

Wales Biodiversity Partnership Steering Group Meeting WBPSG12 11th November 2010, Environment Centre Wales, Bangor

Attendees

Name		Organisation
Alys	Edwards	WBP Support Team
Amy	Mulkern	Wildlife Trusts Wales
Andy	Mackie	National Museum Wales
Clive	Walmsley	CCW/Climate Change Commission Wales
Diana	Reynolds	WAG/WBP Support Team
Frankie	Hobro	Anglesey Sea Zoo
Hazel	Drewett	CCW
Huw	Jenkins	Natur Cymru
Ian	Guildford	CCW/ South Wales Police
Kate	Williamson	Snowdonia National Park Authority
Lizzie	Webster	Denbighshire CC
Nigel	Ajax-Lewis	Wildlife Trusts Wales
Paul	Henderson	Dwr Cymru
Richard	May	Wales LBAP rep
Roy	Tapping	LRC's Wales/Cofnod
Sarah	Mellor	National Trust
Sean	Christian	RSPB/Wales Environment Link
Sean	McHugh	WBP Support Team
Shaun	Russell	WERH
Stuart	Moodie	British Waterways
Tracey	Lovering	CCW/WBP Support Team
Trevor	Dines	Plantlife/CCW

Apologies

Name		Organisation
Aethne	Cooke	CCW
Bill	Somerfield	WAG/WBP Support Team
Chris	John	British Waterways
David	Parker	CCW
Deb	Hill	WLGA/City & County of Swansea
David	Jenkins	Coed Cymru
Dusi	Thomas	Dwr Cymru
Glenda	Thomas	FWAG
Graham	Oliver	National Museum Wales
Helen	Buckingham	National Trust
Laura	Jones	Gwynedd County Council
Margaret	Jones	Cardiff Council
Michelle	Van-Velzen	Forestry Commission Wales
Nick	Bialynicki-Birula	Environment Agency Wales
Pam	Barnes	Keep Wales Tidy
Robin	Woodyatt	WLGA
Steven	Bromley	Groundwork

Diana Reynolds chaired the meeting and welcomed attendees. She thanked Shaun Russell and the Wales Environment Centre for hosting the meeting and for providing an informative tour of the Environment Centre Wales building before the meeting.

Diana then provided a staffing update introducing Alys Edwards and Tracey Lovering, the two newest members of the WBP Support Team and informed the meeting that Delcie Simkin has now left the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) and that Bill Sommerfield would be leaving the team at the end of the year to take up a post within the food strategy division of WAG. Business cases for Delcie and Bill's replacements had been agreed.

Diana updated the group on the discussions held following SG11 between Gerry Quarrell and David Parker regarding funding for the WBP Ecosystem Groups. Diana announced that a total of £140,000 had been secured (£70,000 from WAG matched by CCW funds).

Grants will be administered by Environment Wales following the same criteria as last year and grant applications must be sponsored by the respective ecosystem group chair and LBAP officer in whose area the project falls.

ACTION 1. All to discuss potential ecosystem projects with the Ecosystem group chairs.

Diana noted the additional WAG contribution to nature conservation funding in Wales over the past five years is estimated to be £1.8 million.

Diana then introduced the format of the morning session, beginning with an update to 'A Living Wales' followed by 2 workshop sessions focussing on Paper 1 (WBP engagement) and Paper 3 (funding approach)

Paper 1: WBP Engagement with 'A Living Wales': Diana Reynolds

Diana clarified the relationship between 'A Living Wales' and the WBP stating that they would continue to move forward together. Paper 1 consists of direct quotes from the 'Living Wales' background document (see for example page 25 which sets out the engagement framework between WBP and 'A Living Wales'). Link: <http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/environmentandcountryside/eshlivingwalescons/?lang=en>

The challenge is to bridge the gap between organisations already embedded in the process and those currently not active. Discussions are ongoing between WAG and the chairs of the Ecosystem Groups, Policy Group and Outcome 21 Group, in order to agree which WAG officials will be direct contacts for the respective Ecosystem Groups.

Diana then emphasised the difference between 'A Living Wales' consultation and previous consultations. The consultation was co-launched with WAG and the EU Environment Commissioner and contained unique elements not typically associated with consultations (poetry was given as an example). Most importantly, the associated work multi-stream programme is underway and is inclusive and transparent. Diana clarified her position as programme manager supported by Stephen Jackson (WAG) who is covering her Nature conservation and Biodiversity role.

The opportunity to join various work streams was discussed. There are opportunities to join the core work stream groups requiring one day per week input or joining a wider email reference group. Products will emerge from the work stream; for example a prototype GIS portal is currently available on the WAG 'Living Wales' consultation site. The prototype GIS portal examines spatial relationships between environmental data and comments are welcome. There is also the potential of the GIS Team providing workshops to organisations to discuss how such tools might be used as part of a Natural Environment Framework.

