

WESG Meeting 17
The Old Sawmill, Tregynon
Thursday 11th December, 2014

Attendees

Chris Tucker (CT) – NRW
David Jenkins (DJ) – Coed Cymru
Richard Jones (RJ) - NRW
Fiona McFarlane (FM) - WG
Nigel Ajax-Lewis (NAL) – WTSWW
Dave Lamacraft (DL) – Plantlife/RSPB
Laura Shewring (LS) – Woodland Trust
Rory Francis (RF) – Woodland Trust

1. Welcome and apologies

Apologies

Jerry Langford – Woodland Trust
Jim Latham – NRW
Elen Richards - NPTCBC

2. Chalara management response

A discussion on the likely pace of impact of Chalara on ash in Wales. Current indications are that there will be a slow decline. DJ – Ash is responsive in terms of ability to breed and evolve so it may adapt and become resistant. DL – Sallow may be an alternative tree species for the Lobarrian community that uses Ash.

DJ – diversify with small-leaved lime and others (e.g. elms) FM – use a range of species. DJ raised the issue of availability of planting stock of species.

CT suggested that WESG produce a note for biodiversity officers etc. on how to improve resilience of woodlands to Chalara. – This was supported. (Update – Fiona reports that the Plant Health group is keen for us to produce a note.)

FM - The Plant health group (WG) has a Chalara tree health management plan

AP1 - FM & CT to check with Terry O'Keefe and Chris Jones on the management plan.

AP2 - CT add production of guidance note to WESG work plan for 2015.

3. Ancient Tree Forum (Chris Tucker) & provision of support for owners (Jerry Langford)

Tracey Lovering is setting up a Wales branch of the Ancient Tree Forum. Could members please inform their contacts in Wales that would be

interested? The Woodland Trust Ancient Tree Hunt volunteer list could be informed and the Very Important Trees work would be useful input.

- Support for owners – Woodland Trust reported that there is lack of support for owners on managing ancient trees. DJ informed the group that there is an element in Glastir advanced for Ancient trees. RF – Chris James (WG) will be pulling together a paper for ministers. There is a WG task and finish group 'Better protection for Wales' Ancient, veteran and heritage trees' – NAL and RF are on the group.
 - AP3 CT - Raise the issue with the Enclosed Farmland Group
 - AP4 All - Engage with Tracey Lovering on Ancient Tree Forum
- [Ancient Tree Forum Wales](#)

To all interested in ancient or veteran trees in Wales, you are invited to join like-minded people to form an Ancient Tree Forum for Wales. Whether your interest is specialised or general, whether you like taking photos of, recording associated species or features, surveying, or just standing in admiration or thought, you're welcome! We can make the group as informal as you like, and include a range of activities or just seek out fine trees. If interested, please contact: Tracey Lovering t.lovering@btinternet.com

- AP5 CT to write to Chris James re progress of the T&F group.

4. Rhododendron strategy

CT is tasked by the WBP INNS group to set up a task & Finish group to progress a Wales Strategy for Rhododendron. Request contact names for those interested in being on the group.

Questions to consider: How does this fit into a wider INNS strategy? What are the impacts of the EU IAS regulations?

- AP6 All to respond to CT with proposed group members.

5. RDP/Glastir working Group

J Langford suggests that a working group is needed to shape/inform design of the grant system. This would be outside the Glastir Woodland Stakeholder Group.

DJ – Stakeholder meetings have been forest agent led but now the NFU, FUW and Confor are attending.

WG recognises the need for a group but not just now. Any ideas on designing Glastir woodland scheme should be fed to Bill McDonald.

It was felt that the scheme needed to follow a management plan basis as BWW did.

FM – The basic payment announcement will exclude woodland.

Below 100 stems/ha canopy will be used, aerial photography will be used. Scrub/bracken land

Bill McDonald working on it, if we have this regulation how can we apply it. Need to get sign off from EU.

EU - greening measure – permanent pastures.

WG are challenging it

Coed Cymru and WG working on putting a case together. For a special category for wood pasture/Ffridd.

6. P.ramorum – Advice on restocking best practice, Woodland Trust PAWS restoration team Wales

LS shared some of the experience of the PAWS restoration project. Family farmers are enthusiastic to return to native species. Farmers don't have forestry knowledge.

So the Woodland Trust are making owners more aware of management options in gradual restoration.

DJ – Coed cae/Ffridd – restocking of larch sites as if they weren't woodlands before.

DJ suggests that there is another descriptor of these sites, as coed cae.

CT – set out some issues on the restocking of PAWS larch sites; lack of planting stock, hectarage, stock availability.

Cypermethrin use/ chemical use.

Hylobius issue – will there be a stop on using cypermethrin?

LS – Is larch removal plan to clear-fell all larch by clear-fell even where there is no infection?

AP7 – CT to Check details of Phytophthora recovery plan.

Planting mixtures suggested to get cover back on sites ASAP.

DJ – The reduced time of 2-3 years to canopy closure from planting non-native/native mixtures is not going to effect the remnant features.

Guidance on planting of restock of larch on Ffridd sites.

DJ raised an issue with hazel/scrub on AWI 2011

- Guidance to: NRW planners on larch restocks
Private sector on Glastir
- What guidance?: Ffridd maps (CCW)

AP8 – DJ to draft note re the above.

7. Tree map data, Wales

Jerry Langford raised this to get the group's thoughts on how it can best be utilised. The group felt that it would be useful.

AP9 – Jerry to supply more detail on what data is available and at what cost?

8. NRW Urban tree cover report

Woodland Trust has a campaign for 2015 on urban trees and is calling on WG to give support for urban trees.

Website link: (Jerry , can you provide link please?)

9. AOB

DJ – Coed Cymru nature Fund project, they have had lots of suggestions re. sites but are still open to more. The project will create a five year plan for the benefit of soil and water, based on Glastir actions for delivery. Gareth Davies or DJ are contacts.

DL – HLF bid with Plantlife/RSPB and SNH; including Meirionnydd SAC/IPA. Focussing on rhododendron control work, focussed on the Mawddach catchment.

REF fund –Meirionnydd survey work for lichens and bryophytes is proceeding very well.

NAL – The Environment and sustainability committee INNS report

- Schedule 9 of the W&C act is being reviewed.

RF – There is a predicted shortage of oak likely in 2016/17 due to poor mast years. What do we recommend as alternative species?

DJ – use pioneer species initially then supplementary plant oak in the 3rd or 4th year.

FM – FR advice is don't use eastern bloc oak as the continental climate is too different from our oceanic one so they won't be suitable.

DJ – direct seed using quill tubes.

- Suggestion for Futureforests oak seed orchard suitable for Q. petraea. Jerry Langford via email – 'What more can be done to ensure future supplies of tree seed? We are offering land to Future Forests for oak seed orchards. They are looking for a suitable site for a Q. petraea orchard in Wales, having rejected the land we have available as more suited to Q. robur. I'd be happy to pass on any site suggestions to them.
- Is there any evidence that the gene pool of Q. petraea in Wales is distinct from that elsewhere? '

RJ – SAC management plan review due by the end of 2015 (Life N2K project).

10. Date and location of next meeting

18th March 2015 Location to be confirmed.