

Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation – Current issues and Opportunities

Background

Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) are considered to be the most important sites for biodiversity outside of legally protected sites. They are important nationally as they represent some of the best biodiversity sites across Wales; priority habitats which we not only need to protect, but also need to manage and enhance. Local CCW officers recognise that some of these sites are of SSSI quality and that they form a cohesive network between other sites. They are also important locally as they reflect a local distinctiveness that communities can more readily engage with through the LBAP process. SINCs are identified by the Local Authority / National Park Authority as a planning tool, and are afforded some protection through Local Development Plan policies but they are not legally protected. A SINC may be considered to be a ‘Wildlife Site’ when the landowner is informed, and the land is actively managed for its wildlife features.

The Environment Strategy for Wales Target 21 aims to ensure that ‘Sites of international, Welsh and **local** importance are in favourable condition to support the species and habitats for which they have been identified’ by 2026. In order for this target to be delivered, with respect to local sites, a more joined up and formally endorsed approach would be welcomed.

The importance of a network of SINCs has been clearly recognised in England by Making Space for Nature (Lawton, 2010). In Wales, a similar emphasis could seek to deliver management and enhancement of SINCs throughout the Country through a Wildlife Sites System, which would also be pivotal to the delivery of an ecosystem service approach, ecological connectivity and green infrastructure. As such, it is suggested that the SINC system in Wales could be fundamental to the delivery of the Natural Environment Framework. A Wildlife Sites system would recognise the important role landowner buy in and support has to play in ensuring these sites are conserved through sensitive management – absence / insensitive management of grassland habitats in particular is considered to be equally significant a threat as actual development of the sites.

However, it is important that the gaps in the data are fully recognised – Local Authority and National Park Authority staff are continuously identifying, surveying and designating SINCs. As such, the designation of SINC sites across Wales may never be completed, and therefore SINC data can only be snapshot of the sites which have been identified and/or designated so far. If SINC data is to be used, it must be under the proviso that it is updated regularly, and with an understanding that a lack of SINC designation does not mean a ‘green light’.

The sensitivity of using the data is also a concern. In many cases, landowners do not welcome the designation of their land as SINC and in some cases this can lead to sites being intentionally damaged.

Information about SINCs across Wales has now been collated which, for the first time, enables us to gain an idea of the bigger picture. Some interesting statistics and facts arose from this exercise:

- The total area of SINCs in Wales is 70,357 Ha +
- The total number of SINCs in Wales is 5,337 +
- Total percentage of Wales which is SINC: 3.4 %
- In South Wales, most LA's use the 'Guidelines for selection of Wildlife Sites in South Wales, with the exception of some LA's in the valleys region who have modified the South Wales guidelines to create a 'Mid-valleys SINC Criteria';
- Not all Planning Authorities in Wales have begun the process of identifying SINCs.

In addition, the Gwent and Glamorgan regional biodiversity forums formed a dedicated subgroup, with a meeting taking place on the 18th May 2011 to discuss the current issues and opportunities.

Current issues

There are a number of ongoing issues which need to be addressed, including:

- SINCs not being integrated into projects such as Glastir Woodland Creation mapping;
- SINCs not being used in CCW green infrastructure opportunity mapping and Ecosystem Groups priority mapping;
- Lack of funding to identify, survey and manage SINC sites;
- Cost of undertaking land registry searches to identify landowners;
- Constraints and sensitivity of using SINC data;
- Lack of joined up thinking about SINCs in the wider context;
- Lack of protection afforded to SINCs, including through the planning system.

Case Study – Monmouthshire Local Wildlife Sites Project

In Monmouthshire, 300 grassland Local Wildlife Sites have been designated in a joint project¹ between Monmouthshire County Council and Gwent Wildlife Trust (GWT). The project aimed to comprehensively identify grasslands of Local Wildlife Site (LWS) quality in Monmouthshire and enable their recognition and protection through the Local Wildlife Site system.

Permission was sought prior to survey from all 300 landowners and the project worked closely with the landowners to ensure they were provided with a high quality source of advice, encouraging pride in this rich biodiversity resource and providing support for positive management of their grasslands. Each landowner was provided with an information card produced specifically for their site. The information cards included a map showing the extent of the Local Wildlife Site, details of the habitats / species present, and management

¹ Gwent Grasslands Initiative Project (2005-2008)

suggestions. The landowners are requested to include the information card in the estate agents pack in the event that the site is sold. GWT have run annual landowner days with up to 60 landowners attending. These provide an opportunity to learn more about local wildlife and how to encourage it through sensitive management, as well as a forum for discussion. The project also delivered a newsletter 'Meadow Matters' for Local Wildlife Site owners. Via Monmouthshire County Council there was also access to a small biodiversity grant scheme for Local Wildlife Site owners (Local Agenda 21). It was considered advantageous that many landowners with Wildlife Sites in Monmouthshire were not necessarily farmers, but rather own small areas of land, outside of commercial agricultural production. Many of those landowners appeared to be pleased to find that their land was of high value for wildlife, and were happy to manage the site appropriately. The main challenges for these small sites are accessing grant schemes and securing contractors willing to cut/graze these often small sites at the appropriate time of year. Other threats experienced in MCC are agricultural improvement and increasingly, small woodland grants both of which can cause an almost overnight loss that is difficult to rectify.

Proposals

It is proposed that WBPSC discuss the following opportunities with a view to endorsing some/all of the proposed decision points:

- The coordination and use of an all-Wales GIS layer of SINCs, considering the various constraints and sensitivity issues;
- The integration of SINCs into: national policy and decision making; current and forthcoming schemes such as Glastir, Living landscapes, Futurescapes etc; national opportunity mapping, and the delivery of green infrastructure and ecosystem service approach (e.g. NEF);
- Development of regional or a Wales-wide leaflet on SINCs or Wildlife Sites;
- Developing a national Wildlife Sites System for Wales.

Decision Points

To propose that action be taken towards delivery of the Wales Biodiversity Framework 'Priority for Action / Next Step' to: *Support and promote the development of a strategy to deliver Target 21 of Environment Strategy with respect to Local Sites, including SINCs, Wildlife Sites, and LNRs across Wales.'*

To recognise SINCs as being fundamental to delivering ecosystem service approach and habitat connectivity across Wales.

To propose that the issues raised in this paper are outlined to the new Minister for Environment and Sustainable Development, John Griffiths AM.

To propose that the issues raised within this paper are added to the next Wales Biodiversity Policy Group meeting agenda, with the aim of discussing the lack of protection and recognition afforded to SINCs at present.

To propose that the issues raised by this paper are presented to the next NEF Workstream and / or WBP Programme board.

Update on progress with the Natural Environment Framework (NEF) - A Living Wales

Background/Progress

1.1 The Welsh Government recognises that our environment:

- has an intrinsic value,
- is our life support system,
- is a finite source of raw materials and resources,
- is central to our quality of life, sense of place, health and wellbeing, and
- underpins our economic development.

