

Woodland Ecosystem Group Meeting
Minutes of the 8th Meeting
Pentre Ifan, Crymych, Pembrokeshire.
22nd Sept.2011

Chris Tucker (CT)	FCW (Chair)
Nigel Ajax-Lewis (NA-L)	Wildlife Trust South & West Wales
Richard Crompton (RC)	Wild Wood Ecology
Jim Latham (JL)	CCW
Linda Makepeace (LM)	WG –SEED
Mark Malins (MM)	FCW (& Secretariat)
Celia Thomas (C Th)	Pembrokeshire National Park Authority
Arfon Williams (AW)	RSBP

1. Welcome and apologies
CT welcomed all to the meeting

Michelle van-Velzen
Jane Holloway
Chris Smith

2. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

2.1 Glastir Woodland Creation

AW enquired on % of applications received by category (Green/Amber/Red).
[Action point CT to report on this question](#)

CT reported that an appeal process had been set up and that a number of Red category applications were being processed by the new appeal system. 250ha of new woodland had been approved in first six months of scheme. A map browser was available to view information (link in minutes of 7th meeting)

2.2 Advisory to CCW re designation boundaries

JL highlighted that SAC boundaries often aligned with boundary walls, especially problematic where roads were straightened. Improvement would be to move back 10m and add a buffer strip. He asked if recommendation could come from WESG.

RC stated every SSSI & SAC needs two lines (core and buffer).

AW stated SACs accommodated with a buffer.

RC stated that they were very challenging legally.

C Th recommended buffer on woodland, but CT of view that would be problems in enforcing.

JL suggested there was potential to update policy position on woodland

CT asked if it should be raised with Steering Group.

C Th. stated that agricultural industry was changing and highlighted case of intensive dairy unit, re planning and cropping. Need for a functional network of habitats. MM stated need to differentiate between buildings (planning) and cropping issues. Would be potential need for compensation payments.

RC recommended topic should be added to NEF list – could have new legislation in 5 years.

Sub-group (C Th, JL & MM) to write summary of issue; discuss with Diana Reynolds (DR) then produce paper for Steering Group to send to other Ecosystem Groups.

Action Point - C Th, JL & MM

AW asked if it could be a pilot project for NEF.

C Th. highlighted that diggers were frequently used to fell small trees encroaching on fields. Not a licensing issue (<5m³) but concerns over EPS.

Need for leaflet on EPS to distribute to agricultural and builders merchants, machinery rings, the Co-op etc. where digger drivers might pick up. Also to farm road contractors, civil engineers and Planning Authorities (to pass to planning applicants). Potential to include reference to EPS within Lantra Competence Certificates.

Action: CT to talk to Richard Siddons (G&R) on publicising EPS on felling requirements; also talk to Steve Jackson (WG-NCB).

2.3 Input to Species Integration:

Reference to Pied Flycatcher to read 'requires clear understory and closed canopy'.

Action Point MM

3. WBP Items for ecosystem groups - Chris Tucker

3.1 Spreadsheet list of woodland habitats

FCW work discussed. CT reported that he was waiting for input from Species Experts before finalising; also asked WESG for further ideas before sending off in November.

Action Point: CT to identify gaps in research and pass to Tracey Lovering (TL) by 30-11-11).

Action Point: All to send comment on spreadsheet to CT.

Defra were sponsoring a GB project on woodland birds, RSPB were involved. Need for more coppice highlighted, was part of Glastir but needed right guidance, also from biomass perspective and for which coppice stands were suitable for work. There is a need to compare/contrast current area of coppice v historical.

Questions raised on:

- (a) Where are areas that would benefit from coppice?
- (b) What were impacts if old coppice not worked, compared to regularly worked coppice?
- (c) How is coppice used by different species?

Action Point: MM to review Forest Research work on coppice.

3.2 PAWS

- NA-L asked if there was information on restored PAWS, as was a policy driver. CTh reported no post –restoration monitoring done.
- There was greater ecological value in restoring PAWS than planting new woods on farmland, especially for mychorrizzal relationships.

Action Point: MM to do literature review on PAWS restoration and mychorizzal relationships.

3.2 Impact of agriculture on woodlands

- Stock in previously grazed woodlands had been fenced out under Tir Gofal. Needed guidance on stocking rates, timing, flexibility, use of rotational grazing.

- What was historical impact of agriculture on woodlands under Tir/Gofal & in last 25 years?
- How many Tir Gofal woodland management plans had been written?
- How many of those plans had been implemented?

