

## WBP SG19

19<sup>th</sup> February 2013

Swansea

### AGENDA

The 19<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Wales Biodiversity Partnership Steering Group will be held in the Swansea Environment Centre (a location map can be found [here](#)). Tea and coffee will be available from 10:00.

TIME	PAPER No:	TITLE	LEAD
10:00	<b>Assemble, tea/coffee</b>		
10:30	1	<b>Welcome:</b> Introduction and apologies	Matthew Quinn
10:35	2	<b>Update:</b> Wales Biodiversity Implementation Framework	John Watkins
11:15	3	<b>Main Paper:</b> s42 Revisions	Stephen Bladwell/Clare Burrows
11:55	4	<b>Main Paper:</b> WBP Wales-level Groups Annual Reporting	Tracey Lovering
<b>12:35</b>	<b>LUNCH – Please bring a packed lunch</b>		
13:35	5	<b>Main Paper:</b> WBP Planning and Budgeting	Sean McHugh
14:05	6	Papers to Note: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>A:</b> Wildlife Crime Update</li> <li>- <b>B:</b> South East Wales Local Wildlife Sites Project</li> <li>- <b>C:</b> Taxonomy and Identification Training: Assessing Needs and Provision in Wales</li> <li>- <b>D:</b> WBP Awareness Raising Activities</li> </ul>	Matt Howells Melanie Dodd Graham Oliver  Sean McHugh
14:35	7	Feedback from Wales Coastal Maritime Partnership (WCMP)	
14:40	8	Four Countries Update	
14:50	9	Confirm minutes and actions from last meeting	
15:00	10	AOB	
15:15	11	<b>Date/Format of future meetings</b>	
15:30	<b>Afternoon tea and finish</b>		

A regular train service operates from Swansea see [www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk) for details.

**WBPSG19**  
**PAPER 01**  
**19<sup>th</sup> February 2013**

**Section 42 List Amendment - Ffridd**

**Amendment to Wales' Priority Species and Habitats List: section 42 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 to include ffridd (coedcae, upland fringe)**

**Produced by:** Clare Burrows, Enclosed Farmland Ecosystem Group

***Progress***

A paper (WBPSG18 paper 05) outlining a proposal to amend the Section 42 list to include ffridd (coedcae, upland fringe) as a new habitat was presented to WBP Steering Group on 14 November 2012. The proposal addresses a key gap in the list of priority habitats for Wales - the addition of ffridd, also known as coedcae or upland fringe, as a habitat of principal importance to biodiversity conservation in Wales. Ffridd is a uniquely Welsh habitat which has high biodiversity value, is culturally important and is a significant landscape feature throughout the uplands of Wales.

There was general support for the proposal at the meeting and the biological importance of the ffridd ecosystem was accepted, but the Chair and other Welsh Government attendees were concerned about the wider implications of amending the list.

Following this, the precise meaning of Section 42 of the NERC Act 2006 has been verified and CCW's Directors' Team opinion was also sought. The Directors' Team endorsed the proposal to amend the Section 42 list to include ffridd habitat as they consider that there is a good evidence base to support the inclusion of this valuable habitat on the list.

***Proposal***

This paper expands upon the previous proposal to amend the Section 42 list by clarifying the legal requirements of the NERC Act.

Section 40 of the NERC Act places a duty on all public authorities, in exercising their functions, to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity.

Under Section 42 of the NERC Act:

- (1) The National Assembly for Wales must, as respects Wales, publish a list of the living organisms and types of habitat which in the Assembly's opinion are of principal importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity.
- (2) Before publishing any list the Assembly must consult the Countryside Council for Wales as to the living organisms or types of habitat to be included in the list.
- (3) Without prejudice to section 40 (1) and (2), the Assembly must:

- a) take such steps as appear to the Assembly to be reasonably practicable to further the conservation of the living organisms and types of habitat included in any list published under this section, or
- b) promote the taking by others of such steps.

(4) The Assembly must, in consultation with the Countryside Council for Wales:

- a) keep under review any list published under this section,
- b) make such revisions of any such list as appear to the Assembly appropriate, and
- c) publish any list so revised as soon as is reasonably practicable after revising it.

The 'Section 42 List' lists the habitats and species of principal importance for the purposes of conserving biodiversity in Wales. The list is a key reference for all statutory and non-statutory bodies involved in operations that affect biodiversity in Wales.

Section 42 of the NERC Act is clearly concerned solely with biodiversity. In compiling and amending the list, there is no reference to other interests (e.g. commercial, socioeconomic). Wider issues may be considered in furthering the conservation of species and habitats on the list, but not in compiling the list.

The technical annex to the paper proposing the addition of ffridd that was submitted to WBP Steering Group in November followed the format used by JNCC for their last review of UK BAP priority habitats. CCW therefore believes that this information should be adequate to make a decision over the principal importance of the habitat for conserving biodiversity in Wales. CCW also believes that new additions to the list should be considered under the same criteria as were used to determine the current list.

Inclusion on the list confers no direct protection for the habitats and species from damage or loss and, as such, has no direct cost implications. The list is used to guide decision-makers such as public bodies, including local authorities, in implementing their duty under Section 40 when carrying out their normal functions. For example, local planning authorities will use it to identify the species and habitats that require specific consideration in dealing with planning and development control and it can be used in forward and strategic planning. It can be used to promote conservation management and to prioritise action under various funding schemes.

There should be no problem in listing an ecosystem (or habitat complex) as opposed to an individual habitat, as the list already contains two such examples: Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh and Open Mosaic Habitats on Previously Developed Land.

Listing ffridd as a Section 42 habitat would have several key benefits beyond the immediate recognition of the importance of its constituent habitats and species. It would:

- Contribute to Wales meeting its duties under European legislation. For example, Article 3 of the Birds Directive places a duty on Welsh Government to preserve ffridd as it incorporates important habitat strongholds (diversity and area) for wild bird species.
- Provide greater focus for research and survey work. For example, better mapping of ffridd would provide information for the ongoing review of Special

Protection Areas, particularly as ffridd provides important foraging habitat beyond the current SPA boundaries for a number of SPA bird features.

- Increase awareness of the importance of ffridd in a planning context to prevent inappropriate development.
- Allow for the development and implementation of appropriate management prescriptions within Glastir and future agri-environment schemes.

The risks associated with not raising awareness of this important ecosystem include:

- Failure to comply with the Birds Directive through loss of foraging habitat for Birds Directive Annex 1 species. Upland raptors and chough extensively use the ffridd zone for foraging. The majority of this zone is not within statutory protected sites.
- Failure to comply with the Habitats Directive through loss of Habitats Directive Annex 1 habitats. A high proportion of many Annex 1 habitats occur in the ffridd and do not receive any statutory protection.
- Failure to comply with Article 3 of the Birds Directive and Article 10 of the Habitats Directive.
- Loss of nationally and internationally important assemblages of lichens and grassland fungi.
- Loss of important habitat for threatened bird species such as yellowhammer, twite and nightjar, which are themselves listed on Section 42.

### ***Decision Points***

1. To endorse the proposal to amend the s42 list as outlined in the paper above and for the reasons detailed in WPBSG18 paper 05.
2. To agree to take the amendment to the Minister for official approval and action.

**WBPSG19**  
**PAPER 02**  
**19<sup>th</sup> February 2013**

**WBP Group Reports 2012-13: including Ecosystem Groups<sup>1</sup>, Invasive Non-native Species, Outcome 21 Group**

**Produced by:** Tracey Lovering, WBP Ecosystems Advisor

**Note: Annex 1 provides individual group summary reports**

## **Introduction**

During 2012-13 WBP Ecosystem groups worked with partners across Wales:

- to identify Welsh biodiversity priorities and share these at a local level, and strategic level with Welsh Government and,
- to enable and support biodiversity action delivery on the ground.
- to provide specialist advice at a strategic and local level.
- to collate biodiversity evidence gaps, some of which may be met by collaboration with Wales' research institutions

The groups provide opportunities to bring together Wales' biodiversity specialists from across NGO and public sectors at ecosystem group meetings (2-3/year), and include site visits to priority areas or best practice sites. They continue to develop their capacity where possible, provide local expertise and advice, disseminate and share priority action per LBAP and contribute to strategic work e.g. WBP Evidence Gaps Research Project. Chairs and group members also provided comments, or directly contributed to consultations, or requests for information. The WBP web-site, refreshed 2012, now enables users to visit the pages of specific Ecosystem Groups and download data, such as priority area actions.

<http://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/en-GB/Ecosystems--Species-Expert-Groups>

The Marine Ecosystem Group has a very wide scope in comparison to the terrestrial & freshwater ecosystem groups, covering numerous ecosystems from marine intertidal to offshore benthic habitats and species, including mobile species and the supporting environment. The general approach to marine conservation necessitates the management of disturbing human activity rather than manipulation of the environment itself.

The Outcome 21 Group partnership was set up in 2007, to address the challenges set by the Environment Strategy for Wales Outcome 21: to achieve favourable condition of sites. The group is chaired by Welsh Government, whilst the programme of work is coordinated and supported by CCW's Special Sites Programme.

The Invasive Non-native Species Group (INNS) provides advice to the Welsh Government and statutory agencies in Wales on development, delivery and

<sup>1</sup> This report does not include information from the Freshwater Ecosystem Group or the Species Expert Group as no annual report was provided by either Chair. The Wildlife Crime & Enforcement Group report is not included within this report, as regular updates are provided at WBP Steering Group meetings.

implementation of the Invasive Non-Native Species Framework Strategy for Great Britain, as it relates to Wales.

The Group chairs meet bi-annually to exchange experience, best practice, discuss opportunities for joint-working, raise issues and agree actions for groups (WBP Group Chairs meetings) <http://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/en-GB/Ecosystems--Species-Expert-Groups>

## **2012-13 PRIORITY WORK AREAS**

N.B. Unusually, the annual Groups Report for 2011-12 was provided at WBP Steering Group 17 WBP SG17 on 10th July 2012, to co-incide with WBP Future of BAP main paper; as a result, this report primarily covers the period following, July 2012 - January 2013.

### **1. Priority Mapping**

1.1 Through 2012 Ecosystem group representatives continued to provide workshops at a local level, to share priority mapping data with Local Biodiversity Partnerships/Networks. In NE Wales the Lowland Grassland & Heathland Ecosystem Group met with the regional biodiversity network (NEW BioNet) <http://www.facebook.com/NEWBioNet> A primary aim of the workshop was to support the potential grazing schemes in NE Wales; this has since developed into a project which has been funded through ERD. Priority Areas are yet to be defined by Freshwater, Woodland, Urban and Wetland, although good progress has been made by the Wetland Group. The Urban Group are waiting completion, and supporting, the development by DEFRA, of the definition and guidance for 'Open Mosaic Habitat on Previously Developed Land' (OMHoPDL). The guidance will allow Local Authorities to map the habitat, and will enable the Urban Group to define strategic priorities for this habitat in Wales to share with LBAPs. However in the interim, presentations on the work of the Urban & Brownfield group and on urban ecosystems have been provided to Caerphilly LBAP, Carmarthenshire LBAP, Swansea LBAP, Neath Port Talbot LBAP, and NEW BioNet. The workshops were very well received; presenting the opportunity for open discussion on how actions may be met at the local level.

