



Biodiversity Action Group Implementation and Monitoring Subgroup Minutes

10am Thursday 16th July 2009
NCC, Trent Bridge House, West Bridgford.

Present:

Janice Bradley (Chair)	Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust (NWT)
Rebecca Brunt	Environment Agency (EA)
Chris Comerie (Minutes)	Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC)
Nick Crouch	Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC)
Julia Gallagher	RPSB
Tristan Galletly	Forestry Commission (FC)
Katherine Garton	Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC)
Caroline Harrison	Natural England (NE)
Chris Jackson	Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Action Group (BAG)
Karyn Stander	Sherwood Forest Trust
Sheila Wright	Nottingham Natural History Museum (NNHM)

1. Apologies

Adrienne Bennett (Forestry Commission), Kira Besh (Mansfield District Council), Deanne Gow (British Waterways), Phil Kimbrey (Nottinghamshire County Council), Paul Phillips (Rushcliffe Borough Council), Norma Saunders (Sherwood Forest Trust), Lesley Sharpe (Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group), Felicity Washbrook (Mansfield District Council).

2. Previous Minutes

Previous minutes were accepted as a true record of the previous meeting. The following comments were made with respect to the actions laid out in the minutes of the previous meeting.

Action 1) Action ongoing, CJ to consult with CH about BARS.

Action 2) TG to seek comments on the Coniferous Woodland HAP from Andrew Powers - ongoing.

Action 3) Action ongoing.

Action 4) Action complete, press release printed in the Nottingham Evening Post on the 15th of July and SW conducted a radio interview with Radio Nottingham on the 16th of July.

3. Update on UKBAP

CJ reported that he had heard nothing regarding the update of the UKBAP. CJ and LS are to attend a training conference organised by the UK HAP group on hedgerows. In previous years Defra have made available grants of up to £1,000 for hedgerow management.

4. Update on Notts HAPs and SAPs

CJ announced that meeting had been held on 16th June for lead partner agencies and that all the lead partners except JG (apologies and input sent) were present. The notes from the work day are to be circulated shortly. Four roles have been identified for the lead partners consisting of providing a co-ordination role for the HAP, supporting the biodiversity officer for reporting baseline data, acting as a HAP champion (holding events and trouble shooting any habitat issues that may arise), and ensuring that the HAP document is kept up to date.

JB added that the workshop had included work to update HAP names, redistribute some of the HAP documents amongst lead partner organisations and to ensure that each organisation was happy to be in that role. A number of HAP names were altered (either to bring them more in line with the UKBAP or to remove possible misconceptions about the habitats). A few issues still required confirmation namely the lead partners for heathland, acid grassland, marsh and swamp and lowland fen. An author is required for the newly formed Urban HAP.

SW enquired as to whether a category has been created to fit lowland deciduous woodland that does not fit into the two existing LBAP woodland categories (using Wellow Wood as an example).

JB responded that the creation of a specific or other category for this needs to be looked into. CJ felt that the need for this would become clearer as the county's woodland resource was mapped by LBAP habitat type.

No progress had been made on target setting for habitats though this process will be progressed as mapping information is developed. After discussion with Bill Bacon and a mapping grid being created for GIS, targets for the Skipper SAP should now be able to be created. The main target will be to maintain the existing skipper populations.

Gordon Ellis has informed CJ that he is happy to pass on data from the Barn Owl group for BAG to map electronically. CJ has spoken with NCC officer about this project and issues have arisen with regards to the use of OS maps. Local groups may not be able to work with BAG on mapping unless local groups are able to get insurance cover (£5m indemnity).

JB added that the need to get insurance cover is damaging the process to get local groups to report mapping data. CJ explained that OS stipulates that any of their information that is used can't be used towards profit making activities and that the uses of information must be stated. FWAG have previously found difficulties in producing mapping information because of OS licensing issues and the British Geological Survey has previously received a large fine.

RB suggested that the partnership bring up the issue of insurance with Warren Priest from National England and look for a way for the partnership and NE to join forces to get around the need for obtaining a licence from OS.

