



MINUTES OF THE HEREFORDSHIRE BIODIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP PROJECT MANAGEMENT GROUP (PMG) HELD AT PLOUGH LANE, ON WEDNESDAY, 18th JULY 2007

Present: Juliet Wheatley (JW) – Chairperson, Team Leader Landscape & Biodiversity – Hfds Council
Jo Hackman (JH) – Ecologist (Nature Conservation)
Nicky Davies (ND) – Biodiversity Partnership Co-ordinator
Geoff Perrott (GP) – Hfds Partnership Environmental Co-ordinator
Fran Griffith (FG) – Conservation Manager, HNT
Charlotte Morgan (CM) – Natural England
Jeff Edwards (JE) – Natural England / WMBP

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Steve Roe (HBRC Manager)

2. Minutes of Last Meeting – Tuesday, 20th March 2007

JW asked if all present agreed with previous minutes – all happy.

3. Matters Arising

JW went through Action Points from previous Minutes.

- 4.1 and 4.4 – BAP Review, ND has sent out reminder for amendments and had some feedback, however, ND needs figures and data for target goals and action goals (to be incorporated in to Report). FG has not received the e-mail – **Action:** ND to send out
- 4.7 – ND advised Communication Plan now available on website but she has to make some amendments. **Action:** Nicky to update
- 4.11 – Funding workshops, ND has held workshops and had positive feedback. ND advised new funding directory has been up-dated and includes environmental info.
- 5.2 – KPI's (Highways), ND informed Group that she had not yet had meeting with Shropshire County Council. JH said a meeting is necessary to discuss best practice. FG reported Shropshire were working on their roadside verges, she has had a meeting with Ben Hodgkiss (HC) on this and suggested working together on this one. Various Councils were considered to contact for ideas including Worcs and Powys. **Action:** JH, ND & FG to meet to discuss further
- 5.3 – ND has been asked to hold back on the presentation of the report to the Council because of the publication of NERC guidelines. ND had a meeting with the auditors w/c 9th July but does not know outcome yet.
- 6.2 – Fund Raising and Budget, JE explained an extra £5,400 is available for this financial year for each LBAP in the region for BAP project delivery as an amendment to the existing SLA. JE said there is a desire to see strategic projects and cross boundary work. Also £2,500 is available for promotion of NERC. The money can be used for projects, consultants, promotions/leaflets and workshops. **Action** ND to up-date because she had some queries on it.

- 6.5 – Statement of Requirement, ND reported that she had not yet done tabulation of times/activities to support process for funding. **Action:** ND, JH and CM to meet to do breakdown of work.
- 6.6 – Funding, ND advised evaluation of times spent on different areas of work and for different partners still not done. Also ND said with reference to letter re clarification on what money would be used for and identification of needs, she still needs to set some criteria.
- 7 - ND advised she has completed report on BAP Revision meetings held in January, however, she still needs to check Communication Plan re activities to be brought forward in this quarter. ND explained that some amendments had been recommended to the CPlan by Trish Marsh.

4. Work Programme and Co-ordinators Report

ND went through some of the points:

- 4.1 BAP Revision – ND informed the Group that she is waiting for some numerical data for certain HAPS and SAPS from partners. From this, meetings will be held with relevant partners to input onto BARS.
- 4.2 KPI – ND has spent a large amount of time on this and has also had a meeting with external auditors. They appear to be pleased with work in progress. ND plans to go out to another 20 schools w/c 30 July surveying grounds and will be assisted by Rachel Elliott to gather data for the 2007/8 report.
- 4.3 ND wants to focus effort on Highways and Parks and Countryside this year. She reported that people from Highways may be interested in funding/ and or participating in the LLOP project. ND has had an e-mail from Trish requesting training for people working in Highways. The Highways Agency has their own Biodiversity Action Plan and an ecologist in post at Amey Mouchel.
- 4.4 HART – need to re-think plans for Adder Project. FG has attended the group meeting recently and has received via e-mail a revised Project Plan.

The deadline for funders will be December. It is necessary to enlighten people about adders and make them more appealing in the county. Adders were not in UKBAP species, however, FG advised they would be shortly due to the UKBAP review (looking at 3-year project).

| 4.5 Newsletter – ND advised this was done at the end of June.

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| 4.6 ND reported that the UKBAP Hedgerow steering group meeting had proved useful. A CD Rom is going to be produced for all people involved in BAP delivery. ND gave a presentation – this was successful. ND has also liaised with regional colleagues re issues with hedges (she fed this in to presentation) and followed up some of these since the meeting. Hedgerow data to be passed onto the group to assist in their work

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| 4.7 Funding Workshops – ND advised these went ahead and appeared to be successful from the feedback received. Clare Wichbold took the lead on these providing info on different funding bodies and management of funds. ND will be going on training course in October for biodiversity and the new NERC guidelines published by DEFRA.

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| 4.8 Future meetings – ND advised everyone that she had not recently attended the Regional Climate Change Group but she had attended the Ponds Restoration & Celebration project steering group.