ACTION 2. All to contact the NEF project team (Nia.Evans@wales.gsi.gov.uk) if your organisation/group is interested in receiving a GIS portal workshop or joining a work stream.

Diana confirmed that WAG are still seeking case studies to add to those received.

ACTION 3. All to continue to feed in good practice case studies to Nia Evans (Nia.Evans@wales.gsi.gov.uk)

ACTION 4. All to continue to engage with ‘A Living Wales’ consultation and electronic fora.

Diana noted that an online regulatory questionnaire produced by the regulatory work stream would be available shortly.

ACTION 5. All to contact Jennifer Dack (jennifer.dack@environment-agency.wales.gov.uk) if they would like to be added to the email circulation list for the regulatory work stream questionnaire.

Diana also mentioned that a communications pack would soon be available on the ‘Living Wales’ pages of the consultation website, containing presentations, key messages etc and she encouraged use of this resource. Diana commented that members were welcome to run their own ‘Living Wales’ sessions within their respective organisations but requested that WAG be informed. She reiterated the point that WAG is happy to run workshops on request; dovetailing with existing meetings is preferred.

ACTION 6. All to contact the NEF project team (Nia.Evans@wales.gsi.gov.uk) if your stakeholders (especially those we don’t normally get to talk to) are interested in receiving a Living Wales workshop.

Trevor Dines asked if all responses to the ‘Living Wales’ consultation would be made available online. Diana confirmed that a full set of responses would be made available (with the exception of those submitted with privacy requests) in the New Year and would be accompanied by a programme report. The consultation website, as it currently stands will be available until 31st December 2010 and be replaced on the 1st January 2011 with a ‘Living Wales’ hub thus ensuring continuity.

WBP Engagement with ‘A Living Wales’ – workshop activity

The workshop focused on WBP addressing three key areas, namely; legitimacy, delivery and traction in order to increase WBP capacity in delivering its objectives. It was acknowledged that progress was already happening in the 3 areas. The workshop focused on 3 key questions, namely:

- 1) Legitimacy: How do we make biodiversity and ecosystems a core activity of people's day jobs?
- 2) Delivery: How do we engage with people more effectively?
- 3) Traction: How do we make the space in which to build our skills?

Trevor Dines requested clarification on whether questions should be answered as a member of WBP or people individual organisations. Diana responded that attendees should bring all aspects of their role/experience when considering responses to the questions posed.

Diana confirmed that workshop outputs would be circulated for additional comments and feed back and brought to the February or July Steering Group 2011 meeting.

ACTION 7. WBP Support Team to collate workshop outputs for WBP SG13/SG14 agenda item.

Paper 2: Financing Nature in an age of Austerity: Sean Christian

Sean Christian introduced the paper, noting that the full report had been prepared at a UK level by RSPB's Economics Team, and contains ideas relevant to Wales. The full report is available electronically at the following location.

http://www.rspb.org.uk/Images/Financingnature_tcm9-262166.pdf

Sean noted that the paper had been stimulated by the UK coalition Governments pledge to make this government the greenest government ever and by the idea of the 'big society'. The paper highlights the challenges posed by the shortfall in funding for nature conservation in the UK (estimated at £275million per year) and the current financial climate and explores ways of unlocking private funds for nature conservation with an emphasis on civil society and business. Significant potential exists for utilising biodiversity offsets and conservation credits to access finance and the biodiversity offset market is currently enjoying success in the United States and Australia. The role for government is to set rules and regulate markets as many of the benefits from nature are public goods and a discretionary or voluntary approach is unlikely to work.

The timing of the NEF and the UK Natural Environment White Paper was seen as an 'once in a lifetime' opportunity for positive change and initial analysis suggests that there are significant opportunities to be had from a formalised system.

Diana thanked Sean for his introduction and asked the workshop groups to focus on 3 questions, namely;

- 1) Which recommendations/tools should be looked at in more detail?
- 2) Is there any current expertise in Wales we should/could tap into?
- 3) What are the barriers and risks?

Diana mentioned that the workshop outputs would be shared with economic work stream of the Natural Environment programme and there is an opportunity to bring in UK experts to assist. Amy Mulkern inquired whether the Rio Tinto work with the Wildlife Trusts had been fed into the development of this report.

ACTION 8. Sean Christian to confirm Rio Tinto input with RSPB Economics team and feed back to Amy Mulkern.

Sean stated that the report looks at species and habitats for the most part, rather than focussing on ecosystem services or landscape scale project due to complexity constraints. The report starts from the simple baseline of ‘no net-loss’ and develops from there. Roy Tapping observed that there was a need for organisations to be more coordinated in their work particularly with respect to landscape-scale work. Trevor Dines noted that there should be ‘no net loss’ of equal quality habitats.

Paul Henderson commented that options should be explored to generate income from ‘good biodiversity’ e.g. willingness to pay mechanisms and that using the ‘stick’ approach could potentially discourage engagement/investment.

