

Wales Coastal Ecosystem Group Priority Habitat Meeting 7th Dec, 2010 Aberystwyth

Attendees: Peter Rhind –Chair (CCW); Mike Howe (CCW); Duncan Ludlow (CCW); Jan Sherry (CCW –by VC); Matty Murphy (CCW); Chris Wynne (Wildlife Trusts Wales); Sean McHugh (WBP)

Apologies: Mark Winder (Swansea City Council/S Wales LBAPs); Rod Jones (CCW); Quentin Grimley (CCW); Mike Bailey (CCW); David Cowley (Anglesey CC/ N Wales LBAPs); Richard Brassington (EAW); Richard Ellis (National Trust).

Peter welcomed all to the meeting.

Priority Mapping

Jan Sherry (CCW) joined by teleconference and talked the group through the Priority habitat mapping process (see attached presentation). The critical Level as far as the CEG is concerned is Level 3 which the group is responsible for in setting priority actions. A synopsis of priority actions for each habitat is required and we can look at the work carried out by the Lowland Grassland & heathland Group (LGLHG).

ACTION: Peter Rhind to review synopsis of LHLG and produce Coastal synopsis for each project once priorities are finalised.

In brief, the Priority Habitat Mapping exercise draws in GIS and survey information to create 3 levels of spatial expression outlined below. Much of the work is designed to feed into the NEF and a first pass of all habitats is expected by January. The work will also be critical for guiding actions to deliver BAP in Wales.

LEVEL 1

Priority habitat distribution, habitat Resource Base and habitat networks.

Will incorporate Jim Latham's work using the FC tool, starting with grassland habitats & eventually all habitats. Will look at core and focal networks and assign scores for different habitats (priority & non-priority habitats) within the network. E.g. if the priority habitat is adjacent improved grassland then it will receive a lower weighting for connectivity in the assessment.

LEVEL 2

Habitat Priority Management, restoration and expansion Areas

Identifies key areas in which to target action e.g. restoration areas based mainly on Glastir with modifications as appropriate. Will feed into NEF Evidence work stream

LEVEL 3

Habitat Priority Action

Ecosystem Groups will lead on this. Critical locations for biodiversity action to restore and prevent biodiversity loss. This will be based on LBAP habitat priorities i.e priority habitat type(s) will targeted for each LBAP area. For each location a brief synopsis of priority actions and species benefiting from action will be produced. This will guide LBAP work and will produce a list of actions WAG could sign up to. Glastir could be used as a funding mechanism. Species on the whole will be integrated into habitats at

this level. Some widespread species and habitats are difficult to deal with spatially. These still require consideration through policy e.g. LDPs NER, etc.

Priority Habitat	Comments	CEG Action/Priority areas	Action timetable
Coastal heath and grassland	Lowland grassland & heathland group have covered the majority of this in their analysis.	Examine the GIS layers for LGLH and expand/amend if appropriate Pembrokeshire suggested as a focus area.	MAH to look at extending LGLH boundaries to incorporate e.g. Porth Neigwl. MAH to produce maps and synopsis by Feb 2011 CW to contact Gwynedd CC re: Porth Neigwl site
Sand dunes	Reference: CCW (Dargie & Houston) Sand Dune remobilisation Report (a copy was distributed; please contact Sean if you require a copy)	Peter will extract the 9 sites from the report and set priorities. Will also include Freshwater West project (Pembs).	MAH to produce polygon maps and synopsis to be produced by February 2011
Coastal Saltmarsh	CEG will set priority actions. Marine Group will set combined targets for saltmarsh & mudflats. Natasha Lough (CCW) produced a Coastal Change report which will influence site selection (can some one send this please or provide a link)	Dee Estuary; Traeth Lavan (Conwy); Mawddach Estuary; Sites identified in the Lough Report. Priority areas, to include Coastal realignment and better management of existing sites to improve structure and floristics.	Priority areas to be identified and mapped by PR & Environment Agency by Feb 2011
Soft Cliffs	Examine the GIS layers for LGLH and expand/amend if appropriate e.g to account for soft cliffs.	Look at existing LGLH projects on the Llyn and the South Gower Coast and look to extend boundaries.	MAH to map and produce synopsis of North Llyn sites and South Gower coast by Feb 2011.

Coastal vegetated shingle	Maintain geomorphologic processes on protected sites and larger non-statutory sites	Cemlyn Bay; Pen Sarn (Abergele)- beach replenishment; Aberthaw; Morfa Dinlle (Gwynedd)- removal of coastal defences etc; Newgale beach - removal of road and car parks?	MAH to map listed coastal vegetated shingle sites by Feb 2011
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In the light of the above, Peter Rhind will modify the Coastal Action framework and will incorporate comments received from Mike Howe and Richard May. This will be circulated to the group for comment.

ACTION: Peter Rhind to update Coastal Action Framework and circulate to the group

Coastal ecosystem Group Funding Award

Grant schemed from WAG administered by Environment Wales; 15K maximum, open to voluntary sector organisations. Deadline for grant submission is 7th Jan 2011. Funds need to be spent by April 2012. Chris Wynne is submitting a project based on Cemlyn Bay shingle. Project proposal need to be approved by the chair of the ecosystem group. Duncan Ludlow will contact groups in S Wales and canvass for suitable projects.

ACTION: Please contact Peter if you have any suitable projects.

Sean McHugh to ask Richard Ellis to see if National Trust are submitting projects and progress on the Freshwater West project. Likely that Butterfly Conservation will submit a project in Ceredigion for coastal grassland improvement for pearl-bordered fritillary. CCW is hoping to improve grazing on cliff slope and excavate nest banks in the soft cliff this winter at Port Neigwl which will help *Osmia xanthomelana*.

Natural Environment Framework

The group did not have time to discuss this in detail. The deadline for responses is 31st Dec 2010.

LBAP and Agency Communications

Noted that the group needs to communicate the CEG aspirations, actions and work plan to a broader audience.

ACTION: All please send in your ideas to Sean McHugh. To get the ball rolling a few things to consider; an article in Natur; representative of the group has a slot with a target LBAP/Agency meeting; develop key messages to distribute to a wider audience.

AOB

Meeting attendance. A poor turnout was recorded - only six attendees, four of whom were CCW. Noted that comments on agenda items, coastal reports etc are infrequent. The next full meeting of the group is due in Apr/May 2011 and we have the option of meeting in Pembrokeshire and undertaking a field visit or conducting a video/teleconference.

ACTION: Please can you state your meeting preference