1.2 The new BARS GIS interface provides users with direct access to all priority area maps and accompanying synopses outlining the importance of each area and the actions required to restore and manage the priority habitat. In addition, details are provided on the WG funded 2012 ERD projects (see Coastal) <http://ukbars.defra.gov.uk/>

1.3 Anglesey Wildlife Forum are currently undertaking an exercise with Forum partners to identify collaborative projects within the Priority Areas that can be added to the Island's Integrated Plan.

1.4 The AONB Plan for the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB, following consultation with WBP Support Team, now includes the Priority Areas within the AONB Management Plan and supporting synopses. We would like to engage further with all AONBs in 2013, and facilitate inclusion of Priority Areas within all AONB Management Plans.

1.5 It is agreed that all Priority Areas for Wales will be reviewed annually, taking into account any new information or survey data. Building good relationships with

LBAPs ensures that the link between local actions and strategic actions is strong and that any new data on priority areas is shared.

## 2. Ecosystem Resilience and Diversity Fund (ERD)

2.1 The Ecosystem Groups gave their expertise, and considerable time commitment, to supporting and assessing applications for WG sponsored Ecosystem Resilience funding in 2012. Groups provided a funding panel to assess and approve the final list of funded projects. Successful projects included:

Wetland: major programme of grip blocking at Ffridd Uchaf, Eryri; fencing work to enable grazing at Coed Cae Marsh

Lowland Grassland & Heathland: NE Wales grazing scheme; Llyn Coastal Connectivity Feasibility Study; DNA Bar Coding Grassland Waxcaps; Chough Foraging Habitat Research; Gower Limestone Coast. Other projects benefitting lowland grasslands or heathlands: River Severn Floodplain Restoration, Montgomeryshire; South Rhondda Landscape Project

Enclosed Farmland: Montgomeryshire pilot of the UK Hedgerow Survey

Upland<sup>2</sup>: only one project funded, partly due to poor quality of applications.

Coastal: Sand Dune Rejuvenation Phase 2; Horton Mere Gower Project; Coastal connectivity baseline exercise

Marine: Risso's dolphins in north Wales; The function and restoration of biogenic reefs formed by Sabellaria; Fisheries productivity value of sensitive marine habitats (FiPSeM); Porth Dinllaen Seagrass – monitoring habitat recovery

Urban: Upper Llynfi Ecological Connectivity Project; Taff Trail Connectivity. Other projects benefitting urban environment: Reconnecting South Wales Dragons; 2.Millennium Wetlands

INNS: various bids approved.

2.2 In preparation for funding opportunities in 2013, many groups are actively supporting the development of projects across Wales. The Wetland Group are setting up a 'Projects and Funding sub-group' in 2013. There has been some comment about the variable quality of applications received. Further work is needed to ensure applications are well prepared, and projects planned and ready to 'take off the shelf' as funding opportunities arise.

## 3. Evidence Gaps

3.1 The Ecosystem Groups contributed to the WBP Evidence Gaps/Research Project, submitting evidence gaps for consideration by WBP academics projects attending the successful meeting in September 2012 at the National Museum, Cardiff. One project, work to define wetland catchments, has been taken up by a Group member (Gareth Farr) and should be completed in-house – a significant achievement. A number of key research activities are already being supported through ERD. Groups are keen to expand their links with the academic sector. Evidence gaps have been further prioritised by the Groups and specific projects allocated a Project Lead from within the Group. Project Leads provide a Research Project Proposal form per project. Welsh research institutions can access Research Project Proposals via a shared web-site and search proposals for suitable research projects. Departmental leads and project leads will work together to take project s forward. A follow-up meeting to the Academics Workshop is being held n February, to which a smaller group of academics are being invited, to agree how we develop the WBP Research Project further.

<sup>2</sup> No detail provided, as also with INNS. However, further details on successfully funded projects can be provided by [j.korn@ccw.gov.uk](mailto:j.korn@ccw.gov.uk)

#### **4. Responding to consultations and calls for information:**

Groups have worked independently and together to respond to a series of consultations and information requests during 2012-13 including: 'Natural Resources Wales'; 'Proposed Wales Biodiversity Framework'; 'WBP Evidence Gaps'; 'Law Commission Review of Wildlife Law'. The INNS Group are now considering how outcomes from the Law Commission review might feed through to the Environment Bill. Input to the Living Wales programme has continued.

#### **5. Additional Work Areas**

##### **5.1 Wider communication of Wales' Biodiversity priorities.**

Coastal Ecosystem Group: The sand-dune remobilisation work has generated publicity opportunities, with articles in Natur Cymru, British Wildlife and Cymdeithas Edward Llwyd; CCW promotional leaflet; the Kenfig remobilisation project featured on Radio 4 'Costing the Earth' Programme, and also featured in a chapter in 'Restoration of Coastal Dunes', 2013.

WBP Group members also presented and facilitated workshops at WBP conference 2012.

Outcome 21 Group An exercise to improve reporting of progress in achieving River Basin Management Plan measures was completed in time to meet European Water Framework reporting deadlines. Work continued on the pilot to enable reporting of achievements on sites (actions) to be fed (semi-)automatically into BARS2 from the Actions Database so that their contribution to BAP can also be recorded. Two workshops were held to bring local EAW, FCW and CCW staff together to identify priority actions to deliver River Basin Management Plan measures on Natura 2000 sites. Meetings have been held and progress has been made on identifying and tackling issues at a strategic level eg long range air pollution, and the EAW Draft Diffuse Pollution Strategy Plan.

Invasive Non-Native Species Group: Progress has been made on prioritisation of the INNS risk assessment for Wales & the INNS audit for Wales. Active Group engagement on various issues identified by the GB Programme Board including training provision across GB, invasive species action plans (ISAP), various alerts, re-introduction of beavers and the commercial exploitation of INNS. Effective working relationships have been maintained with Defra and the Scottish Government through the GB NNS Secretariat who attend all INNS WG meetings to provide additional context and information for group members at a UK and EU level

Urban & Brownfield Ecosystem Group: The chair is a member of the Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems working party for Wales and the Welsh Government's steering group for the implementation of the European Directive on Environmental Noise. In both cases advice has been given on the wider ecosystem services delivered by urban green space which has been designated for urban water, and urban noise management..

##### **5.2 Work Planning & Programmes**

Upland Ecosystem Group: Produced an outcome-focused group work plan.

Lowland Grassland & Heathland Ecosystem Group: Translated the original Action Plan into an Annual Workplan.

Woodland Ecosystem Group: Action plan has been reviewed. A work programme for 2013/14 is under preparation.

INNS Group: Group's terms of reference revised. Good progress made on INNS work plan for 2012-2014

Outcome 21 Group: Proposed that the Outcome 21 Group is subsumed into the Nature Conservation and Natura 2000 Working Group (terms of reference and work plan to be agreed).

## **ISSUES HIGHLIGHTED FOR CONSIDERATION 2012-13**

### **1. Support for Groups**

1.1 The following issues were reported by WBP Groups in 2011; these remain unresolved in 2013. Action is requested by WBP Steering Group to address issues.

- Group representation often remains inadequate for purpose.
- Widespread concern across all groups with regard to the levels of current and future resourcing of groups; all active members are swamped with work from their day-jobs; ecosystem group memberships are not within job descriptions and often not seen as a priority by representatives' organisations

1.2 Changes within groups, an uncertain future, particularly for Marine Ecosystem Group. Action is requested by WBP Steering Group to fully support the continuation of the Marine Ecosystem Group, as an advisory group on marine biodiversity issues to both government and local biodiversity networks, as other groups operate on terrestrial and freshwater biodiversity issues.

1.3 Marine Ecosystem Group Members give expertise and time freely to WG but receive little, or no response from WG. Can WBP Steering Group agree a specific communication loop for Marine Ecosystem group and WG?

1.4 As raised at the recent WBP Chairs workshop, and last Chairs Report 2011-12 WBP Chairs and members currently lack the authority to task their organisations to meet actions arising through WBP. Action completion depends on partner organisation agreement, support, capacity and available resources. This situation is frustrating, and often results in inconsistent response levels across partner organisations; and in some cases actions are considerably delayed or remain incomplete. WBP Chairs look to the Proposed Wales Biodiversity Framework and proposed Wales Biodiversity Strategy to address and remedy this.

### **2. Habitat specific issues**

2.1 Proposing ffridd as a section 42 habitat (Enclosed Farmland Ecosystem Group).

2.2 Ongoing issues regarding compiling baseline data for hedgerows, orchards and arable field margins for priority mapping across Wales (Enclosed Farmland Ecosystem Group).

2.3 Burning: meeting was held with Welsh Government and the Fires and Rescue Services in winter 2011/2012 to find ways to address continued problem with uncontrolled burning. Significant increase in burning during spring 2012, some of which was very damaging and impacting on ongoing habitat restoration projects.

Further action is needed by WG and Natural Resources Wales (Lowland Grassland & Heathland Ecosystem Group).

2.4 Recognising the perilous state of montane heath habitat in Wales, a working group has been reenergised, to work on actions that will safeguard the existing resource in Wales (Upland Ecosystem Group).

## **PRIORITIES IN 2013/14**

Detailed Information is provided within each Group's individual report (see Paper Annex) and is available from <http://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/en-GB/Ecosystems-Species-Expert-Groups> and from each Group's Secretariat (please contact WBP Support Team). A selection of work priorities are given below:

Enclosed Farmland Ecosystem Group: High Nature Value farming due to be looked at under the forthcoming Monitoring and Evaluation Programme for Glastir.

Lowland Grassland & Heathland Ecosystem Group: further work is required to translate an initial draft for Lowland Heathland into guidance and action, under the Habitat Species Integration Project. The species integration work is seen as a critical component of the Ecosystem Approach and therefore time needs to be found to take this work forward for both heathlands and grasslands habitats.

Woodland Ecosystem Group: Review of the National Forest Inventory woodland habitat targets, and ancient woodland areas (within Ancient Woodland Inventory).

Marine Ecosystem Group endorsed the approach to target setting and identification of management actions for Sect 42 habitats and species. This work area needs further attention in 2013.

Priority action workshops are planned for a number of LBAPs in 2013.

