

Wales Biodiversity Partnership Invasive Non Native Species Group

Llandefgeidd Reservoir

23rd March 2016

Minutes

Attendees

Dave Thomas (Chair)	DT	Welsh Government - LNF
Richard Poole	RP	Dwr Cymru
Colin Cheesman	CC	Plantlife
Dan Jones	DJ	Swansea University
Jo Cable	JC	Cardiff University
Judith Oakley	JO	CCS, University of Wales Trinity Saint David
Holly York	HY	Wales Biodiversity Partnership
Nigel Ajax-Lewis	NA-L	Wildlife Trusts (and on behalf of WEL)
Niall Moore	NM	GB non-native species secretariat (GB NNSS) (Dial-in)
Emma Barton	EB	RYA (Dial-in)
Sharon Davies	SD	WG – Marine (Dial-in)
Gabe Wyn	GW	Natural Resources Wales (NRW) (Dial-in)
Nick Bialynicki-Birula	NB-B	NRW (Dial-In)
Dave Thorpe	DTh	NRW (Dial-in)
Kathleen Carroll	KC	WG – LNF (Dial-in)

Apologies

Dan Forman	DF	Swansea University
Jo Mullett	JM	Knotweed Control
Sean Hathaway	SH	City and County of Swansea
Alison Smith	AS	WG - Property
Anthony Hicks	AH	WG – LNF
Ben Rowson	BR	National Museum Wales
Bradley Welch	BW	Brecon Beacon National Park Authority

1. Welcome, introductions, apologies and AOB items

DT extended a warm welcome to all attendees, particularly to Dr Dan Jones who is attending his first meeting as a member.

2. Actions from previous meetings

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and will be published on the WBP website. Chair thanked HY for minute taking.

Action 1: HY to upload the minutes onto the WBP website
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The majority of the actions from November's meeting are covered by agenda items or listed below with an update.

November Action 5: HY to look at an adaption of data flow policy for LBAPS/LA use	Ongoing. Several LBAPs (Powys, Newport) are producing Invasive Species Action Plans at the moment. Actions will include data flow
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	<p>guidance. HY will circulate to members for comments when available.</p> <p>Note, NRW happy for the NRW internal data flow policy to be adapted for organisations use.</p>
<p>November Action 6: HY/DTh to investigate scope for an adapted INNS data flow policy for CIEEM best practice guidance.</p>	<p>DTh spoken to Mike Willis (NRW) who sits on the CIEEM governing board. Mike is meeting with board today and will discuss. DTh is also looking into a NRW biosecurity policy. Action 2: DTh/HY to progress</p>

Nov Action 7: **Marine Biosecurity Guidance** in British Marine Annual Marina conference delegate pack: EB – Guidance was sent to them. GW will provide an update on England training provided on the Marine Biosecurity Guidance at our next meeting.

Nov Action 8: **Topmouth Gudgeon** eradication on Welsh sites with the EA. DT reported he has been in touch with EA, as has NM. NM reported costs appear lower than initial estimated costs, with the main cost being for the purchase of rotenone. NB-B reported discussions with WG Marine team to see how funds can be accessed to conduct the work, with work being carried out through the Environment Agency.

Nov Action 11: **N2K INNS Actions** – DT received no specific comments. NB-B noted that the N2K team is now disbanded (work identifying N2K Actions is complete). There may be some possible cross over with Implementation Plan. A role for the group to support any funding bids relating to N2K INNS Actions and to look at pooling resources?

Could we link to the new Section 7 list of the Environment Act? Is there potential for INNS species to be listed? Guidance is under development – Dai Harris and team are working on the biodiversity guidance.

ACTION 3: DT to contact Dai Harris regarding INNS species listing on S7 of the Environment Act. HY to arrange a specific meeting to discuss if required.

Nov Action 13: Membership. DT reported that the group have strengthened academic links (Jo Cable from Cardiff University and Dan Jones from Swansea University), with National Museum Wales (Ben Rowson) and with the National Parks (Bradley Welch at Brecon Beacons National Park Authority) joining the group. Additional potential members include AONB representative and strengthening LBAP/Local Authority representation.

