales

WBP

Wildlife Trusts Wales

WLGA