



MINUTES OF THE HEREFORDSHIRE BIODIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP PROJECT MANAGEMENT GROUP (PMG), HELD AT THE TOWN HALL ANNEX ON TUESDAY, 26th SEPTEMBER 2006

Present: Juliet Wheatley – Chairman, Team Leader Landscape and Biodiversity – Herefordshire Council
Nicky Davies – Biodiversity Partnership Co-ordinator
Steve Roe – BRC Manager
Jo Hackman – Ecologist (Nature Conservation) – Herefordshire Council
Geoff Perrott – Herefordshire Partnership Environmental Co-ordinator
Francesca Griffith – Conservation Manager, HNT

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Mark July (Natural England) and Jeff Edwards (WMBP).

2. Minutes of Last Meeting – 28 June 2006

Everyone present was happy with previous Minutes. ND asked members how they felt about JE attending meetings as he has expressed that he would like to attend, however, on this occasion was unable to. This implied he was not considering attending to be top priority. FG felt it would be useful initially, however, it might be a waste of his time unless it was necessary. **Action: ND to clarify with JE**

3. Matters Arising

JW suggested running through the Action Points from the minutes.

- 3.1 First point for clarification, Co-ordinators Report re-creating links with neighbouring LBAPs. ND advised she has meeting with Gareth Ellis (BBNP LBAP Co-ordinator) on Friday, 29th September.
- 3.2 ND has not done sub-section to Lead Partners Guidance for BARS yet. She needs to liaise with other LBAP Co-ordinators re their in-put to BARS. ND has meeting on Tuesday, 3rd October to clarify this. JH mentioned that copies of the Lead Partner Guidance have not yet been circulated. ND said this is because she has had to produce sub-section on BARS.
- 3.3 ND advised that the newsletter has been produced, circulated and has had received positive feedback. FG remarked that putting text over pictures makes it difficult to read but otherwise she liked it.
- 3.4 Geodiversity Action Plan – ND has spoken to Debbie Klein from HC and has a second meeting w/c 2nd October. JW thought DK was a good contact as she is very interested in ecology and has taken on responsibility for minerals until Nick Dean's post is filled.

- 3.5 Breathing Places – ND has sent information to all partners but has not heard anything back relating to funding applications to date.
- 3.6 Role of Herefordshire LBAP re. how issues of monitoring were being looked at and whether there are going to be annual monitoring statements as this is part of Rural Spatial Strategy – JE still to get back to ND on this issue. **Action: ND to chase up.**
- 3.7 Project Budget Situation – BB has not reported on this yet. **Action: ND to chase up.**
- 3.8 AOB re NENE event – GP said Nicky and Rachel Elliott had been a great help.
- 3.9 Business approach within Strategy – JW suggested this should be discussed with BB. **Action: ND & JH to discuss this with WNB.**

4. Work Programme

- 4.1 SR would like work progress report sent out prior to meeting. Other partners also seconded this. ND agreed to send this out in advance of PMG meetings.
- 4.2 There is a significant amount of data to put into BARS and Nicky is looking to hold training courses for partners in 2007.
- 4.3 With reference to editing work on the website, there have been problems until now (firewall blocking). It was suggested that if this is a common problem it should be raised with IT. ND has had two meetings with Chris Harris re editing the website. Hopefully IT will have resolved issues by next meeting. **Action: ND to chase up.**
- 4.4 BEAs – ND has had meetings to discuss targets, objectives and priority habitats for the Woolhope Dome BEA. She felt this had proved useful, however, not all questions were answered. ND reported she had attended BEA day for LBAP Co-ordinators a few weeks ago. The objective was to find out about Co-ordinators and what their roles involved. The overall feeling was that not everybody knew exactly what Landscapes for Living and BEA actually do. Some of this was clarified at the meeting, although some questions couldn't be answered at that point in time.
- 4.5 Landscapes for Living is now going to be a regional initiative and going to county level for consultations. There has been some confusion on BEAs and their relationship with LfL. JH commented that she was unsure where to target work. LBAP Co-ordinators do not really know at present what their involvement re targets actually is. They are awaiting clarification by WMBP.
- 4.6 A brief discussion took place on BARS. The collation of BARS data/info is on-going. ND is looking at things like trends, progress, partner progress and linking action points with objectives; this can eventually be fed in to BARS. **Action: ND to decide info to input so that it is easily accessible to partners.**

5. Wider Partnership Meeting

- 5.1 Within the SLA, ND needs to organise 2 meetings per year (first one being the launch of the LBAP Update, 2005). FG thought it would be acceptable to have on meeting a year. Other partnerships meet twice a year. GPs opinion was that if they met once a year more people would attend. We could go for one meeting of the partnership and one themed

meeting. ND suggested topics for next year's partnership meetings could include BARS data collation and reporting.