Richard May stated that he felt this was undervaluing biodiversity i.e. s106 agreements funds were more often spent on community centres rather than environmental projects and that stronger direction was needed at a senior level to ensure money is being spent in the right place.

Sean mentioned that biodiversity does not feature in the balance sheet. Diana emphasised that intrinsic value of biodiversity as an important context to developing and using valuation tools.

Presentation: Native Seahorses, Frankie Hobro, Anglesey Sea Zoo.

Diana welcomed Frankie to the meeting, who thanked the WBP for the invitation and gave a brief introduction to the zoo and its work. Anglesey Sea Zoo is the only privately owned zoo in the UK and its work focuses entirely upon native marine life. Its work in relation to seahorses focuses on the two species of native seahorse - the spiny seahorse (*Hippocampus guttulatus*) and the short-snouted seahorse (*Hippocampus hippocampus*). The zoo runs a captive breeding programme which at present focuses on *H. hippocampus* and has successfully reared a significant number of *H. hippocampus* to adulthood and is now seen as a centre of expertise in relation to the species.

An overview was given of the current problems experienced by those trying to help the species, such as lack of data on historical and present population trends and range. Frankie then highlighted actions that would benefit native seahorses namely:

- 1) Determining baselines and research to establish details of historical distribution especially around Wales, which would allow the identification of suitable trial release sites and monitoring for *H. hippocampus*.
- 2) The need for general clarification of the roles of the various statutory bodies and NGOs in the wild management of this taxon, and also of their relationship with the private sector.
- 3) Financial support towards the ongoing program and assistance in the development of a similar program for *H. guttulatus*.

Discussion

A discussion then followed relating in particular to the lack of data or knowledge on native seahorse distribution in Wales. Roy Tapping noted that the lack of data on historic or current distribution makes re-release difficult, although with a few confirmations of sightings, monitoring of a few key sites would enable some sites to be excluded and a long-term programme to be established.

Clive Walmsley enquired whether enough was known about associated habitats and noted that the Wales intertidal habitat survey could be used to identify appropriate sites for release programmes. Frankie informed the group that the principle habitat for seahorses is sea grass beds. Trevor Dines suggested arranging a meeting between Frankie and the CCW Intertidal Team.

Licensing for release – Carys Roberts in CCW Headquarters should be able to advise and it was suggested that this should be followed up through contact with the intertidal team. Ian Guildford commented that re-introduction would be unlikely to be problematic as the species concerned were native.

ACTION 9. Clive Walmsley to facilitate first meeting with Frankie and CCW Intertidal Team and CCW to follow up with Carys with regard to license issues for release.

Paul Henderson suggested seeking European funding such as INTERREG, and noted that Chester Zoo have experience of securing European funding and may be able to offer their expertise. Frankie expressed concern over the amount of time needed to put together such a bid. Kate Williamson suggested that it may be possible to secure assistance from the 3-Agency Funding Officers.

ACTION 10. Frankie to discuss European funding with Chester Zoo, seeking assistance from 3-Agency Officers if necessary.

Sean McHugh noted that Seasearch had been funded to monitor marine crawfish and suggested a similar project could take place with regard to native seahorses.

ACTION 11. Sean McHugh to forward contact details of Seasearch to Frankie and look at WBP funding for a similar project.

Trevor Dines suggested there is potential to add both species to the S42 list when the list is reviewed and that establishing current status and extent is key.

The possibility of corporate sponsorship was suggested by Paul Henderson. Amy Mulkern agreed to follow this up with Anglesey Sea Zoo outside of the meeting.

ACTION 12. Amy Mulkern to advise Frankie with regard to securing corporate sponsorship

Nigel Ajax Lewis noted that it may be possible to look at the Victorian vice county natural history maps of Wales, which may indicate seahorse distribution.

ACTION 13. Nigel Ajax Lewis to review historical records to check if seahorse records exist.

Paper 3: Marine Education Framework: Presented by Hazel Drewett

Hazel introduced the paper in Aethne's absence and explained that Aethne Cook (CCW) is involved with GEMS (Group for European Marine Sites) in Wales, in the capacity of facilitating a co-ordinated approach to marine education in the formal education sector in Wales (in and out of the classroom).

CCW are engaged with the above initiative and have contracted a study looking at the new Welsh curriculum (content and education policies) to see where use of the marine environment could provide an opportunity to deliver curricular requirements at primary (all subjects) and secondary levels (in certain subjects).

Aethne and Siobhan Hayward (CCW's education advisor) held a meeting with the National Grid for Learning (NgFL) recently with regard to the Marine Education Framework principles, and also about the possibility of using the NgFL website (<http://www.ngfl-cymru.org.uk>) as the online depository/link to other websites for marine information and support. A positive response was received, and the NgFL have agreed to host a Marine Splash page on their website, promoting existing marine educational resource materials (which CCW have metadata for) and also hosting links to other relevant web sites.