1.2 The Welsh Government also recognises that people experience environmental inequalities which must be addressed. To address these inequalities and ensure sustainable use of all our resources, we are committed to:

- recognising and living within environmental limits, locally and globally,
- ensuring that all of our policies take the environment into account, in accordance with our statutory Sustainable Development duty,
- stimulating and enabling collaboration across the Welsh public sector,
- working with business and voluntary sector partners,
- encouraging individual citizen and communities to live in an environmentally sustainable way, and
- providing leadership by acting now for the future.

1.3 A **Cabinet Statement** was issued by the Minister for Environment and Sustainable Development to launch phase II of the Natural Environment Framework and can be found at:
<http://wales.gov.uk/about/cabinet/cabinetstatements/2011/110615nat/?lang=en>

Plan/Proposals

2.1 Developments under Living Wales since the Wales Biodiversity Partnership (WBP) Steering Group meeting on 10th February 2011 include agreement of our guiding aim which is;

to ensure that Wales has increasingly diverse and resilient ecosystems that deliver economic, environmental and social benefits.

2.2 **Living Wales work streams:** groups have remained active and we are very grateful for your input to these. New papers that are now available via the website which include the following on which we welcome feedback:

- the scales at which ecosystems function
- the biodiversity targets that we have to meet
- integrated management, sustainable use and conservation of Wales geodiversity resource”
- Keystone Species and Keystone Habitats
- the services provided by ecosystems that contribute to making human life both possible and worth living
- Natural Capital Accounting – which extends the traditional economic concept of capital to environmental goods and services
- an introduction to the main economic tools that are currently available

2.3 Welsh Government: The audit of current departmental contributions to ecosystems and biodiversity is underway and we hope to report progress at the WBP conference in September in the form of interactive posters.

2.4 Development is underway of **practical tools** which identifies the key questions that we need to ask about ecosystems and links these directly to achieving positive outcomes for people in Wales.

2.5 Ecosystem groups: The Sustainability and Environmental Evidence Division (SEED) of the Welsh Government are responsible for improving links between science and policy delivery in relation to evidence. This department has offered to take on the role as the key link between ecosystem groups and other Welsh Government Departments. We are exploring how this might be done.

2.6 Key Messages: Work has begun with the farming sector to develop meaningful extensions to the Living Wales Key Messages and a piece of work is planned to help us develop language and messages appropriate to a range of sectors.

2.7 Engagement and Communications: In response to feedback from stakeholders we have revamped the partnership work stream to create a high level reference group an Engagement and Communications work stream. WBP and Wales Environment Link (WEL) are invited to provide a member for the core group of this work stream to ensure that any work carried out adds value to that already going on in the third sector in Wales. WBP Support team would like to recommend Sean McHugh for this role.

2.8 Responding to feedback: in response to feedback back from WBP members and others we will be providing short up-date messages via the website (the 'three key messages') as well as providing the terms of reference for NEF groups. We have also added an additional sub-work stream considering social evidence which will report alongside the existing evidence work streams.

Decision Points

The Natural Environment Framework team would welcome your feedback on any aspect above but in particular we are asking you:

To endorse the production of interactive posters based on interim outcomes of the Welsh Government Biodiversity Audit for the Biodiversity Conference in 2.3 above.

To endorse the role of SEED staff in acting as a link to ecosystem groups to assist in delivery of biodiversity outcomes by Welsh Government departments.

To agree to Sean McHugh as the WBP representative on the Natural Environment Framework Engagement and Communications group.

To endorse the request to WEL colleagues to appropriate an additional third sector member to the Natural Environment Framework Engagement and Communications group.

Title: Wildlife Crime Update

Produced by: Sgt Ian Guildford, South Wales Police/Countryside Council for Wales

Background/Progress

Wildlife Crime Prevention and Enforcement Working Group

Since the last steering group meeting the Welsh Biodiversity Partnership – wildlife crime prevention and enforcement working group has held two further meetings, the last being at the WG Buildings in Aberystwyth. The minutes (Appendix 1) of this meeting are attached. As well as the minutes/actions from this meeting the following documents area also attached:

- Delivery Plans Actions June 2011.(Appendix 2)
- The 'All Wales' Wildlife Crime Reduction Strategy 2011 – 2015 (Appendix 3)

New Officer Dyfed Powys

On 23rd May 2011, Sgt Matthew HOWELLS from the Dyfed Powys Police took up the role of a full time Wildlife and Environmental Crime Officer with the Dyfed Powys Police. He will be stationed at Police HQ's in Carmarthen and will have responsibility for wildlife and environmental crime within Dyfed Powys.

Guide to Dealing with Woodland Crime in Wales

On Thursday 14 July at 2.30 at Troserch Woodland, Llangennech the Forestry Commission Forestry Commission Wales will be launching the a guide to dealing with woodland crime in Wales this is a partnership initiative supported by the four Welsh Police Services. The guide will provide guidance and contacts in relation to incidents occurring within Welsh Woodland. It will identify when woodland can be classified as a public place where the Police, Environment Agency and Local Authorities have powers to deal with criminal and antisocial activities. There is also guidance on how to work with the police and other agencies to deal with crime and antisocial behaviour.

Operation Antler

Forest Crime Officer Sgt Andrew Scourfield has been tackling the problem of deer poaching, with the help of Forestry Commission Rangers and the police helicopter. During a two day clampdown on the problem, a number of vehicle check points were established across the Bryn and Goetre areas. Sgt Scourfield along with colleagues from the police Firearms Tactical Unit

stopped a number of people who were suspected of poaching and firearms offences. Patrols were conducted, with officers speaking to forest users about the problem. The Operation which was called Antler was carried out in response to concerns raised by local farmers and the public.

UK Wildlife Crime Priorities 2011 – 2013

An updated copy of the overview of the UK Wildlife Crime Priorities and Intelligence Requirements is attached (Appendix 4)

Conferences

The 23rd Wildlife Crime Enforcers Conference will be held at the Barcel Majestic Hotel, Harrogate from Friday 7th to Sunday 9th October 2011. It is hoped to run a one day Welsh Wildlife Crime conference at the Dyfed Powys Police HQ's, Carmarthen at the end of this year.

Cases

As mentioned in the last paper two men from the Gwent area were convicted at Cardiff Crown Court in October last year, one of the men, Stephen Richards initially failed to appear at court for sentencing and despite extensive enquiries by the EA Enforcement team and Gwent Police he was unable to be traced. On 17th May 2011, acting on information received, enforcement officers from the EA travelled to Lewis in Sussex where together with officers from the Sussex Police they located Mr Richards who was then subsequently arrested and conveyed back to South Wales. He subsequently appeared before Cardiff Crown court on 19th May 2011 where he received a custodial sentence of 18 months. Confiscation proceeding are currently on going under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 against both Mr Richards and his co-defendant Anthony HOLWELL

Plan/Proposals

Action Requested

- Form a task and finish team to carry out next step NO
- Approve us to carry on as suggested above YES
- Ask all WBP members to comment on the format of the report YES

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

Meeting held at Welsh Government Buildings, Aberystwyth
10.30am Wednesday 8th June 2011

Present

Gwyn Thomas – Dyfed Powys Police (Chair)

Countryside Council for Wales	Iwan Hughes
Dyfed Powys Police	Pete Charleston
North Wales Police	Rob Taylor
Dyfed Powys Police	Matthew Howells
R.S.P.B.	Patrick Lindley (v/c)
Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service	Mark Jones.
South Wales Police	Ian Guildford
South Wales Police	Andy Scourfield
Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service	Richie Hammond
Crown Prosecution Service	Peter Jones
Welsh Government	Sian Laws
Welsh Government	Rachel Hodson
Welsh Government	Chris Evans

Apologies.

