

Wales Biodiversity Partnership Urban Ecosystem Group

meeting

to be held on 14 March 2011, 14:00 to 16:00 by video conference between the CCW offices in Cardiff Bay (Drake Walk), Abergavenny, and Bangor (Maes y Ffynnon)

Agenda

Item	Title	Activity	Lead	Time
1	Introductions and Welcome	We will also take apologies & submissions for AOB	Pete Frost	14:00-14:05
2	Actions from last meeting			14:05 – 14:10
3	Update	Briefing on the status of this group, the OMHoPDL Priority Habitat definition, DEFRA (England) survey and Green Infrastructure Forum	Pete Frost	14:10 – 14:25
4	Terms of Reference	To review and agree revised terms of reference (paper circulated 14/2/11	Pete Frost	14:25 – 14:35
5	Natural Environment Framework	To decide how best to influence the development of the NEF to reflect the importance of urban ecosystem services	All	14:35 – 14:50
6	Habitat Survey	To work out how to discover the extent, quality and location of OMHoPDL in Wales	All	14:50 – 15:10
7	Policies	Identifying policy issues which may affect urban ecosystems for referral to the Policy Group	All	15:10 – 15:20
8	Review of membership	To consider Jan Miller of Saith Ffynnon Farm as a potential new member and to note the appointment by WBP to this group of academic members John Healy, Bangor University and Lorraine Frater, Cardiff University (BRASS)	All	15:20 – 15:30
9	Key messages and LBAP liaison	To confirm the three “key messages” from this meeting to send to LBAPs and to re-confirm our liaison arrangements with LBAPs and BARS	All	15:30-15:40
10	Wales Biodiversity Partnership Conference	14 th & 15 th September 2011 Trinity College Carmarthen Ideas to be included in the conference in terms of presentations/workshops	All	15.40-15.50
11	AOB & Date of next meeting			15:50 onwards
	End			16:00 latest

Meeting Notes, Urban Ecosystem Group (UEG) meeting
14/03/2011 2.00 – 4.00 pm via video conference at CCW Offices Bangor,
 Cardiff and Abergavenny

Present: Bangor: Pete Frost (Chair), , David Thorpe, Jan Sherry, Emily Meilleur, Steve Chambers, Cardiff: Becky Sharp, Abergavenny: Margaret Underwood (Minuting) .

Item	Title	Activity	Action number
1.	Introductions and Welcome	<i>Apologies received from Liz Howe, Nigel Ajax Lewis, Steve Williams</i>	
2.	Minutes	<i>Minutes were agreed</i>	
3.	Update by the Chair	<p>a. Status of the group – at the BAP chairs meeting all groups have been asked to realign to the Ecosystems Approach to give a wider more holistic focus on where individual habitats fit in the wider context. As a result this group will now be the Urban Ecosystem Group</p> <p>b. Now got an agreed definition valid UK wide for OMHoPDL. The chair thanks everyone who had an input into the final definition stressing the value of Wales’s contribution. Definition will be available on JNCC website at http://www.jncc.gov.uk/page-5220 however, this link is broken at present.</p> <p>c. DEFRA research project – this is currently an England only piece of desk based research into OMH to be followed up by a pilot study to check the validity of the desk research. It was pointed out that the Wildlife for Countryside budget was a combined England/Wales pot so DEFRA should be undertaking this project using examples from both countries.</p> <p>d. Urban Green Infrastructure Forum – this group has had its first meeting at which it was agreed that they would meet twice a year in future. They would feed into and be a sub-group of the UEG. The chair reported that the issue of SUDS not being used in England and Wales due to the wording of a previous act had been resolved by the 2010 Flood and Water Management Act which had been enacted in Wales. Schedule 3 of that act now proactively promotes the use of SUDS. The chair now sits on the SUDS working group and will continue to report back to this group.</p>	<p>3.1 JS to circulate NEF definitions paper</p> <p>3.2. EM to circulate alternative link to group for the final OMH definition.</p> <p>3.3 SC to contact DEFRA to include Wales in OMH research project and if unsuccessful, to investigate further via WAG channels</p> <p>3.4 PF to follow up if above action is not successful</p> <p>3.5 PF to send a link giving an example of a green infrastructure project (http://www.grabs-eu.org/membersArea/files/malmo.pdf)</p> <p>3.6 PF to circulate links to 2010 Act (http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/29/contents)</p> <p>3.7 PF provide a report on the SUDS working group for the next meeting</p>
4.	Terms of Reference	Concern was expressed at both the new terms themselves and the process used to arrive at the new terms of reference. It was pointed out that there was no mention of S42 or biodiversity and there had been no wider consultation processes used to develop the new terms which runs contrary to the spirit of the environmental compact and to the various defined methods of working with voluntary sector partners. The aims of the groups and ToR had been unacceptably watered down.	4.1 PF to express the group’s concerns about new TOR directly to Diana Reynolds

