

**Pollinators Taskforce Meeting
Aberystwyth
10 February 2014**

Attendees	Apologies
Alan Michie – RDP Monmouthshire	Alison Heal – Ceredigion County Council
Caryn Le Roux (Chair) – WG Biodiversity Policy	Amy Byrne – WG-OCVO
Claudia Howard – North Wales Libraries Partnership	Amy Green - Flintshire County Council
Davey Martyn - WG Biodiversity	Angie Polkey - (previously) Denmark Farm Conservation Centre
Deborah Procter - JNCC	Ann Jones – National Federation of Women’s Institutes
Francis Gellatly - FERA	Anna Williams - North Wales Wildlife Trust
Gareth Baker – professional beekeeper	Bleddyn Lake – FoE Cymru
Gemma Light (Secretariat) - WG Biodiversity	Chris Partridge – Keep Wales Tidy
Helen Ovens - FUW	Claire Dinham - Buglife
James Byrne – Wildlife Trusts Wales	Holly Pinkney - National Beekeeping Centre Wales
Jane Rees - Anglesey Verges	Jan Miller - North Wales Wildlife Trust
Jenny Shaw - Welsh Bee Keepers’ Association	Jane Jones – WG-OCVO
Jill Jackson – North & Mid Wales Trunk Road Agency	Jon Hadlow - Ceredigion County Council
Kathleen Carroll – WG Pesticide Policy	Lucy Rothstein - Bumblebee Conservation Trust
Mike Howe - NRW	Marc Carlton - Wildlife Gardening Forum
Natasha DeVere – National Botanic Garden of Wales	Maria Golightly – Kew Gardens
Nicola Bradbear – Bees for Development	Martin Jones – Bees for Development
Rachel Palmer – Keep Wales Tidy	Paul Evans - Buglife
Russel Hobson - Butterfly Conservation Wales	Rachel Lewis-Davies - NFU
Sinead Lynch – Bumblebee Conservation Trust	Trevor Dines – Plantlife Cymru
Stephen Thomas - National Beekeeping Centre Wales	

Welcome and Introductions

Caryn welcomed the members and reminded those present of the Action Plan for Pollinators and the Draft Implementation Plan to be updated in the afternoon’s workshops as well as reviewed internally within the Welsh Government.

Examples of actions being taken forward within Welsh Government include highlighting best practice for pollinators during Local Authority biodiversity duty audits, consideration of pollinators within wider biodiversity guidance for Sustainable Housing policy, and roadside verge management by the Trunk Road Agencies.

Work continues with links to the National Pollinator Strategy in England which will soon be launching a consultation.

Action - A link will be circulated by Gemma when it is available.

Caryn also gave a brief update on the £6 million Nature Fund. 450 ideas were submitted which are available to view online – over 40 ideas had been received regarding pollinators and related issues, and there is likely to be some form of funding around this theme. An update will be circulated to the taskforce when it becomes available though it is clear that this work could help the Taskforce meet its goals.

Members were also reminded to add any comments or changes to the Terms of Reference for consideration by the wider taskforce.

Sub-group Updates

Evidence and Monitoring – Deborah Proctor from JNCC gave a presentation regarding current monitoring and data collected for pollinators in Wales.

Further evidence could be included from Beebase and the Glastir Monitoring and Evaluation programme which includes pollinators.

A National Pollinator Monitoring Scheme is being scoped by a Defra led contract to which Deborah, Caryn and Mike have contributed. The Taskforce will be asked to engage with this as it is developed. The Evidence subgroup will meet separately to agree a suitable baseline for monitoring going forward, and further evidence needs.

Roadside Verges – The focus of this group is on awareness raising and sharing of best practice. Nicola Bradbear updated on the work of Bee Friendly Monmouthshire regarding road verges and the policy they have put forward to Monmouthshire Council. Unfortunately there has been a petition from 120 farmers objecting to their proposals. A counter-petition has been launched by Nicola and colleagues which currently stands at 700 signatories. Taskforce members were urged to sign the petition and forward to colleagues and contacts to increase support. It was noted though that there had been a very positive response from the Local Authority and councillors in Monmouthshire.

Other Local Authorities are also making changes and it was proposed that further case studies are sought. The Trunk Road Agencies also have much experience in management techniques and contract management. The proposed Roadside verge seminars should be used to disseminate this knowledge and experience.

Helen Ovens stressed the importance of continuing to engage with the farming community.

It was suggested that this sub-group should also incorporate hedges and that consideration should be given to the fact that each area needs to be treated separately and what might work in one area may well be different from another.

Sustainable Bees – (Alan Michie) There are several different work streams arising from this subgroup, which were discussed by the group members in more detail later in the day. They relate to proposals for improving native stocks of honeybees for hobbyist and commercial beekeepers, as well as bumblebees for commercial purposes.