Barbara Spence, Forestry Commission Wales

Rhys Hughes, Environment Agency Wales

Eryl Lloyd, Environment Agency Wales

Brian Stuart, NWCU

Simon Williams UKBA

Keith Hogben, RSPCA

Outstanding actions

	Action	By	By whom	Outcome
4	To complete review of existing EA/NWP's information sharing and data sharing agreements (ISA & DSA's) with a view to them being utilised as a template by other partners. When draft is complete consideration to be given as to whether ACPO lead can sign on behalf of all 4 Welsh forces.	October 2011	Eryl Lloyd	
4g	To investigate the work being done on the Gazateer project by Tony Bracey	July 2011	Rachel Hodson	
9	To consider how a complete picture of wildlife crime in Wales might be achieved through the collation and submission of incident returns to the National Wildlife Crime Unit.	Next meeting	All	EA Wales will be submitting incident returns from this month. Welsh Government still considering the issue. Reports from UKBA and RSPCA to be made at next meeting
16	All to provide written input on their roles and responsibilities	June	Pete Charleston	Circulate responses.
20	To recirculate Andy Scourfields document outlining SARA in word 97 format	June	Pete Charleston	
23	To circulate matrix to be used to identify	June	Ian Guildford	

	and justify welsh wildlife crime priorities			
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Actions arising from presentation provided by Patrick Lindley on bird crime in Wales

24	Establish if NWCU have produced offender profiles in relation to bird crimes in particular egg collecting	October	Brian Stuart	
25	Establish what evidence there is to support a suggestion that incidents of finch trapping increase during times of economic hardship.	October	Ian Guildford/Keith Hogben	
26	Chair to meet with force WCO's (including Gwent) to discuss how to embed wildlife crime into core Police business	October	Chair	
27	Establish if UKBA in Wales are aware of any export of finches to meditteranian countries	October	Simon Williams	
28	To look at NWCU's analysis of bird of prey persecution to identify any Welsh Problems and to identify actions needed to address those problems.	October	Lead WCO's	
29	CCW to ensure that suspicions of criminal behaviour within the licensing system that they are actioned.	October	Iwan Hughes	
30	RSPB to establish whether bird of prey hotline is still active	June	Patrick Lindley	
31	RSPB to provide link to birdcrime reports	June	Patrick Lindley	
32	Provide copy of paper demonstrating increases in the population of hen harriers in Wales	June	Patrick Lindley	

Actions relating to the Welsh Wildlife crime strategy delivery plan are circulated seperately.

Actions relating to AOB

33	Chair to meet with CFO Andy Thomas to discuss wildfires	October	Richie Hammond	
34	An enforcement guide relating to wildfires to be produced	October	Andy Scourfield	

Next meeting

It is hoped to hold the next meeting in October 2011. Date to be fixed and circulated asap. Ian Guildford/Iwan Hughes will provide a presentation that will lead to the adoption of Welsh wildlife crime priorities by the group.

Partnerships					
	Objective	Action	Owner	Timescale	Action
P1	To build trust and improve relationships between all groups with an interest in sustaining the wildlife and environment of Wales.	To be delivered through the development and implementation of an effective and representative All Wales Biodiversity Partnership Wildlife Crime Enforcement Group where attendees have the expertise and ability to deliver on agreed actions.	Chair	Complete	
P2	To take the lead in considering strategic issues concerned with reducing and enforcing wildlife and environmental crime.	To be delivered through the development and implementation of an effective and representative All Wales Biodiversity Partnership Wildlife Crime Enforcement Group where attendees have the expertise and ability to deliver on agreed actions.	Chair	Complete	
P3	To provide a single and unified 'Wales Wide' voice in opposing wildlife and environmental crime and promoting its reduction.	<p>To form a Communications Strategy Working Group.</p> <p>To develop a Communications Strategy for the All Wales Biodiversity Partnership Wildlife Crime Enforcement Group that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formulation of key messages and brand; • Changing perception and attitudes to wildlife crime; • Influencing the media and key stakeholders; • Engaging with the community through direct contact, literature and digital engagement; • Effective use of the Welsh Biodiversity Partnership website; • Group members disseminating information on the work of wwceg in their own organisations; • Wildlife crime featuring in the policies and practices of partners; • Forming an effective working partnership with farm and rural watch schemes; • Develop linkages to other key Communications Groups in Wales. 	Iwan Hughes	Complete	<p>Group established on 08062011. Chair Iwan Hughes</p> <p>Other members to include RSPB and the Police with others to participate as needed and agreed.</p> <p>Updates from the Communications Strategy working group to be a standing item on the agenda of the WWCEG.</p>
P4	To work to change perceptions and attitudes to wildlife and	To be delivered through the communications strategy (see P3 above).	Chair Communications Sub-Group	Review periods to be agreed	

	environmental crime.				
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Partnerships (2)					
	Objective	Action	Owner	Timescale	Action
P5	To build the brand of wildlife and environmental crime enforcement and reduction to become the primary source in Wales for information, guidance and delivery of good practice on wildlife and environmental crime.	To be delivered through the Communications Strategy (see P3 above).	Chair Communications Sub Group	TBA	
P6	To share experience, knowledge and good practice across Wales and the wider UK in relation to wildlife crime enforcement and reduction.	Where possible to engage in work that is already taking place to promote the sharing of knowledge and good practice (for example information sharing agreements, WASPI and the 'all Wales Data Sharing Project (WAG). To consider the role of NGO's in particular with regard to the sharing of information.	Eryl Lloyd	Ongoing	Work by Eryl Lloyd already in progress
P7	To change and reinforce public opinion against wildlife and environmental crime.	To be delivered through the Communications Strategy (see P3 above).	Chair, Communications Sub-Group	TBA	
P8	To seek to access financial support to tackle wildlife and environmental	Members to identify areas of work that require funding that is not at present available or that is present but vulnerable.	All	TBA	Gwyn Thomas to speak to the external funding officer in Dyfed Powys Police

	crime.	To identify funding sources that might be utilised to gain funding that is not otherwise available.	All	TBA	Pete Charleston to investigate the potential for funding from WBP
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Enforcement and Legislation					
	<i>Objective</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Owner</i>	<i>Timescales</i>	<i>Action</i>
EL1	To raise the profile of wildlife and environmental crime with relevant agencies and the communities at large.	Raising the profile of wildlife crime with the community will be a function of the Communications Sub-Group. To produce an annual welsh wildlife crime report.	Chair Communications Sub Group Ian Guildford	TBA April/May 2012	Ian to be assisted by Matthew Howells/Patrick Lindley/Pete Charleston
EL2	To seek to ensure wildlife and environmental crime is mainstreamed into the policy and practice of the relevant enforcement agencies.	Each partner to deliver this action by; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducting a base review of the measures in place to reduce and investigate wildlife crime; • Produce an agency specific report in time for the Welsh Wildlife Crime Conference that identifies strengths, weaknesses, development needs and good practice in their approach to tackling wildlife crime. 	All All	October 2011 October 2011	Actions adopted 08062011
EL3	To support and enhance a national network of police wildlife and environmental crime officers and assist in the development of good practice to provide them with the best support in their role and connects to other relevant agencies.	This action to be delivered through EL 2 above.	Each police service	TBA	
EL4	To promote and encourage the use of and research into forensic technologies for application in wildlife and	Ensure that Welsh representation on the PAW forensics group continues and is effective in its contribution.	Chair	Review periods to be agreed	Rob Taylor has established that from June 2011 Cathering Fenner of NWP will no longer be involved in the PAW forensics group. As such this objective will