**ACTION REQUESTED:** *Steering Group to request Welsh Government to agree to:*

### **1. Raise the profile of WBP work:**

- 1.1 across all sectors of Welsh Government delivery
- 1.2 through WBP partners remit letters and partnership grants that specify the role of each partner in WBP action delivery. Partners to provide adequate provision within WBP Group members work programmes to meet the required Group commitments;
- 1.3 through the Government's proposed Wales Biodiversity Framework and proposed Biodiversity Strategy for Wales, both of which are welcomed by WBP

### **2. Fully support the continuation of the Marine Ecosystem Group, as an advisory group on marine biodiversity issues to both government and local biodiversity networks; as other groups operate on terrestrial and freshwater biodiversity issues.**

**WBPSG19**  
**Paper 02: ANNEX 01**  
**19<sup>th</sup> February 2013**

**WBP GROUP PROGRESS REPORTS 2012-13**

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**MARINE ECOSYSTEM GROUP**

The MEG has a very wide scope in comparison to the terrestrial ecosystem groups, covering numerous ecosystems from marine intertidal to offshore benthic habitats and species, including mobile species and the supporting environment. The general approach to marine conservation necessitates the management of disturbing human activity rather than manipulation of the environment itself. To accommodate this, BAP targets have been reviewed to align the targets with the concept that management of human activities is a more effective means of conserving biodiversity. This work is still ongoing within the Group.

**1. Overview**

Blaise Bullimore stood down as Chair of the group at the March 2012 meeting. He had been undertaking the role in a caretaker capacity until a more permanent replacement was found. Paul Brazier and Gill Bell agreed to jointly cover the post of chair for the time being.

The future of the group continues to remain of concern, particularly since, during 2012, Welsh Government (WG) suggested that MEG may be disbanded and replaced with a more strategic high level group. This suggestion was not well received by members, who continue to attend meetings despite no representatives from WG attending and uncertainty about the group's future. Attending members reiterated their agreement that there was value in continuing the group.

However, concern also remains over proposed changes to the remit of the group. Members agreed that the primary function of the MEG is as an advisory, rather than a delivery group. Individual members may, of course, contribute to delivery in their own right. The MEG however, as a group, is not empowered, nor does it have the capacity, to act as a delivery partnership. Members have expressed frustration that despite diligently giving information and time freely on many MEG matters, they have little or no response from WG. Coupled with the members' perception that WG do not value the work of the MEG and good will is about exhausted.

The MEG meeting in November saw 11 participants, with an agenda dominated by updates from the WBP, ERD projects and the academics workshop. Further discussion was had on the evidence gaps spreadsheet and an agreed prioritisation completed.

**2. Evidence Gaps spreadsheet**

MEG members worked on the evidence gaps paper for WBP. This highlighted lack of evidence in our understanding of marine ecosystems, little baseline data, large gaps in existing data sets, little understanding of ecological functioning and services. This demonstrates the lack of prioritisation of marine issues when societal and economic benefits are considerable. Points raised at the MEG meeting:

- Each evidence gap represents a broad area of work that has been summarised from a more detailed list early on in the process. They will need to be broken down into 'bite-size' pieces to develop a program of research.

- There are considerable gaps in survey and monitoring that are not picked up in the research priorities.
- The evidence gaps may reflect lack of circulation of existing research.
- A better view of what research is already undertaken would aid the process of developing an understanding of evidence gaps.
- The evidence needs spreadsheet has some information derived from the CCW Actions database, but it is important to integrate streams of work between the agencies, including the Actions database and the EA habitat creation work.

### 3. Section 42 habitats and species

Members endorsed the approaches to Section 42 habitats and species target setting and identification of management actions. This is an area of work that needs further attention in the future.

### 4. Future priorities for the MEG.

The content of the agenda in November reflected the current activities that draw on the expertise of the membership of the MEG. Local action has been raised by the WBP secretariat as an area for further development, LBAP do not, however, have expertise in the marine environment, making the establishment of local actions very difficult or impossible. It is felt that there is the enthusiasm and desire to add marine actions to the LBAP, but little capacity to do so. LBAP officers require considerable support, in the form of a full time officer, to help write and understand the LBAP and to implement them. Additional guidance and a template would help in this process. Equally, the outcomes of discussions at LBAP meetings can help MEG to develop further evidence needs and BAP targets. Since Aethne left CCW, there has been no capacity to support LBAP in marine action.

As with other Ecosystem Groups, there is a hiatus currently, until the WBP Review is completed. The Group will maintain moving forward with current activities.

### 5. Ecosystem Resilience and Diversity Fund (ERD) projects update

Project Title	Project owner
Risso's dolphins in north Wales	Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society (WDCS)
The function and restoration of biogenic reefs formed by <i>Sabellaria</i>	Bangor university
Fisheries productivity value of sensitive marine habitats (FiPSeM)	Swansea University
Porth Dinllaen Seagrass – monitoring habitat recovery	Gwynedd Council

#### 5.1 Pen Llŷn a'r Sarnau SAC - Porth Dinllaen seagrass project

- A lot of time has been spent on stakeholder engagement. Publicity material is now available – leaflet, drinks mat, poster and briefing note. A drop in session was held in December 2012 to give people the opportunity to get involved / find out more. Steering group meetings are held. We have been speaking to groups and individuals over the last few months. A number of local businesses are now on board.

- SEACAMS ecological project – well underway. Juvenile fish species have been found to use the bed, of which a number are commercial species. SEACAMS will be researching a rocky shore and snorkel trail for us shortly.
- SEACAMS eco moorings project – this has begun. Two methods will be explored, using an eco mooring system and also adapting current systems to be less impacting (e.g. 5 ways to adapt your mooring for under £50). We have linked in with Pembrokeshire Marine SAC for this section of the project. Trials will be conducted at both locations.
- ERDF project – well underway. Practical side has been completed. 6 days of diving undertaken. 31 moorings surveyed and 4 control sites. Report will be produced by Feb 2013. This project is now registered on BARS.
- Sustainable Development Fund (Llyn AONB) – we have been successful in securing SDF funding.
- Infaunal survey has taken place. The core samples now need to be analysed. A survey report is available.
- A number of students are undertaking projects in the bay – e.g. mooring scars, fish surveys etc.
- EA hope to conduct an acoustic survey of the bay in 2013.
- We are also linked in with the SEACAMS ERDF project – baited camera work. Porth Dinllaen seagrass bed is one of the locations of the survey.
- An article has been submitted to Seagrass Watch magazine and should be in the next issue.

<http://www.penllynarsarnau.co.uk/projects.aspx?lang=pages&id=19>

(Alison Palmer Hargrave, PLAS SAC Officer)

## 5.2 Fisheries Productivity Value

The survey season is over, dogged with poor underwater visibility and bad weather. Developments on the technique have been made and the analyses are underway. The project is progressing well, numerous Kelp forests and seagrass meadows have been sampled with the BRUV system. Some further short sampling trips to Milford Haven still required. Sampling of Modiolus beds has been conducted but data collection has been minimal due to numerous unfortunate circumstances (poor weather, staff injury, v fast currents rolling cameras, poor visibility). It is unlikely that further data collection will be conducted on these beds. Sampling of seagrass at Skomer has been hampered by poor visibility and problems caused by seals.

## 5.3 The function and restoration of biogenic reefs formed by Sabellaria

The first wave of aerial imagery and GPS walk-around data has been completed. Permanent transects have been established for continued monitoring of reefs at each site along with extensive quadrat data recording. Larval catalogue has been completed. Quantified exponential growth has been recorded within the first few days of fertilisation. Successful settlement has been achieved on larvae > 4 weeks old on 30 individual 50mm x 50mm slate tiles. We are monitoring tube growth formation in High (200mg/l), Low (50mg/l) and None (<10mg/l) suspended particulate matter conditions. Significant tube formation has been recorded within the first week of the experiment and has continued. Successful settlement onto large (100mm x 100mm) slate tiles will be used for site placement during the winter months. The wave attenuation observations are ahead of schedule with a large stock of Plaster of Paris clods for deployment along with numbered/coloured pebbles for mapping the flow.

#### 5.4 Risso's dolphins in north Wales

Preliminary results:

- 116 hours of land-based effort on 23 days
- 93 land-based sightings of 135 harbour porpoises on effort
- 1 land-based sighting of 6 Risso's dolphins and 5 bottlenose dolphins on effort
- 14 sightings of 34 harbour porpoises off effort
- 13 sightings of 43 Risso's dolphins off effort
- 1 sighting of 5 bottlenoses off effort
- 4.5 hours of boat-based watching on 2 days
- 1 boat-based sightings of 30+ common dolphins
- 1 boat-based sighting of 10+ Risso's and 2 common dolphins

We also seem to already have a match of one Risso's seen last year, and again this year, but we still have to go through all 362 pictures taken during our encounter to confirm this and to see if we have further matches. The weather seems to have been really bad, so they didn't manage to do as much field work as hoped.

**Gill Bell, Co-Chair Marine Ecosystem Group (with Paul Brazier)**

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#### **WOODLAND ECOSYSTEM GROUP**

The Woodland Ecosystem Group has met three times since the last report. The National Forest Inventory is due to be published this year and the group will review the woodland habitat targets for Wales. The area for the ancient woodland targets within the habitats will also be subject to review once the revision of the Ancient Woodland Inventory is published.

The group continues to contribute to the development of guidelines for both Glastir Woodland Creation and Glastir Woodland Management schemes. The contract manager guidance for delivery of woodland priority species is currently being reviewed to include spatial implementation, the group is contributing to this development. This will influence the work to interpret this guidance for LBAPs and other woodland managers.

Members of the group have been promoting the opportunities under Glastir Woodland Creation and management schemes to local biodiversity managers through other fora that they are involved in. The group has provided a strong input to the redesign of the opportunity mapping for woodland creation schemes.

Issues that are high on the group's agenda are:

- Delivery of woodland biodiversity benefits through grant schemes
- Invasive non-native species
- Providing advice and guidance to local deliverers
- Managing woodlands containing EPS

The group is still keen to promote the strategic objectives and guidance to local deliverers and to learn from the experience of other ecosystem groups in holding local delivery workshops. Advice has been given to LBAPs on prioritisation and data sources so there is definitely a need.

The group's action plan has been reviewed and a work programme to further delivery in 2013/14 is under preparation.

**Chris Tucker, Chair Woodland Ecosystem Group**

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## **WETLANDS ECOSYSTEM GROUP**

The Wetlands Ecosystem Group covers the four lowland wetland habitats (raised bog, fen, wet reedbed and grazing marsh), lowland examples of blanket bog, and priority species dependent on these habitats.

Working with LBAPs continues as an important theme, with workshops planned for a number of LBAPs in 2013. Support for the Gwynedd (particularly Lleyrn) wetland inventory project continues.

