

10am, Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2013  
Trentside, West Bridgford

**Present:**

Felicity Atkin	Nottingham City Council (Nott'm CC)
Wayne Ball	Sherwood Forest Trust
Janice Bradley	Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust (NWT)
Nick Crouch	Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC)
Chris Jackson	Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Action Group (BAG)
Paul Phillips (Chair)	Rushcliffe Borough Council (RBC)
Heather Stokes	Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC)
Dan Widdowson (Vice-chair)	Environment Agency (EA)

**1. Apologies**

Bill Bacon (Butterfly Conservation), Richard Bennett (Canal & River Trust), Carl Cornish (RSPB) and Steve Fisher (Broxtowe Borough Council).

**2. Previous Minutes**

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

In response to the previous actions.

Action 1: completed - CJ had circulated a copy of the ToR.

Action 2: completed - JB had discussed the proposal for one BAG Working Group with Erin McDaid and he was happy with the proposal. EM was happy for JB to be the NWT representative on the new BAG Working Group.

Action 3: completed - DW had discussed with his line manager if he was able to take up the role as vice-chair of the NottsBAG Steering Group and this had been agreed within the EA.

**3. Biodiversity Officer update**

CJ produced a progress report detailing the key work streams being taken forward by the Biodiversity Officer on behalf of the Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Action Group partnership. CJ highlighted the key issues in this report to the members of the Steering Group and answered any questions in relation to the progress made with regards to various BAG issues and work streams. These work streams included

- Recent funding bids from BAG partner organisations
- Website updates and developments
- Local Nature Partnership
- LBAP Habitat Mapping & Biodiversity Opportunity Mapping
- Grizzled Skipper Project
- Invasive Non-Native Species Project
- Notts Crayfish Project
- BigBAG Annual Forum Event
- LIS Projects
- Future Work Priorities

At the end of the Biodiversity Officer update, CJ highlighted to the Steering Group that he was struggling to keep on top of his ever increasing workload. On a regular basis CJ was finding that he had to work on top of his contracted hours, and he was finding that this was putting pressure on his home life (having a young family).

The Steering Group discussed ways in which the group may be able to help relieve some of the pressures from CJ.

**Action 1: JB & PP to take on the coordination of the BigBAG event for 2013. JB to contact members of the former Nott'sBAG Awareness subgroup to see what support members such as Sue McDonald, Jackie Adams, Linda Davey and Erin Mcdaid could add to arranging a BigBAG event.**

**Action 2: NC & HS (as line managers of CJ) to work with CJ to establish work priorities and to discuss and clarify CJ's work programme.**

**Action 3: CJ & HS to talk to Janet Valenti about managing the Nott'sBAG website updates.**

#### **4. Funding for NottsBAG & Biodiversity Officer post**

As discussed at the previous meeting the Biodiversity Officer Post was now part time, and CJ was now spending 50% of his time undertaking work for Notts County Council and the other 50% of his time working for the Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Action Group Partnership.

HS briefed the group that the Nott's BAG had some funding left in the Nott'sBAG partnership budget but this was limited and each year the cash coming into the budget to support the Biodiversity Officer post but this was less than the money that was outgoing. As a result, HS reminded the partners that if they wanted to support the Biodiversity Officer post then it was still important to pull in additional funds. It was requested that Nott'sBAG partners be considerate of this when applying for funding and should be looking for ways to incorporate a small contribution to Nott'sBAG through their own project work.

During 2012/13 additional funds to support the role had come in from Rushcliffe BC, Broxtowe BC, Defra INNS work (HB), Biodiversity Opportunity Mapping (various sources), Grizzled Skipper Project - total £9,500

The steering group agreed that it felt that the post was an important role for the county and then discussed other ideas for drawing in funding to help to keep the post in place.

Paul Phillips discussed investigating the possibility of pulling in funding with the counties LA's, its district, borough and city authorities that currently don't fund the post. The funding would be a membership and a commitment from the LA's to the work of the partnership. PP would look at investigating this further.

**Action 4: CJ to make a breakdown of all the services currently provided by Nott'sBAG to the LA's currently.**

**Action 5: CJ to forward a copy of the previous letter requesting funding from LA's to PP.**

DW felt that there was a good argument for Nott'sBAG pulling in some funding from the Environment Agency given all the work that the Nott'sBAG partnership helped the EA to deliver.

**Action 6: CJ to send DW a list of the BAG activities that supported EA work streams (wetland work).**

The group discussed the possibility of using the BigBAG event to raise the profile of the partnership especially with elected members from different Nottingham and Nottinghamshire local authorities. As a result of the discussion it was suggested that the date of the Nott'sBAG Annual Forum Event (Big BAG) be moved from spring 2013 to autumn 2013 as by this time a new lot of county councillors would be in place and it would be wise to invite them to the Nott'sBAG Annual Forum Event. It would be wise to set this event at a time prior to LA budget setting.

**5. Terms of Reference, Role of Chair, Membership of BAG Steering Group**

Prior to discussions on the terms of reference began, Nick Crouch raised that he felt that it would be more appropriate to call the newly formed subgroup the Nott'sBAG Delivery Group rather than the Nott'sBAG Working Group. This would allow the term working group to be utilised by special task and finish groups such as the BOM Working Group. JB agreed to include this change in the updated ToR for the subgroup.