Referring to the paper, Hazel commented that in looking at the syllabus for GCE and GCSE subjects (Biology and Science primarily), it was interesting to note the wider learning that the students were required to study. When looked at from a marine perspective, certain aspects of the syllabuses were relevant. When looked at from the perspective of the natural environment generally (i.e. not just marine), there were more links to be made.

Hazel passed on Aethne's message that it was important to bring this to the attention of the WBP to support this opportunity. In particular the following points are noted:

- 1) WBP to be made aware of the wider contextual learning on GCE/GCSE syllabuses (and relevance to the Living Wales)
- 2) WBP to discuss how the learning initiative can be supported, as much of the hands-on experience lies within WBP membership organisations in Wales. Many members of WBP already do a great deal of educational work (RSPB, WTs, National Museum of Wales and many others) and it is important that this is recognised.

Diana and Lizzie Webster then provided an update on the WBP Conference workshop focussing on education, run by Tina Hawkins from WAG Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills and noted that Tina was keen to work with Aethne and others to develop this programme.

Lizzie recommended that this could be achieved through providing extra capacity to teachers, possibly through a pairing exercise in the classroom with teachers and an expert in the given subject. However it was noted that capacity issues in many of the smaller organisations would limit their ability to help in this regard. Trevor Dines supported the initiative but informed that PlantLife did not currently have the capacity to supply education officers.

Paul Henderson informed the meeting that Dwr Cymru already run a similar project through a number of education centres, where they employ professional staff to deliver curriculum based education and agreed he would be happy to recommend colleagues with the necessary expertise to assist in the development of this programme.

ACTION 14. Paul Henderson to provide Dwr Cymru education contacts to Aethne.

Kate Williamson noted that a north Wales Wildlife Gardening Officer is currently in post and has expertise in this area and commented that she would be happy to link into the initiative.

ACTION 15. Kate Williamson to supply Wildlife Gardening contact to Aethne.

A discussion then followed on the various ways in which this programme could be developed such as through 1-2-1's with teachers, experts going into schools or through the provision of online resources. Paul noted that Dwr Cymru currently run a secondment programme whereby teachers are seconded for a set period of time in order to develop their skills and then return to their previous roles.

Kate suggested compiling a list of people in individual organisations who are able to go into schools and the subjects they are able to talk on. It was suggested that this, along with a list of what could be termed educational resources would be useful.

Andy Mackie stated that the National Museum of Wales has been running an outreach programme to schools for 3 years which has proved very successful. The Museum also provides bilingual resources including 'Explore the Sea Floor' resource.

Sean Christian noted that RSPB Cymru have education resources and are involved with 'out of classroom' initiatives and also run a successful field teaching programme at several sites throughout Wales.

Diana then recommended that a small working group be established to develop the proposals, which can then feed back at SG13 in February next year. Diana enquired whether Aethne would have the capacity to lead on this action. Hazel stated that she believed Aethne would be able to work with the group to identify areas of syllabus relevant to the natural environment, but would be unable to lead.

ACTION 16. Aethne and Tina Hawkins to set up the initial learning initiative group to bring together all relevant individuals and resources.

ACTION 17. All to identify education officers and resources in their respective organisations that could be used to take the work of learning initiative group forward and feed these through to the support team (Alys Edwards, a.edwards@welshwildlife.org)

Kate Williamson noted that education resources would need to be bilingual and Diana commented that WAG/CCW would investigate this as appropriate.

ACTION 18. WAG/CCW to investigate provision of bilingual resources for the learning initiative group as and when mono-lingual materials are identified.

Paper to Note A: Invasive Non Native Species Update: Bill Somerfield

Diana introduced the paper in Bill's absence and noted that although Bill will be leaving his role shortly he will continue to chair the INNS group in the short term, to ensure continuity.

Trevor Dines requested that the feeding of information be a two-way process and commented that there was a need for information on INNS to be passed to vice county recorders. Diana noted that the INNS group were meeting in November and she will feed this information to Bill.

Kate Williamson enquired why data was fed to the INNS group and not to the Local Record Centres (LRCs). Diana clarified that any actions being taken on INNS should be sent to the INNS group and data records should be sent to the LRCs. Roy stated that work was ongoing to look at tightening the links between groups and Trevor reiterated the

importance of data being fed to both the LRCs and the County Recorders, noting, also, that it would be extremely helpful to have the list sorted by taxonomic group.

ACTION 19. All to ensure records of INNS are sent to the relevant LRC and actions are sent to the INNS core group (William.Somerfield@Wales.GSI.Gov.UK) and the appropriate regional group.

ACTION 20. INNS data to be provided by INNS groups to LRCs and distributed by the LRCs to vice county recorders.

ACTION 21. Wales INNS Group (Bill Somerfield) to revamp the action plan so that it is sorted by taxonomic group.