Significant effort was devoted to supporting and assessing applications for WG sponsored Ecosystem Resilience funding. Successful projects in 2012 include a major programme of grip blocking at Ffridd Uchaf in Eryri led by SNPA, and fencing work to enable grazing at Coed Cae Marsh by the Wildlife Trust South & West Wales. The group will continue to pursue the development of projects across Wales and will set up a 'projects and funding sub-group' in 2013.

The group contributed to the WBP Research Coordination project, submitting projects and attending the successful meeting in September 2012 at the National Museum, Cardiff. One project, work to define wetland catchments, has been taken up by a Group member (Gareth Farr) and should be completed in-house – a significant achievement.

The group plans to finish work on the priority mapping project this year!

Much of the work of the group has been taken forward by a handful of individuals. The capacity of the group needs to be bolstered to enable more intensive work across a wider platform.

**Peter Jones, Chair Wetland Ecosystem Group**

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## **LOWLAND GRASSLAND & HEATHLAND ECOSYSTEM GROUP**

### **Achievements**

#### **1. Priority mapping**

All maps and synopses completed annual update will take place 22 Nov 2012

### **Progress in Priority Areas**

1 Anglesey Grazing Animal Project AGAP 2. Second phase of project expanding site management and continuing the development of product market with farmers group. Development of heathland arisings stock bedding trial on Anglesey and Llŷn.

ii Llyn Landscape Partnership. Site management including the introduction of cattle grazing. Development of product marketing group. Development of heathland arisings stock bedding trial on Anglesey and Llyn. ERD money supported a feasibility study for a coastal heathland connectivity project.

iii North East Wales grazing scheme funding secured through ERD to develop site works and marketing scheme.

iv Saving Our Magnificent Meadows. Heritage Lottery supported. Funding secured for development year. Project focused on marshy grassland sites in Ceredigion and Northern Carmarthenshire

v Gower Coast ERD supported purchase of machinery to take forward heathland and scrub management work identified by partners in 2011.

## **2. ERD Fund**

A successful sub-panel meeting was held to select potential projects. The Chair attended the ERD panel meeting where the final decision on projects was made. The following projects will contribute to achieving the group's objectives in Priority Areas:

- DNA Bar Coding Grassland Wax caps - Aberystwyth University
- Chough Foraging Habitat Research - RSPB
- Gower Limestone Coast – National Trust
- North East Wales Grazing Scheme - Pont
- Llyn Coastal Connectivity Feasibility Study – Gwynedd County Council

Other projects which will benefit lowland grasslands or heathlands

- River Severn Floodplan Restoration – Montgomeryshire
- South Rhondda Landscape Project

## **3. LBAP Workshops**

Workshop was held with the NE Wales partnership in April 2012. A primary aim of the workshop was to support the potential grazing schemes in NE Wales which has since developed into a project which has been funded through ERD.

## **4. Workplan**

The group has translated the original Action Plan into an Annual Workplan which will be updated on 22 Nov 2012

## **5. Research**

The group identified research gaps which were fed into the Academic Workshop in September. A number of key research activities are already being supported through ERD but the group would like to expand its links with the academic sector.

## **Challenges**

### **1. Species Integration Work**

The group has completed an initial draft for Lowland Heathland but further work is required to translate this into guidance and action. The species integration work is seen as a critical component of the Ecosystem Approach and therefore time needs to be found to take this work forward for both heathlands and grasslands habitats.

## **2. Burning**

A meeting was held with Welsh Government and the Fires and Rescue Services in winter 2011/2012 to find ways to address the continued problem with uncontrolled burning. Although some progress was made particularly in providing better information to the Fire and Rescue Services there was a significant increase in burning during the spring of 2012 some of it very damaging and impacting on ongoing habitat restoration projects. More action needs to be taken by WG and Natural Resources Wales to address heather and grass burning.

**Jan Sherry, Secretariat Lowland Grassland & Heathland Ecosystem Group**

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### **UPLAND ECOSYSTEM GROUP**

During 2012, the WBP Upland group concentrated on getting an outcome focused work plan for the group in place to take its work forward in a measurable and focused way.

Recognising the perilous state of montane heath habitat in Wales, it encouraged a working group that had stalled to be reenergised, to work on actions that will deliver positive measures on the ground to safeguard the existing resource in Wales.

The Upland group invited a number of academics from Wales to become engaged with it, so as to try to support and encourage the research that will contribute toward evidence based conservation that could benefit upland biodiversity. So far evidence gaps and priorities for research have been identified.

A sub group assessed three applications put forward for the WGERDF funding and one was put forward to the main panel and was successful in being funded. The assessing sub group hoped that higher quality applications would be submitted in any future rounds of WGERDF funding.

In the latter part of the year, the upland group reviewed the proposal for developing the Wales Biodiversity Framework put forward by Welsh Government, and though supporting the idea behind it, the group raised a number of issues due to having serious concerns over the proposed approach put forward.

The group recognised it did not deliver on the regional meetings it had planned for 2012, and so is remedying this for 2013 by seeking to deliver one North Wales and one South Wales centred meeting.

**Charles Morgan, Chair Upland Ecosystem Group**

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### **URBAN & BROWNFIELD ECOSYSTEM GROUP**

#### **Achievements**

#### **1. Priority mapping**

The Urban Ecosystem Group has been working with DEFRA's contractors Exegesis, to support the OMHoPDL Mapping project which has been extended to Wales. The aim of this is to trial the use of the criteria developed by Defra in 2010. This project

has included both a desk-based study and some field work the latter particularly focusing on invertebrate-rich sites. Thanks to a misunderstanding at DEFRA the project requires an extra £2,000 to fully deliver in Wales and this extra funding is being applied-for in the CCW out-turn.

Buglife secured WREN funding for the West Glamorgan Brownfield Stepping Stone Project. This project as well as delivering management on a range of sites will be helping local authorities map their OMHoPDL habitat using the DEFRA Criteria.

It is hoped that once the group has a better map of the OMHoPDL resource we can start to develop priority areas.

## **2. Ecosystem Resilience and Diversity Fund Projects**

The Group provided members for the Sub-panel to select potential urban projects for and the Chair sat on the Panel where the final decision were made. Two urban projects secured funding:

- Upper Llynfi Ecological Connectivity Project - Bridgend County Borough Council
- Taff Trail Connectivity - Groundwork Trust

Despite some problems with invoicing arrangements both projects are proceeding as planned and expect to deliver on-time.

Other projects which will benefit the urban environment are:

- Reconnecting South Wales Dragons - ARC
- Millennium Wetlands - Wildfowl and Wetlands trust

## **3. Research**

The group has identified its research priorities and sent a representative to the WBP Academic Workshop.

## **4. LBAP Liaison**

Since February 2012 the chair has made presentations on the work of the group and on urban ecosystems to: Caerphilly LBAP, Carmarthenshire LBAP, Swansea LBAP, Neath Port Talbot LBAP, and the North East Wales Biodiversity Network.

## **5. Consultations and liaison with other groups**

The Urban Ecosystem Group responded to the consultation on Natural Resources Wales.

The chair is a member of the Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems working party for Wales and the Welsh Government's steering group for the implementation of the European Directive on Environmental Noise. In both cases advice has been given on the wider ecosystem services delivered by urban green space which has been designated for urban water, and urban noise management.

## **Challenges**

### **1. Mapping**

Although mapping is now taking place with the Exegesis and Buglife projects it is unlikely that these initiatives will be able to map the entire resource so further funding will be required to take forward mapping in other areas. It is hoped that we will be

able to identify which OMHoPDL substrates are least well represented in the current mapping initiatives and prioritise further work in these areas.

## **2. Planning**

The Urban Ecosystem Group will participate as fully as possible in the development of the planning bill in order to emphasise the crucial importance of ecosystem service delivery by green spaces in urban areas.

**Pete Frost, Chair Urban & Brownfield Ecosystem Group**

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## **COASTAL ECOSYSTEM GROUP**

Meetings attendance continues to be patchy although it was reasonably good at our last meeting (8 November 2012) when we were pleased to welcome John Clark (RSPB/WEL) and Alan Kearsley-Evans (National Trust). This was the first time we have had a representative from RSPB. A field meeting held at Kenfig NNR (24th April 2012) was well attended and the group was able to see at first hand the sand dune mobilisation and dune slack creation work.

The group continues to make steady progress. The following cover some of the more important initiatives:

### **WBP Academic Workshop - Coastal EG input**

Angus Garbutt attended a WBP workshop on behalf of the CEG involving WG, academics and ecosystem specialists looking at research gaps and evidence gaps. A report has been released and circulated to CEG members. Coastal evidence gaps have been collated.

### **External Funding**

In terms of the Ecosystem Resilience & Diversity Fund (ERDF) (Welsh Government) funding was secured for three coastal projects:

1. Sand Dune Rejuvenation Phase 2
2. Horton Mere Gower Project aimed at improving connectivity and grazing infrastructure
3. Coastal connectivity baseline exercise on the Llyn Peninsula

As a result of the further award from the ERDC fund further remobilisation has or will be initiated at Kenfig, Merthyr Mawr and Brownslade Burrows to enable sand dune rejuvenation. CCW plan to publish all the reports produced by Professor Ken Pye covering recommendations for remobilisation on key sites in Wales. These will also be made available on CCW's website.

In the reactivation zones, monitoring of dune species, vegetation and topographic surveys are on-going. Invertebrates with sand-dune affinity have been recorded within the reactivation zone but it's too early to say how successful this project has been.

The remobilisation work has also generated publicity opportunities and articles have appeared in Natur Cymru, British Wildlife and Cymdeithas Edward Llwyd and a 'Bringing back sand dunes to Life' leaflet from CCW. The Kenfig remobilisation

project also featured on the Radio 4 Costing the Earth - Sands of Time programme recorded from Kenfig. There is also a chapter, written by Peter Rhind, Rod Jones and Laurence Jones, covering this issue in the new sand dune book: Restoration of Coastal Dunes. 2013. Eds. Martínez, M. Luisa; Gallego-Fernández, Juan B.; Hesp, Patrick A. Springer Series on Environmental Management.

### **RSBP Futurescapes**

John Clark gave an update of the Futurescapes projects planned for in Wales: Three Rivers (West Wales), Gwent Levels, and the North Wales Moorland project. Futurescapes is a partnership involving environment organisations, local communities, businesses and government bodies aimed at developing a vision for a wildlife-rich countryside.

### **BARS**

The new spatially aware version of the Biodiversity Action Reporting system is available. The coastal priority maps layers are now loaded on the system together with details of the coastal ERDC projects.

### **Evidence Gaps**

The following continue to be major evidence gaps:

#### **The lack of a phase II maritime cliff vegetation survey for Wales**

This continues to be a crucial requirement, not least of which because coastal habitats are not covered in the Countryside Survey.