Action: ND to clarify with English Nature what is needed to fulfil their requirements.

Clarification is needed as to who would be making EN decisions in future.

6. Organisational Sign-up to Herefordshire LBAP through BARS

- 6.1 ND needs to determine how committed people are and to decide how much she can put in to LBAP/BARS. Questionnaires had been sent out but not all had responded (not great feedback). She needs to know what communication about BAP actions is going on within the county and if people have already had any BARS training. **Action: ND to undertake more work on this.**
- 6.2 Regarding other partnerships, Shropshire have a very high sign-up by BARS (80%). It seems every partnership does it in a different way. Staffordshire have a different method in that it is more of a verbal agreement. ND's aim is to get a combination of the two. There is a need to keep communicating with people by adopting a personal approach.
- 6.3 ND felt that some organisations need more help than others and expressed she would be willing to help. It was also felt that Lead Partners should be committed to attending BARS training and everyone should be willing to participate.

7. Communication Strategy Discussion

- 7.1 The purpose of producing a Communication Plan is to promote and aid awareness of the BAP to a wider audience working with the partnership.
- 7.2 ND sent out an email asking for examples of Communication plans to facilitate her to build a skeletal document (based on Shetland LBAP Communication Strategy). She had some response. ND and JH had met to discuss the plan contents and ND had drafted a plan that was presented to the meeting.
- 7.3 ND suggested keeping it short and wants people to feed in to it, provide comments and any suggestions for additions/extractions. Discussion continued on how the LBAP would be used and GP suggested a marketing plan.
- 7.4 JW wanted SMART clarified – Action 6.17 to be replaced with “where appropriate”. Also point 7.1 to be amended. **Action: ND to change**
- 7.5 JW suggested ND sent a draft to the PR/Communication team within the Council. Action: ND to send plan to team – John Burnett
- 7.6 JH said it was important to prioritise actions in the plan. Schools could be a key communication area e.g. Geoff worked with schools for the Climate Change Strategy consultation. One thing to consider would be how work has developed with businesses. SR suggested a numbering system. It was agreed that ND would do a breakdown of actions on annual basis. Key actions for next year needs to be thought about and prioritised as there are too many things on the list at moment It was agreed that there is enough information in the plan currently.

7.7 JW suggested that the BAP needs to be explained to people. ND thought this could be addressed through the LBAP website, particularly in education areas. SR suggested a general leaflet might be a good idea when giving presentations and attending events. JH said that a general BAP leaflet had been produced previously by the Trust and this should be re-examined. Financial constraints would have to be considered but partners might buy into funding a leaflet. It was felt that, as this was not a top priority at present. .
Action: PMG to send any Additions/deletions to ND within a fortnight.

8. SLA

8.1 The SLA had been distributed to funding partners for reference.

8.2 The Project budget was discussed and it was established that there needs to be a separate budget under ND's control and autonomy for running events, training courses, hiring halls, refreshments, etc. There is currently no budget for these expenses and money is currently taken out of JW and JH's Landscape and Biodiversity budget, which is already limited. Ideas were considered including approaching organisations cap in hand for a minimal amount. **Action: ND to liaise with B to get cost centre set up for the LBAP utilising a set amount of general HC Landscape and Biodiversity funds. Other PMG partners to consider any financial contribution or ideas they can contribute to raise funds.**

8.3 FG suggested ND also needs her own grant fund for biodiversity projects e.g. equipment for groups but where would this come from? JH said that if you administer grants you must have in place guidelines so as to be fair and equitable and the scale of demand would need to be defined. Another suggestion was looking at key partners to individually fund projects in the future. SR suggested a skeletal plan be done??. . Each year would yield different requirements. JH suggested that an initial chat with English Nature might be good idea as they had previously provided a seed fund for the BAP Officer to administer. ND needs to know what is already accessible to small groups. **Action: ND to query at next LBAP co-ordinators meeting w/c 2 Oct.**

8.4 Outcome - funding to be reviewed next year because by then ND will have a better idea of what is required.

9. AOB

9.1 Timescale for business plan financial strategy to be considered by PMG. **Action: ND to produce Communication Strategy (she has already started this and has info sitting on file).**

9.2 ND's work for next three months include:

- Website updating
- Communication strategy
- BARS
- Organisational sign-up
- KPI work (this is picking up and ND does not want to lose momentum)

10. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday, 9th January am, 2007 venue tbc following office move

