

Minutes of the Wales Biodiversity Lowland Farmland Ecosystem Group (LFEG)

7th October 2009, Boardroom, Y Lanfa, Abersystwyth

11am-3pm

Chair: Caryn Le Roux (Welsh Assembly Government)

Present: Charles Morgan (Pori Natur a Threftadaeth)
 Charles Grisedale (Cambrian Lapwing Recovery Trust)
 Trevor Dines (Plantlife)
 Dave Lamacraft (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds)
 Juliet Hynes (Wales Biodiversity Partnership)
 Rosie Carmichael (Carmarthenshire County Council)

Minutes: Frances Gillett (Welsh Assembly Government)

Apologies: Gethin Davies (Snowdonia National Park)
 Clare Burrows (Countryside Council for Wales)
 Hilary Miller (Countryside Council for Wales)

Item	Discussion	Action	Progress
1. Group Remit	The name 'lowland farmland' does not quite reflect the habitats encompassed by the group – it was felt that 'Enclosed Farmland' was a better description. Administration – all agendas/minutes need to go on WBP website. Future meetings could focus on	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CLR to suggest name change at Ecosystem group chairs meeting. 2. FG to locate website link and place future minutes etc on website via Sean 	Completed – name changed on all documents and WBP website. Link: http://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/bap_in_wales-27.aspx

	<p>one of each of three priority habitats in turn, but next job will be to draw up the action plan with SMART actions.</p> <p>BARS reporting officer – need to identify for the group. JH flagged up the lack of time available for the WBP officers to carry out this work on our behalf.</p>	<p>McHugh.</p> <p>3. CLR to raise this point at Chairs meeting and request extra funding for a support officer for this role.</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p>2. Minutes and action points from the last meeting</p>	<p>These were confirmed and all actions either completed or carried forward and dealt with in this meeting, except for AP 4 here.</p>	<p>4. JH to chase up GLASU re orchards.</p>	
<p>3. UK HAP objectives and targets for Wales</p>	<p>Discussed changes to Wales BAP targets and actions needed to achieve them (see BARS for target numbers). Discussion focussed on:</p> <p>Hedgerows –</p> <p>T1) Local changes to hedgerow lengths, and how this could be monitored through Local</p>	<p>5. Carry forward to action plan – Track losses and mitigation of hedgerows through LPAs, possibly through LRCs, and by December 2010</p>	

	<p>planning authorities and/or LRCs T2)Should be addressed by Glastir</p> <p>T3)Still need disaggregated figure for Wales from the CS.</p> <p>T4)Need to focus Glastir higher level at achieving favourable condition – see later discussion.</p> <p>T5)Communications to encourage favourable practice. Reword the target positively. T6)As for T3, still awaiting disaggregated figures, see AP 6. T7)Should be achieved by Glastir options –will need to be monitored.</p> <p>T8)Will need an increase by 100kms of hedgerows per year – will Glastir funding support this?</p>	<p>6. CLR to chase up disaggregated figures for CS2007.</p> <p>7. Communications needs - carry forward to action plan.</p> <p>8. Group to look at Glastir options to assess whether they will achieve hedgerow targets.</p> <p>9. Group to look at monitoring of Glastir to ensure these targets will be measured</p> <p>10. Need to quantify area of margins not</p>	<p>Still to do</p> <p>Partially completed</p>
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	<p>Arable Field Margins - T1) Retain target. Focus on increasing amount habitat through Glastir. T2) Slightly change wording to appropriate for Wales, and to deliver for plants and birds. T3) Currently not a priority in Wales but will be retained for future review. T4) Would like to change this target to: maintain 100ha of permanent grass margin. T5) Currently unable to monitor this in Wales – needs baseline condition criteria, and a method of achieving and monitoring through Glastir</p> <p>Traditional Orchards – There are currently no UK BAP targets as this is a new priority habitat. Wales is still to establish a baseline of orchard extent and condition.</p>	<p>included in TG monitoring.</p> <p>11. Group need to look at Glastir with this target in mind. 12. To collate mechanisms for achieving arable targets in Wales – through action plan.</p> <p>13. Hilary Miller to maintain link with UK group and to monitor Glastir.</p>	
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<p>4. Glastir</p>	<p>A) CLR gave an update on the Whole Farm code, the Pan Wales options and the current status of the scheme.</p> <p>B) DL explained the Regional packages (see paper) which were met with general approval. RC emphasised the need for consultation with and buy in from Local authorities and LBAP officers and partnerships who may have local knowledge, and will certainly help to implement the scheme.</p> <p>C) Clare Burrows was unable to attend the meeting to explain these so CLR presented the higher tier options, for comments to be made by email following the meeting.</p>	<p>14. FG to establish who is representing LAs on the Glastir stakeholder group, who could also liaise with LBAPs.</p> <p>15. DL and TD to consult LBAPs on regional packages.</p> <p>16. CLR to circulate higher tier options by email and collate responses of the group.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Completed.</p>
<p>5. Policy matters</p>	<p>CLR circulated the paper on Policy issues for taking to the WBP Policy Group meeting on 8/12/09. Various comments were made re:</p> <p>Notifying outgoing TG farmers of their obligations under EIA regs and other legislation.</p> <p>Review of Tree Preservation</p>	<p>17. CLR to update policy paper to take to policy group meeting</p> <p>18. FG to contact Highways Agency re tree removal policy.</p>	<p>Completed</p>

	Orders and Hedgerow Regs. Highways Agency policy on tree removal, particularly of veteran trees.		
6. Species links	Still awaiting the species/habitat linking work. Glastir work has set everything back.		
7. Work programme (Action Plan)	The need for SMART actions was discussed but drawing up the action plan will be the focus of the next meeting.	19. Action plan to be focus of next EFEG meeting.	On agenda
8. Links to LBAPs and to UK groups update	UK steering group meetings are still being held for each priority habitat at the moment, with (CLR thinks) a more technical remit. CB will continue to represent Wales on Arable Field Margin and Hedgerow groups, and HM our rep on the Traditional Orchards group. EFEG will ask for feedback from these groups as appropriate. CLR will represent the group on the UK Lowland Farmland BAP group which will be collating targets and their achievement for the UK. JH is the group's LBAP link officer.	20. UK group updates as standing agenda item. 21. LBAP link update	On agenda On agenda

	She will take three key messages from each EFEG meeting to circulate to LBAP officers.	as standing agenda item.	
9. Research update	<p>Defra has let contract for a Hedgerow management survey to be carried out this autumn. It is understood that CCW have a budget for Rand D. Need to develop a central database of research related to the priority habitats.</p> <p>Cath Shellswell has completed a report on arable plant monitoring in Wales, which is on the Plantlife website.</p>	<p>22. Carry this forward to the action plan.</p> <p>23. TD to provide the link to this work.</p>	<p>This refers to the following links: Plantlife webpages: http://www.plantlife.org.uk/uk/plantlife-saving-species-arable.html The UK arable plants website: http://www.arableplants.org.uk/</p>
10. AOB		24. CLR to provide a link to hedgelink website	www.hedgelink.org.uk
11. Date of next meeting	20 January in Aberystwyth.		