

Minutes of Action Plan for Pollinators Taskforce Meeting - 12 November 2020

Attendees

Gary Mitchell - Tyfu Fyny/Social Farms & Gardens

Kathleen Carroll - Welsh Government

Tom Holmes - Welsh Government

Sam Lloyd-Williams - Welsh Government

Alison Heal - Ceredigion County Council

Andrew Lucas - NRW

Ant Rogers - Pembrokeshire Nature Partnership

Gemma Baron – National Trust

Clare Dinham – Buglife Cymru

Anna Williams – N Wales Wildlife Trust

Francis Gellatly – National Bee Unit

Bleddyn Lake – Friends of the Earth

Jon Walker – Swansea University

Veronica Brannovic - Local Nature Partnership Coordinator, Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen

Dai Rees – Butterfly Conservation

Bob Griffiths - North & Mid Wales Trunk Road Agent

James Byrne – Wildlife Trust

Keith Davies – N Wales Wildlife Trust

Nigel Leaworthy - Monmouthshire County Council

Lynda Christie – Welsh Beekeeping Association

Natasha de Vere - National Botanic Garden of Wales

Nicola Bradbear - Bees for Development

Sinead Lynch - Bumblebee Conservation

Terry Howe – Friends of the Earth

1. Welcome and Introductions

Kathleen Carroll opened the meeting by welcoming the members. Introductions were made.

2. Action Plan for Pollinators Taskforce – Goals

Kathleen opened with a presentation reflecting on the Taskforce's Terms of Reference, legislation and the refreshed Nature Recovery Action Plan (NRAP).

Key points of discussion:

- How can the APP Taskforce group work together towards achievable goals?
- Prior to the meeting there was a suggestion from Pete Frost, NRW, that public bodies should follow good practice on their properties to support pollinators. This led to a discussion on how this can be achieved.

- A suggestion was for Local Authorities should have a Pollinator Action Plan. Buglife have developed a Pollinator Action Plan template for Local Authorities. This template could be included as part of Local Authorities' Biodiversity Plan or as a standalone document.
- Alison Heal (Ceredigion CC) raised a concern that, with limited staff resources, drafting plans can have an impact on carrying out action.
- Collating what is happening and where within LAs on a spreadsheet or other format to feedback to the group would be useful.
- There was a suggestion that a letter from the Minister to chief executives could be useful to encourage LAs to take action.
- Action: Kathleen Carroll to discuss with NRAP policy colleagues on how good practices that support pollinators can be embedded within LAs.
- Action: Clare Dinham to share template with Kathleen Carroll. This will be passed to NRAP colleagues to see how best this can be shared with LAs.
- Action: Kathleen Carroll to discuss with NRAP policy colleagues on reporting mechanisms to collect actions for pollinators carried out by LAs.

3. A concept of Wales becoming a Pollinator Nation – Bleddyn Lake and Terry Howe

Ideas on next steps for taskforce group:

- How to join up what is going on in Wales through the group.
- Presenting a positive narrative amongst increasing negative pressures.
- Working with all different organisations and levels of government with different plans, do we have a joined up view on what is good for Pollinators in Wales as a whole?
- What does that view look like?
- Who would be in the best position to implement it?
- How to move things forward from where we started with APP to share ideas and targets for specific species worked on or in the field operation of day to day work?
- How does this all come together to make Wales a Pollinator Friendly Nation?
- How can we show that we are achieving what we set out to do - or do we carry on with wanting more?
- Identifying when we have been successful and showing this.
- Can we identify what hasn't progressed or is falling into a gap?
- What would a Pollinator-Friendly Wales look like in the future, how would we get there etc. benefits of ambitions viewed positively by public etc.?
- Can we work together to set specific targets to help progression towards a goal?

Terry Howe suggested umbrella terms, a positive vision to encourage people from authorities to the public across the whole of Wales.

Feedback

We need things we can put together quickly to stand out and make Wales that pollinator friendly nation.

The Action Plan sets out a roadmap but the 'pollinator friendly nation' is a positive idea collating the information and setting a positive outlook on what Wales is doing as a whole.

We need an evidence-based vision and taking ownership for actions that are being taken forward.

Sinead Lynch to get the ball rolling suggested bullet pointing a list, separate from the consultation.