	rural crime investigations.				have to be further considered.
Enforcement & Legislation (2)					
	Objective	Action	Owner	Timescale	Action
EL5	To support the development and implementation of innovative projects that focus directly on the enforcement and reduction of wildlife and rural crime.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Identify in an informed and transparent manner wildlife crime priorities that are relevant to the threat, risk and harm to biodiversity in Wales. b) To provide standard operating procedures for the management of each of the identified Welsh wildlife crime priorities. c) Ensure that conservation impact statements are included in any file of papers where prosecution for offences involving the Welsh wildlife crime priorities is being considered. d) Consider appropriate sponsorship for those engaged in the investigation and reduction of wildlife crime. e) To identify further projects to be included in this objective. 	CCW? All All All All	TBA TBA TBA TBA TBA	Pete Charleston to circulate existing bat conservation impact statement Further actions to be identified after welsh wildlife crime priorities have been idnetified at next meeting
EL6	To monitor and take an active interest in the use and effectiveness of wildlife and rural crime legislation.	The group will actively and effectively engage in Welsh conversations that relate to wildlife crime legislation.	All	Review periods to be agreed	
EL7	To monitor and report on significant cases and decisions to practitioners.	This action will be delivered by the communications sub-group.	Chair Communication Sub-Group	TBA	
EL8	To ensure that any new legislation and guidance within Wales makes best use of scientific advice.	Conservation impact statement to be used in all appropriate cases (link to EL5 c above).	All	TBA	
EL9	To ensure the provision of comprehensive and accurate data that can inform decision making.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Develop a common template relating to the submission of data (NWCU format?). b) Progress the exchange of information through Information and Data sharing 	TBA TBA	TBA TBA	

		agreements.			
EL10	To provide a means by which wildlife crime priorities in Wales can be identified in an informed and transparent manner.	Delivery through EL 5 above.		CCW / All	TBA

Education and Guidance					
	Objective	Action	Owner	Timescale	Actions
EG1	To assist in the development and delivery of training and learning for wildlife and rural crime officers, staff from partner agencies and the community at large.	<p>a) Partners to review career development of those involved in the enforcement and reduction of wildlife crime including selection, initial training, refresher training and qualifications.</p> <p>b) To carry out an audit of what training is available in relation to wildlife crime and to identify what gaps need to be filled.</p> <p>c) To consider how an awareness of wildlife crime might be included within the national curriculum and other streams of education.</p>	All All WAG / Chair	TBA TBA TBA	Rachel Hodson to discuss EG1c with DCELLS
EG2	To develop good practice guides to enable officers, partner agency staff and members of the community fully understand their role in tackling wildlife and rural crime.	All to identify where and what good practice guides are needed with a few to their development and implementation.	Andy Scourfield	TBA	<p>Andy Scourfield to lead on Good Practice Guides.</p> <p>Andy Scourfield to be provided with a copy of Operation Bat by Pete Charleston</p>
EG3	To co-ordinate and deliver an annual 'Wales Wildlife Crime Conference' to facilitate the sharing and learning of good practice in the area of wildlife crime education and guidance.	A working group to be formed to deliver such a conference in November 2011 and annually thereafter.	C/I Curtiss	November 2011	Working group to deliver a wildlife crime conference in November 2011 will be led by C/I Curtiss, assisted by Matthew Howells, Iwan Hughes and Ian Guildford

The 'All Wales' Wildlife Crime Reduction Strategy 2011 - 2015

Foreword

In April 2010 I took responsibility, on behalf of the Association of Chief Police Officers in Wales, for the policing of wildlife crime within Wales. One of the key pieces of work that has now been completed is a stocktake of where we are and where we need to go to continue to enhance the policing response to this key area of business. An essential element of this work was the completion of the pan Wales review of the prevention and investigation of wildlife crime that was commissioned by Jane Davidson AM the then Minister for the Environment and Housing.

One of the key recommendations that emerged from that review was the need to develop and implement this Wildlife Crime Reduction Strategy for Wales. Now complete, this strategy outlines how this work supports the delivery of other key strategic areas of work within Wales which includes the National Policing Plan for Wales, delivering key elements of the cross party 'One Wales Progressive Agenda' and the Welsh Governments Environment Strategy. It also provides an integrated vision for wildlife crime reduction and enforcement and how this will be delivered through the three key strategic objectives of partnership, Enforcement and Legislation together with Education & Guidance.

Most importantly this strategy provides an essential framework that will draw together and harness all the excellent work that is on-going in this area by the many different agencies across Wales into a common framework. This will assist in ensuring that our approach to reducing and enforcing wildlife crime across Wales continues to be effective and plays a significant role in making our rural communities safer and improving public confidence in the services that we provide to them in tackling wildlife crime.

On behalf of my colleague Chief Officers, both within the Police Services of Wales, and our many different partner agencies that contribute to tackling wildlife crime I commend this strategy to you.

Ian Arundale QPM
Chief Constable
Dyfed-Powys Police
ACPO (Cymru) Wildlife Crime Lead

The Strategy

This strategy starts from the premise that biodiversity and the natural environment are vital to our economy and to our identity in the eyes of the Welsh public and the wider world. Our natural heritage is a precious asset that requires protection from those who abuse and damage it. Wildlife crime¹ therefore includes criminal offences against flora and fauna, not only in Wales but against endangered species across the world, and also offences against the habitats which support wildlife. It is therefore part of the wider issue of environmental crime.

The strategy recognises that wildlife and the environment are subject to a number of factors such as climate change, demographic change and economic shocks which will bring new and different wildlife crime enforcement challenges. The strategy also acknowledges that conservation interests will require to be balanced against the needs of economic and social development and that this balance needs to be reflected in the legislation that provides the framework for protection of wildlife and natural habitats.

Meeting this core joint strategic aim will support:

- 1 The delivery of the 'National Policing Plan for Wales 2008 – 2011 – Working Together to:

'Effectively counter domestic extremism to ensure public safety and promoting joint working with other partners in local government and having due regard to Welsh Assembly Government's devolved policy agenda'

2. The delivery of the 'One Wales – A Progressive Agenda for the Government of Wales – Sustainable Environment' and item 173 of its related Delivery Plan 2009 - 2010 that commits to providing within Wales:

'A sustainable environment through the provision of support for rural communities which includes as a specific action the vigorous pursuit of a programme for the eradication of Bovine TB'

3. The delivery of the Welsh Governments Environment Strategy that envisions:

"By 2026, we want to see our distinctive Welsh environment thriving and contributing to the economic and social wellbeing and health of all of the people of Wales".