A report on the issues, as well as the proposals is in production by the subgroup.

Glastir – Mike Howe had circulated a paper on proposed changes to Glastir options and it was acknowledged that although the technical aspects of management and prescriptions the paper are agreed there are differences of opinion on how to maximise uptake of these. It was agreed to make a Taskforce response to the Glastir Consultation which will close on 28th March 2014, to include proposals regarding engagement with farmers, prioritising uptake, and a small grant scheme.

Action – Glastir sub-group to be arranged by Gemma

In the longer term, this group will focus on land management action for pollinators in the wider countryside, including farmland.

Wildlife Gardening - Current work relating to this was discussed and Jan Miller, of the Wildlife Gardening Forum, subsequently provided further information, which has been added to the Taskforce website. Technical guidance was provided to Keep Wales Tidy for the Wild Weekend for Wales scheme regarding planting and management for pollinators.

Communications – led by the Secretariat

- Branding – Gemma updated the taskforce on the logo and waiting to hear back from the Design Team in WG with an initial draft design. This will be circulated in due course. The question of accreditation and endorsement by the Taskforce using the logo was raised, to be discussed at a future meeting.
- Webpage – the Taskforce webpages are now live at <http://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/en-GB/Wales-Action-Plan-for-Pollinators>
- All to send any papers or links to Gemma for updating on the webpage hosted on the Wales Biodiversity Partnership website.
- Spring Seminar on road verges – It was agreed that 2 separate events to take place in north and south wales towards the end of April.
- Gwlad article of the overview of the APP and the Pollinators Taskforce was submitted and published.

**Action – Technical article to be submitted for next issue of Gwlad.
Gemma to arrange meeting of the technical sub-group**

Action – Initial dates and venues for road verge seminar to be sourced by Gemma

- It was agreed to look at potential other locations than Aberystwyth for face-to-face meetings and to cover as much as possible by email.
- There is a communications plan in place for the Action Plan for Pollinators.
- The question of a Taskforce presence at the Royal Welsh Show was raised – to be discussed at the next meeting.
- A reporting template will be developed, and Taskforce members asked to contribute actions undertaken towards the Action plan.

Action – Gemma to draft a template and circulate to all

Funding –

- Nature Fund – has received 450 ideas which are available to view online, see above.
- Wild Weekend for Wales – the Keep Wales Tidy scheme has been targeted at pollinators this year, and was endorsed by the Taskforce, and supported with technical guidance. Some extra funding for the project has been sought from Welsh Government, the outcome awaited.
- Further funding opportunities will be circulated as they arise.

Terms of Reference – This will be updated with a short description of the subgroups and some detail regarding flow of information between groups, Welsh Government and the Minister. All members of the Taskforce to forward any proposed amendments to Gemma for circulation.

Action – Amended Terms of Reference to be circulated by Gemma

Lunch

Workshops –

Session 1:

- Review of Implementation Plan – the following questions were asked for each of the four outcomes of the APP group (Sustainable Bees, Evidence and Road Verge Management):
 1. How are we doing so far?
 2. What else needs identifying?
 3. What are the barriers?
 4. How could they be removed (or moved)?

Action – An amended implementation plan to be circulated by Gemma

Session 2:

- Discussion of three topics in smaller groups:
 1. Sustainable bees – consideration of proposals for improving supply of native queens and colonies.
 2. Glastir – elements of the consultation to respond to
 3. Roadside verges – programme for Spring seminars for practitioners

Actions:

Action	Lead	Partners	Target date (if possible to assign)
Glastir Meeting to be arranged	Mike Howe	Gemma	
Seminar on road verges to be organised	Caryn Le Roux	Gemma Light	April 2014
Draft Implementation Plan to be circulated for comments	Gemma Light	Caryn Le Roux, Davey Martyn	End of March 2014
Reporting template	Caryn Le Roux	Gemma Light	End of March 2014
Technical Group to meet	Caryn Le Roux	Davey Martyn Mike Howe James Byrne Russel Hobson Jill Jackson	April 2014
Gwlad article	Caryn Le Roux	Input from Technical Group	April 2014
Brief summary of each sub-groups aims to be emailed to Gemma to go on website	Mike Howe Alan Michie Jan Miller	Gemma Light	End of March 2014
Paper on “un-mown road verges make drivers slow down” to be circulated	Gemma Light	James Byrne	completed
Paper on roadside verges and hedges to be forwarded to all	Jill Jackson	Gemma	completed
Terms of Reference to be updated	All	Gemma	End of March 2014
National Pollinator Strategy consultation document to be circulated	Gemma		completed