Action: LM to ask Steve Chambers (Tir Gofal) for info.

3.3 Review of Wales Biodiversity Network

Future role of WBN raised. Need to clarify links to proposed Single Environmental Body (SEB).

Action Point: CT to forward WBP Policy Group email to WESG. & to ask Diana Reynolds how WBP will be involved in NEF; what will be the role of the Steering group?

4. Glastir Update

The Forestry Target Species spreadsheet is progressing but awaiting input from some species experts (see 3.1). Will there be targets for hectares of woodland in management for each FTS? How will monitoring happen for these actions? This will be part of the overall Glastir monitoring,

Action Point: CT to share draft with WESG. Enquire on monitoring with Glastir team.

4..1 Non-priority woodland species

- Simple SAC woodland monitoring in place, but need for more monitoring to provide common bird species trends, plus a Woodland Bird Index (see Farmland Index). Need for this approach under Glastir. SAC type system could be rolled out to managed sites.
- Base line info. on Bats would be useful for future reference.
- Common Spp. Monitoring data on JNCC website – need to add distribution to Wales datasets.

5. Terms of Reference – Chris Tucker

- ToR reviewed. Need to define link between Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (ES) and to retain management for Biodiversity. The higher the level of biodiversity the more robust the ecosystem and hence provision of ES.

Action Point: All WESG to send thoughts on original ToR (points 1-6) to CT by 31-10-11

Action Point : CT to send overarching principles for Ecosystem Groups to all

6. Prioritisation mapping – Jim Latham

JL provided update of potential for mapping habitats and connectivity with Ecosystems.

There is a need to look at:

- Areas with highest connectivity values;
- Areas under greatest threat;
- Areas under greatest threat that have potential for restoration.

Three levels of info are recorded:

- Maps of whole resource;
- Prioritised areas within (a) for conservation action;
- Critical sites where significant loss of biodiversity was imminent and where exemplar projects might be created.

Action Point: JL to distribute Shape files to group – If MapInfo convert to MIF format for FCW.

WESG workshop to finalise info and potential exemplars with especial reference to Rhododendron, Himalayan Balsam, deer browsing and grey squirrels.

Where were INNS on Rhododendron, Himalayan Balsam, deer and grey squirrels?

Action Point: MM to provide update on INNS position at 10th meeting

Action Point: CT to speak to Chris Smith re Rhododendron, Richard Jones re Himalayan Balsam, query O21 database on grey squirrel damage, report to 10th meeting.

- There was a potential project in the Pembrokeshire re connectivity for Dormice/Butterfly/Hazel woodland edge link.

Action Point: C Th. to provide ½ page outline to CT & JL

- There was a need for sensitivity in relation to landowners, also to make reference to PAWS research).

Action Point: CT & JL to collate all info into one document for 10th meeting

7. Action Plan - Chris Tucker

Action: CT to circulate details of Action Plan against targets, plus three key messages from Diana Reynolds.

The meeting ended at 13:00 hrs.

8. AOB

Action Summary

From	Action	To	Date due
CT	Breakdown of Woodland applications (% G/A/R)	WESG	
CTh et al	Summary on protected site boundary issues; discuss with DR; paper for Steering Group (SG) Report to WESG	SG WESG	10 th meet.
CT	Raise EPS issue with FCW G&R & WG NCB	WESG	10 th meet.
MM	Amend ref to Pied Flycatcher & redistribute minutes of 7 th meeting.	WESG	
CT	Re woodland habitats identify research gaps – pass to TL	TL	30-11-11
MM	Review FR work on coppice	WESG	10 th meet.
MM	Literature review on PAWS restoration and mychorizza.	WESG	10 th meet.
LM	Seek woodland info from Steve Chambers	WESG	10 th meet.
CT	share draft FTS spreadsheet with WESG. Enquire on monitoring with Glastir team.	WESG	10 th meet.
WESG	Comment on ToR	CT	31-10-11
CT	Info on overarching principles of EGs	WESG	

JL	Distribute Shape Priority Mapping files	WESG	10 th meet
MM	Update on INNS position on R/HB/Deer/GS	WESG	10 th meet.
CT	Speak to Chris Smith (Rhodo) & Richard Jones (Him.Balsam)	WESG	10 th meet.
C Th.	½ page outline on Dormice/Butterfly connectivity	CT & JL	31-10-11
CT & JL	Collate connectivity info.	WESG	10 th meet.
CT	Circulate info on Action Plan v targets, plus 3 key messages from DR.	WESG	10 th meet.
JL	Select field visit photos	CT	