

Minutes of Action Plan for Pollinators (APP) Taskforce Meeting – 11 May 2022, MS Teams

Attendees:

Alison Heal	Ceredigion LA
Angharad Owen	Network Rail
Bleddyn Lake	Friends of the Earth
Bruce Langridge	National Botanic Garden of Wales
Clare Eleanor Williamson	Conway LA
Daniel Warren	Swansea University
Elliot Waters	Monmouthshire County Council/ Gwent Green Grid Partnership
Gemma Baron	National Trust
Geoff Robinson	Welsh Government
Huw Bramhall	Welsh Government
Julieanne Quinlan	Conway LA
Kathleen Carroll	Welsh Government
Kipper Davies	Welsh Beekeepers' Association
Lizzie Wilberforce	Plantlife
Maria Golightly	Brecon Beacon National Park
Mark Cleaver	Monmouthshire County Council
Nigel Leaworthy	Monmouthshire County Council
Rachel Carter	One Voice Wales
Richard Dawson	UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology
Richard Whitehead	Welsh Government
Samantha Harris	Welsh Government
Stacey Delbridge	Monmouthshire County Council/ Gwent Green Grid Partnership
Tim Birch	Wildlife Trust
Tom Bucher-Flynn	Buglife

1. Kathleen Carroll opened the meeting and introductions were made.
2. **Local Places for Nature** - Richard Whitehead (Welsh Government, Head of Natural Resources Policy and Implementation) (Please see slides attached in the e-mail)

Richard explained that Local Places for Nature is a Welsh Government initiative to create Nature on your Doorstep. It is designed to restore and enhance nature where people live, work and access public services. There is a focus on areas of deprivation or for those with least access to nature in Wales, such as urban communities. Giving access to nature will hopefully support people's wellbeing, give them an appreciation of nature and an understanding of the benefits of wider sustainable land management programmes.

Monitoring and evaluation of the projects are carried out annually.

Local Places for Nature provides funding, together with help in implementing specific projects. It works with local communities to take forward projects. It adopts a bottom-up approach.

It has several strands: Local Nature Partnership Plans, Open Access Capital Grant, Community Packages, Breaking Barriers and One Voice Wales.

This year's funding of projects will be promoted through WG channels in the coming weeks.

A question was asked about management of projects after they have been established and the use of pesticides in public spaces.

Richard explained that the community packages have a focus on education and guidance. They explain the benefits of pollinators and how to maintain the sites without relying on pesticides. Advisors connected with LPfN such as Local Nature Partnership co-ordinators can also provide information on how to manage sites in a pesticide-free way. The packages require a five-year commitment to main the sites after establishment. Although Richard recognised that this sometimes falls to an individual who, due to unforeseen circumstances such as moving away, may not be able to fulfil that commitment. However, due to the bottom-up approach to the projects, many of the initial smaller project are supported by the community and go on to become large projects.

3. Species-rich Meadows - Bruce Langridge (Head of Interpretation at the National Botanic Garden of Wales) (Please see slides attached in the e-mail)

Bruce has been involved in the restoration of meadows on the National Botanic Garden of Wales organic farm for many years.

Bruce reminded us of the importance of species-rich meadows for the 700 different plants, 1,400 invertebrate species and other wildlife they support. They are also an important carbon store with their deep tap roots drawing down carbon. Species-rich meadows can contain 500% more carbon than monoculture grassland. As grassland is one of the most common land covers in Wales. The creation of species-rich meadows offers great potential to lock in carbon.

The initial method that the Garden used to convert species-poor grassland to species-rich meadows was to remove nutrients through taking an annual cut. After 5-6 years, there was a noticeable change and species associated with flower-rich meadows such as yellow rattle and whorled caraway started to appear and flourish.

The Garden then thought about how they could use green hay from these flower-rich meadows to restore two additional fields. They started this process in 2016 and the grass in the receiving site was thick and species-poor. They used guidance produced by Trevor Dines as a guide. By 2019, whorled caraway and greater butterfly orchid had appeared in the new sites. Green hay has been used

successfully by other meadow groups but it has limitations. It is important to prevent seed from overheating and it needs to be cut, collected and spread on the same day.

The garden has moved to collecting seed from the meadows. This removes the time constraints of green hay and provides a source of local seeds. They use a brush harvester and seeds are dried and sieved in one of the barns.

A question was asked if the brush harvester can be hired. Bruce explained that the harvester cost about £6K and was funded through Biophilic Wales (WG Enabling Natural Resources and Well-being (ENRaW) grant). Bruce also confirmed that the meadow work was funded through the RC-RDP Sustainable Management Scheme. Richard said that the lessons learned from the project would be useful in the development of new agri-environment schemes.