Action 4: ALL to provide further suggestions for membership

3. Any other business

None

4. Review of Welsh INNS Priorities (NA-L/NM)

NA-L and NM have drafted a review of the Welsh Non-Native Species Priorities (Paper 4)

- List is now shorter – 41 species listed
- List includes GB priorities and EU listed species
- Species are listed under three categories
 - High Alert Species (*not in wales but likely to arrive and for which the response is to prevent arrival and/or establishment*) e.g. African clawed toad/frog (*Xenopus laevis*)
 - Priority Rapid Response Species (*present in the wild where national eradication is required/desirable*) e.g. Ruddy duck, Topmouth Gudgeon, Water Primrose
 - Strategic Control Priorities (*established in Wales where the main aim can be protecting key areas, containment, control or mitigation*)
- Marine species to be added. GW: Working with SD on reviewing the Welsh Marine INNS priority list. The Marine INNS priorities will be discussed with marine stakeholders – the Welsh Marine Strategic Advisory Group. Also need to consider the list of species that are subject to monitoring and surveillance to meet the requirements of the MSFD and the W&C Act Schedule 9.
- JC asked why *Xenopus laevis* is listed. KC reported that although the pathway has gone, there could still be existing populations that have not yet been detected.
- JO asked why terrapins are not listed. A – although terrapins do persist in Wales there is no evidence of successful breeding so not deemed a high priority
- List takes into account the ease of removal
- NB-B suggested that the group should regularly review the list.
- Communications plan? List will go on to the WBP website. Should a public facing document be produced with key information? Listed on the Marine Planning Portal?

Action 5: ALL members to comment on draft INNS priorities document by end of April to NA-L. NA-L/NM to continue review with members' comments and feedback to group at the June meeting.

5. EU IAS Regulation – update by NM

37 species have been proposed - 23 animals, and 14 plants. The Committee met on the 4th December (Trevor Salmon at DEFRA and NM attended) where members voted and the list was passed. The European Commission then publishes the EU list of concern in the Official Journal (OJ) of the European Union and the list comes into force 20 days after. However, EU parliament has set a motion condemning the list for several reasons (e.g. too political, length of list, species listed). The commission will reply to the motion - currently on its way through the replying mechanism. Penalties and sanctions regulations (e.g. border control permits) will follow, likely to be autumn time.

Roughly half of the species are present in the UK. Some will need management plans (at UK level). KC noted that Chinese Mitten Crab will still be allowed to be imported for restaurant use.

Action 6: DT/HY to circulate the IAS regulations timeframe

6. Short break

7. GB INNS Strategy and Implementation Plan (NM)

NM updated the group on progress of the Implementation Plan:

- **3.3. Develop Pathway Action Plans (PAPs)** – the first PAP for Zoos and Aquaria has been developed and is going to the Programme Board in May. This PAP provides a template for future PAPs. GB NNSS are seeking suggestions for the next PAPs to prioritise – feedback any suggestions to NM
- **3.7 Rapid Response Group** reconvened – looking at resources needed for rapid response, future priorities and contingency planning for priority species.
- **Contingency Plans** at England level will expand to cover Wales and Scotland or take forward separately. DT suggested a role for this group to be involved in drafting, NRW supported this suggestion.

Action 7: NM/DT to check with DEFRA if England contingency plan drafts can be circulated to members at this stage

- **Public awareness** – the recent Invasives Week was successful. Over 160 organisations were involved, with lots of tweeting including from the Welsh Minister for Natural Resources. See hashtag #InvasivesWeek on twitter. The Green Blue launched their inland sailing guidance. Minister Lord Gardiner visited Walthamstow Reservoir, a Thames Water site to look at biosecurity – the site has Zebra Mussels. The week coincided with the 5th birthday of CCD campaign. DTh suggested that May/June time would be a useful time for Invasive Week with more INNS around. NM noted. HY/DT to look at dissemination of information during future Invasive Week's with GB NNSS.
- **Research Working Group** – NM is working on setting up the group but unfortunately several meeting suggested meeting chairs have fallen through.
- **Annual Stakeholder Forum** – is likely to take place on the 8th July in London (TBC in due course).

