

**Herefordshire Local Biodiversity Partnership
Project Management Group Meeting
Minutes and Action Points
23rd September 2009
Plough Lane Offices**

PRESENT:

Nicky Davies	ND	Herefordshire LBAP Co-ordinator
Jo Hackman	JH	Herefordshire Council
Nick Smith	NS	Forestry Commission
Anthony Muller	AM	Natural England

ITEM		ACTION
1.	APOLOGIES Juliet Wheatley, Herefordshire Council , Fran Griffith, Herefordshire Nature Trust	
2.	MINUTES OF LAST MEETING – 28.04.2009 Minutes agreed to be a true record of previous meeting.	
3.	<p>MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LBAP funding: Funding Confirmation Letter - AM forwarded the letter to ND as requested. ND gave JH the NE funding approval letter for 2009/2010 • Yasmin Lynes report – ND circulated the report. The general feedback is that members do want a climate change action plan in the BAP. ND to edit the report and reduce it to 4 sides of A4 and to contact Rob Garner (Bulmer Foundation) regarding presenting the report to the next HEP Meeting. NS to advise ND of date of next HEP Meeting • Communication Plan – this was completed and sent out to all partners by ND. • Pine Martens – ND confirmed that there is a historical record of Pine Martens in Tack Wood just over the border. NS advised that they have instructed Tom Fairfield to provide an ecology report re the Pine Martens by March-2010. ND queried if National Park could assist with the survey, but NS advised that there are issues due to the border and not being allowed to spend Welsh money in England and vice-versa. NS will discuss with Tom Fairfield about what's happening across the border and advise ND. • Quarterly Report – ND will action adding the additional columns as discussed. Work plan, alterations have been made. This now needs to be signed off by the group. IDB map – ND to contact Tony Pickup and ask him to attend the next PMG meeting to give update/presentation on creation of Lugg IDB BAP • Funding Strategy – Framework, ND advised that this has been completed and no comments were received from consultees. It was resolved that Nicky would send it out again. • Natural England Involvement – ND confirmed UK LBAP and Chairs meeting details were sent out. AM, ND and JH had attended the meeting in Reading on the 9th June. • WMBP steering group representation – JH advised that she and FG are covering the attendance of the quarterly meetings between them. FG attended in June, and JH attended in September. • JH/FG to forward future Agenda items to PMG to seek any points/feedback from the group to be taken to the meeting. 	<p>ND</p> <p>NS</p> <p>NS</p> <p>ND</p> <p>ND</p> <p>JH / FG</p>