CJ mentioned that he would be meeting with NC and the County Council's OS and GIS officers to discuss this. JB offered to attend as well if it was felt this would be advantageous.

TG reported that he has received vague answers from his FC colleagues regarding the planted coniferous woodland HAP and that the content of the plan has been questioned. It was recommended that the HAP be retained but in the form of a

guidance document rather than a full blown HAP or as a grouped SAP for species associated with Coniferous Woodland.

JG mentioned that there are implications regarding targets for restoration of open habitat in Coniferous Woodland in downgrading the plan to a guidance note and that these would be very important in assisting the partnership in meeting its targets for open habitats.

SW raised concern over Nightjar habitat loss caused by the loss of conifers.

TG followed on that the FC is best set for writing a guidance note for planted coniferous woodland. TG will seek to pass on Andy Powers comments to the partnership and will look into the production of a guidance note.

JB said that the guidance note or group species action plan for species associated with Coniferous Woodland should focus on Sherwood Forest and the species within its coniferous woodlands.

CJ informed all that the orchard HAP had been sent back to NS to make changes and once returned he will circulate it. Also the black poplar HAP is nearly finished and ready for consultation. It is going through final checking before it is sent out through the partnership.

Action 1: TG to talk with Andrew Powers to give his thoughts on the current Coniferous Woodland HAP and on producing a guidance note for planted coniferous woodland. In addition FC would look at species of importance within the coniferous habitat with the possibility of creating a grouped SAP for species associated with coniferous woodlands in Nottinghamshire

Action 2: CJ to circulate the amended orchard HAP once NS has sent it to him.

Action 3: CJ to circulate black poplar HAP once it has been checked.

Action 4: CJ to meet with NCC O/S staff and/or Warren P to tackle issue of local groups and licensing, and insurance.

5. LBAP Reporting

CJ reported that the Wildlife Trust estate has now been roughly mapped though a few tweaks to the data are still required.

A county wide calcareous grassland layer is currently being worked on with the information being compared with the calcareous grassland habitat identified in the Wildlife Trust LBAP habitat layer. There are discrepancies with the grassland/scrub boundaries but most of the data matches up fairly closely.

KG informed that the Nottinghamshire County Council LBAP mapping is approximately half way through.

CJ continued that he has met with staff from Center Parcs and has annotated paper maps of their estate. This data is due to be transferred to MapInfo to create a LBAP habitat layer for use by Center Parcs for future reporting. CJ has obtained phase 1 survey for Clumber Park from the National Trust. CJ is trying to convert this into LBAP habitat data and will then return it to NT to be agreed. At present no mapping has been conducted for the Forestry Commission's sites though he is in discussion

with Adrienne for this to start in the autumn. PP has provided an estate layer for data on Rushcliffe's BC owned land. CJ will be talking with Gaynor JJ from NWT to see if she is able to help identify the LBAP habitat present at each of the sites. CJ is still awaiting information from the EA but this will be passed on soon after RB has confirmed internally within EA that this data can be shared. CJ needs to contact Carolyn Marshall at FC to move forward the process of LBAP mapping the FC estate.

CH informed all that she had been talking internally within NE and that the HLS information collected by the team in Lowland Derbyshire and passed onto Debbie Alston would (as from September) be passed onto CJ at Notts.

CJ stated that he would be trying to create LBAP habitat information for those sites advised upon or owned outside of the partnership once partnership land had been mapped.

JB mentioned that she is trying to co-ordinate data recording for NWT to add BAP habitat information for SINC's where NWT staff have been consulted by third parties on management of those sites.

CJ said that he is due to meet with a volunteer in the first week of August who will be helping to work on the LBAP grassland GIS layers over the summer.

CH added that NE may be getting people in on temporary three to six month contract to work on mapping. This will be primarily working with WP on a regional LBAP habitat mapping project.

JB continued that she would be discussing mapping funding with NC and may be getting a student intern in September to help with mapping.