ACTION 22. Wales INNS Groups to refresh the relationship between the national and regional INNS groups in Wales in light of Living Wales (Bill Somerfield/Steve Jackson).

Paper to Note B: Wildlife Crime Update: Sgt Ian Guildford

Diana welcomed Ian and noted the new format of the paper, including a synopsis of cases and requested that this reporting in this format be continued. Ian brought the groups attention to the scale of wildlife crime in relation to trade, noting that Wales was now both an exporter and an importer of illegally traded species, highlighting the case of Jeffrey Landrum, who was arrested and successfully convicted of attempting to smuggle peregrine eggs to the Middle East. This case revealed the international context of wildlife crime which is often thought of as a local issue. To underline the international dimension, the UK wildlife crime group will be meeting in the Hague with 7 other counties to discuss and action wildlife crime initiatives.

The Wildlife Enforcement Working Group in Wales has been established and will hold an inaugural meeting on the Monday 29th November.

Sean Christian congratulated the police force and others involved in the prosecution and significant sentence secured for the Landrum case. Ian informed the group that credit must be given to Andy Macmillan from the National Wildlife Crime Unit (NWCU) who secured the conviction and noted that staffing levels within the NWCU currently consisted of three officers covering England, Wales and Scotland. Sean enquired whether these posts were secure with regard to funding as the unit was very important to the RSPB's work and Ian responded that it was possible these posts would be under threat as they were jointly funded by Defra and the UK police forces, all of who would be subject to cuts in funding. Ian reiterated the importance of having one central point of contact and expertise in relation to wildlife crime. Diana thanked Ian and stated that WBP were very grateful for the work of the NWCU.

ACTION 23. Ian to continue to include wildlife crime case examples in future Wildlife Crime updates to WBP SG.

**Paper to Note C: Local Authority and National Park Biodiversity Officer Group
Actions: Richard May on behalf of the Welsh LBAPs**

Richard May introduced the paper and stated that the aim of the paper was to highlight present and future work of the Local Authority and National Park Biodiversity Officers in Wales. The ongoing work was acknowledged as very useful and attention was brought to the Neath Port Talbot award scheme for planning officers which has been running for the past 3 years. Diana welcomed this approach and enquired if it could be copied. Richard commented that it would be possible to replicate this approach in other organisations as well as Local Authorities and a context for the idea would be useful. Kate Williamson questioned if this idea could be passed to the Biodiversity Champions and Diana agreed that WBP would discuss the idea at the upcoming NERC Duty visits with Local Authorities

ACTION 24. WBP to raise the planning awards idea with biodiversity champions at upcoming visits.

ACTION 25. Richard to liaise with Catrin Evans at Neath Port Talbot to prepare a brief outline on the award scheme to be used in Biodiversity Champion meetings.

Trevor Dines noted that the LBAPs had received training in identification skills for shrill carder bee and enquired whether there would be interest amongst the LBAPs for receiving additional training in other taxa, highlighting the lichenology apprentice scheme as an example.

ACTION 26. All to send details of species identification schemes and training workshops from your organisation to Sean (s.mchugh@welshwildlife.org) for dissemination to LBAP officers.

Diana thanked Richard for producing the paper and requested that LBAP progress updates to WBP SG be included for alternate steering group meetings.

ACTION 27. WBP Support team to ensure that LBAP representative is invited to include an LBAP progress update as an item at alternate Steering Group meetings.

Paper to Note D: Biodiversity and Business sub Group Update: Amy Mulkern

Amy Mulkern introduced the paper and informed the group that the aim of the paper was to tie up previous actions identified by the group in preparation for input into the Living Wales. Amy noted the recession and the disbanding of the Arena Network business program had impacted the work of the group and that this paper and the conceptual framework would be a useful contributions to the Living Wales. The main issues the

group had highlighted were a lack of communication between business and the 'biodiversity' sector and the need to make a 'business case' for biodiversity. Amy informed the group that a business and biodiversity portal has been set up on the WBP website with case studies but there was still a need for additional case studies from partners who were working with the business sector. (Link: <http://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/businesses-44.aspx>)

ACTION 28. All to send case studies of public/private sector collaborations to Sean McHugh (s.mchugh@welshwildlife.org) for inclusion on the WBP website.

ACTION 29. All to send details of services their organisations provide to the business sector to Amy Mulkern (AmyMulkern@wildlifetrustswales.org).

Amy stated that there was a need to legitimise contact with business and biodiversity services given the financial and time constraints in many organisations at present.

Paper to Note E: Conceptual Framework for Engaging Business with Biodiversity in Wales: Amy Mulkern

Amy introduced the second paper outlining the conceptual framework for business engagement and informed the group that if approved it would be fed into the Living Wales Partnership work stream. Diana then asked the group for comments.