8. Work planning and Evidence gaps

Evidence Gaps – Tracey Lovering has now left WBP to take up a job with Plantlife. Alys Morris, Sustainable Places Research Institute has taken up administration of the EGs project in the interim. EG's can be initially submitted to HY.

Group discussed EGs and several main issues were raised:

- Lack of evidence gaps suggestions
 - Update the list with our new Welsh INNS priorities
 - GW working on producing NRW's marine evidence gaps which can feed in
 - Provide a user friendly list for members to easily select fields of expertise
- JC noted that research is already being undertaken under some of the INNS priority species currently listed on EG's register
- Communications of INNS gaps needs to be communicated more widely within academia.

EB asked if GB level research working group can help the group identify Welsh EGs? NM noted that members can suggest gaps that can feed up into the GB level group. Note, EG's can be GB wide or Wales specific, can be for a particular species or for non-specific

species/topics e.g. biosecurity, boating. Members can look at their individual areas of expertise.

DTh offered to take the lead with the EG's.

Action 8: HY to provide a user friendly list of INNS EG's with updated priorities to members

Action 9: HY/DTh to look at current research already being undertaken on EG's register (with academic members)

Work Planning - Our current work plan finishes at the end of March 2016. The work planning subgroup (suggested at the last meeting) did not get 'off the ground' but members noted the value in setting up a meeting to take the work plan forward. Work plan should align with GB strategy, Implementation plan, IAS Regulations and Welsh priorities. A pro-formae for partners to complete (used for partner updates) can feed into work plan to monitor the progress.

Action 10: HY to arrange work plan subgroup meeting in April/May

9. UK Infrastructure Act – update on Species Control Code of Practice (KC)

The Code of practice for species control provisions in Wales' [consultation](#) is running until the 5th April. The consultation has been well circulated, including to Group members and on the WBP monthly newsletter. Around 10-20 responses have been received so far. A consultation in England has been completed by Defra.

10. CCD Guide for inland sailing clubs (EB)

The Green Blue has developed a new guide to Check Clean Dry for Inland Sailing Clubs. The guide was launched during Invasive Species Week. It focuses on the practicalities of CCD and provides a checklist to help clubs assess what needs to be put in place for delivery. An electronic copy was circulated with the agenda. Hard copies are available from RYA or downloadable from the RYA website [here](#). RYA also have various education [resources](#) e.g. activity cards. Please contact Emma for hard copies.

KC asked if an electronic copy of the guidance is available in Welsh. No copy is available in Welsh, but RYA can provide copies if a member can provide translation.

RP reported that the guides are being used already at Llandefgedd Reservoir.

11. Welsh Federation of Sea Anglers (RP)

RP updated the group on the Welsh Federation of Sea Anglers (WFSA), a federation run for and by recreational sea anglers. RP is the National Fish Recorder at WFSA. WFSA has over 60 affiliated clubs, with over 3000 anglers represented. Members form a potential resource for identifying Invasive Species and for spreading INNS messages. Many anglers interested in wildlife, particularly those collecting their own bait.

Group supports RP in taking forward INNS messages to WSFA. GW suggested looking at the Marine INNS [resource pack](#) and alien species champion programme developed by the North Wales Marine Aliens Project.

WSFA website: www.wfsa.org.uk

WSFA Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/103368423031729/>

12. Review of Schedule 9 (W&C Act 1981) – update from JNCC

DT provided a short update on the review of Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 received from JNCC.

The document has been simplified since its last viewing by the JNCC led working group. Overall, 17 animal species are proposed for addition and 2 for removal, along with 10 plans for addition and 5 for removal.

The report will be shared when available. NM reported that the list will be presented to Defra and WG with a consultation to follow.

13. Partner Updates

Dwr Cymru (RP): See circulated partner update for full details. Highlights include:

- Working on a Japanese Knotweed GIS layer. Planning to provide data to LERCs and use BARS
- Increasing awareness and biosecurity within workforce
- INNS Funding scheme is still running (see circulated details and online [here](#)).

