

10am, Tuesday 15th March 2011
EA Offices, Trentside, Nottingham

Present:

Janice Bradley	Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust (NWT)
Nick Crouch	Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC)
Caroline Harrison	Natural England (NE)
Chris Jackson	Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Action Group (BAG)
Paul Phillips (Vice chair)	Rushcliffe Borough Council (RBC)
Anja Randeria	Environment Agency (EA)
Heather Stokes	Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC)

1. Apologies

Erin McDaid (Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust), Norma Saunders (Sherwood Forest Trust), Steve Fisher (Broxtowe Borough Council).

2. Previous Minutes

The previous minutes were checked and accepted as a true record.

Actions from the previous meeting.

1, 3 and 5 completed
2 and 4 ongoing

3. Biodiversity Officer update and work plan prioritisation

CJ reported to the Steering Group on the progress made with regards to various BAG issues and work streams including

- Recent funding bids from BAG partner organisations
- Website developments
- Latest updates with regards to the LBAP document
- The current situation with regards to LBAP mapping in Notts.
- BAG Funding
- Bioblitz
- Invasive non-native species work
- Priority species work
- Notts Crayfish Project
- BAG budget
- Future Work Priorities

CJ was thanked by the group for the update and the work that he had undertaken.

4. LBAP Funding

CJ briefed the group that he had heard nothing from NE with regards to a funding contribution for any period beyond the end of March 2011. As a result it was now very unclear as to how NE hoped to support local BAP in the future. CJ reminded the group that at previous England Biodiversity Seminar held in 2009, staff from Natural England had reassured all the LBAPs that they would be the first to hear

about any changes to funding and that this would be in good time to allow for planning.

CH had not been able to enlighten the steering group any further. She was able to tell the group that the regional BAP was to receive funding for the coming year but less than in previous years. The group questioned why the regional BAP was to be funded and not local BAP's as the regional BAP was currently disintegrating.

HS informed the group of the high level of cuts that had been proposed for both the conservation team and country parks at NCC. Within this less than positive situation for NCC conservation services, and in the light of a lack of information from NE, the county council had managed to find funds to support the Biodiversity Officer post for the coming financial year 2011-12.

Action 1: HS to write to NE to try to find out what was happening with regards to support for LBAP's.

NS raised the possibilities of Notts BAG seeking charity status. NS pointed out that she had done a lot of work with Lianne looking into this possibility. It was recognised that this was a big job and who would undertake this work. In addition it would involve onerous responsibilities such as annual reporting etc.

It was agreed that this item should be kept on the agenda as a standing item.

5. Biodiversity Mapping

CJ updated the Steering Group with the latest progress that had been made with the mapping work.

The mapping was helping to provide a clearer picture of the counties habitats and would be very useful in creating the baseline data required for setting new and more realistic information with regards to setting new targets.

JB pointed out that the information would be very useful to assist the partnership with its Biodiversity Opportunity Mapping work that was being led by the Implementation and Monitoring subgroup.

Mapping work was continuing to develop but this was at a slower pace than had been hoped due to the low level of resources that the partnership was being able to commit to the work.

6. IBDA's

Since the New Year CJ had heard very little with respect to IBDA's and what he had heard was still very unclear as to what progress was being made through this process.

As discussed previously the 8 IBDA pilots had been tasked with collating a large amount of data about priority habitats and species, a map of the area, a list of partners etc. This had all been placed in a glossy document to showcase the identities of each IBDA. The IBDA's had also been informed by information from the BIG groups. This information had not yet been received from all the groups but had been received from the Woodland BIG. A comment on the data received from these groups was that it was less accurate than the existing partnerships already held. It was also hoped that the IBDA's would be assisted with comments from the taxon groups but very little information had been received.

Currently the situation appeared to still be very confused, very little progress had been made and officers involved in IBDA's wished that they weren't.

7. Update from the Implementation and Monitoring subgroup

JB informed members of the Steering Group that the I&M subgroup had met twice since the previous meeting, in November and in January. The meetings had been very well attended and there had been some interesting discussions. Warren Priest had attended the meeting in November to update the partnership on the regional Biodiversity Opportunity Mapping model and also the latest information on the Lawton review. In January the subgroup hosted a presentation from Ben Wood from Nottingham Trent University on his post graduate research into hedgehogs. The core work of the group had mainly been covered in items raised earlier in the meeting.

8. Update from the Awareness subgroup

EM informed the group that the Awareness subgroup had met twice since the last BAG Steering Group meeting in November and in February. During the November meeting the subgroup had discussed the successes of Bioblitz and talked about areas where it could be improved as an event. Unfortunately it was decided that Bioblitz could no longer be coordinated by the Biodiversity Officer role and as such the event may need to look to other partners to move it forward in the future. At the last meeting of the BAG Awareness subgroup, the group was discussing a way forward to provide an outline for partners to follow to enable them to work more effectively to promote the work of the BAG and the Action Plan process as part of their regular promotional activities.

9. AOB

none

10. Date of Next Meetings

Thursday 13th September 2011. 10.00. RBC Offices.