Paul Henderson agreed it was difficult to find consultants and service providers and that having a central resource to assist with this would be useful. It was agreed that issues need to be flagged early on and Paul mentioned two useful routes for procurement; Achilles (<http://www.achilles.com/en/>) and Sell2Wales (<https://www.sell2wales.co.uk/>).

Trevor Dines enquired if a framework exists for engaging agri-business, in particular with larger companies e.g. Massey Ferguson, Monsanto, large herbicide companies, to address issues such as chemical risk to endangered species. Amy informed the group that this was challenging and that engagement generally takes place through individual organisations using in-house schemes such as the Grazing Animals Project (GAP). There was no formal interaction through WBP so far and the Defra chemical Stakeholder Group, which Amy sits on, does not consider the effect of herbicides.

Amy informed the group that the next meeting of the business and biodiversity subgroup would take place on the 17th November in Newtown and that all were welcome to attend. Andy Schofield who is leading the Living Wales partnership work stream is attending and will providing a NEF perspective at the meeting.

ACTION 30. All to note meeting on the 17th and inform Amy if interested in contributing to the group or attending the above meeting.

The Conceptual Framework was endorsed as the WBP business and biodiversity contribution to the 'Living Wales' partnership work stream.

Paper to Note F: Natur Cymru: Huw Jenkins

Diana introduced the paper and asked the group to approve the additional services offered by Natur Cymru. She informed the group that WAG had previously agreed an increased level of financial support to Natur Cymru and that this could continue, if suitable additional actions were agreed with WBP. Trevor Dines welcomed the idea of Natur Cymru producing reports on behalf of WBP.

ACTION 31. All to inform Huw Jenkins (huw.naturcymru@btinternet.com) of suggestions for campaigns, articles or inserts and/or ideas for potential reports that Natur Cymru could produce on behalf of WBP members.

Paper to Note G: New Woodland Creation for Wales: Michelle van-Velzen

Michelle was unable to attend the meeting and sent her apologies. In her absence, Diana introduced the paper and informed the group that a map viewer was available via the Forestry Commission Wales website (Link: http://maps.forestry.gov.uk/imf/imf.jsp?site=fcwales_ext)

Paul Henderson stated that he was interested in potential grant opportunities but enquired whether the Water Framework Directive (WFD) had been considered in development of the project. Diana informed the group that some red areas were still being worked on and that activity around water bodies were being considered in collaboration with the WFD. Nigel Ajax Lewis highlighted that the draft plan included CCW mapped priority habitats (e.g. saltmarsh, mudflats) and this needed to be addressed.

Paul enquired what balance of native woodland was considered within the woodland/forestry mapping. Clive Walmsley stated that it was 75% native woodland and 25% utility woodland. Richard May noted that although the analysis had included priority habitats there was no reference to Local Authority SINC sites, and that these sites should be also be considered.

Trevor Dines questioned whether funding from existing woodland programmes was being utilised to fund the management costs of the initiative and noted the need for ongoing management of these sites. Diana agreed to clarify these issues with Michelle and feedback to the group.

ACTION 32. All to provide feedback comments on paper and the draft strategic map to Michelle van-Velzen (michelle.van-velzen@forestry.gsi.gov.uk).

ACTION 33. Diana Reynolds to clarify funding mechanism and use of WFD links, SINC sites and CCW priority habitats with Michelle van-Velzen.

Roy Tapping noted that when dealing with species distribution maps the outputs were only as good as the data fed in and noted that the absence of species data which might help to make these maps more useful at a local and strategic level.

ACTION 34. Roy Tapping to open discussions on species distribution maps with FCW (Michelle van-Velzen).

Paper to Note H: Ensuring due regard to section 42 list habitats and species in the development control process: Hazel Drewett

Hazel introduced the paper and informed the group that the amended paragraph regarding consideration of S42 habitats and species would be included as standard in all CCW consultation responses. The amended paragraph has been added to encourage Local Authorities to consider the comments of their own ecologists and NGOs when considering planning applications.

A discussion then followed as to the suitability of the paragraph and whether any changes needed to be made. Richard May recommended adding a reference to TAN 5 and it was agreed that this would be done. Trevor Dines requested Plantlife be included in the list of recommended NGOs to consult and Hazel agreed to include this.

Roy Tapping questioned whether there was a case for drawing up a list of recommended organisation to consult. Diana responded that although this may be useful in the longer term it posed difficulties as, in attempting to produce an exhaustive list of consultees, someone would inevitably be left out, as recommended consultees would be dependant on both the location and the type development being considered. Richard May enquired whether it would be possible for the Local Authority Ecologist to hold this list. Clive Walmsley suggested that it would be more appropriate for CCW regional staff to make recommendations for specific consultees in the body of the CCW response and this was agreed.

Trevor Dines suggested it would be appropriate to include a comment directing planning officer to the LRCs along the lines of "...seek possible further advice based on information from the LRCs". However Richard May noted that Local Authority ecologists would themselves make use of the LRCs when making responses thereby making this addition unnecessary.