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4.	<p>QUARTERLY REPORT</p> <p>ND advised there are no updates to the report received by all in July.</p> <p>World Environment Day – two days held in Hereford City Centre. No guided walks took place due to lack of interest, lots of interest at the stall, rained out on second day.</p> <p>What's that snake Project – this is continuing</p> <p>Orchard Biodiversity Project – on hold at present as JW has had to concentrate on Forward Planning issues. ND will find out when this will be progressing.</p> <p>Orchard Project Leaflet – has now been produced and is going to be distributed at the Big Apple and at Colwall Orchards. Further work needed with planners on constraints layer i.e. planning applications received to build on Orchards within settlement boundaries.</p> <p>Orchard Topic Group – This group is now ending. A celebration of the work undertaken is to take place on 5th February 2010 at Duchy of Cornwall premises.</p> <p>Thomas Andrew Night Celebration Event – 24th October 2009 to coincide with the Food Fair. James Bisset main contact for this event. ND to send out further info to the group when received.</p> <p>The Geodiversity Action Plan – continuing</p> <p>Special Wildlife Sites – JH confirmed Local Sites Partnership meet four times a year. Target to complete management plans for 50 sites, JH and Bill Bloxsome sent off application for Area Based Grant funding recently, if successful should enable them to complete all 50 sites. Reliant on land owner's co-operation though so it will be a challenge to complete by March 2010 deadline. A sub-group has been set up, consisting of FG, JH & Jeff Edwards to determine local sites criteria. No wildlife officer in post to deal with issues raised regarding selection, so need funding in order to develop this post. Will probably utilise FWAG again next year and possibly work with 'Caring for Gods Acre' as many sites are churchyards.</p> <p>Newsletter – completed, next one due in November.</p> <p>UK BAP Conference – ND will be attending 7-8th October York University.</p>	<p>ND</p> <p>ND</p>
5.	<p>WORK PLAN</p> <p>ND to tidy and complete the work plan and put into PDF format and then circulate to the group.</p> <p>AM stressed that there is a lot of work under quarters 3 & 4 so ND may need to look at her workload. Suggested that when ND circulates the work plan she requests help and direction regarding priorities. Need to share out the tough choices across the group so that ND is confident about what direction she's going and what is priority.</p> <p>NS suggested that members of the group could do more of the work in the work plan instead of everything being reliant on ND. Also suggested arranging a meeting to purely discuss the work plan, and sort work load and timescales.</p> <p>JH stated that decisions need to be made quickly regarding priorities and targets so the work plan needs to be sorted ASAP. <i>A fallback meeting date is being kept for the 20th October if matter isn't resolved by email.</i></p>	<p>ND</p> <p>ND</p>
6.	<p>RSS REGIONAL HABITAT TARGETS EXERCISE</p> <p>ND advised that she had received a request from Bill Butcher, Consultant, to comment on a draft document about habitat targets. Some targets were drawn up on phase III RSS Regional targets. Consulted with partners within County and received good responses, all of which were fed back to Bill Butcher. When the report was published, none of the comments from Hereford & Worcester were taken into consideration. ND was advised that this was due to time constraints while preparing the document.</p> <p>She was advised by Jeff Edwards that this was not the final document, that it</p>	

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	<p>was still a draft, and that comments were still required on it. ND advised that she and her counterparts within neighbouring counties are dealing with the issue jointly. Warwickshire have prepared a spreadsheet of targets for each County based on best possible knowledge. She will update PMG on progress/outcomes either via email or at the next meeting.</p> <p>AM suggested looking on Worcester BAP website at the Minutes from 15th July co-ordination group meeting. There is a foreword by Colin Raven which explains from his perspective what this is all about including timescales for alignment with Regional Biodiversity Delivery Plan.</p> <p>ND advised that the main issue had arisen from the fact that they were not advised it was a draft document when they were asked to distribute it.</p>	ND
7.	<p>WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT UPDATE</p> <p>ND advised that she has been spending a great deal of time working on the website, and will be spending a couple of days a week for the next few weeks working at the Thorn offices with the IT team to ensure all the details are correct. Work started yesterday (22nd Sep) on building the site and it will be a fully functional site from November 2009. It should be a simple, elegant, low maintenance site, but it will be updated with minutes from meetings, Newsletters, etc, on a regular basis.</p>	
8.	<p>OPPORTUNITY MAPPING</p> <p>JH advised that Bridgit Symons has been gathering data layers and using the millennium map data as an evidence base to inform the process.</p> <p>AM noted that this is an important item on the work plan. He will query with JE the urgency of progressing this and its importance, and feedback his response.</p>	
9.	<p>QUARRY ACTION PLAN</p> <p>ND advised that there has not been much involvement from Tarmac so she has progressed this on her own. She will be meeting with the stakeholders in October and will present the Action Plan as it is now.</p>	
10.	<p>ENGLAND BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY</p> <p>ND advised that this is being reviewed with the focus shifting to landscape scale approach rather than habitat. ND Attended a meeting on 9th June which was co-ordinated by DEFRA, the next meeting is in October for northern regions. They have looked at landscape scale projects locally, looking to facilitate projects, providing letters of support for project bids, providing advice, etc. NS to send out document once it has been agreed.</p>	ND
11.	<p>WIDER PARTNERSHIP MEETING – SUGGESTIONS FOR A THEME</p> <p>NS suggested the following ideas for possible themes: Website Launch, Bio-blitz with WVAONB International Year of Biodiversity, NERC Update, Health & Biodiversity, England Biodiversity Strategy, Event with Malvern Hills AONB, Launch of Quarry Action Plan</p> <p>NS highlighted that landscaping and networking seem to be hot topics at present. AM suggested splitting the day in two with a meeting/workshops in the morning, followed by a site visit in the afternoon. NS agreed this was a good idea, and suggested it could be a good opportunity to launch the web-site. The visit could be to a small site to demonstrate how it fits into a larger landscape project – possibly Moccas Park.</p> <p>ND to draw something up and distribute.</p>	ND