#### **Sea cliff / coastal habitat connectivity**

Further information required on how best to secure more sympathetic management of cliff tops and headlands particularly at key sites such as the soft cliffs at Porth Neigwl and those on the north Llyn coast. The recent ERD funded connectivity study for the Llyn Peninsula (see above) will be of value in this respect.

#### **Further studies on the impact of sea level rise on salt marsh and mudflats**

Because of the potential for “coastal squeeze” these habitats are particularly susceptible to the impact of sea level rise.

#### **The value of Glastir to coastal habitats**

Thompson Ecology has been commissioned to monitor progress which will hopefully provide the group with a coastal perspective.

#### **Information on the negative impacts of eutrophication on coastal habitats**

This would include all sources of nutrient enrichment, but as an example, it is known that agricultural runoff is now having an impact on inter-tidal habitats in Milford Haven.

#### **The impact of coastal defence structures**

This can have an impact on many coastal habitats but there is now growing concern that our best site in Wales for vegetated shingle (Pensarn Beach) is being degraded by sediment starvation. Some form of beach nourishment may be necessary in this case, but we need a more general assessment of this problem.

#### **Peter Rhind, Chair Coastal Ecosystem Group**

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## **ENCLOSED FARMLAND ECOSYSTEM GROUP**

### **Meetings**

The group met only once in October 2012. However a fair amount of work on specific tasks, consultation and feedback was carried out through email correspondence.

### **Ecosystem Resilience and Diversity Fund**

A grant was awarded to Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust to pilot the UK Hedgerow Survey in Montgomeryshire. The group visited the project during its meeting in October, and intends to hold a workshop soon to roll out the survey across Wales.

### **Research and Development**

The group was represented at the academics workshop in September and has contributed to the collation and prioritisation of projects for students in Wales.

### **Current Issues**

- Information due out under the Tir Gofal Monitoring will be used to update Glastir layers for the Advanced scheme.
- High Nature Value farming due to be looked at under the forthcoming Monitoring and Evaluation Programme for Glastir
- Proposing ffridd as a section 42 habitat
- Ongoing issues regarding compiling baseline data for hedgerows, orchards and arable field margins for priority mapping across Wales

### **Caryn Le Roux, Chair Enclosed Farmland Ecosystem Group**

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## **INVASIVE NON-NATIVE SPECIES (INNS) WORKING GROUP**

INNS are plant and animals from other regions in the world which have the capacity to proliferate if introduced. They have been described as the second biggest threat after habitat loss and destruction to biodiversity worldwide and the greatest threat to fragile ecosystems such as islands.

The focus of the Group is to provide advice to the Welsh Government and statutory agencies in Wales on development, delivery and implementation of the Invasive Non-Native Species Framework Strategy for Great Britain as it relates to Wales. Our overarching aim is to minimise the risks posed and reduce the negative impacts cause by invasive non-native species in Wales by identifying management opportunities in partnership with others and look to deliver these through shared working. We endeavour to help stop the spread of invasive non-native species in a number of ways including supporting GB campaigns "Check, Clean, Dry" and "Be Plant Wise".

The INNS Working Group met twice in 2012 - February and November. In September, INNS was an issue at the British Irish Council (Environment) Ministers meeting hosted in Edinburgh. The principal outcome for the Group was that Defra had offered to fund a workshop of relevant experts from across the BIC administrations (probably 30 April 2013).

There have been a number of personnel changes in 2012 which contributed to delayed INNS work in some areas. For example, within Welsh Government, policy

responsibility for INNS passed to the Natural Environment and Agriculture Team with effect from 1 September 2012.

The Chair attended regular meetings of the *D. villosus* Task Group (Killer shrimp) which had been identified at two sites in Wales - Cardiff Bay and Eglwys Nunydd. The Group (Defra, Welsh Government, Environment Agency, GBNNS, Broads Authority, Natural England) which is responsible for overseeing and coordinating the GB response to the species, produced a position statement summarising the rationale behind the response. This greatly helped stakeholders understand the GB approach. Cardiff Harbour Authority ensured "Check, Clean, Dry" biosecurity measures were written into the terms and conditions for the Canoe Slalom World Cup competition held at the Cardiff International White Water Centre. A biosecurity audit of the Tata Steel Triathlon showed biosecurity arrangements at Eglwys Nunydd to be in keeping with the risk assessment. Local Fisheries Enforcement Officers agreed to incorporate awareness raising into their licence checking work regarding *D.villosus* and the national "Check, Clean, Dry" campaign. A researcher, looking into DNA population sequencing and invasion route information, was supplied with Cardiff Bay specimens in liaison with the Cardiff Harbour Authority, which were provided to the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS) for a biosecurity project.

In September, the Group received confirmation that a non-native invasive shrimp (*D.haemobaphes*) had been discovered at Tewkesbury and Bevere Bridge (R. Severn) and at sites on the Worcester - Birmingham Canal and the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal. The Group worked effectively with stakeholders to adopt a "Check, Clean, Dry" response similar, to the "killer" shrimp (*D. villosus*) response.

In October, the Group supported action taken by Environment Agency (Wales) to eradicate the non-native population of topmouth gudgeon at the Millenium Coastal Park in Llanelli.

In November, the Group supported action taken by Environment Agency (Wales) to remove Himalayan Balsam which was threatening the Cors Llyferin SSSI in Abersoch.

There was active Group engagement on various issues identified by the GB Programme Board including training provision across GB, invasive species action plans (ISAP), various alerts (asian hornet, water primrose, ring-necked parakeets, aesculapian snakes), re-introduction of beavers and the commercial exploitation of INNS such as Chinese Mitten Crab and Pacific Oyster.

The Group considered outcomes from Stage 1 of the non-native sea squirt *Didemnum vexillum* eradication project in Holyhead marina and supported the views of the Countryside Council for Wales to re-direct funds and resource towards improving biosecurity and monitoring including the building of a prototype quarantine berth and self-antifouling pontoons.

The Group responded to the consultation "Law Commission Review of Wildlife Law in England and Wales" which included a substantial section on invasive non-native species. The Group will be considering how outcomes from the Law Commission review might feed through to the Environment Bill.

The Group met formally on 26 November 2012, where good progress was made on revising the Group's terms of reference, the INNS work plan for 2012-2014, identification of evidence gaps, prioritisation of the INNS risk assessment for Wales, INNS audit for Wales and progress on the various Ecosystem, Resilience, Diversity

and Compliance grants which had been approved. The Group also considered ongoing representation from various Assembly Members concerning the spread of Japanese Knotweed across Wales.

The Group gave early consideration to the possibility that the EU Invasive Alien Species Strategy may need to take the form of a European Directive. It is expected that the EC will bring forward its proposals in 2013. The Group agreed that the 5 year review of the Invasive Non-Native Species Framework Strategy for Great Britain (due 2013) should await clarification of the EC position.

Effective working relationships have been maintained with Defra, the Scottish Government and the GB Non-Native Species Secretariat who attended the November INNS Group meeting to provide additional context and information for group members at a UK and EU level. The Chair participates in monthly meetings with policy leads in Defra and the Scottish Government to discuss issues of common interest. The INNS WG has focused its attentions in the past year or so on developing a prioritised action list for INNS species in Wales which covers terrestrial, freshwater and marine environments. A final version of this is currently being produced and will be tabled for signing off at the next INNS WG meeting on 20 June 2012.

In addition, further work has progressed on the action audit which has been on-going for some time. Once the prioritised action list has been signed off, the action audit will be re-appraised and it is hoped to be able to start aligning the resources of the INNS WG to deliver actions in a more joined-up way, with the intention of doing so through the lens of the ecosystem approach.

Effective working relationships have been maintained with Defra and the Scottish Government through the GB NNS Secretariat who attend all INNS WG meetings to provide additional context and information for group members at a UK and EU level. The chair also meets relatively informally on an ad hoc basis with the policy leads in Defra and the Scottish Government to discuss relevant issues.

**David Thomas, Chair Invasive Non-native Species (INNS) Working Group**

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## **OUTCOME 21 TASK AND FINISH GROUP**

### **Background**

The Outcome 21 Group was formed in 2007 as a partnership group to address the challenges set by the Environment Strategy for Wales Outcome 21 to get sites into favourable condition. The group is chaired by Welsh Government, whilst the programme of work is coordinated and supported by CCW's Special Sites Programme.

### **Work completed**

During 2012 the whole group met formally twice. Topic workshops, sub groups and meetings were held throughout the year to work through conservation management issues and actions on sites and to address issues at a strategic level.

The Actions database for sites, hosted by CCW, continued to be used as a collaborative tool for sharing conservation management needs and for planning action. Work programmes for 2012/2013 were prepared and shared, and progress is

reported quarterly for CCW, WG, EAW, FCW, National Trust, RSPB and the Wildlife Trusts.

An exercise to improve reporting of progress in achieving River Basin Management Plan measures was completed in time to meet European Water Framework reporting deadlines.

Work continued on the pilot to enable reporting of achievements on sites (actions) to be fed (semi-)automatically into BARS2 so that their contribution to BAP can also be recorded.

Welsh Government Glastir Contract Managers now have access to the Actions database to support them in their liaison with farmers entering into Glastir agreements on land on designated sites.

### **Notable workshops and meetings**

The EAW/CCW/FCW Outcome 21 Process Management Group met three times. Two workshops were held to bring local EAW, FCW and CCW staff together to identify priority actions to deliver River Basin Management Plan measures on Natura 2000 sites. It is extremely valuable to bring all 3 organisations together to discuss the issues on the ground face to face.

Meetings have been held and progress has been made on identifying and tackling issues at a strategic level eg long range air pollution, and the EAW Draft Diffuse Pollution Strategy Plan.

Meetings to progress action on individual sites have been held across Wales eg CCW/EAW Pembrokeshire Marine SAC meeting November 2012, South East Region sites, River Dee SAC, fisheries issues workshop with Welsh Government.

### **Major projects involved with**

CCW has been successful in a bid for a project to develop a strategic programme for the management and restoration of SACs and SPAs in Wales for the period 2014-20 and beyond. The project started on Sept 2012 and will be completed by Dec 2014. It will be prioritised, detailed, costed and agreed by relevant stakeholders. The N2K Management and restoration LIFE project complements the overall long term programme of work to get sites into favourable condition (Outcome 21), focusing on the management requirements of European sites and potential funding sources.

### **2013 workplan**

It is proposed that the Outcome 21 Group is subsumed into the Nature Conservation and Natura 2000 Working Group (terms of reference and work plan to be agreed).

**Christine Edwards, Secretariat Outcome 21 Group**

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**WBPSG19**  
**PAPER 03**  
**19<sup>th</sup> February 2013**

**WBP Planning and Budget**

**Produced by:** Sean McHugh, WBP Support Team

**Wales Biodiversity Partnership Conference 2013**

***Background/Progress***

WBP organises an annual 2-day conference for biodiversity and ecosystem practitioners in Wales. The conference is an opportunity to highlight developments in Wales and beyond, exchange ideas, network, promote discussion and generate action.