Hazel also pointed out that regular planning liaison meetings took place between CCW and Local Authorities which would help with on-going improvements to the process.

ACTION 35. Hazel Drewett to amend CCW S42 planning paragraph to include reference to TAN 5 and include PlantLife as list of recommended consultees.

ACTION 36. Hazel Drewett to provide a reminder to regional CCW staff to add in appropriate bodies for each S42 consultation.

ACTION 37. Local Authority Ecologists to ensure that LRC data considered as part of their advice/responses to planning.

Paper to Note I: Academic Representation on Ecosystem Groups: WBP Support Team

Diana introduced the paper and noted that representation from within the research community was currently lacking on the Species Expert/Ecosystem Groups. The group was informed that the WBP support team, with assistance from Shaun Russell had been actively seeking increased representation on these groups and the next steps would be outlined by the end of the year.

Alys Edwards noted that to date a very positive response had been received, with offers of involvement from 24 academics. Alys informed the group that the Enclosed Farmland Ecosystem Group is currently the only group with no offers of involvement. Diana noted that the Enclosed Farmland group had met recently and had discussed extending the remit of the group which may help in this regard.

ACTION 38. Alys Edwards to follow up on post doctoral researchers links to ecosystem and species expert groups, ensuring a balance between full membership and electronic involvement.

ACTION 39. Alys Edwards to discuss extended remit with the chair of the Enclosed Farmland Ecosystem Group (Caryn Le-Roux) and, with support from Shaun Russell, to follow up suggestions for academics for this group.

Paul Henderson enquired whether there should be a link to the chief scientist for Wales. It was agreed that this would be beneficial and Diana will follow this up.

ACTION 40. Diana Reynolds to follow chief scientist link up with Ecosystem Groups with WAG colleagues (Chris Lea).

ACTION 41. Alys to provide Diana and Chris with firm list of full members and electronic supporters by end of year.

Annex 2: Draft Ecosystem Group Terms of Reference

Diana introduced the draft terms of reference and welcomed comment, stating that there was a need to free up time for the chairs and secretariats of the groups in order to fully develop this work.

Paul Henderson suggested looking at the structure and funding of the UK TAG (www.wfduk.org) and SNIFFER (www.sniffer.org.uk) groups which has worked well with driving forward the Water Framework Directive and includes a charitable arm.

ACTION 42. Diana Reynolds to investigate WBP lessons from UK TAG and SNIFFER environmental research forums.

Trevor Dines remarked that the change in remit of the groups required the need for additional membership of the groups to cover the new, wider remit. Diana responded that this is reflected in the draft Terms of Reference (second bullet) and there is flexibility in calling in additional help as needed. Some ecosystem groups are keen to increase/develop new membership.

Paul Henderson stated that he was happy to be involved in the Freshwater Ecosystem Group.

ACTION 43. Paul Henderson to contact Tristan Hatton-Ellis (T.Hatton-Ellis@ccw.gov.uk) regarding involvement with the Freshwater Ecosystem Group.

WCMP Update

Marine Conservation Zone Site Selection Guidance

Diana asked the group to note that the site selection guidance for the MCZ project is currently out for consultation until the 26th November 2010 (Link: <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/environmentcountryside/consmanagement/marinefisheries/conservation/protected/conservationzones/project/siteselection/?lang=en>)

ACTION 44. All to note the MCZ project consultation event and respond as appropriate.

UKBAP Standing Committee Feedback: Hazel Drewett

Hazel provided feedback from the recent UKBAP Standing Committee held on the 4th October, a summary of which is presented below:

Post 2010 Framework: Preparations for COP10 and the New EU Strategic Plan: Martin Brasher reported that the CBD Conference of Parties was imminent (18-29 October). The UK delegation comprised representatives of Defra, JNCC, Kew and other

Government Departments. The Devolved Administrations had been kept closely in touch throughout the preparatory process. On the EU Strategy, Martin reported that the European Commission was working on the production of an action plan and that a public consultation was ongoing, with comments required by 22 October. CCW have responded to the consultation.

Feedback from BRAG: BRAG's last meeting in July prioritised work areas. Three areas on which new investigations would be instigated:

- 1) forestry/woodland and biodiversity;
- 2) agriculture/aquaculture/food security and biodiversity – to ensure there was a biodiversity aspect to the work of the Food Council;
- 3) systematics and taxonomy.

Review of UK Habitat Groups: Paul Rose (JNCC) explained that the UK Habitat Groups had been established following devolution with the role of aggregating targets from the four countries and reporting these at UK level. He mentioned that BRIG had consulted the groups and other stakeholders and that this had revealed that the groups were struggling to meet their objectives; and that there was limited support for them to continue. He reported that BRIG's recommendation was therefore to disband the groups. Paul confirmed to John Robbs that there was no need to replace them with anything else at this stage. A letter would be issued to the members of the UK Habitat Group chairs thanking them for their service and explaining the reasons for disbanding the groups.