The goal of reducing wildlife crime in Wales is particularly closely aligned with this Environment Strategy as highlighted by the three biodiversity outcomes contained within it. These are:

- *Outcome 19* - The loss of biodiversity has been halted and we can see a definite recovery in the number, range and genetic diversity of species, including those species that need very specific conditions to survive;

¹ The All Wales Biodiversity Partnership Wildlife Crime Enforcement Group has adopted the definition of wildlife crime suggested in the Welsh Governments review of the prevention and investigation of wildlife crime in Wales - "Criminal Offences committed in the UK that impact on global biodiversity".

- *Outcome 20* - The wider environment is more favourable to biodiversity through appropriate management, reduced habitat fragmentation and increased extent and interconnectivity of habitats;
- *Outcome 21* - Sites of international, Welsh and local importance are in favourable condition to support the species and habitats for which they have been identified.

The purpose of this Crime Reduction Strategy is to provide a framework for support and direction for organisations involved in dealing with wildlife crime in Wales within the Welsh Biodiversity Partnership (WBP), the National Environment Framework (NEF) and more widely the UK Partnership for Action against Wildlife Crime (PAW).

Enforcement of wildlife crime laws is a matter for statutory enforcement agencies and prosecutors, there are however also a number of other bodies who have a close and legitimate interest in the prevention and detection of wildlife crime. These organisations include animal welfare, conservation and land management interests.

In Wales offences against wildlife and habitats are set out mainly, but not exclusively, in the following primary legislation and in associated secondary legislation:

- The various Game Acts;
- Conservation of Seals Act 1970;
- Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act 1975 and other fisheries legislation;
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (Parts I and II);
- Deer Act 1991;
- Protection of Badgers Act 1992;
- Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996;
- Regulations relating to the trade in endangered species;
- Animal Welfare Act 2006;
- Conservation (Habitats and Species) Regulations 2010.

The Partnership for Action against Wildlife Crime, PAW, was established to unify efforts to combat wildlife crime in the UK. PAW's Mission Statement is:

'Working in partnership to reduce wildlife crime by raising awareness and promoting effective enforcement'

The aim of the partnership is to create opportunities to work together to combat wildlife crime.

The Welsh Biodiversity Partnership (WBP) brings together key players from the public, private and voluntary sectors to promote and monitor biodiversity action in Wales. It provides a leadership role and an expert steer on priorities for action on biodiversity in Wales. WBP consists of a steering group (SG) and a wider partnership, supported administratively by a team drawn from the Countryside Council of Wales, Welsh Government, Forestry Commission and the Wildlife Trust Wales. A wildlife crime enforcement group has now been created within the partnership and will now own this Wildlife Crime Reduction Strategy and as such regularly report on its implementation progress to key stakeholders (See page 5 later). The WBP enforcement group will keep PAW informed their activities and will consider how actions identified by PAW can be delivered in Wales.

Strategic Vision

The Strategic Vision of this Wildlife Crime Reduction Strategy is to:

"Provide a co-ordinated partnership approach to wildlife crime reduction and its enforcement thereby ensuring that our rural environment remains a safe and prosperous place both for biodiversity and all who live work and visit it"

Proposed Strategy

The proposed strategy for achieving this vision is fourfold:

- Ensuring appropriate partnership arrangements are in place to enable the meaningful participation and empowerment of local communities in tackling wildlife & environmental crime;
- Shaping local enforcement activity around the requirements of our rural environments and the people that use them by ensuring joined up services across the localities that add value to other services such as those provided by the Local Authorities, NGO's, and the Private and Voluntary Sector;
- Improving quality of life and tackling those matters that cause most concern such as Anti - Social behaviour by ensuring that our services are responsive to local need through good quality co-participatory planning that facilitates effective and sustainable change;
- Promoting an educational approach to enable long term and sustainable change and improvement to tackling wildlife crime throughout Wales.

Strategic Objectives

Partnership

- To build trust and improve relationships between all groups with an interest in sustaining the wildlife and environment of Wales;
- To take the lead in considering strategic issues concerned with reducing and enforcing wildlife and environmental crime;
- To provide a single and unified 'Wales Wide' voice in opposing wildlife and environmental crime and promoting its reduction;
- To work to change perceptions and attitudes to wildlife and environmental crime;
- To build the brand of wildlife and environmental crime enforcement and reduction to become the primary source in Wales for information, guidance and delivery of good practice on wildlife and environmental crime;
- To share experience, knowledge and good practice across Wales and the wider UK in relation to wildlife crime enforcement and reduction;
- To change and reinforce public opinion against wildlife and environmental crime;
- To seek to access financial support to tackle wildlife and environmental crime.

Enforcement & Legislation

- To raise the profile of wildlife and environmental crime with relevant agencies and the communities at large;
- To seek to ensure wildlife and environmental crime is mainstreamed into the policy and practice of the relevant enforcement agencies;
- To support and enhance a national network of police wildlife and environmental crime officers and assist in the development of good practice to provide them with the best support in their role and connects to other relevant agencies;
- To promote and encourage the use of and research into forensic technologies for application in wildlife and rural crime investigations;
- To support the development and implementation of innovative projects that focus directly on the enforcement and reduction of wildlife and rural crime;
- To monitor and take an active interest in the use and effectiveness of wildlife and rural crime legislation;
- To monitor and report on significant cases and decisions to practitioners;
- To ensure that any new legislation and guidance within Wales makes best use of scientific advice;
- To ensure the provision of comprehensive and accurate data that can inform decision making;
- To provide a means by which wildlife crime priorities in Wales can be identified in an informed and transparent manner.

Education & Guidance

- To assist in the development and delivery of training and learning for wildlife and rural crime officers and staff from partner agencies that are involved in enforcing and reducing wildlife and rural crime;
- To develop good practice guides to enable officers, partner agency staff and members of the community fully understand their role in tackling wildlife and rural crime;
- To co-ordinate and deliver an annual 'Wales Wildlife Crime Conference' to facilitate the sharing and learning of good practice in the area of wildlife crime education and guidance.

Delivering the Strategy

These strategic objectives will be delivered through an associated Delivery Plan that is shown at Appendix A. The progress of delivery will be monitored through the *All Wales Biodiversity Partnership Wildlife Crime Enforcement Group* using the RAG process. This will also be periodically reported to the ACPO Cymru Chief Officer Lead.