Key themes to work together on to make Wales more pollinator friendly:

- Roadside grass verges
 - Members of the group highly recommended a presentation given by Joel Walley on Denbighshire's mapping system at a previous meeting of the Local Nature Partners. This presentation was recorded so it could be edited and shown at the Wales Biodiversity Partnership conference. (Link to edited presentation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nSMpSQ1tP4k&feature=youtu.be>)
- Agriculture schemes
 - Action: Kathleen Carroll to share upcoming consultation on Sustainable farming and our land when published. A sub-group of the Taskforce to be established to respond to this.
- Pesticides
 - Action: Kathleen Carroll to share James Byrne's (Wildlife Trust) paper on Briefing for development of the UK's National Action Plan on Sustainable Use of Pesticides (NAP)
 - Action: Kathleen Carroll to share with the Taskforce the UK's National Action Plan on Sustainable Use of Pesticides consultation when it is published and to see if there is an appetite within the Taskforce to respond jointly. If there is, a sub-group would be established.
- Community action
- Citizen Science: in particular how to increase engagement in PoMS.
- Education (Organic food production, subjects, school knowledge - sustainability)

Action All: To help share ideas within the Taskforce, can people please send information they want publicised to NatureConservation@gov.wales by the middle of each month and this will be collated by Kathleen Carroll and shared with the Taskforce.

Afternoon session

4. Creating wildlife and bee friendly schools in North Wales - Anna Williams (Please see presentation)

Working with schools allows the Trust to engage with communities, help people to value nature and raise awareness. They have worked with a large number of schools, giving pupils the opportunity to connect with their environment, carry out scientific surveys and gain life skills. Their work improves the schools' appearance and gives the pupils a sense of ownership and something to be proud of. Through training days they give teachers the confidence to establish wildlife gardens, develop appreciation for wildlife and love for nature which they can share with pupils.

Anna acknowledged that it can be difficult to build links with schools. An e-mail sent to a school may not get to the person who would be interested in taking forward a project. She has found that following up an e-mail with a phone call enables connections to be made. Alternatively, having an established contact within the community can be very helpful.

Working through Covid-19 - Mark Cleaver

At the start of the spring lockdown, with uncertainty about mowing being an essential service, coupled with utilising staff to carry out other services, resulted in a significant amount of grassland not being cut. Monmouth CC communicated with the public why they were leaving areas uncut. They emphasised the 'Nature isn't Neat' programme, making more meadow spaces whilst keeping areas for social recreation. They used social media to deliver messages and keep everyone up to date with the progress.

Covid-19 became an opportunity to change management practices and bring what they've been trying to do to the public's attention.

5. Updates, AOB and date of next meeting

Kathleen Carroll

- [Healthy Bees Plan 2030](#): Kathleen thanked the Taskforce for their consideration of the draft Healthy Bees Plan that was sent to them for comment in July. The Healthy Bees Plan 2030 has now been published.
- [Bee Friendly Webpage](#): Bee Friendly has its own page on the Wales Biodiversity Partnership website. This will make it easier to signpost people to information. The new webpage includes several case studies. At the start of the year, we had several Bee Friendly applications and there seemed there was momentum building behind the scheme. However, since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic we had only one application.
- [Helo Blod](#): For Information, Helo Blod can translate up to 500 words into Welsh per month free of charge. Translations will be returned within 4 working days, or 1 working day if it is 5 words or fewer.

Gary Mitchell

Gary had to leave early so Kathleen reminded everyone that Gary had provided an update, which was sent out ahead of the meeting.

Frank Gellatly

Frank outlined within the Healthy Bees Plan 2030 there are four outcomes:

1. Effective biosecurity and good standards of husbandry, to minimise pest and disease risks and so improve the sustainability of honey bee populations
2. Enhanced skills and production capability/capacity of beekeepers and bee farmers
3. Sound science and evidence underpinning the actions taken to support bee health
4. Increased opportunities for knowledge exchange and partnership working on bee health and wider pollinator needs

Frank also gave an update on Asian Hornet. One Asian Hornet nest was found, and subsequently destroyed, in Hampshire, England. No confirmed sightings in Wales. Fewer Asian Hornet nests have been found in Jersey this year. Perhaps fewer people traveling from France has meant fewer opportunities for Asian hornet queens to hitch a lift.

Date of next meeting

Kathleen to identify a date for the next meeting in March 2021