Review of HAP and SAP Groups: Defra would draft a second letter for the HAP and SAP groups, explaining that a view would be taken on the structures needed to support future strategies in the four countries at the UK level next year and that this would consider what technical expertise currently resting in the HAP and SAP groups might be drawn upon.

Plans for Biodiversity Reporting at the UK Level Post 2010 were also discussed and would be influenced by the recent COP 10 conference in Nagoya. It was noted that UK indicators don't always aggregate well due to devolved BAP status in the county nations.

The next meeting of the UK BAP steering group will take place on 4th May 2011.

Minutes and Actions from SG11

The minutes from the last meeting were accepted as a true record of the meeting.

ACTION 30. Sean McHugh to arrange 2011 conference booking with Aberystwyth University.

ACTION 45. Aberystwyth University is fully booked in September so Sean to carry forward this action by investigating the possibility of using Trinity College Carmarthen for the 2011 WBP Conference.

ACTION 38. WBP Support Team to cascade SEED paper to Ecosystem and Species groups who will feed comments to Nina Prichard to influence funding streams. (nina.prichard@wales.gsi.gov.uk)

Steve Chambers will be in touch with ecosystem groups directly for their recommendations.

ACTION 46. David Parker to check when the 2008 UK BAP Report will be available.

UK BAP 2008 report will not be made available. Problems with JNCC data have been identified. Some 'clean' data is available and the relevant WBP support team (Jan sherry) is looking at the best way to take this forward. Diana thanked Nigel Ajax Lewis for his efforts in analysing the data.

AOB

Diana brought the groups attention to iSpot (www.iSpot.org.uk), a website developed by the Open University (OU) to engage the public and experts to learn and share their interest with nature. The OU would like to encourage as many people as possible to get involved with iSpot and there is a facility for posting pictures and descriptions of wildlife encountered.

ACTION 46. All to note the iSpot website and engage/publicise as appropriate.

Lichen Apprenticeship Scheme: Trevor Dines

Diana noted that T&S costs were available to unpaid volunteers and confirmed that details of the 3-Agency funding officers had been circulated to Ray Woods and Alan Hale.

ACTION 47. Trevor Dines to encourage proactive use of these options and draft a Lichen apprenticeship progress report for SG13

UK BAP NERC Course, Plas Tan-y-Bwlch

Diana informed the group of the national BAP course due to take place in 7 – 9 February 2011 and encouraged WBP members to promote the course within their organisation. (Link: <http://www.snowdonia-npa.gov.uk>). Tracey Lovering suggested that it would be useful to highlight the course at the upcoming LA/NPA biodiversity champion visits.

ACTION 48. All- Remind senior staff in your organisation of the Plas Tan-y-Bwlch NERC Duty course.

ACTION 49. WBP Support Team to highlight the Plas course in the upcoming biodiversity champion LA/NPA visits.

Diana then asked the group to formally pass on our best wishes to Steve Moon, Katie-jo Luxton and Gerry Quarrell, and informed the group that Linda Warren and herself would be recording a video card for Steve and would convey everyone's best wishes.

Climate Change Strategy: Clive Walmsley

Clive informed the group that the Climate Change Strategy was launched in October, and included an adaptation action plan. The group would also be considering its approach to 'A Living Wales' at their next meeting. It was agreed that it would be useful for Clive to run an adaptation session, either at SG13 or the next Policy Group meeting.

ACTION 50. Clive to consider correct audience for this presentation and inform the chair of the relevant group so that it can be added to the agenda.

Sean Russell enquired whether a list of BAP habitats and associated species had been produced for Wales, along similar lines to the one produced for England. Trevor Dines informed the group that an exercise will take place over the winter to complete this work.

Richard May enquired about the status of the data sharing charter and Roy Tapping informed the group that it has now been endorsed by the Minister. The Wales Environmental Information Forum (WEIF) will be meeting on the 18th December 2010 in Aberystwyth where the data charter will be signed off and available for use directly after the meeting.

Stuart Moodie provided an update on British Waterways (BW), informing the group BW will be evolving into a third sector organisation over the next couple of years and that himself or Chris John would be the contact.

Trevor Dines enquired as to the status of species without actions associated or lead partners and commented that it would be good to have feedback at the next Species Expert Group meeting. Diana mentioned that the issue was under consideration and Graham Oliver has agreed to look at some of the lead partner gaps on behalf of the Natural History Museum and an update from Graham was required.

ACTION 51. Sean McHugh to check with Stephen Bladwell and Graham Oliver on progress with offer of lead partner 'gaps' and feed back to Trevor.

Date of next meeting:

SG13 10th February 2011, National Museum of Wales, Cardiff

SG14 12th July 2011, WAG offices, Newtown

Diana thanked everyone for attending and for their hard work between steering group meetings and closed the meeting.