

Minutes of the Wales Biodiversity Enclosed Farmland Ecosystem Group (EFEG)

20 January 2010, Glandyfi Room, Rhodfa Padarn, Aberystwyth
11am-3pm

| | | |
|------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Chair: | Caryn Le Roux (CLR) | (Welsh Assembly Government) |
| Present: | Trevor Dines (TD) | (Plantlife) |
| | Rosie Carmichael (RC) | (Carmarthenshire County Council) |
| | Hilary Miller (HM) | (Countryside Council for Wales) |
| | Clare Burrows (CB) | (Countryside Council for Wales) |
| | Dafydd Jarrett (DJ) | (NFU) |
| Minutes: | Frances Gillett (FG) | (Welsh Assembly Government) |
| Apologies: | Charles Morgan | (Pori Natur a Threftadaeth) |
| | Charles Grisedale | (Cambrian Lapwing Recovery Trust) |
| | Gethin Davies | (Snowdonia National Park) |
| | Dave Lamacraft | (RSPB) |
| | Juliet Hynes | (Wales Biodiversity Partnership) |

1. Introduction and apologies

CLR reviewed group's remit briefly. A UK Lowland Farmland group has been convened by JNCC to act as a collation group for the BAP targets in England and the Devolved Administrations (DAs). Current thinking is that Wales' targets should continue to feed in to the UK targets on BARS at the moment.

2. Minutes and action points from the last meeting

These were confirmed and all actions either completed or carried forward and dealt with in this meeting.

3. UK HAP Steering Groups

The UK HAP Steering groups continue to meet, seemingly as technical fora. Clarification has been sought on their official remit, but in the meantime members of this group sit on these meetings. Feedback from these was given by CB (Hedges and AFMs) and HM (Orchards):

Hedgerows –

Hedgelink website has been updated. The UK group are keen to improve communication with farmers.

DJ to look at the Hedgelink website and put the link into the NFU newsletter.

CLR to look into getting a Welsh page on Hedgelink and translation.

The UK group have an R and D subgroup to consider and commission projects. These are very England centric. This is an issue with all Defra research, and there is ongoing work within WAG to address this.

CLR to raise issue of how to improve input for Wales on R and D with the Ecosystem Group Chairs meeting.

The use of the EFEG resource area on the WBP website as a central repository for information on R and D was also discussed.

CLR to clarify this with EF Chairs as above, for all priority habitats.

Arable Field Margins -

No meeting attended since last EFEG meeting so nothing to report.

Traditional Orchards –

The priority habitat has now been defined.

Targets and action plan still being developed but priorities are likely to be to retention of traditional orchards followed by expansion, followed by creation of new sites.

Another priority will be to identify the baseline of traditional orchard stock in Wales. People's Trust for Endangered Species have developed a survey pack, which CCW have translated, and HM has put in a bid for funding to enable some surveys to go ahead.

4. Glastir

Discussion of targeting priority habitats through the higher level scheme in Glastir. Group felt the maps produced for arable field margins and orchards, were reasonable, but again highlighted the need for this group to encourage actions for these habitats outside of Glastir.

The hedgerow options were proposed to be targeted only in landscape areas, areas targeted for certain species, and ffridd areas. It was felt this would miss essential lowland and other upland areas, and would also limit the availability of capital payments. The group felt that hedgerow options should be available in **all** targeted areas.

CB to take these views back to next consultation.

5. Policy update

CLR had taken a list of policy issues to the WBP policy group meeting, and is due to meet Diana Reynolds (WAG) to take some of these forward.

Tree Preservation Orders – TPOs operate under Local Authority planning law for amenity purposes. The issue is whether they could be employed to give protection for trees which support biodiversity/other priority species.

TD to produce a list of trees and lichens that TPO's are wanted for.

CLR to circulate 'protection through policy and legislation' document for information.

TD stated that Plantlife were delighted that WAG money from the Small Grant Scheme was provided for a project with the National Trust at Trefrane.

CLR find out what budget there is and when it will be available for next year from Nature, Conservation and Biodiversity to allow for better planning

6. Species link update

56 species will be covered by the regional options packages of the Pan Wales element of Glastir.

WBP have started to publish action plans for individual or groups of priority species. We will need to cross check these with our action plans. Species have been signposted to Ecosystem Groups, but we haven't seen these yet. **TD** to chase species list for enclosed farmland ecosystems group.

7. Non native invasive species targets

A spreadsheet of these produced by the Non Native Invasive Species group was considered for our feedback. A few plants relevant to our priority habitats at this time. Grey Squirrels have a low impact on hedgerows, but hedgerows provide a dispersal route for the species, which may then have a greater impact on other habitats and species, esp. red squirrels. We will need to consider this under species actions.

TD to provide comments to Mike McCabe on grey squirrels at the same time as reporting on plant issues.

8. Wales priority habitat action plans

The template for these was discussed, and the way forward agreed.

CB to obtain work programmes from UK HAP groups for Hedgerows and AFMs. Relevant actions to be moved to Wales action plans. Add in actions arising from minutes of EFEG meetings.

HM to take charge of Traditional Orchard action plan

CLR hedgerows

TD arable field margins

To meet others or circulate as possible/appropriate

CLR to collate and notify of next stages.

9. Date of Next Meeting

28 April 2010 in Aberystwyth. NB This was subsequently changed to 5 May 2010, when a subgroup met to go through the Action Plans produced under 8. above.