



Lowland Farmland HAP Group Meeting 26th April 2006, DWT Office, Belper.

Present:

Anna Evans, Derbyshire Wildlife Trust
Debbie Court (LD Biodiversity Partnership) **Note taker**

Apologies:

Carl Hawke (National Trust)
Helen Williams (DEFRA RDS)
Barney Parker (FWAG)
Beverley Rhodes (Derby City Council)

1. Progress on Farmland information.

The background document to accompany the farmland Habitats Action Plans (HAPs) was completed in December 2005. This provides information on habitat definitions, ecology and distribution in Lowland Derbyshire. This document is downloadable from the Derbyshire Biodiversity website.

The Derby City Hedgerow report is available from the Derby City Website (http://www.derby.gov.uk/Environment/WildDerby/010Derby_Hedgerows.htm.)

2. Progress on Hedgerows

The Ancient and Species-rich hedgerow HAP was finalised in February 2006 following a second round of consultations. The HAP is now downloadable from the Derbyshire Biodiversity Website.

Three students from Derby University approached Debbie to do their Independent Study on hedgerows in Derbyshire. They will be working in specific areas, identifying the hedgerows present on the First Edition OS map and those still present today. This information will be used as background information for their follow up detailed hedgerow survey using the DEFRA 2002 methodology. The students will be working in Ingleby and Ticknall parishes and within the Moss Valley.

To date, the hedgerows present on the First Edition OS map and those present on current aerial photos have been digitised for Ticknall, Ingleby and Glapwell parishes. Debbie will try and get other areas digitised.

Action: Debbie

Anna reported that Derbyshire Wildlife Trust had been successful in gaining funding from Awards For All and Chesterfield Borough Council for the Chesterfield Borough Hedgerow survey. This will cover some training of volunteers, publicity, a pilot area for detailed hedgerow survey and a public survey and leaflet. A training day had been organised for volunteers and Trevor Taylor had been approached to do the pilot survey and training. Chesterfield Borough Council had agreed to put more funding into the project to help complete the survey of the Borough over the next few years. It was also suggested that we should apply for a hedgerow survey grant from DEFRA to help complete the project quicker to achieve the actions in the Chesterfield Greenprint.

Action Debbie and Anna

Derbyshire Wildlife Trust has undertaken a review of all Hedgerow Regulation surveys carried out for local authorities in the last 7 years. Only 10% of the hedgerows had been classified as 'important' hedgerows under the criteria.

3. Progress on Cereal Field Margins

A final draft of the Cereal Field margins HAP has yet to be produced. The UK BAP review has brought up some definition issues and Debbie needs to talk to DEFRA as to how field margins will be recorded from ELS and HLS. This will influence how the targets for the HAP are set.

The final draft of the Field Margins HAP should go out for consultation in May.

Action: Debbie

4. Progress with Farmland birds

Debbie received information on farmland bird species distribution from Derbyshire Ornithological Society in 2005 and is currently in the process of putting this information into a 'background' document. This will contain information on species ecology, UK status, local status and estimated population and distribution. This document can then be updated as more information becomes available. Currently information has been gathered on reed bunting, corn bunting, tree sparrow, turtle dove, bullfinch, linnets, grey partridge and lapwing. It was felt that yellowhammer could also be included in this list. Debbie to ask DOS for information on yellowhammer distribution.

Action: Debbie

The targets for the UK Species Action Plans are currently being reviewed. It was felt necessary to wait until these have been finalised before producing the SAP for farmland birds.

5. Update on UK BAP revision

Debbie reported that the UK BAP revision is still ongoing. It is likely Ancient and Species-rich hedgerow HAP will become broader in its definition to include all hedgerows. This will have little effect on our HAP as we will be looking at all hedgerows in order to discover the ancient and species-rich ones!

The cereal field margins HAP is likely to become the arable field margins to include grassy margins.

All of the targets for the SAPs are being reviewed and will include targets relating to population sizes and ranges. These are supposed to be finalised and up on the UK BAP website by July.

6. Priorities for 2006

DWT will continue to respond to requests for Hedgerow Regulation surveys. They will also survey some hedgerows as part of the Wildlife Sites survey work.

DWT will be taking the lead on the Chesterfield Hedgerow survey this year.

Derby City will continue with the free hedgerow scheme in the Autumn, as in 2005, with the help of the East Derbyshire Wildlife Project and free hedge laying training.

The National Trust has about 1,500ha of farmland in the LBAP area. Most of this is tenanted and work is ongoing to achieve positive management on the farms. The farmland around Hardwick Hall is in the National Trust's nature conservation strategy as a target zone for action.

7. Date of next meeting - 2pm 16th November 2006 at DWT offices, Belper.

Debbie Court
12th May 2006.