5.	Natural Environment Framework	<p>The group felt it was important to ensure that urban issues fully take into account the biodiversity implications which links back to agenda item 3- Urban green infrastructure issues. It was agreed that case studies should be identified and collated by the chair to enable the production of guidance on what is acceptable.</p> <p>UEG needs to formulate its own clear vision of how a sustainable urban area would look in the future to incorporate points raised under agenda items 3 & 4</p> <p>The value of greenspace was highlighted in a report on the Paris heatwave of 2003. If you were a member of a vulnerable group living within 300m of a functioning greenspace, you were less likely to die as a result of the heatwave.</p>	<p>5.1 ALL to research potential Green Infrastructure case studies and submit to PF as soon as possible</p> <p>5.2 PF to collate</p> <p>5.3. RS to write up the Neath Strategic Green Infrastructure project</p> <p>5.4 MU to explore any possible case studies with EW</p> <p>5.5 ALL to jointly work up a vision for what a sustainable urban area might look like</p>
6.	Habitat Survey	<p>The chair reported that 16 of the 22 local authorities have now mapped out where their urban green spaces actually are and suggested that this and other data sets might provide a good basis on which to begin mapping the relevant sites in Wales.</p> <p>It was felt that without good baseline data, the future work of the group would be severely hampered. There was an urgent need for a research project to undertake this work which could be based on the Gwent methodology.</p> <p>Groups would also be asked to identify action sites in urgent need of protection that would provide priority for BAP actions. Due to the potential size and scope of the research project, it was agreed that all LBAPs and involved bodies might be asked to contribute in the region of £1k to help fund the research. It would need to go out to tender .</p> <p>It was agreed that site identification would be an on-going process and would need regular revisions and additions.</p>	<p>6.1 ALL – to approach their own agencies to see if any funding was available</p> <p>6.2 PF to produce an initial tender brief for discussion</p> <p>6.3 JS to circulate a brief note of what is required.</p> <p>6.4 ALL to revisit any priority sites lists and prepare justifications for protecting each site within the template to be circulated by JS.</p>
7.	Policies	<p>The question was posed – How much can WAG influence local authorities to maintain / retain urban green spaces particularly in the current economic climate. Specific concerns were raised that local authority land which was of biodiversity value could be sold with no safeguards attached in order to provide funds for the authority.</p>	<p>7.1 PF to write to the policy group to remind them of the NERC duty</p>
8.	Review of membership	<p>It was agreed to call on Jan Miller as an expert witness as and when needed and to accept the WBP recommendation that John Healy and Lorraine Frater become members of the group.</p> <p>It was also agreed to look into the possibility of inviting Dr Charles Hipkin from Swansea University to join the group.</p> <p>In response to the annual request from WBP, the membership list needs to be updated and the details returned to WBP</p>	<p>8.1 PF to action new and potential members of the group</p> <p>8.2 RS to investigate whether Dr Hipkin would be interested in joining this group</p> <p>8.3 MU to circulate membership details request</p> <p>8.4 ALL – to reconfirm willingness to remain on the group and provide updated contact details</p>

9.	Key messages and LBAP liaison	<p>Arising out of the afternoon's discussions the following three key messages were agreed:</p> <p>1. The Group were unable to accept the new Terms of Reference for Ecosystem Groups prepared by WBP. Concerns were raised that the development of the new TOR was not undertaken in the spirit of the Wales Environmental Compact (the voluntary sector compact to which CCW, Environment Agency and Forestry Commission are signatories) and that there was a consequent risk to the partnership with the voluntary sector which underlies all our work.</p> <p>2. The Group are looking to run a study to identify all sites in Wales that would meet the Open Mosaic Habitats on Previously Developed Land. A contribution from each LBAP/ Local Authority and all other organisations interested is likely to be needed. The Group would appreciate if all LBAPs could look at their budgets for 2011/12 as a contribution of £1,000+ towards the study would be needed for each area.</p> <p>3. Action sites are to be identified. These are sites or groups of sites where if action is not taken important habitats or species will be lost. These need to be of national importance supporting S42 habitats and/or species. An example of the type of site the Group would be looking for would be good quality Coal Spoil. These sites will then be used to target funding.</p>	<p>9.1. RS to send out to LBAP officers</p> <p>9.2 NAL to circulate to WTs</p> <p>9.3 PF to report to WBP</p>
10	Wales Biodiversity Partnership Conference	<p>The group discussed the UEG contribution to the conference and agreed that a workshop could be provided based around the new agreed OMHoPDL definition. A small subgroup has been set up to action this but contributions for all would be welcome.</p>	<p>10.1 JS, EM DT and MU to form the subgroup</p> <p>10.2 JS to liaise with Sean McHugh re workshop</p>
11	AOB and Date of next meeting	<p>It was agreed that the next meeting should include a site visit to the old chemical weapons and atomic research site at Rhydymwyn nr Mold and take place in June</p> <p>http://news.bbc.co.uk/local/northeastwales/hi/people_and_places/hi/story/newsid_8077000/8077550.stm link to information about the site</p>	<p>11.1 MU to arrange the date</p> <p>11.2 DT to arrange permission with site managers</p>