Appendix A

All Wales Wildlife Crime Strategy – Delivery Plan

Final 08/06/2017

UK WILDLIFE CRIME PRIORITIES 2011 – 2013

PRIORITY ¹	PREVENTION	INTELLIGENCE	ENFORCEMENT
BADGER PERSECUTION Plan Owner(s): Barry Fryer (RSPCA); Mike Flynn (SSPCA); Stephen Philpott (USPCA) Objective: Improve and increase the recording of incidents, crimes and intelligence for Badger Persecution. Improve the investigation process and increase awareness of Badger Persecution across the UK	Lead: Ian Hutchison (Scottish Badgers) (Scotland and England & Wales)	Lead: NWCU	Lead(s): Mark Rasbeary (North Yorks); Ian Briggs (RSPCA) (England & Wales); Charlie Everitt (NWCU); Jim Cormack (SSPCA) (Scotland)
BAT PERSECUTION Plan Owner: Julia Hanmer (BCT) Objective: To reduce bat crime by: ~ working with key stakeholders to raise awareness of responsibilities and criminal offences against bats, promoting a preventative approach and improving the submission of intelligence and standards of investigation relating to bats across the UK	Lead: BCT	Lead: NWCU	Lead: BCT
CITES ISSUES 3 current CITES priorities of Ivory, Tortoises and Traditional Medicines ² Also looking at compliance with Forestry Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) EU regulations Plan Owner: Charles Mackay (UKBA) Objective: Increase the number of disruption activities and detections of illegal trade in CITES priority species by: Increasing the amount of targeted compliance activity, increasing the number of intelligence submissions and intelligence products produced, improve the quality of Analytical Assessments and complete in agreed time-scales, and increase the number of investigations and enforcement outcomes	Lead: John Hounslow (Animal Health)	Lead: NWCU	Lead(s): Ian Knox (Met) / Guy Clarke (UKBA)
FRESHWATER PEARL MUSSELS Plan Owner: Iain Sime (SNH) Objective: Raise awareness of criminality affecting freshwater pearl mussels in order to facilitate intelligence and incident reporting, leading to increased prevention and enforcement action	Lead: Ben Ross (SNH)	Lead: NWCU	Lead: Supt Alan Smailes (Grampian)
POACHING (Deer Poaching/Coursing, Fish Poaching and Hare Coursing) Plan Owner(s): Doug Macadam (SRPBA) (Scotland); Tom Blades (BASC) (England & Wales) Objective: To increase the level of awareness of poaching and hare coursing as serious wildlife crimes and build better trust and relationships between the law enforcement agencies and local rural communities, both leading to increased prevention activity, intelligence flows and enforcement success (Scotland)	Lead(s): Colin Sheldon (BASC) (Scotland) Peter Watson (Deer Initiative) (England & Wales)	Lead: NWCU	Lead(s): Alan Stewart (Tayside) (Scotland); TBC (England & Wales)
RAPTOR PERSECUTION (including poisoning, egg theft, chick theft, taking from the wild and nest disturbance/destruction and to concentrate on golden eagle, goshawk, hen harrier, peregrine, red kite and white-tailed eagle) Plan Owner(s): Chief Constable Richard Crompton (England & Wales); Supt Alan Smailes (Scotland) Objective: Raise community trust and awareness to facilitate intelligence and incident reporting, leading to increased prevention and enforcement activity relating to Raptor Persecution	Lead(s): Des Thomson (SNH) (Scotland); Paul Horswill (Natural England) (England & Wales)	Lead: NWCU	Lead(s): Supt Alan Smailes (Grampian) (Scotland); Supt Dave Lynch (Lincolnshire) (England & Wales)

¹ Priorities are presented in *alphabetical* order, *not* order of importance

² Including Rhino Horn

UK WILDLIFE CRIME INTELLIGENCE REQUIREMENTS 2011 – 2013

Intelligence Requirement ³	OBJECTIVE
CITES – Annex A & B Orchid species Plan Owners: Madeleine Groves (RBG Kew); John Hounslow (Animal Health)	To increase intelligence and incident submissions to the NWCU
CITES – Timber (with focus on Ramin) Plan Owner: TBC	To increase intelligence and incident submissions to the NWCU
Finch trapping Plan Owners: Mike Flynn (SSPCA); Barry Fryer (RSPCA); Stephen Philpott (USPCA)	To increase intelligence and incident submissions to the NWCU
Illegal taking of wild bird eggs (Op Easter) Plan Owner: Alan Stewart, Tayside	To increase intelligence and incident submissions to the NWCU
Illegal trade in Raptors Plan Owner: Animal Health	To increase intelligence and incident submissions to the NWCU
Illegal trade in Parrots Plan Owner: Animal Health	To increase intelligence and incident submissions to the NWCU
Introduction of Non Native Species Plan Owner: TBC	To increase intelligence and incident submissions to the NWCU

³ Presented in *alphabetical* order, *not* order of importance

Title: Neath Port Talbot Biodiversity-Friendly Planner of the Year Awards

Produced by: Rebecca Sharp – Ecologist for Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council (NPTCBC)

Background/Progress

The requirements for biodiversity issues to be included in planning decisions has increased in recent years with the development of the LBAP process, legislation changes plus court/judicial and planning inspectorate decisions. Additional training provided by WG, ALGE and by Local Authorities in-house has resulted in raising additional awareness of planning officers to the requirements of biodiversity.

This has made biodiversity a common issue for consideration for the average planning application; however this has come with a downside. Biodiversity issues often require survey information to be provided and in some cases this can only be undertaken at certain times of year; potentially resulting in delays for planning decisions; or mitigation requirements can sometimes reduce the viability of some developments. It can be difficult for planning officers, especially when they have targets or are being pushed to determine applications, to ensure that all biodiversity requirements are met appropriately in conjunction with balancing out all of the other issues they also have to consider.

In 2003, NPTCBC established a method of keeping track of potential Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) habitat losses resulting from planning decisions. This not only provided a measurement of loss to inform the Local BAP process but also started to give an insight into the consideration of biodiversity issues in planning decisions. The measurement of potential BAP habitat loss has been reported to Council Committee annually since then.

For 2006/07 this indicator was expanded to try and establish a better view of how biodiversity, in general, was being considered in the planning process. This was particularly pertinent considering the newly introduced biodiversity duty under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC). For all planning applications, where the Authority's Biodiversity Unit had provided recommendations for the requirements for biodiversity, the decision notice was checked to establish whether all, some or none of the requirements had been appropriately considered, i.e. appropriate conditions included or where surveys had been requested the decision had not been made prior to receipt of these. Particular attention was taken to the requirements of European Protected Species. This assessment has now been undertaken annually since 2006 and results reported to the Head of Service for Planning.

However, after a number of years of reporting these sorts of assessments it was clear that a more positive approach was also needed to encourage rather

than continually criticise planning officers, as in many cases individual officers try and do as much as they possibly can for biodiversity. The Unit therefore decided to expand the assessment to look at the decisions of individual officers. Again the decisions were scored in relation to whether all, some or none of the biodiversity recommendations had been included in the final decision but this was established for each individual planning officer. The officer with the highest number of 'all' biodiversity recommendations included was then declared the Biodiversity-friendly planner of the Year. If scores were similar for more than one officer then the assessment looked at the number of some and none categories. A certificate and prize for this achievement was awarded as part of the events for Wales Biodiversity Week.

The following year sparked a healthy competition between a number of planning officers all striving for the now coveted prize. Officers were keen to feedback to the Biodiversity Unit any achievements to incorporate as much biodiversity benefit into a scheme as they could possibly negotiate and generally communications between the Unit and the planners were much improved. This success in sparking the interest in many of the planners led to the decision to expand the awards the following year to include a team award (NB the NPT development control planning dept is divided into 3 teams covering different geographical areas) and the 'batty award' which awarded teams for their compliance with EPS requirements particularly bats, that have traditionally been problematic in relation to timings of surveys. In addition, a runners up prize for the planner award was also awarded as the scores were very close in 2009.