**Action 7: JB to include the change of name of the subgroup in the ToR for this group.**

A few days prior to the Steering Group meeting PP, NC and CJ had sat down to discuss the current ToR for the Steering Group and start to think about how to update them. As a result they had identified a number of items that were now out of date and needed alterations. In addition they had slightly changed the layout of the terms of reference in order to make them a more logical and a more easily used document.

The draft document was discussed by the Steering group members and the main issues that were raised were

- a mission statement should be included as part of the ToR.
- to take out all items that refer to the Nott'sBAG Delivery Group and these should be incorporated into the ToR for the subgroup.
- to not list all the organisations who are partners but to leave this more open so that membership could be more open.
- the role of the chair and vice chair should be included in the ToR.

**Action 8: CJ to include the comments of the Steering Group members and update the ToR accordingly for approval at the next meeting.**

**6. Nott'sBAG partnership - do we need a Mission Statement?**

This agenda item was discussed as part of agenda item 5. It was agreed that a mission statement would be useful for the Nott'sBAG partnership and that this should be included in the ToR for the Nott'sBAG Steering Group.

**Action 9: Include a mission statement as part of the updated terms of reference.**

**7. Natural Environment White Paper - LNP's, NIA's, Biodiversity Offsetting**

Local Nature Partnerships – In July 2012 a final workshop was arranged as the final part of the LNP capacity building work. This workshop invited everyone who had been involved in the 6 sectoral engagement events earlier in the year. The aim of the event was to look at a priority work list for the LNP as well as a structure for the new LNP. In August a final report detailing all the work that had been undertaken as part of the capacity building as well as all the outcomes was produced by Alison Millward Associates. All the papers are available on the Lowland Derbyshire LBAP website. In September the LNP for Lowland Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire heard from Defra that it had been successful with its application to government to be recognised as an official LNP. During October, Heather Stokes represented the LD&N LNP at a meeting with Defra in London. The meeting was arranged to discuss how LNP's would develop in the future. During December the LD&N LNP arranged for partners who were particularly interested in being involved in the development of this local body to meet and form the LNP board. The meeting was attended by 12 partners each of whom represented one of the 6 sectors that were involved in the capacity building work. The minutes from this meeting have been posted on the Lowland Derbyshire LBAP website. The LNP board has agreed to meet every two months and will seek to identify a work plan and engage with the LEP as its priorities.

Nature Improvement Areas - JB reported that the area covered by the small grant scheme had been reduced and would no longer include the Idle valley and was now restricted to Nottinghamshire north of Bawtry. The grant scheme would be available from April 2013 onwards. The new 2 year post hosted by the RSPB had been filled. The post would primarily be researching the potential to utilise biomass within the NIA area. Particular focus was currently looking at the potential for use of reed from the reedbed reserve on the Humber at Blacktop Sands and scrub taken from Thorn and Hatfield Moors. The NIA were currently preparing a landscape partnership bid to HLF, and initial work looked to include North Notts within this bid area.

Biodiversity Offsetting - NC and Liz Newman (Natural England) had giving briefing sessions to the planning officers at all the local authorities that would be taking part in the offsetting pilot project. In addition NC and LN had met with a number of potential offset providers to discuss their potential role in the scheme. NC was now actively looking for projects to bring into the offsetting scheme and there were potentially two developments which may be appropriate. NC had attended an event organised by Defra in London in November that was arranged to look at developments by all offsetting pilot areas. NC was reassured by the event that most of the other offsetting pilots were in a very similar situation. NC also feedback to the group that there had been a lot of recent negative publicity with regards to biodiversity Offsetting due to an offsetting scheme involving the environment bank and nightingales at Ward Hill in Kent.

## **8. Update from the BAG Working Group**

The new BAG Working Group met for the first time on 18th October 2012 and most recently on the 8<sup>th</sup> January 2013. The newly formed working group was poorly attended by members of the Notts BAG Awareness subgroup at the initial meeting and this may have been due to the lack of notice given to members of this subgroup. January meeting was well attended with 18 members representing both of the former subgroups. The working group was attended by the guest speaker Michael Walker (Notts Bat Group) in October and by Andrew Crawford (Environment Agency) in January. Michael spoke about the Bat species (that were BAP priorities in Nottinghamshire) and talked about the work being undertaken by the Bat group to help this group of mammals. Andrew spoke about the Eurasian

Otter and how it was fairing in Nottinghamshire. Andrew invited the Nott'sBAG partnership to join the EA with survey work to help the EA with its monitoring of Otter within the Trent catchment. The group main agenda items covered issues such as the Biodiversity Opportunity Mapping, the Natural Environment White Paper update, the relationship between the LBAP and the LNP and the partnership updates.

**9. AOB**

EM suggested that NottsBAG could be put forward for one of the Green Guardian Awards during 2012.

**10. Date of Next Meetings**

**Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2013**  
**Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2013**

**Rushcliffe Civic Centre, West Bridgford**  
**Trentside, West Bridgford**