CJ informed all that a LBAP habitat layer for canals was complete. Layers for rivers and streams and standing water and ponds is to be obtained from Master Map. A layer for Calcareous grassland is underway and CJ needs to speak with Dave Wood (BSBI recorder for Notts) to help with completing this layer.

JB added that small ponds created under the Rushcliffe Borough Council's grant scheme might not have been reported in the past.

NC queried if reporting forms are to be passed out.

CJ replied that this is on hold until he has spoken with Debbie Alston about the layout of reporting forms in Derbyshire.

RB mentioned that the reporting form is being used as a working document on their sites.

CJ stated that data from Greenwood monitoring should be linked up with LBAP reporting and that he needed to speak to someone at Greenwood to see if this could be done.

NC added that reporting BAP information may take time to set up as this is the first year it has been done for some time but once it has been set up it will be easier for future years.

Action 5: CJ to contact Carolyn Marshall for habitat mapping of FC estate.

Action 6: CJ to speak with Dave Wood before completing for the final layer data on calcareous grasslands.

Action 7: NC and JB to look at draft habitats reporting spreadsheet and pass to CJ to circulate amongst the full partnership for comment.

6. LBAP list of species of Conservation Concern (Pending List)

CJ reported that Welsh Clearwing has been added to the pending list.

SW briefed that moth trapping work is currently underway and has been very successful in uncovering moths not seen for some time. The Beautiful Snout moth (associated with Bilberry) was last seen on Bestwood Lodge Rd in the 1970's, until 2 adults were discovered whilst trapping in Thieves Wood in 2009 - this is a grade 2 moth. In addition the Muslin Footman moth has also been found at Thieves Wood having previously been recorded back in the 1990's in Newstead (this is also a grade 2 moth). In addition the Yellow Legged clearwing moth has recently been recorded all across the Sherwood area (again previously these moths had not been recorded since the 1990's.).

CJ stated that there are no fungal species in the list of Species of Conservation Concern (SoCC) but that he will try to address this in the near future as he is soon to meet with the Notts Fungi group.

NC added that other species groups are not represented in the LBAP SoCC list and that perhaps groups should be contacted as part of the updating of the BAP to ensure that the document has the latest information when it is updated during 2010.

NC asked if glow worms should be added to the SoCC list. SW replied that they aren't nationally rare. However they may be added if they were to be considered as a locally rare species and that in that case they would be added to the SoCC list in the LBAP.

JB continued that an exception has been made for the spring crocuses as they are not common throughout the County and are considered of local concern and as a result have been added to the SoCC list as well as having a SAP written on their behalf in Nottinghamshire.

SW stated that the moth species grades are based on the number of 1km grid squares that certain species have been recorded in and that this system is now linked with the SINC criteria (the number of grade1, 2 and 3 grade moths present at a location) and is used as a basis of designating SINC sites for moths.

NC was asked if there could be a way of building together a relationship between the SoCC list the SINC criteria. This could be clarified in the BAP for the 2010 update. NC could look into this prospect.

SW followed on that autumn 2010 is the due date for reviewing moth species nationally and that after this date she would be happy to update the Notts SoCC list for moths.

JB recommended that 2010 is set as the timetable for updating the SoCC

SW mentioned that a change in the criteria for recording is being assessed.

Action 8: CJ to contact specialist species groups in the future to request their help with the Species of Conservation Concern list.

7. Priority species/habitats - 2009 work programme

SW informed that press releases have gone out with identifying photographs and CJ has received sightings of similar looking moths. CJ has passed on all information to SW but so far the project has not uncovered any new records for small eggar and scarce vapourer moths.

8. What does the group want to achieve over the next 12 months?

JB reported that 6Cs high level mapping is underway. NE's regional mapping could take longer than previously thought and may not end up being that helpful for targeting as it will be very broad brush.

CJ said that Warren Priest from NE will be going around the partnership in August requesting mapping information that he intends to create the regional LBAP map to be used for biodiversity opportunity mapping. NE is getting a mapping officer to help with this project.

JB informed that she has put in a request to Nottingham University for an internship to work on mapping and that never has opportunity mapping work been needed as much as now.