Again the 2009 awards were very much appreciated by the planners although due to the way the scoring system worked it was noted that some planners who deal with fewer but larger applications that could deliver a great deal for biodiversity in one hit were missing out. So, again additional categories were added in 2010 for technical innovation (awarded in 2010 for the planner that granted permission for NPTs first green-facade) and liaison (awarded to the planner that was felt to communicate the best with the Unit). Due to the increasing interest and appreciation for the awards externally the awards in 2010 were announced by the Authority's Environment Director; gaining a little more impetus.

Prizes awarded to date have included items such as bird boxes, insect houses, wildflower seeds and other items that could encourage the planning officers to gain more appreciation for wildlife at home. All funding for the awards has been provided via the WG/CCW core grant programme.

Due to the gaining momentum of recognition of the scheme the Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales has volunteered to sponsor the awards for 2011. Membership and a trip to Skomer are now being proposed as the main prize; to be awarded on 13th June following Wales Biodiversity Week.

Plan/Proposals

NPTCBC intend to continue the scheme as long as resources are available.

Action Requested

- Ask all WBP members to members note the approach taken and its success; and promote the up take of similar schemes throughout local authorities in Wales.

Title: Reaching out with Natur Cymru

Produced by: Huw Jenkins, marketing manager Natur Cymru

Background/Progress

Natur Cymru helps members of WBP to communicate and, through recently published articles on lichen and bees, to encourage greater awareness and data collection for these species groups. See paper November 2010

<http://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/content/uploads/documents/SG%20Meetings/SG12/F%20Natur%20Cymru%20SG12.pdf>

To reach a wider audience we have introduced Natur Cymru social media (blogging, YouTube and tweeting). To date we have made 16 films to promote understanding of ecosystems and links to these can be found at
<http://naturcymru.blogspot.com/2011/06/natur-cymru-youtube-services.html>

Plan/Proposals

We can help you reach your target audience.

This can be through the publication of suitable articles in Natur Cymru which may be re-published elsewhere (Daily Post, Western Mail, Walking Wales etc.).

Alternatively we can create a strategy for getting your message out. This could include the creation of engaging press releases, case studies, articles, films, blogs and so on.

After all the hard work and research that goes into conservation projects it is a shame to leave the communication as an afterthought. Often the task falls to someone who is too busy and probably too close to the subject.

Whether you do it in-house or use an outside professional it costs. We can't do it for free, but our services are competitive, and sometimes attract grants. Payment in kind through a reciprocal favour will be considered.

Action Requested

We ask all WBP members to consider Natur Cymru as a potential partner when there is a need for good communication. Please get in touch with huw.naturcymru@btinternet.com 01766 590272.

Title: Invasive Shrimp *Dikerogammarus villosus*

Produced by: Nick Bialynicki-Birula, Environment Agency Wales

Background/Progress

Since the discovery of invasive non native shrimp, *Dikerogammarus villosus* ('killer shrimp') in Grafham Water in Cambridgeshire and subsequently Cardiff Bay and Eglwys Nunydd in South Wales, a National Task Group has been established to lead an England and Wales response.

The Group comprises Defra and WAG with advisers from the Environment Agency, Natural England and the Countryside Council for Wales. National Briefing Notes explain the situation and how the response is being managed –

<https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/nonnativespecies/downloadDocument.cfm?id=563>

Plan/Proposals

The Group has developed a national response plan and actions covering biosecurity measures, identifying the extent of *Dv* and protecting nature conservation sites. It is also conducting research to improve the limited knowledge on *Dv*'s impact and how best to deal with it.

EAW has sampled and is monitoring 49 high-risk sites in Wales but to date there have been no additional detections beyond the three known sites.

Site owners, managers and operators at Cardiff Bay and Eglwys Nunydd are implementing biosecurity measures based on the National Briefing Note advice.

A national communications group has also been established with a wide range of stakeholders. It has developed a national *CHECK, CLEAN & DRY* campaign to promote these simple biosecurity measures to all water users:

<https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/nonnativespecies/index.cfm?pageid=337>

Action Requested

- WBP members to read the national briefing note, keep up to date with the latest biosecurity advice and help promote the *CHECK, CLEAN and DRY* campaign wherever possible.

WPSG14
PAPER TO NOTE E
12th July 2011**Title: WBP Planning & Budgeting****Produced by Sean McHugh WBP Support team****WBP Budget****Background/Progress**

CCW grant aid for WBP activities in 2011/2012 is £100,000 covering 1 Apr 2011 to 31 March 2012. The draft budget plan (Apr 11 -Mar 2012) is provided in Annex 1 in addition to a breakdown of Year 4 spending.

Plan/Proposals

It is anticipated that a number of additions and/or updates may be required to the budget in response to steering group input and these will be included by the support team for circulation after the meeting.

Action Requested

1. To approve the budget as outlined and suggest any changes required

Wales Biodiversity Week (WBW) 2012**Background/Progress**

WBW has run annually since 2002 and is typically held in the second week in June and is well established feature on the calendar. Suggested dates for 2012 are 9th -17th June. WBP have supported the event centrally, providing merchandise, publicity and a centralised web resource including an interactive events calendar. This year's approach (and awareness events in general) should take note of the activities around the Sustainable Development Rio+20 anniversary conference and the International Day for Biological Diversity (IDB) on 22 May 2012 which is themed "Marine and Coastal Biodiversity".

Action Requested

2. To agree WBW 2012 approach and confirm dates
3. To note Rio+20 and IDB themes as a focus for environmental awareness events

WBP Conference 2011 Reminder

WBP conference 14th and 15th Sept, "Delivering Ecosystem Health- building resilience, restoring biodiversity", Trinity College, Carmarthen.

The conference programme and booking form is available on the WBP website

UK BAP Conference update

The next UK BAP conference will be in 2012 and will link with the CBD Conference of the Parties. Conference venue and dates are not available at present.

WBP Conference 2012

A location and venue is required for the 2012 conference. Suggested location - South Wales (Cardiff, Newport, Pontypridd, or Swansea); Suggested dates: 12th - 13th Sep 2012

Action Requested

4. To finalise location and date of WBP Conference 2012

DRAFT Budget - Wales Biodiversity Partnership
Year 5 2011 - 2012

Staff costs (2 staff)

Salary	57400
Travel and Subsistence	2000

Administration/Office costs

Office Overheads (hosting /accounts)	9000
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Volunteer Costs

Volunteer Expenses	500
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Capital Expenditure

IT and Communication equipment	150
Mobile Phones	400

WBP Workplan Project Items

BARS strategic support	10000
Website	300
Conference	5500

Taxonomic Groups Funding/Nature Consv Funding

Vice county book fund	300
LRC wildlife recording training	3800
Taxonomic groups (SG presentations x2)	3200
Lichen trainer support	750

Wales Biodiversity Week

Wales Biodiversity Week	5500
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WBP Workplan General Items

Marketing/Publicity/Materials	300
Shows/Events/Meetings	400

Other project costs

WBP Staff Development	500
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Total **100000**

WBP Year 4 Expenditure

Staff costs (2 staff)