**Dates:** 18th and 19th September 2013

**Location:** North Wales (Wrexham or Bangor)

**Aim:** Through speaker sessions, workshops and delegate participation, conference will reflect on current progress in order to plan, improve and build resilient ecological networks in Wales for the benefit of nature and people.

Input from WBP is requested to develop the conference programme. A draft theme and general outline is presented to facilitate discussion at the meeting.

The conference will draw on existing initiatives e.g. Natura 2000, Ecosystem Resilience projects, WBP working group projects, WBP partner projects, LBAP examples and external speakers.

**Potential theme:** Developing Ecological Networks –planning, integration and delivery for Wales

**Potential outline:**

- Context and scene setting
- Guest speaker
- Ministerial address
- Connectivity and priority habitat mapping update
- Panel discussion
- Broadening involvement with other sectors and agendas
- Natural Resource Planning update
- Ecological network projects -large-scale projects demonstrating an ecosystems approach; potential to draw from existing initiatives e.g. NRW, PONT, Butterfly Conservation, National Trust, academic consortium projects, Living Landscapes, Futurescapes and external examples e.g. Nature Improvement Area projects (external)
- Marine planning
- Green Infrastructure & Sustainable Urban Drainage

- Local Biodiversity projects
- Workshop sessions (examples: delivery on the Wales Biodiversity Framework aspirations; linking local delivery to national ambitions; developing taxonomic expertise; pollinator program; using volunteers in conservation site monitoring programmes; monitoring and reporting, Invasive non-native species; communicating biodiversity and ecosystems etc).

Note: The WBP Conference 2012 proceedings are available from the WBP website: [www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/en-GB/Wales-Biodiversity-Partnership-Conference](http://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/en-GB/Wales-Biodiversity-Partnership-Conference)

### **Action Requested**

1. To agree the general conference theme and outline
2. To suggest topics/speakers/workshops
3. To circulate the WBP conference date & location to your contacts

### **WBP Budget**

#### **Background/Progress**

CCW grant aid for WBP activities in 2013/2014 is £100,000 covering the period 1 Apr 2013 - 31 March 2014. Approximately 70% of the WBP budget comprises overheads (salaries, hosting costs etc) and 30% of the WBP budget is allocated to project costs.

#### **Plan/Proposals**

A budget framework is outlined below for discussion. WBP are asked to review the framework and approve the fixed costs items and recommend suitable areas to cover project costs – project ideas are given to facilitate the process.

<b>2013/14</b>	<b>Amount</b> (2012/13 budget forecast in parenthesis)	<b>Details of fixed costs 2013/14</b>
Salary (2 staff)	<b>57.6</b> (56.4)	1.5% proposed increase to assist with inflationary costs (previous salary increase in 2008)
T&S	<b>3.6</b> (3.8)	Includes travel & subsistence, mobile phone & IT equipment costs
Hosting	<b>9.0</b> (9.0)	Costs paid for hosting 2 WBP staff and provision of financial accounting & personnel support
Training & Development	<b>1.0</b> (0.7)	Training costs covering 2 WBP staff
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>71.2</b> (69.9)	
<b>Project Items</b>		<b>Potential project items 2013/14</b>
BARS	<b>8.0</b> (10.0)	On-going development of strategic web-based biodiversity action planning & reporting tool
Conference	<b>6.2</b> (5.1)	Annual 2-day conference
Events & Awareness	<b>5.8</b> (5.2)	Wales Biodiversity Week; Events linking in with National recording & Citizen Science Schemes (including translation costs for OPAL supporting materials); Supporting Bioblitz events; Wales Biodiversity Communications Group event

Supporting biodiversity training and WBF/WBP working group initiatives	<b>7.2</b> (7.8)	Wildlife training days (LRCs) & LRC support; Wildlife training assessment workshop; WBP working group support (Ecosystem & species group initiatives, coordinating academic integration); Biodiversity implementation Framework support; Pollinator program support; LBAP training including spring seminar; SINC Wales Layer coordination & Wildlife Sites support; Project contingency to cover any underspend
Marketing, meetings & volunteer support	<b>1.1</b> (1.4)	Servicing meetings, assisting with volunteer expenses and promotional materials
Website	<b>0.5</b> (0.6)	Website hosting costs and <i>ad hoc</i> web support items
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>28.8</b> (30.1)	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

### ***Decision Points***

1. To review the budget framework and suggest any changes required
2. To suggest suitable project areas to allocate WBP project funding

**WBPSG19**  
**PAPER TO NOTE A**  
**19<sup>th</sup> February 2013**

**Welsh Wildlife Crime Enforcement Group (WWCEG)**

**Produced by:** Sergeant Matthew Howells (Dyfed Powys Police) on behalf of the above group.

***Background/Progress***

The WWCEG met on the 21<sup>st</sup> November 2012 with a new Chair, Chief Inspector Mark Bleasdale (on behalf of Chief Constable Jackie Roberts) of Dyfed Powys Police. Actions from that meeting are attached at Appendix 1. Since that meeting though there has been a change in portfolios with some senior officers in Dyfed Powys Police. This will mean that Mark Bleasdale will chair the next meeting on the 6<sup>th</sup> February and after that will be replaced by his successor, who I'll not name at the moment in case there are further changes in the next few weeks. Since the appointment of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), the Chief Officer Group (COG) has remained the same but there may well be changes within the next few months while all PCCs appoint their COGs.

The WWCEG will continue to carry out its functions through this period of change.

The Countryside Council for Wales has appointed Ian Guildford's replacement. Constable Mark Goulding commenced his secondment on the 7<sup>th</sup> January 2013. He has several years experience dealing with wildlife matters within South Wales Police and will hit the ground running in his new role.

Sergeant Andy Scourfield of South Wales Police (SWP), who has been seconded to the Forestry Commission (FC) for 5 years, will be returning to SWP in March. He has been a very active member of the group and his work with the FC has been invaluable in reducing crime and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) with the South Wales forestry area. We wish him well back in force.

Several pieces of work have continued to be progressed these include

- The Deer Poaching Standard Operation Procedure, compiled by Andy Scourfield. This has been circulated to the Welsh force via the wildlife coordinators, however to ensure its success there needs to be a buy in from the forces. As wildlife matters are not within force priorities any initiatives that could attract a cost implication (for example storage of dead poached deer) may not be looked at or supported for the time being.
- Information Sharing Agreements being developed by Eryl Lloyd. Currently three of the four Welsh forces are signed up to the Wales Accord for Sharing of Personal Information (WASPI). Dyfed Powys Police are yet to sign up to it, but it is being looked at. Natural Resources Wales are looking to sign up to WASPI and most partners

with the Community Safety Partnerships have already signed up to it. WASPI provides an agreement and templates on the sharing of personal information and should make it easier for agencies to set up Information Sharing Protocols. This link will take you to the WASPI home page for further information <http://www.waspi.org/home.cfm?orgid=702>

- Sergeant Rob Taylor from North Wales Police will be producing an all Wales wildlife crime report for 2012 by the end of January, highlighting some excellent cases and some statistics to show the level and type of incidents that have been dealt with throughout the year. Due to the way that wildlife incidents are recorded differently in the Welsh forces the figures will not be official one that can be published in the public domain as their accuracy will not be guaranteed. This report can be circulated to members of the WBP once released for their information and perusal.

### ***Plan/Proposals***

The next meeting of the WWCEG will take place on the 6<sup>th</sup> February. It is the group's intention to critically review the Wales Wildlife Crime Strategy 2011-2015 document so that our Delivery Plan for 2013 is focused towards that strategy.

Now that the PCCs are in post in the four Welsh Police Forces and they are in the process of setting their priorities and budgets for the following year it would be an opportune time for the WPB to individually seek the PCCs views on wildlife/rural crime in order to obtain their support in the work that we are trying to achieve.

### ***Action Requested***

- Approve us to carry on as suggested above YES/NO

## WBPSG19

### PAPER TO NOTE A: ANNEX 01

19<sup>th</sup> February 2013

## Welsh Biodiversity Partnership – wildlife crime prevention and enforcement working group.

Meeting held at Forestry Commission Offices, Resolven.  
11am Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2012

Present

Mark Bleasdale – Dyfed Powys Police

Countryside Council for Wales	Iwan Hughes (By phone)
Dyfed Powys Police (DPP)	Matthew Howells
Dyfed Powys Police	Pete Charleston
Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service (MWWFRS)	Richie Hammond
North Wales Police (NWP)	Rob Taylor (By phone)
North Wales Police/Environment Agency	Eryl Lloyd (By phone)
R.S.P.B.	Pat Lindley (Phone)
R.S.P.C.A.	Simon Evans
South Wales Police/Forestry Commission	Andy Scourfield
Welsh Government (WG)	Rachel Hodson
Observer	Ian Guildford

Apologies.

Peter Jones, CPS

Jo Jones MWWFRS

Mark Stafford WG

Nevin Hunter NWCUC

Colin Thomas Gwent Police

Rob Maddocks Gwent Police

The group wish to thank the Forestry Commission for providing the use of meeting room, telephone conferencing facilities.

The ACPOC lead on wildlife crime Ian Arundale and the chair of the group Chief Superintendent Thomas have retired since the last meeting of the group. Chief Constable Roberts of Dyfed Powys Police has taken the lead on wildlife crime matters for ACPOC and has asked Chief Inspector Mark Bleasdale to represent her at meeting of the group. Mark has offered to take on the role of chair and the offer was accepted unanimously.

Actions

	Action	By	By whom	Outcome
4j	To work with other forces to see the NWP/EAW ISA and DSA being used across Wales.	July 2012	Eryl Lloyd	EA/NWP protocols in use and DPP have similar protocols.