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4.9 Internal training within the Council and GEM for Highway verge operations – ND has been asked to be a representative.

4.10 JW requested clarification from ND on ‘‘facilitating orchard consultations’’. ND explained it is talking with local communities within a 1-mile radius and finding out what people are doing and how they can benefit having orchards in the County.

5. KPI Report

5.1 ND advised that draft 06/07 Report has been produced but needs some amendments. WNB has seen it and agreed. **Action:** ND to complete report by end of August 2007.

5.2 ND stated that Highways and Parks and Countryside are two areas she needs to focus on in 07/08. ND said P&C have highlighted a problem associated with including Section 9 Common data (ND needs to do some ‘number crunching’).

JH advised there is plenty of work to be done before running out of sites.

6. BAP Review

6.1 HAPS and SAPS – JE said new habitats are an issue. There is a large amount of work to be done to decide species/Action Plan/priorities for producing them. JE suggested focusing on new habitats initially. FG requested list of new habitats. **Action:** ND & JE to await guidance from UKBAP.

6.2 Grassland Forum - JH said this needs to be tied in to the delivery of revised Grassland HAPS. **Action:** ND to attend next Grassland Forum meeting.

Discussions continued on habitats, quarries, orchards, hedges, ponds, rivers and streams. ND thought uplands and wetlands should be reviewed next. **Action:** ND to begin organising 2nd tranche of Herefordshire LBAP HAPS & SAPs.

7. Fund Raising/Budget

7.1 ND advised that the Business Plan Meeting is to be re-scheduled. **Action:** ND, JH & CM to organise meeting.

7.2 JE said a discussion was needed on how the NERC and SLA money was going to be spent. The West Midlands region was going to produce an Action Plan in support of the local activities and regional level activities. JE reported that they were also looking at sending out a glossy leaflet asking Chief Executives to pledge to this.

7.3 A potential Orchards and Grassland Project was discussed. FG felt it would be worthwhile to spend time on a project that delivers something rather than a report. JE felt that Grasslands for Herefordshire were lacking in wildlife details and something more could be done i.e. survey.

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Staffs are looking at inventory work and Birmingham ancient woodland. Other suggestions were bat work on Malvern Hills and Pond Project. It is too early for the Adder Project, however, the Otter Project (LLOP) is almost ready to go and JH thought this might be a potential way of spending it. JE stated that they need to know as soon as possible. ND had suggested grasslands (really good opportunity) but she needs to look through action points and targets, JH suggested speaking to Worcs re grassland HAPS. **Action:** ND to speak to Worcs LBAP representative and to compile a list of options and circulate to Group, needs response asap

7.4 One way of supporting local activity would be regional assembly structures – advising duties of local authorities. JE needs contact list, any help would be appreciated! This needs to go out mid-end September and will be followed up with local publicity. JE said it will be necessary to make sure good practice examples in the authority are included and there will be a judicial review at some stage. **Action: PMG**

7.5 ND has spoken to WNB about the NERC money– he suggested using it to hold an event something similar to the NENE event held at the Left Bank last year. ND asked the Group for suggestions and ideas. JE went on to explain what other Councils were doing. Shropshire is thinking of holding a small event and producing a leaflet. Warwickshire are using it for updating their website and talking to departments within the Council. Ideas were discussed and it was thought somewhere cheaper than the Left Bank was needed. Also, JE remarked that additional support needs to be a consideration if Herefordshire BAP is doing an event similar to NENE. There would be a lot of work involved in organising it. GP said he produced a report at the end of the NENE event that proved very favourable. **Action:** JE to send more information through to ND as it arrives. ND to circulate to PMG members

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8. Training

- ND advised she is going on pesticide training in October organised by the Sustainability Unit and the Highways Division.
- UKBAP Conference. September in Exeter.

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9. AOB

9.1 Landscapes for Living – JE gave up-date. There are five zones to be included. The Prospectus and Technical Report is to be widely publicised. The Landscapes for Living Steering Group will feed back to people who took part in the workshops and everybody will be up-dated shortly.

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9.2 A representative from LFL had given a presentation to some LBAP Steering Groups, however, as Herefordshire is small then a presentation is questionable. JE asked the Group for their feelings.

9.3 Local opportunity mapping – proposals for Phase II were to review guidance. Discussions were planned on how to take this forward. The reason for doing opportunity mapping needs to be established and it is necessary to build up factual information.

JH suggested the presentation should include colleagues from Forward Planning as this needs to be tied in to LDF. CM suggested a village hall as venue. JE advised this will be arranged some time in Autumn/Winter. **Action:** ND & JH to confirm attendees list, including relevant forward planners

9.4 JE advised Group a meeting/event is planned to publicise trees, woods and forests on 1st Oct organised by the Regional Forestry Forum (RFF). They will be looking particularly at ancient trees. Programme is yet to be sorted and venue is dependant on amount of people interested. **Action: JE to e-mail details to ND** who will forward them to partnership

9.5 ND advised she is on holiday w/c 10 September for one week.

10. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday, 2 October 2007, venue TBA