Salary	50,890.35
Travel and Subsistence	2,955.01

Administration/Office costs

Office Overheads (hosting/accounts)	9843
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Volunteer Costs

Volunteer Expenses	303.2
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Capital Expenditure

IT and Communication equipment	0
Mobile Phones	516.43

WBP Workplan Project Items

BARS strategic support	10000
Website	922.25
Conference	6493

Taxonomic Groups Funding/Nature Consv Funding

Vice county book fund	100
LRC wildlife recording training days	3507.6
Taxonomic groups (SG presentations)	835
Elm & Aspen Project	1500

Wales Biodiversity Week

Wales Biodiversity Week	6921.18
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WBP Workplan General Items

Marketing/Publicity/Materials	402
Shows/Events/Meetings	1642.89

Other project costs

WBP Staff Development	500
WBP Recruitment costs	279

Total **97610.91**

Title: Wales Biodiversity Partnership (WBP) Future of Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Group

Produced by: Julia Korn on behalf of the WBP Future of BAP group

Background/Progress

In 2007 Defra published a report on behalf of the UK Biodiversity Standing Committee which recommended that the responsibility for delivery of BAP should largely be a devolved responsibility ("Conserving Biodiversity the UK Approach"). This report was signed by the then Ministers for all 4 countries of the UK. In response WBP established the Future of BAP task and finish group to develop and roll out the approach to BAP in Wales. This led to the establishment of the wider WBP encompassing successful elements of the old approach (e.g. Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP partnerships and the WBP Steering Group) and the establishment of new groups to cover and improve on the functions of the UK groups. The new approach was published in the reviewed Wales Biodiversity Framework in February 2010 and the group met for the final time just after this. An action at that meeting was to re-establish in the future should there be a need.

During 2010 it was widely accepted that countries across the world had failed to meet international, continental and national targets to reduce the rate, and halt the loss of biodiversity. In response biodiversity policies have been reviewed at all levels. In November 2010 the 10th meeting of the Convention of the Parties (COP 10) of the Convention on Biological Diversity CBD) agreed a new international Strategic Plan for Biodiversity (2011 -2020) which set out a long term vision (2050), a short term Mission (2020) and goals and sub targets. In May 2011 the EU published a new Biodiversity Strategy with a long term vision and targets up to 2020. In Wales the National Assembly for Wales held an inquiry into why we missed the 2010 targets and published a report with 19 recommendations, most of which the then Minister Jane Davidson accepted. The development of the Natural Environment Framework in Wales focused on integrated environmental delivery through the ecosystem approach and the review of environmental bodies both present opportunities and challenges for biodiversity. The Future of BAP Group has been re-established to look at this. The primary task will be to review the Wales Biodiversity Framework and ensure its integration into delivery mechanisms for the NEF including the through the work of any new environmental body.

The group will report back to WBP Steering Group and to the NEF/Singles Environment Body (SEB) Joint Steering Group.

Plan/Proposals

This is an information paper only

Title: Biodiversity Action Reporting System (BARS) Update

Produced by: Alys Edwards, Technical Officer, Wales Biodiversity Partnership

Background/Progress

The Biodiversity Action Reporting System (BARS) is an integrated web-based information system developed in 2002 to meet the challenge of reporting against the UK Biodiversity Action Plan. The system has been added to and expanded but not fundamentally changed or updated since its initial release. In 2010 the BARS partnership, in consultation with the existing user community, identified a large number of development requirements.

The developments currently being undertaken will add new capabilities to the system, with the aim of making the new system much more accessible and transparent. This redevelopment of BARS reflects a fundamental shift away from the current focus on recording biodiversity action plans. The primary aim of BARS going forward will be to record and report information about actual action in place to benefit biodiversity. Over the past year BARS partners, including CCW and WBP, have been working to refresh and clarify their business case for a UK Biodiversity Action Reporting System to support the emerging country biodiversity strategies or other functions.

BARS Strategic Statement:

A newly developed and revitalised BARS should offer a more focussed, open and effective system for entering and reporting information about biodiversity action within the UK. It must be capable of aggregating statistics from individual actions, with a particular focus on the amount of habitat and species management in place. It should be possible to filter this information by biodiversity objective and viewed spatially within in interactive maps and across different periods of time.

Plan/Proposals

There has been no clear indication of action reporting requirement from the country groups leading on the BAP strategies in each of the four countries. There remains a great deal of uncertainty around the form of these new strategies which are more focussed at landscape scale delivery, promoting ecosystem services and securing ecological networks. However, whilst the strategies behind the Biodiversity Action Plan process evolve and change the broad type and objective of action taken on the ground remains unchanged.

The 2010-2011 development strategy for BARS has been to focus on improving core ability of the system to represent the distribution of individual, site based action taken to benefit biodiversity. This is in effect implementing a shift in emphasis from a UK BAP driven process (top down) using BARS to collate biodiversity action plans setting out work that should be done, to an action driven process (bottom up) using BARS to collate information about

biodiversity action planned, underway or complete taken to achieve a defined set of practical objectives.

A post 2010 UK Biodiversity Action Reporting System

- **Practical Biodiversity Action:** The primary purpose of BARS is to collate and share information about practical action being taken by anyone to benefit biodiversity throughout the UK.
- **Interactive Action Maps:** BARS will make use of GIS technology to offer the ability to browse and display the location and extent of actions in place across the landscape from a UK to local scale.
- **No Observation Evidence:** BARS will not aim to collect, manage or share observational evidence from field survey or biodiversity monitoring schemes.
- **Appropriate management:** BARS will continue to accommodate a variety of action types although priority will be given to information about appropriate land management put in place to directly benefit species and habitats.
- **Biodiversity Loss:** BARS will also collate and share information about negative impacts and losses to biodiversity throughout the UK.
- **Biodiversity Aspirations:** It will be possible to enter actions that have not started but the emphasis will be on realistic, planned work. The entering of actions representing an aspiration alone will be discouraged or otherwise clearly labelled as such.
- **More open action recording:** BARS will no longer require actions to be added as part of an existing biodiversity action plan. Instead a revised data standard will allow anyone to register and add information about the positive action they are taking to benefit biodiversity within the UK.
- **Biodiversity reporting:** BARS will offer statistics on the amount of action taken to benefit biodiversity. In particular BARS will aim to aggregate statistics from individual actions to indicate the total amount of land reported to be under management to maintain, improve, create or restore habitats. BARS will aim to offer these statistics for different points in time helping illustrate any change over time.
- **Progress reporting:** There is a clear distinction between progress reported against each action and progress towards the biodiversity objective. Biodiversity actions are usually applied and completed in parallel or succession towards a single biodiversity objective. BARS will offer a means of reporting progress and completion of actions. BARS will offer a means of indicating whether the action is likely to achieve the biodiversity action or whether further actions will be needed. BARS cannot not offer a statistical indication of progress towards achieving biodiversity objectives. This is because BARS does not hold survey and monitoring data needed for this. To invest in doing so would overlap the aims and objectives of other publicly funded information systems and networks. Instead effort will

be made to more closely integrate BARS with these different systems, including the NBN Gateway.

Action Requested

- Ask all WBP members to note the on-going development of BARS and consider how their organisation can best engage