

Wales Biodiversity Partnership Invasive Non Native Species Group

Tan y bwch, Welsh Government, Aberystwyth
22nd March 2017
Minutes

Attendees: Leasa Fielding (Welsh Government), Holly York (WBP), Kathleen Carroll (WG), Richard Poole (Dwr Cymru), Nigel Ajax-Lewis (Wildlife Trusts), Theresa Kudelska (NRW), Jennie Jones (NRW), Alison Smith (WG) **Dial-in:** Lucy Cornwell (GB NNSS), Emma Barton (RYA), Sean Hathaway (City and County of Swansea), Sharon Davies (WG), Chris Tucker (NRW), Bradley Welch (Brecon Beacons National Park Authority), Tom King (Canal and River Trust), Olaf Booy (GB NNSS)

Apologies: Anthony Hicks (WG), Dan Forman (Swansea University), Gabe Wyn (NRW), Dave Thorpe (NRW), Jo Cable (Cardiff University), Dan Jones (Swansea University), Hilary Foster (NRW), Judith Oakley (CCS, University of Wales Trinity Saint David), Neville Rookes (WLGA), Niall Moore (GB NNSS), David Hall (Cardiff Harbour Authority), Tracey King (Ornamental Aquatics Trade), Jo Mullett (Knotweed Control).

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies

Leasa Fielding replaces Dave Thomas's role at Welsh Government and is the new chair of the WBP INNS Group.

2. Matters arising and actions from previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved and will be published on the WBP website.

ACTION 1: HY to upload the minutes from the previous meeting onto the WBP website

The majority of the actions are complete or agenda items. Action 2 is deferred. Rail electrification work (action 3 of previous meeting) – discussion around the recent Japanese Knotweed case, a homeowner whose bungalow is encroached by JK on a railway line has won a case for compensation from Network Rail. Awaiting response from Network Rail.

ACTION 2: DTh to continue to investigate INNS data and biosecurity policies for CIEEM best practice

3. Invasive Species Week Planning

LC updated the group on Invasive Week progress

- Invasive Week is 27th March to 2nd April
- Will be a different focus on each day: Monday – welcome to the week, launch of Asian Hornet app, Tues – biosecurity, Weds – recording and identification, Thurs – local action groups, Friday – projects.
- Social media – please use Hashtag #InvasivesWeek. GBNNSS will be tweeting at @checkcleandry

- LF ran through the events taking place in Wales (See Paper 'item 3 Invasive Species Week 2017'). BW updated the group on the events planned in BBNPA which will include a species of the day, social media, site visits and developing work with Welsh Water. SD: hoping that the Cabinet Secretary will tweet. TK/JJ – delivering a roadshow around the NRW offices.
- The e-learning biosecurity module in Welsh will hopefully be launched shortly.
- NA-L: the Wildlife Trust's will be at the RHS Spring Show in Cardiff 7th to 9th April with a wild woodland garden. Will be highlighting the differences between the native and Spanish bluebells. GBNSS (APHA) will also be at the show.
- Be Plant Wise 'Don't dump aquarium or pond plants in the wild' stickers have been printed e.g. to display on aquatic plant tanks. Could these be printed in Welsh? Minimal cost to redesign with Welsh and print.
- RP: Welsh Water are producing an INNS handbook to be used internally - will include identification and logging. Also hoping to release an internal e-learning biosecurity (including INNS) training course for staff. Provide biosecurity information to water users and at visitor centres.

ACTION 3: LC/HY circulate Invasives Week social media pack

ACTION 4: LF/KC with **LC** to look into producing the Be Plant Wise stickers in Welsh

4. Clean Check Dry and Be Plant Wise campaigns in Wales

NRW are looking to reinvigorate the campaigns in Wales. Bilingual signs and leaflets are available from WG and NRW. Making contact with partners e.g. BBNPA, Canoe Wales. Will be initially promoting the campaigns through Invasives Week.

Concern raised that angling communities are reluctant to install signage as they do not want to suggest that it indicates an access point for boats (the signs show a picture of a boat). Could we produce a sign for angling use without a picture of a boat on? Should be feasible to contact designer to have the sign adapted.

ACTION 5: ALL partners to contact NRW for bilingual signs and leaflets on Clean Check Dry and Be Plant Wise.