Natural Resources Wales (NB-B, GW): Highlights include:

- Providing a response to the Species Control Order consultation
- SBRI is progressing well with the feasibility of the two projects being reviewed (Biochar INNS plants, and new technological control of aquatic INNS)
- Working with the LERCs on dataflow onto the NBN gateway. Data will be uploaded regularly (~quarterly)
- Working on making INNS apps windows compatible

Plantlife (CC): Ongoing work as mentioned in previous meeting update. Plantlife are being funded by WG to produce a toolkit for Cotoneaster control. CC is working with NRW, NE and Buglife on a sand dunes LIFE and HLF bid. This should include Sea buckthorn management at Carmarthen Dunes.

City and County of Swansea and University of Wales Trinity Saint David (JO):

Apologies from Sean Hathaway, he is carrying out Japanese Knotweed surveys with students from UWTSD today. Further surveys will take place with students from Swansea University. Findings will help update Japanese Knotweed mapping layers for the council. JO is working with NRW and landowners to remove Hottentot-fig at a site in April.

Cardiff University (JC): current research includes work on invasive crayfish. Other research taking place at university on Invasive species includes eDNA on Chinese mitten crabs.

Swansea University (Dan Forman): DF co-supervising a PhD on aspects of Himalayan Balsam impacts, dispersal and management. Ffion has produced a poster to promote the submission of under-recorded species.

Welsh Government (KC)

- Translating biosecurity INNS e-learning module to make available in Welsh on the GB NNSS website.
- Produced leaflets on Japanese knotweed, Giant hogweed and Himalayan balsam. Leaflets include information on identification, management and legislation. Leaflets can be downloaded here:
<http://gov.wales/topics/environmentcountryside/farmingandcountryside/plantsseedsbiotechnology/invasive-non-native-species/invasive-plant-species/?lang=en>
- Sika deer update: Following discussions at previous meeting, and a meeting held with GB NNSS, Wildlife Trust and NRW regarding the small population of Sika Deer in Wales a briefing was provided to the Minister regarding a potential trial programme for eradication. It has been decided to continue monitoring at this time.
- DT: pleased to see Ministers remit letter to NRW included an Invasive Species reference 'Provide timely and joined-up advice to Welsh Government on the implementation of EU and domestic regulations and in support of infraction casework, including helping to develop the approach to implementation of the new EU Invasive Alien Species Regulation'. Read the full letter [here](#).

Wales Biodiversity Partnership (HY)

The Nature Recovery Plan parts 1 and 2 have been released. The NRP comes in three parts – Part 1 the strategy, Part 2 the action plan and Part 3 the governance. Part 1 is available to download from the WG website [here](#). Part 2 is a living document and available by emailing Bio.Diversity@wales.gsi.gov.uk. The overall aim of the NRP is to 'reverse the decline in biodiversity, for its intrinsic value, and to ensure lasting benefits to society'. It has 6 objectives around engagement and support, safeguarding species and habitats, increasing resilience, tackling key pressures (including Invasive Species), improving evidence and a framework of governance. HY suggested looking at the NRP objectives and actions when working on the group work plan.

Action 11: ALL to send any further updates to HY for circulation

14. Any further AOBs

DT reported that Welsh Language standards come into place from 1st April 2016. Any business undertaken by WG will need to be bilingual. Members can inform WG if they wish our meetings to be bilingual. Note, WBP INNS Group meeting minutes are available in Welsh. These are published on the WBP website.

15. Future agenda items and date of next meeting

Future agenda items suggestions:

- NA-L: Rail electrification plans on South Wales to Cardiff lines poses risk of spread of Japanese Knotweed or potential for eradication work?

Action 12: Potential effects on Japanese Knotweed spread or potential for eradication during rail electrification work in South Wales. NA-L to investigate

- Focus on one topic area e.g. terrestrial INNS?
- Grey Squirrel strategy update (Chris Tucker)
- Cotoneaster control leaflets (Colin Cheesman)

Date of next meeting will be late June – Date TBC. RP offered use of Welsh Water office at Elan Valley.

Action 13: ALL Please send any Agenda suggestions to HY

Action 14: HY/DT to arrange date of next meeting