JG enquired as to how the mapping information would be used and how it would link up with the regional map. JB explained that the opportunity map will help to target priority areas for habitat creation/linkages/buffering action etc by partners, and also help with fundraising for projects to do that work.

CJ replied that he would also be liaising with other LBAP's to see what methodologies they would be using.

TG asked if the partnership will use the mapping for looking at opportunities for creation or target setting.

JB answered that it would be used for both and for planning.

TG mentioned that he was sceptical about the usefulness of the mapping for creation as it depends on land owners, in Derbyshire's Lower Derwent Valley and the Moss Valley near Sheffield opportunities are being looked at for linking up ancient woodland and regional opportunity mapping has proved too broad-brush for this.

JB continued that the mapping can be helpful with regard to grant applications for land owners from 6Cs money for works identified by the mapping, and for building up an evidence base. Our County map will be more detailed than the regional map but will use the most useful data from the regional work.

CJ stated that there is a problem currently with the regional mapping information in that it isn't that accurate. It will currently be based on National Inventory data but in the future the LBAP mapping that is being undertaken by Notts can be used at a regional level to inform the process. WP has said that the regional mapping project will look to fit together all the data from different LBAP's.

JB followed on that it doesn't matter if the partnership's mapping information is too accurate as NE can always take it out, if there is too much detail for their model.

RB raised the issue that there are similarities between different areas mapping.

CJ briefed that it has been ten years since the last big Water Vole survey in the County as the meeting moved onto discuss priority species and habitats. EA and Amtrack are conducting surveys and Adrienne is surveying forestry estates.

JB suggested looking at Otters and Mink as well.

RB mentioned that EA are doing a national survey on Water Shrews.

SW informed that a meeting is to be held to discuss the issues of Water Vole colonies and Great Crested Newts at the water retention project in Misson.

NC expressed doubts about conducting a Water Vole survey as it would be a big job and possibly too big a project for the partnership to take on. And questioned whether the purpose of having priority species and habitats was to raise awareness or for surveying and also asked what would be done with the information.

JB responded that the information can be used to identify sites where habitat management work needs to be done, so that there is some evidence to take to landowners and statutory agencies.

CJ continued that there still are volunteers who were involved in the last survey and people who could train others to do the surveying as well as records showing Water Vole populations between 1998 and 2001.

RB queried if the partnership have decided to have Water Voles as next year's priority species and brought up the possibility of having farmland birds as the priority species as a SAP is needed for them and Mike Reid is working on them.

JG suggested that instead of doing a full Water Vole survey, existing data on them is collated. JB said that this has already been done as far as possible, it is in the County Mammal database, if partners are aware of data that they have not sent to the Mammal Recorder (John Ellis at NWT), then please could they do so.

JB added that a multipurpose funding bid would be needed for a full survey.

Action 9: CJ to consult with other LBAP co-ordinators for their input on mapping.

Action 10: CJ to obtain Water Vole records from Adrienne.

9. Future meetings - Speakers/topics of interest

SW suggested that the group could have a speaker to update the group on the work of the Burbot reintroduction research project.

CJ informed all that Richard Yarnall is in Sumatra and will be unavailable until October to give a presentation on his planned research into Hedgehogs. This project is currently looking for volunteers to undertake survey work but currently has no funding.

The group agreed to follow up with new ideas for the next meeting.

10. Update on partner projects

Sheila Wright - Nottingham Natural History Museum

The training day for the Welsh Clearwing moth held on the 26th of June went well with thirty five people attending the event. A Hogsworth Pug moth has been recorded for the first time in ten years at Beacon Hill, while a Redneck Footmen moth has been identified at Wellow Wood. Currently during 2009, eleven trapping sessions have been conducted and one new moth SINC site has been identified (Thieves Wood). The bat boxes Sherwood NNR were checked on the fourteenth of May with noctule, leisler's and pipistrelle bats all present.