ACTION 6: LF/KC with **LC** to look into producing CCD signs without boats

5. Membership, Work Plan, Terms of Reference

Membership review:

- Potential members – Trunk Road Agencies, Network Rail (AS has a contact), other National Park Authorities and AONBs, Bangor University (JJ has a contact), Severn Trent? Canoe Wales or British Canoe (latter involved at GB level), Farming sector e.g. NFU
- Need new contacts for Welsh Fisherman's Association, Horticultural Trade Association
- Who represents the majority of ports/harbours?
- More local authority representatives? WBP send information to the Local Nature Partnerships and the WBP Groups. Some LNPs have INNS subgroups looking at their Invasive Species Action Plans e.g. Pembrokeshire, Ceredigion.

- NA-L provides information to WEL members

Members can be full or corresponding. Could create a communications group.

Terms of Reference review:

- Covers the main roles e.g. promoting INNS, raising awareness, biosecurity
- Scope (iii) – Remove ‘to co-ordinate’ and including species alerts
- Scope (vii) – update with the latest legislation and strategies

Work plan review: Our work plan is now out of date and requires reviewing and updating.

Group went through and reviewed the work plan activities. Notes made directly on work plan. HY/LF to formulate an updated work plan based on discussions and send to members for further comments.

Additional discussion points:

- GB NNS Stakeholder Forum will take place in Cardiff on the 13th June. If you have an agenda suggestions please contact LC.
- BARS is now closed. An alternative mechanism to record biodiversity action and projects (including INNS) may be the use of an application on the new NBN Atlas. The focus is currently on the establishing the NBN Atlas (a replacement to the NBN Gateway) – the development of applications will fall into a later stage of development.
- Update on the Nature Recovery Action Plan – moving towards the delivery phase. Looking to establish an implementation group with task and finish groups focused on prioritised actions. The WBP Ecosystem Groups are likely to close with expertise transferring to the task and finish groups. The WBP INNS Group will continue. The WBP Support Team is moving hosts to Natural Resources Wales. Matthew Quinn is on secondment to Cardiff University. Now under directorate of Andrew Slade.

ACTION 7: LF/HY to look further at membership list and invite new members as appropriate

ACTION 8: LF/HY to update the Terms of Reference

ACTION 9: LF/HY to update the work plan and circulate for comments

6. Welsh Government updates

Update from Welsh Government – LF, KC, AS:

- Species Control Provisions– code of practice has now been finalised and is with the design team. It will be laid in the Assembly. There is a separate code of practice for England – both will be launched at the same time.
- Update on the CABI trials on Japanese Knotweed – second phase releases taking place on different sites with higher chance of success.
- Continuing with the eradication programme on estates – mainly on Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam.

7. Local Action Groups in Wales

Discussion on local action groups in Wales. Only 2 groups are listed on the GB NNS website ‘List of Local Action Groups’ at present (River Usk Giant Hogweed Forum and Wye

and Usk Foundation). Other groups active but not listed in Wales include the Dee INNS Project/Group, Pembrokeshire Stitch in Time. Potential LAGs – HLF Living Levels Partnership are looking to establish a local INNS group, any subgroups of the LBAPs? Himalayan balsam project on the River Ystwyth (NRW)? Local community groups? Local Wards e.g. INNS free ward? Mike Sutton-Cross leads on communications with the LAGs.

No specific criteria need to become a LAG – just a group or project focused on INNS. GB NNSS provides a 'toolkit' of resources to LAGs and runs an annual workshop.

All to encourage any potential Local Action Groups to sign up with the GB NNSS.

8. NRW INNS Programme Work Plan (NRW)

Update from TK and JJ. Also see the item 8 briefing note paper.

Identified and prioritised actions in Dec 2016, underwent a period of consultation and then presented the final plan for sign off by the Programme Board in January. Creating an abridged version of the narrative and work plan which will be available for circulation soon. The process identified a list of actions across Wales – these were prioritised to identify a short list of actions that can be undertaken within the timescale. Those actions which need to be undertaken but which were screened out of the work programme this year could form the basis of future work plans should the programme be extended or other bodies/organisations could undertake some of these actions. These will be presented back to the WBP INNS Group at the next meeting. Potential for some of these actions to align with the groups' work plan.

11 work streams with 22 work packages have been identified. These include

- Supporting the implementation of the new IAS (enforcing and permitting) regulations including role out of the codes of practice provisions and embedding these new powers within NRW processes
- Surveillance and horizon scanning – supporting the production of a GB level surveillance analysis, setting up a Wales alert system
- Pathways e.g. PAPS – supporting the GB NNSS at a GB and Welsh level
- Rapid Response – supporting GB NNSS contingency plans, supporting the development of the priority species for eradication list in Wales
- Biosecurity – reviewing and improving within NRW.
- Supporting the production of management plans – e.g. updating the Topmouth Gudgeon eradication plan on a site.