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12.	<p>PMG TERMS OF REFERENCE</p> <p>AM stated that the Terms of Reference (TOR) should assist ND in organising the work plan and prioritising the workload. There are TOR in existence but they need tweaking to make them clearer. Warwickshire have clear TOR, one side of A4 and then details of representatives within the area are on the back. JH advised that there is an existing county TOR originally agreed with NE Mark July which had always proved sufficient and there was also a quarterly work plan in place. However there would be no harm in reviewing this.</p> <p>AM advised that in Worcester they have two groups, the Management group which is made up of funding partners, and then the Co-ordination group (steering) which is a wider group where plan leads and networks are involved. The Management group always meet prior to the Co-ordination group to ensure discussions cover what is being done by the management group. JH pointed out that Herefordshire situation is different with just one unitary authority.</p> <p>NS agreed that the TOR need to be looked at but as there are only a few representative in attendance today suggested forwarding the existing TOR, accompanied by Worcestershire's and Warwickshire TOR to PMG and requesting feedback, with the suggestion that they would be amended ready to be launched at the beginning of the next financial year.</p> <p>AM to forward copy of Worcestershire's and Warwickshire TOR to ND, accompanied by a short paragraph outlining what has been discussed today to be sent out with the TOR.</p> <p>ND to forward existing TOR accompanied by details from AM to PMG.</p>	<p>AM</p> <p>ND</p>
13.	<p>PROJECT UPDATES</p> <p>Forestry Commission outcome of commission policy on Open Spaces to be announced by MP's in early new year. Likely to be site specific. Wood Pasture will be the main issue for Herefordshire. Crofts will also raise issues, little bit of restoration, open up parkland, but not for grazing.</p> <p>Hay to Hereford landscape scale project ND & Chris Mayes had a meeting with Woodland Trust to get a brief on this project. The brief is to be presented to the WT National Committee for consideration.</p>	<p>NS to send out</p>
14.	<p>AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>Biological Records Centre - JH gave an update on current position. One staff member (Rachel Price) has been on secondment within Planning Services, and Steve Roe left in July to take up a post elsewhere. A review of the structure has been undertaken and as a result it has been concluded that there are too many managerial layers. To resolve this they are proposing to get rid of the HBRC manager's role and to split the tasks between Emma & Rachel, employing them on a three-year contract on a revised pay-scale. JH has also extended her work hours by an additional half day to assist with the managerial role. This has been agreed in principle by the steering group and now needs to be agreed by Head of Planning and Human Resources. It will be subject to review to ensure it is working. Rachel is due to return from secondment on 22nd December 2009. It is hoped that this new structure will in be place from the end of December when Rachel returns.</p> <p>AM queried if Bridgit will be returning to her original role if Rachel's secondment is coming to an end. JH confirmed that she will.</p> 	

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15.	<p>DATE FOR NEXT PMG MEETINGS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesday 20th October 2009, 10.00am at Plough Lane This date/time will be used to discuss the work plan and TOR if necessary. • Tuesday 19th January 2010, 10.00am at Plough Lane Project Management Group Meeting. • Wider Partnership Meeting Suggested that this should be in the first or last week of February 2010 to avoid half-term. Agreed it should be a work day. ND to look at dates and make a suggestion. 	ND