	Discussions already taking place with SWP and EA			<p>Natural Resources Wales (Ann Weedy) taking forward work on this through WASPI.</p> <p>The Police now have some reservations regarding compliance with MOPI guidance.</p>
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34c	To consider production of standard operating procedures for offences relating to deer poaching	July 2012	Andy Scourfield	Document circulated and accepted.
34d	To establish whether force command and control systems create automatic links from keywords to guidance documents.	May 2012	Rob Taylor Colin Thomas Matthew Howells	<p>Gwent report previously received</p> <p>NWP searching on 25 key words.</p> <p>DPP not able to link guidance to key words but Matt will now investigate whether incidents can be identified through searches on key words.</p>
34f	Deer poaching SOP to be reviewed to establish whether it requires to be protectively marked	Next meeting	Mark Bleasdale	
34g	Andy Scourfield to circulate deer poaching SOP to all lead WCO's who will then disseminate to control rooms.	Next meeting	Mark Bleasdale	
37	Production of an all Wales wildlife crime report for 2011	January 2013	Iwan Hughes/Rob Taylor	<p>Discussions between C/Supt Thomas and Rob Taylor led to an agreement that an annual report would not be produced for 2012.</p> <p>A report for 2012 will be produced in January 2013 utilising data submitted to Rob Taylor by the deadlines he sets.</p>
37a	Lead wco's to submit wildlife crime data to Rob Taylor as required to enable production of 2012 annual report.	January 2013	Lead wco's	
37b	Rachael Hodson to submit poisoning data to Rob Taylor for inclusion in the 2012 annual report	January 2013	Rachael Hodson	
37c	Simon Evans to consider whether RSPCA statistics can inform the 2012 report	January 2013	Simon Evans	

40	Group to consider production of a series of guidance notes for officers investigating wildlife crime dependent on outcome of actions 34c and 34d	July 2012	Chair	Matt Howells to produce EPS SOP  Rob Taylor to produce habitat damage SOP  Drafts to be considered at next meeting in January 2013.
41	Group will take up an offer from CCW to feature on one afternoon the work of the group on their stand at the Royal Welsh Show (23 <sup>rd</sup> -27 <sup>th</sup> July)	July 2012	Richie Hammond	Initiative successfully delivered.  Members of the group also took part in a successful NWP force open day where their stand seemed to be one of the most popular.
42	Develop a short 10 min presentation on Landscape Crime (dvd and PowerPoint), which can be presented by leaders at various local Forest Schools within the Torfaen area and then rolled out into Gwent. (Not to be confused with the work on-going with WAG and the National School Curriculum).	July 2012	Rob Maddocks	Written update provided to the effect that the dvd has been produced and is awaiting the cover. It is hoped that the video will then be included on the schoolbeat website.
42a	Consideration being given to Gwent Police producing a wildlife crime dvd	Oct 2012	Colin Thomas	DVD has been put on the back burner for the time being.  10 training sessions on wildlife and landscape crime are to be made to Gwent Police control room staff by May 2013 after which the need for a dvd will be reviewed.
42c	To consider how wildlife crime can be included in the school curriculum		Matt Howells	Linda Roberts all Wales schools coordinator and Matt Howells have produced a wildlife crime lesson plan that is at present now being translated and will then be circulated.
43	To consider and critically review the delivery plan for 2013	July 2012	All	Put back to Jan 2013 when all are asked to be present.
43a	To consider how we can lobby to ensure that the recommendations of the EAC inquiry into wildlife crime can be implemented in Wales.	Jan 2013	All	
43b	To clarify how the WWLEG relates to WBP	Jan 2013	Pete Charleston	
43d	The group should consider using social media as part of our communications plan.	Jan 2013	All	To investigate whether organisations represented on the group use social media and allow individuals to use

			Pete Charleston	Twitter accounts. To investigate whether WBP utilise social media
43c	To circulate delivery plan, strategy and terms of reference prior to next meeting	Jan 2013	Pete Charleston	
44	To produce a calendar of key events.	July 2012	All to email Pete Charleston with details of events key to the work of this group	Information received from Gwent others to provide same please.  No further information received.
44a	UK wildfire show 2013 is due to be held in South Wales		Richie Hammond to circulate further details when known. There will be an opportunity for WWLEG to contribute in some manner.	
45	To consider the production of sanitized intelligence bulletins.	Oct 2012	Andy McWilliam	Not able to progress at this time.
46	To identify dates for meeting during the next 12-18 months.			Agreed that future meetings will be held on the 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday in October, January, April and July
47	The group note the appointment of Mark Goulding as SWP's wildlife crime officer who is to be seconded to CCW and hope that he is able to be active in the work of WWLEG			

AOB

Next meeting 10.30am Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2013 at the Combined Service Station, Llandrindod LD1 5DF (Last roundabout when leaving Llandrindod for Rhayader.  
Then Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2013 at Gwent Police HQ?

**WBPSG19**  
**PAPER TO NOTE B**  
**19<sup>th</sup> February 2013**

**Local Wildlife Sites Project for South East Wales**

**Produced by:** Melanie Dodd MIEEM, Caerphilly County Borough Council Ecologist and ALGE Wales Officer, report provided on behalf of the 'project group'

***Background/Progress***

A paper was presented to the Wales Biodiversity Partnership Steering Group on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2011 on behalf of the South and North Wales local authorities (LA) and Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) partnerships that aimed to press for greater recognition of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) in the biodiversity decision-making across Wales. The paper also highlighted the benefits of the existing SINC system as an opportunity for delivering national biodiversity targets, suggesting that an effective approach would be to develop a Wales-wide Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) system. Following the WBP meeting, a pilot project in South East Wales dovetailing other relevant projects in the region has been proposed to confirm these benefits and to provide best practice guidance on establishing a LWS system in Wales.

SINC are allocated by most of the LA in South Wales as part of the Development Plan process. SINC are non-statutory sites and their only level of protection is through policies in the planning process (i.e. they are a material consideration in development control). Whilst Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) are a representative sample that meets national criteria, SINC include all sites that meet the local/regional selection criteria. There has been ongoing debate over the terminology used when referring to these non-statutory sites, an issue that is currently being considered by the Wales SINC Group. However, it is widely accepted that a site of local importance allocated through the planning system is a SINC and that a SINC may be considered a LWS when the landowner's agreement, management advice and/or assistance, and potentially funding, have been provided. The ultimate aim for all involved with SINC in Wales is to establish a LWS system to conserve and enhance these sites for biodiversity in the longer term, by engaging with the landowner and aiming to secure active positive management.

Liaison with landowners during the initial survey and evaluation stages of the SINC selection process by LA has been limited as most only consult on SINC allocation through the Deposit Local / Unitary Development Plan process. This is largely due to the length of time required to survey large numbers of sites, and in some cases, the difficulty in determining full land ownership details. Some landowners are therefore unaware of the importance of their land for wildlife, or, in cases where landowners are aware of LWS; there have been no dedicated officers available to provide advice to encourage positive management to safeguard the biodiversity interest. The proposed pilot project would establish a dialogue with landowners and raise awareness of the local and regional significance of LWS, as well as securing positive management.

For some landowners the project would provide an important introduction to the world of environmental grant aid support, for farmers it would be an opportunity to receive grant aid for specific habitat or species features, which are not included in Glastir, and for some non-farming landowners it would provide the only source of non-woodland environmental grant support.

The habitats and species identified on the Section 42 ("*biodiversity lists and action (Wales)*") of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 are frequently located in LWS. Therefore a project to encourage the positive management of LWS would significantly contribute to the statutory duty on the Welsh Government (and thereby local authorities) to "*take steps to further the conservation of the living organisms and types of habitat included in any list published under this section, or promote the taking by others of such steps.*"

A long-term LWS project would also contribute to the delivery of Outcome 21 of the Environment Strategy for Wales, which aims to bring local sites into favourable condition by 2026. The project would also support the implementation of LBAP across the region as well as contributing towards national biodiversity targets.

Local Wildlife Sites (LWS), together with national, European and International designated sites, represent the "critical natural capital" of the UK. It is suggested that these irreplaceable assets should be treated as the "*minimum viable wildlife resource of an area to which loss and deterioration should be prevented in order to sustain existing levels of biodiversity*" (Criteria for the Selection of Wildlife Sites in Gwent, Glamorgan and Carmarthenshire, 2000).

### ***Plan/Proposals***

The proposed pilot project concentrates on the LA areas of South East Wales, which aligns with the area covered by the South East Wales Biodiversity Records Centre (SEWBReC), comprising Blaenau-Gwent, Caerphilly, Merthyr Tydfil, Torfaen and Rhondda Cynon Taff, Bridgend, Cardiff, Monmouthshire, Neath Port Talbot, Newport, Swansea and the Vale of Glamorgan. All the ecologists/biodiversity officers have been contacted and have confirmed that they would like to be involved in a project.

The "project group" comprises all the LA ecologists/biodiversity officers, plus the Gwent Wildlife Trust, the Wildlife Trust for South and West Wales, Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) and the Bumblebee Conservation Trust. Other organisations and groups, such as those already involved with LWS, including the Mid-Valleys Area Wildlife Sites Steering Group, are fully supportive of the project. Other organisations will be invited to join the group as it develops.

The project group met for the first time on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2013 to discuss the project and agree a way forward, particularly with regard to obtaining funding.

The Gwent Wildlife Trust (GWT) and the Wildlife Trust for South and West Wales (WTSWW) have agreed to lead on the project, as they would act as the applicant for funding and host the two project officers, which would be required to deliver and monitor the project.

It is considered likely that there would need to be a substantive development phase in support of a funding application. This would be necessary in order to research existing projects, demonstrate the need for the project (e.g. evidence of loss of LWS), identify landowners, confirm sites to be taken forward and specify management works required. It is likely that this would be a 1-year development phase.

A subgroup was set up at the project group meeting to take the project forward and the Wildlife Trusts are seeking initial funding to start off the process by collating the evidence base. LA ecologists have been asked to include some funding in their CCW grant aid programme for 2013-2014. A dialogue will be established with HLF to seek clarification on some issues and other sources of funding need to be identified.

In summary, it is envisaged that the aims of the project would be:

- To establish a regional LWS system in South East Wales
- To provide best practice guidance on setting up a LWS system in Wales
- For landowners to have a sense of pride in the rich biodiversity resource they own
- For local communities to be involved in championing the conservation of their local biodiversity resource
- To raise awareness of the biodiversity significance of LWS
- To enhance and restore priority habitats at a landscape scale and contribute towards local and national biodiversity targets
- To contribute to the delivery of Outcome 21 of the Environment Strategy for Wales

With the following objectives:

- To employ a LWS project officer(s)
- To create a regional LWS system in SE Wales that is actively collaborating with landowners to deliver landscape-scale biodiversity enhancement and restoration
- To communicate effectively and positively with LWS landowners
- To provide technical advice for appropriate and achievable management of LWS
- To provide financial assistance in order to carry out appropriate management
- To publish habitat management advice leaflets
- To publicise the value of LWS as widely as possible and increase their recognition nationally

Some specific actions could include:

- Advertise and employ a project officer(s)
- Gather information in order to select sites for this project
- Select sites that will be taken forward as part of this project
- Undertake a land registry search and contact with the landowners of the selected sites
- Establish habitat and SINC baseline data for these sites
- Set project targets (e.g. total area of habitat to be restored, total number of sites to be monitored) for these sites
- Establish and administer a small grants scheme that provides financial assistance to landowners for specific management tasks
- Organise and host local demonstration and training events for landowners
- Prepare and publish a set of habitat management advice leaflets
- Research and apply for future additional funding to continue the project

Positive land management tasks could include the following:

- Practical and appropriate management of priority habitats and LWS features, e.g. scrub management, grass cutting, grazing, fencing
- Management for specific species interest
- Access improvements for management
- Monitoring of species and habitat features
- Control of invasive plant species

### ***Action Requested***

- To endorse a pilot project for a LWS system in South East Wales
- To support a funding application for the project
- To assist in identifying and securing funding for an initial 1-year development phase
- To assist in identifying and securing additional funding for a 5-year pilot project

**WBPSG19**  
**PAPER TO NOTE C**  
**19th February 2013**

**Taxonomy and Identification Training: Assessing Needs and Provision in Wales**

**Produced by:** Dr Graham Oliver on behalf of WBP and Amgueddfa Cymru-National Museum Wales

***Background/Progress***

This project was first brought to WBPSG as an AOB at its last meeting (WBPSG18/Action 19) from which a brief background was circulated to members (copy appended).