4. Newport Pollinator Project - Tom Bucher-Flynn (Buglife) (Please see slides attached in the e-mail)

The [Newport Pollinator Project](#) is funded by the Landfill Disposal Tax Community Scheme. Sites are located inside or just outside Buglife's B-lines project. The project aims to restore/create habitat, increase recording of pollinators, increase people's knowledge and inspire them to get involved in activities to improve their wellbeing. There are four sites: The Road to Nature (Coedkernow), Y Twmp – Barracks Wood, St Julian's Wood Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and Pillgwenlly. The Road to Nature has marshy grassland habitats but had previously been used as a dumping ground. Dumped waste has been cleared and habitat management of the site including the reens is taking place. Along with St Julian's Wood there is a high floral resource (including peas and other legumes) in this area. The site no longer has vehicle access but is connected to a cycle path. In Y Twmp – Barracks Wood, they are managing grassland to remove invasive non-native species and encroaching scrub. Work at St Julian's Wood LNR links into Buglife's [Searching for Scabious Project](#). In Pillgwenlly, green spaces were underutilised. They are now working with local residents to change these to become a resource for wildlife and this will also benefit people. They are upgrading people's skills to recognise and record pollinators including those in the Searching for Scabious project. For some groups who have not previously engaged with nature, they have found that to build confidence they first work with them at a centre/location that the group is familiar with. Once the group is comfortable, they bring them to the site. They are creating plans with community groups so the project will have longevity after the initial funding has finished.

5. Modelling Pollinator Abundance in Neath Port Talbot to Inform Green Infrastructure Planning - P. Yui Khatti and Daniel Warren (Swansea University)

This is a UKCRF-funded project to restore, enhance and connect green infrastructure for people and nature in Neath Port Talbot. A recording of Yui's presentation is attached in the e-mail. Please contact [NPT GI Roadmap - Map](#)

Ffordd SG CNPT (@RoadmapGI) / Twitter, <https://www.facebook.com/roadmapGI> or RoadmapGI@swansea.ac.uk if you have any questions.

6. Updates

Wildlife Trust:

- Tim Birch provided a link to - [Bugs Matter survey finds that UK flying insects have declined by nearly 60% in less than 20 years - Buglife latest news](#)

Plantlife:

- Lizzie Wilberforce informed us that Plantlife has launched their bilingual Meadow Hub:

Welsh language link: <https://meadows.plantlife.org.uk/cy/home-2/>

English Language link: <https://meadows.plantlife.org.uk/>

- Plantlife has also translated into Welsh their comprehensive guidance: [managing grassland road verges: a best practice guide](#) which can be found on the following Link. [Rheoli glaswelltiroedd ymylon ffyrdd: Canllaw arfer gorau](#)

WG update:

- Road verge and amenity grassland landing page and FAQ went live on 6 May.

Landing page:

<https://gov.wales/grasslandwildlife>

<https://llyw.cymru/glaswelltirbywydgwyllt>

FAQs:

<https://gov.wales/road-ve+rges-and-amenity-grasslands-supporting-wildlife-frequently-asked-questions>

<https://llyw.cymru/ymylon-ffyrdd-glaswelltiroedd-amwynder-syn-cynnal-bywyd-gwyllt-cwestiynau-cyffredin>

- The 'It's for Them' campaign is being developed. The purpose of the campaign is to promote organisations to create more meadow-like areas on road verges and amenity grasslands and to raise awareness with the public on why this is good for wildlife.

In January 2022, Welsh Government commissioned Beaufort Research to carry out a Wales Omnibus: Welsh Government Nature Emergency and Grass Cutting Survey. The Survey highlighted that people were not quite sure why we were

encouraging changing grass cutting. Therefore, we thought having a campaign named 'It's for Them' would help show that it is to support nature.

- As part of the Bee Friendly scheme, a new booklet 'Planting for Pollinators' and posters have been produced. The illustrated booklet gives advice for the first Bee Friendly theme, providing pollinator-friendly 'Food'. It also references the importance of providing places for pollinators to shelter.

Many thanks to the following members for their support in producing this booklet: Marc Carlton (Wildlife Gardening Forum), Jan Miller (Wildlife Trust North Wales), Abi Lowe, Kevin McGinn and Natasha de Vere (National Botanic Garden for Wales), Cath Shellswell (Plantlife), Mark Cleaver (Monmouthshire County Council) and Lucy Arnold-Matthews (Newport City Council).

Hard copies of the Planting for Pollinators booklet and posters (A3 and A2) are available on request from NatureConservation@gov.wales.

The digital booklet pdf can be found on:

Welsh language: <https://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/File/809/cy-GB>

English language: <https://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/File/809/en-GB>

The digital posters pdf can be found on:

- [Bee Friendly - Welcome pollinators to your balcony and yard spaces](#)
- [Bee Friendly - Welcome pollinators to your balcony and yard spaces](#)
- [Bee Friendly - Welcome pollinators to your garden](#)

7. Next Meeting

The next meeting is due to be held virtually in autumn 2022. A Doodle poll for date options will be circulated by Kathleen Carroll.