Karyn Stander - Sherwood Forest Trust

Ian Major has been appointed as the community, heritage and landscape officer with SFT. The role will work on a 4 day/week basis. £30,000 has been made available to this years landscape scheme for Sherwood – this is the same as for the previous year. KS is currently working on habitat creation projects at Hollingwell Golf Course and at Intake Wood near Clipstone

Chris Jackson - Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Action Group

175 records had so far been received as part of the Japanese Knotweed survey.

Tristan Galletly – Forestry Commission

The woodland bird's project is receiving lots of interest and thirty five to forty percent of their budget has gone towards it already. Some organisations are still to be involved with this project. .

Katherine Garton - Nottinghamshire County Council

KG is leaving her role at NCC at the end of the month and is trying to finish up her LBAP mapping work before her departure.

Nick Crouch - Nottinghamshire County Council

Much of his time has been spent addressing planning work, in particularly with the developments for Nottingham Gateway and the proposed Eco town in Bingham. Unfortunately there is no update from the Green Estates team. He has attended a biodiversity stake holders group for identifying mineral extraction sites for biodiversity opportunities (the work involves NCC, NE, RSPB, NWT & BAG). Also in the wake of the local elections, following the change of councillors the Sherwood Forest Visitors Centre project is to be redesigned and down sized.

Janice Bradley - Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust

Following the economic downturn the slow down in the amount of planning work NWT has dealt with has been short lived and this is now picking up again. An increasing amount of time is being spent preparing for the Rufford incinerator public inquiry with statements of common ground being prepared. In addition UK coal is working on a proposal for an industrial estate and revisions to the Rufford colliery restoration scheme. A meeting between NWT, NCC UKcoal and FC is planned. 6Cs funding has been successfully applied for by NWT, DWT, Broxtowe BC, NCC and Erewash BC for the Erewash Valley. Initially money will help with the purchase of equipment to help manage wildlife sites and opportunity mapping of the valley. The estate work is ongoing for habitat management and creation, the Clifton Clearwater project has exceeded targets for community outreach and the physical habitat management works have been done while a reed bed creation project is

being planned at Besthorpe. The new reserve officers are Ruth Tester for the City, and Western Notts and Lee Scofield for East and South Notts.

Caroline Harrison - Natural England

NE has a new regional director in Maddy Jago who will be based between Bakewell and Nottingham. Maddie is an ex English Heritage officer. The Marine Act should go through parliament in October/November. The promotional work for this will include displays at the Riverside Festival in Nottingham. The re-newable energy strategy was released in July. CH continues with her work on planning and policy and core strategies.

Julia Gallagher – RSPB

Avocet have breed at Langford Lowfields this year, although all the chicks were predated. Little ringed plover and oyster catcher have both successfully breed at the site. Three sites are being worked up for HLS applications (with the work being undertaken alongside FWAG). An application for land at Redhill is also on the horizon. As part of the farmland birds project 50 volunteer surveys have been undertaken and 1 promotional event has been held.

RB had to leave the meeting before she had time to feedback on the latest work of the EA

11. Feedback from the Steering Group

CJ reported that work on the Communications Strategy is ongoing while the Funding Strategy hasn't progressed. No major issues have arisen.

12. Feedback from the Awareness sub group

CJ related to the group that Newark and Sherwood District Council or Gedling Borough Council's sites are favoured for the Big BAG which should be held around November.

Lots of venues have been suggested for the Bio Blitz event for which feedback is currently being sought.

13. Outstanding matters arising

CH briefed that her investigation into BARS training for NE staff continues. CH will try to find out if NE is likely to replace the Donna Radley post that helped to act as a link between LBAP and UKBAP.

14. AOB

CJ and NC announced that a regional species workshop will be held on 29th July 2009.

15. Date of next meeting

10am Thursday 29th October, Idle Valley Centre (date moved due to public inquiry - CJ to check this does not clash with half term). Moved to the 19th November as both the Chair and Vice-chair of the group were asked to attend a Public Inquiry on this date.

10am Thursday 14th January (2010), Center Parcs

10am Thursday 15th April (2010), NE Offices