Concerning the UK Taxonomic Coordination Committee, the first meeting has been scheduled for February 12<sup>th</sup>; a résumé will be available or presented at WBPSG 19.

Concerning the review of the needs and provision of taxonomic and identification training there has been a positive response to the note circulated. The response, however, confirms my understanding that this is a diverse issue and the review requires careful structuring to encompass all the elements arising. There are also areas of overlap that require resolution such as the DEFRA survey of biological recording needs (see <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/MonitoringChange>).

Given these complexities I have decided to use SurveyMonkey™ to structure the survey and ease compilation of the results. However, following consultation with Sean McHugh and Adam Rowe, I have initiated an immediate response from the Local Record Centres asking for their data on both supply and demand. The response should give a rapid indication related to the important area of biological recorders and inform a way forward with this part of the review. Preliminary data should be available at WBPSG19 as will a copy of the SurveyMonkey template and any data acquired by that time.

The same discussion above recognised at least 30 organisations in Wales delivering some level of training; their responses are likely to be complex as will the analysis. Input from a variety of organisations on the analysis is desirable. One question that may require caution is that of charging for training and a discussion on this at WBPSG19 may be advisable.

Another related topic concerns the impact of the OPAL project in England (see <http://www.opalexplornature.org/>). Would a similar project in Wales be a proactive means of encouraging participation in wildlife and recording?

### ***Plan/Proposals***

This paper restates the intention to complete a survey of taxonomic training needs and provision in Wales. The methodology will be to use a SurveyMonkey template and a task and finish group is requested for the analysis and recommendation phases. Composition to be discussed.

An interim survey of data from the Local Record Centres is in place.

A discussion at WBPSG on charging for training is suggested.

A discussion at WBP on the effectiveness of a Welsh OPAL project is suggested.

### ***Action Requested***

1. Form a task and finish team to carry out next step
2. Approve us to carry on as suggested above
3. Ask all WBP members to encourage participation in the survey

Appendix A WBP AoB note circulated after WBPSG18

**Taxonomy and Taxonomic Training** Report from Graham Oliver, Amgueddfa Cymru-National Museum of Wales

The final response from NERC on their “UK Taxonomy and Systematics Review” has been released and the summary is appended. A full copy is at  
<<http://www.nerc.ac.uk/research/programmes/taxonomy/documents/uk-review-response.pdf>>

I draw particular attention to two aspects.

**1. The creation of the UK Taxonomy Co-ordination Committee and the presence on it of the Amgueddfa Cymru-National Museum of Wales (currently represented by myself).**

I wish to assure the entire community in Wales, with an interest in taxonomy and taxonomic training, that the museum will function in an inclusive manner as possible. It is essential that the needs of Wales are fully represented and that opportunities that may arise are, where possible, seized by Wales.

The first meeting of the committee has not yet taken place but once a process has begun I would envisage bringing the taxonomic community, in Wales, together. The issues in the response can be discussed and a perspective from Wales taken forward.

**2. Tasks relating to the provision of taxonomic training.**

During this year the national museum has been tasked with reviewing the supply and demand for taxonomic training and identification skills in Wales. Diana Reynolds asked for this through our remit letter and it is now part of the museum’s operational plan. I have delayed acting, awaiting the NERC review and also for some work undertaken by the Linnean Society on the provision of taught courses in the UK. Both are completed and I now wish to proceed.

I envisage creating a web site where supply and demand can be seen and hopefully matched. To do so a survey of demand and available expertise is needed and I am relying on partners in WBP to help me achieve this.

I would like all partners to

- List the types of taxonomic/identification skills training they require, what groups and to what level.
- List the expertise they could offer, which groups and to what level
- List any courses they currently run, which groups and to what level
- List any courses they currently subscribe to.

One of the difficulties with such a review is that there are many individual, often recorders, with considerable skills who fall outside any organisation. Any help with capturing this community would be greatly appreciated

From this compilation I would be looking primarily for unfilled demand and then exploring how to fill these gaps.

Please send any relevant data to me [graham.oliver@museum.wales.ac.uk](mailto:graham.oliver@museum.wales.ac.uk) or by post to me at BioSyB, National Museum of Wales, Cathays Park, Cardiff, CF10 3NP.

## **WBPSG19 PAPER TO NOTE D 19<sup>th</sup> February 2013**

### **WBP Awareness Update**

**Produced by:** Sean McHugh WBP Support Team

### **Biodiversity Awareness Update**

#### **Background/Progress**

The Convention on Biological Diversity has endorsed the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, including the [Aichi Biodiversity Targets](#)<sup>1</sup>. Aichi Target 1 relates to biodiversity communication and awareness.

**Aichi Biodiversity Target 1:** By 2020, at the latest, people are aware of the values of biodiversity and the steps they can take to conserve and use it sustainably.

To address this, there is a need to focus on communication, education and public awareness efforts using an approach tailored towards the different audiences.

Awareness and education occurs in formal contexts of learning, such as in schools and universities, as well as in informal contexts, through mentoring and expertise provided by museums, parks, LBAPs, NGOs and recorder networks. Films, television, radio, literature and social media are also powerful ways to communicate and raise awareness. Learning also occurs through participation in events and platforms exist for information exchange between stakeholders.

The Convention's Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) programme offers advice and has recently published an awareness toolkit<sup>2</sup>.

#### **United Nations Activities**

2011-2020 is the [UN Decade on Biodiversity](#)

The International Day for Biodiversity 2013 theme is the [Water and Biodiversity](#) chosen to coincide with the United Nations designation of 2013 as the [International Year of Water Cooperation](#)

#### **Activity overview in Wales**

Many partner organisations including the major NGOs, local authorities and National Parks hold regular outreach events and work with schools and other stakeholders. Opportunities also exist to coordinate events with the smaller NGOs who employ Wales-based officers (e.g. BTO, Buglife, Bumblebee Trust, Plantlife, Reptile & Amphibian Conservation, British Dragonfly Society, Mammal Society, Cardigan Bay Marine Wildlife Centre).

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.cbd.int/sp/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.cbd.int/cepa/toolkit.shtml>

Local Record Centres hold regular Bioblitz events which have scope to be adapted to focus on a public audience. Wildlife training courses provided by LRCs and Wildlife Trusts include beginner's level courses.

There is scope to link in and participate in UK Wildlife Surveys<sup>3</sup>. The National Museum London website features a portal listing all [major surveys](#) covering a wide range of plants, animals and environmental situations. WBP funding is funding translation of the popular OPAL [Bugs Count Survey](#) for use in Wales as a pilot project. The OPAL project promotes citizen science and have just released a preliminary report<sup>4</sup> evaluating the impact of the project.

### **Wales Biodiversity Week (WBW) 8th -16th June 2013**

WBW is designed to raise awareness of biodiversity to society and to celebrate local wildlife. An estimated 95 events took place directly engaging ~4000 people. Events included: Ministerial event opening a SAC site in Aberbargoed; Nature walks; Discovery days; Skomer Island visit, Open farm day, Farmers market, Beach cleans; pond dips, environmental fair, Urdd Eisteddfod event, Welsh language nature walk, Biodiversity Train Ride, wildlife talks, wildlife gardening class and the annual Go Wild festival in south Wales. In addition, many LBAP partnerships held school-based events throughout the week.

All WBW events are publicised centrally on behalf of LBAPs and partner organisations, branded merchandise is provided with guidance & support material. A press release is produced and a Western Mail article. WBW featured on Radio Cymru, articles appeared in local and regional press and on the BBC Things to Do<sup>5</sup> activity website.

An evaluation of WBW 2012 is available from the WBP website:

<http://biodiversitywales.org.uk/en-GB/Wales-Biodiversity-Week>

### **'Beans on Toast' Event 15th June**

An event is planned during Wales Biodiversity Week in the National Museum Wales, Cardiff with information stalls and interactive displays to highlight the links between food, biodiversity and ecosystems. The expectation is regional Museums will also hold events throughout Wales.

### **Natures Calendar dates 2013**

[Big Garden Birdwatch](#) 26- 27<sup>th</sup> January

[World Wetlands Day](#) 2<sup>nd</sup> February

[Climate Week](#) 4<sup>th</sup> -10th March

[National Gardening Week](#) 15 – 21 April (theme - sowing wildflowers to make Britain beautiful and buzz)

[Wales Sustainability Week](#) May (dates TBC)

[International Dawn Chorus Day](#) 5<sup>th</sup> May

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.nhm.ac.uk/nature-online/british-natural-history/uk-biodiversity-portal/get-involved/citizen-science-projects/index.html>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.opalexplornature.org/sites/default/files/7/file/Community-Environment-Report-low-res.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/thingstodo>

[International Day for Biodiversity](#) (IDB) 22nd May – Theme: Water and Biodiversity  
[World Environment Day](#) 5<sup>th</sup> June  
[World Oceans Day](#) 8<sup>th</sup> June  
[Wales Biodiversity Week](#) 8 -16<sup>th</sup> June  
[National Dragonfly Week](#) 20 July - 28 July  
[Big Butterfly Count](#) 13<sup>th</sup> July – 4<sup>th</sup> August  
[National Parks Week](#) July 29 to August 4  
[International Bat Night](#) August (TBC)  
[National Marine Week](#) August (TBC)  
[National Moth Night](#) 8th – 10th August  
[Wales Biodiversity Partnership Conference](#) 18<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> September  
[Beachwatch](#) 20th - 23rd Sept  
[Wild Weekend for Wales](#) (October TBC)  
[Seed Gathering Season](#) 23rd September to 23rd October 2013  
[National Tree Week](#) 23rd November – 1 December

### **Action Requested**

1. For partners to circulate the WBW date (8th – 16th June) to your contacts
2. For partners to review the activity update/Natures Calendar and look for links and event ideas they can potentially host or get involved with.
3. For partners to circulate nature-based event details to their local LBAP and WBP ([smchugh@wtwales.org](mailto:smchugh@wtwales.org)) for publicity purposes.