Tasks to be done under agenda item	Who	By when	Resources / additional resources required	Status
3. Update 3.1 Circulate the NEF definitions paper to highlight the differences between ecosystems approach and ecosystems services	Jan Sherry	19 March 2011	-	
3.2 Circulate alternative link to final OMHoPDL definition	Emily Meilleur	19 March 2011	-	Included with minutes
3.3 Contact be made with Helen Pontier of DEFRA, to include examples / case studies from Wales as part of the current DEFRA research	Steve Chambers	19 March 2011	-	
3.4 If the above approach does not yield results the following actions will be taken: a. Notify Nina Pritchard in WAG b. write to Diana Reynolds to express concerns	Peter Frost	Dependent on response received under 3.3	Officer time	
3.5 As a result of the establishment of the Urban Green Infrastructure Group examples of good projects to be circulated	Peter Frost	19 March 2011		
3.6 Circulate links to The 2010 Flood and Water Management Act as part of its relevance to SUDS	Peter Frost	19 March 2011		Included with minutes
3.7 Provide a report on the SUDS working group for the next meeting of the UEG	Peter Frost	June 2011	Officer time	
4. Terms of Reference 4.1 Express concerns directly to Diana Reynolds regarding the new proposed terms of reference as provided by WAG	Peter Frost	1 April 2011		
4.2 Report back issues with ToR to the Chairs Group	Peter Frost	1 April 2011		
5. Natural Environment Framework 5.1 Research potential examples / case studies of good green infrastructure projects and submit to the chair	ALL	1 April 2011		

5.2 Collate examples and begin guidance	Peter Frost	1 May 2011	Officer time	
5.3 Write up case study for Neath PTCBC large scale SUDS project and submit to the chair	Becky Sharp	1 April 2011		
5.4 Explore possible case studies from the voluntary sector and submit to the chair	Margaret Underwood	1 April 2011	Volunteer time	
5.5 Develop a UEG vision for the future and submit ideas to the chair	ALL	1 April 2011		
6. Habitat Survey 6.1 Approach to all LBAP groups and partner organisations to secure contributions in the region of £1K to undertake a base-line research project in Wales to map sites within the OMHoPDL definition	ALL	1 April 2011	Approx 30 – 50K needed for research	
6.2 Production of an initial tender document for the research project.	Peter Frost	26 March 2011	Officer time	
6.3 Production of a brief note on requirements for identification of action sites and circulated to all members	Jan Sherry	26 March 2011	Officer time	
6.4 Identification of action sites that would provide priority for BAP actions within a template provided by Jan Sherry	ALL	1 May 2011		
7. policies 7.1 Reminder letter to policy group regarding the NERC duty and the importance of maintaining useable urban greenspace	Peter Frost	26 March 2011	Officer time	
8. Review of Membership 8.1 Notification to the expert witness and invites sent to the two new WBP proposed members.	Peter frost	26 March 2011	Officer time	
8.2 Investigate whether Dr Charles Hipkin would be interested in joining the UEG	Becky Sharp	26 March 2011	Officer time	
8.3 Circulate reminder to update current details and willingness to serve on UEG in response to request from WBP	Margaret Underwood	19 March 2011	Volunteer time	
8.4 Update current details and status on group	ALL	1 April 2011		

9. Key messages and LBPA Liasion				
9.1 Send out key messages to LBPA officers	Becky Sharp	19 March 2011	Officer time	
9.2 Send out key messages to Wildlife trust Partners	Nigel Ajax Lewis	19 March 2011		
9.3 Report key messages to WBP	Peter Frost	19 March 2011	Officer time	
10. Wales Biodiversity Partnership Conference				
10.1 Sub group to liaise over content of workshop session based on OMHoPDL definition	Jan Sherry Emily Meilleur David Thorpe Margaret Underwood	1 April 2011		
10.2 Liaise with Sean McHugh re workshop content	Jan Sherry	26 March 2011	Officer time	
11. Date of next meeting				
11.1 Arrange the next meeting date for June to include a site visit	Margaret Underwood	26 March 2011	Volunteer time	
11.2 Arrange permissions with site managers for site visit to Rhydymwyn	David Thorpe	Subject to final date being agreed but no later than 1 May 2011		