Team will have 5 members, the 5th (Marine technical INNS) being interviewed next week

9. Priority species list

At the last meeting, NRW INNS Team took an action to look at the Wales Priority Species List. The INNS Priority species list for Wales was circulated prior to the meeting. The list is similar to the last iteration – with 4 marine species inclusions as identified through NRW's work on marine priority species, listing of the Invasive Garden Ant and Demon Shrimp along with some presentation/formatting updates. Engagement, presentation style and considering relevant actions for these species to be looked at during the next meeting. Must look at engagement outside of the biodiversity field e.g. contractors, through the national procurement system who could be early alerts for species.

Table 2 Management priority species lists those species that are present or recently present in the wild in Wales in low numbers or limited isolated populations – steered away from calling it rapid response as some species have been present in low numbers in Wales for some time. Some species listed e.g. the Aesculapian Snake may require feasibility studies. NRW project ongoing on the Alpine Newt – locations and feasibility to stop their spread/ability to contain the populations.

The Priority species list (INNS – priority species for action in Wales) is agreed by the WBP INNS Group.

The list will be reviewed regularly.

10. GB Strategy, including Implementation plan and IAS regulations

Update from Olaf Booy, GB NNSS.

- Contingency plans for horizon scanning to be signed off. Will be looking at how these can be resourced and who the leads should be under various circumstances.
- Asian Hornets – nest was removed in Gloucestershire. A recent report has been received of a single Asian Hornet at a supermarket distribution centre located west of Edinburgh. The hornet was caught by staff and sent to pest control. Its pathway is likely to have been from goods delivered. Species alert information will be provided for the pest control media and to distribution centres.
- IAS Regulations – the first list is in place, an additional 12 species are under review and a vote will take place on those in the summer
- Timescales on contingency plans? Keen to publish as a public document and keen for stakeholders views. At present, the plans are sensitive, but hope to release to wider stakeholder group in due course. TK: NRW INNS Team have been given agreement in principle to help develop the contingency plans. More work on the resources needs to implement them and ownership will be needed before plans can be embedded.
- Discussion around the GB Training Group (a subgroup/T&F of the GB NNSS Media and Communications group) and report produced around training priorities. The report can be downloaded from the GB NNSS publications page - <http://www.nonnativespecies.org/index.cfm?sectionid=59> – see ‘Report of the Training Working Group for Great Britain’ halfway down the page.

11. Partner updates – Most partner updates have been covered through other agenda items.

Royal Yachting Association, RYA Cymru Wales and The Green Blue (EB)

[The Green Blue’s University Sailing Sustainability Challenge](#) concluded at the RYA Suzuki Dinghy Show on 4 March 2017, with Bangor University clinching first place after 6 months of enthusiastic competition. Cardiff University were also awarded joint 4th place.

A variety of actions were achieved by competing clubs, including performing an environmental audit of their sailing venue, ensuring use of reusable water bottles, installing an oil/fuel spill kit at their sailing venue, and demonstrating ‘check, clean and dry’ best practice to minimise the spread of alien species around UK waters. The University Sustainability Challenge is also having a wider impact on other sports, with Bangor

University keen to use the sustainable action plan developed by The Green Blue with each of its sports clubs.

[A new initiative](#) between The Green Blue and the RS Aero Class Association will see The Green Blue working with those clubs used by the Class for their racing circuit to make them more environmentally sustainable. The initiative was launched at the RYA Suzuki Dinghy Show and the first event will be at Burghfield Sailing Club on 1 April. The circuit includes Bala Sailing Club.

The Green Blue continues to promote [Check Clean Dry](#) with sailing clubs, including Pwllheli, Plas Menai and Cardiff Bay Yacht Clubs, and is approaching clubs used by class associations and/or university sailing clubs. These include Tata Steel used by Swansea University Sailing Club and Lyn Brenig Sailing Club used by the Optimist Class Association. New Welsh Check Clean Dry signs have been received from Welsh Government and will be disseminated to clubs during events and visits.

12. Any other business

- OB: For info – Ireland are holding a horizon scanning exercise in 3 weeks. GB NNSS will be attending. Outcomes may be relevant to the group, particularly around pathways. OB to feedback to keep group informed of outcomes as applicable.

13. Future agenda items

Potential agenda items for our next meeting include

- Demonstration of the NBN Atlas applications
- Look at actions identified through the NRW INNS Work Programme that did not get picked up to work on during the programmes timescales.
- Update from the NRW INNS Programme including the priority list.
- Members find it useful to receive updates on relevant legislation and regulations.

The next WBP INNS Group meeting is on the **Wednesday 21st June 2017**. Location to be confirmed.

ACTION 10: HY/LF to arrange meeting location for our next meeting on the 21 st June.
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