



Derbyshire LBAPs Phase II (ALSF SJA/TAL 003)

**Progress Report
April 2006 – June 2006**



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July 2006

1. Linkages to national and local BAPs.

1.1 UK BAP.

The UK LBAP conference in March has resulted in improved communication between the UK BAP and the LBAPs and frequent e-mails and communication have been sent from the UK BAP officer to the LBAPs. This quarter has also seen the release of the results from the 2005 UK BAP reporting round and further consultation on UK BAP review.

1.2 Regional

The regional LBAP officers, with other members of the Regional Biodiversity Forum, took part in a workshop to discuss the UK BAP targets review. The Regional LBAP officers met in June to discuss various regional issues including BARS and progress towards LBAP targets.

1.3 Links with neighbouring LBAPs

Close contact and liaison has been maintained with the Peak District and National Forest LBAPs.

1.4 Greenprints

A consultation draft of the North East Derbyshire Greenprint has been circulated for comment from Derbyshire Wildlife Trust. The Project Officer made comments on its compatibility with the LBAP and opportunities for projects with neighbouring Greenprints.

There has not been a Chesterfield Greenprint meeting this quarter but the Project Officer has provided input into Greenprint actions through a successful funding application for hedgerow surveys and the delivery of a wildlife themed evening course.

The Bolsover Greenprint Steering Group met in May. The meeting was well attended and included representatives from the local wildlife groups. The Project Officer chairs the meetings as Bolsover District Council do not have a dedicated officer to take the Greenprint forward. As with the Chesterfield Greenprint meetings this ensures that partners are engaged and holistic opportunities to take forward projects are maximised.

2. Local Feedback

2.1 Annual Forum

Preparation has taken place for the Annual Forum in September. The theme will be grasslands and the workshops will be focussed on practical grassland management issues.

2.2 LBAP Steering Group

The Steering Group of the Lowland Derbyshire Biodiversity Partnership met in June. Various partners gave updates on BAP projects and recent funding successes. The Project Officer presented a paper on the feedback from the training sessions for planners and asked for feedback on the format the implementation strategy/ business plan.

3. Making the LBAP accessible.

3.1 Website

In previous quarters there was some difficulty with the statistics package attached to the Derbyshire Biodiversity website, so in late March the website was moved to a different hosting company with a better support package. The accompanying statistics package is much better and more reliable. The table below has been compiled from the package.

Month	Unique visitors	Number of visits	Average number of visits per day	Pages	Hits	Bandwidth
Apr 2006	731	1307	44	3976	27892	617.17 MB
May 2006	603	1063	34	3807	27621	349.64 MB
Jun 2006	461	797	29	1986	18633	168.36 MB
Total	1795	3167	Average 36	9769	74146	1.13 GB

These figures show that the average number of visits per day has increased slightly on previous quarters and most visitors are returning at least once during the month. The bandwidth refers to the amount of information looked at and downloaded. The peak in April corresponds with the release of the newsletter. The website is now receiving visits from abroad including the USA, Germany and Guyana. There has also been an increase in website usage at weekends and in the evenings. Apart from the homepage the most visited part of the website appears to be the local groups section, which is surprising. Hopefully this has meant an increased level of interest in local group activities.

3.2. Newsletter

The first issue of Derbyshire Biodiversity News for 2006 was published on 6th April. This was put on the website on 7th April and an e-mail with a link was sent round to LBAP partners.

The website statistics package showed that during the quarter almost 550 copies of the newsletter were downloaded. In addition a further 700 copies were sent out by post and distributed at events. A copy of the newsletter is attached to this report.

3.3 Talks

The Project Officer has not delivered any talks to local groups this quarter but spoke to countryside students at Broomfield College about biodiversity issues.

The Project Officer delivered a 14 hour evening class entitled “Wildlife on your Doorstep!” through the Workers Educational Association in Chesterfield. The course was attended by 13 people all of whom considered themselves to be wildlife ‘beginners’. Chesterfield Borough Council subsidised places for 9 local residents. The course covered the main habitats and species highlighted within the Chesterfield Greenprint. It also encouraged participants to take part in various surveys and projects undertaken by various LBAP partners.

3.4 Annual Report

Copies of the 2001-2004 Lowland Derbyshire BAP Progress report are still being downloaded from the website. Work has now begun on pulling together information from the LBAP partners for the 2005/6 Annual Report which is hoped to be ready in time for the Annual Forum in September.

4. Implement Habitat Action Plans

4.1 Woodland

In April the Woodland HAP group publicised the completed revision of the ‘Lowland Mixed Broadleaved Woodland’ HAP. This HAP takes into account recommendations from the Landscape Character of Derbyshire and provides guidance on priority areas for woodland creation and management.

The Project Officer took the lead on organising a seminar focussing on ancient woodland management. The successful seminar was held on 6th May at Cromford Mill and had 45 attendees. Themes discussed included woodland surveying, management, grant aid and restoration. The

seminar also included three site visits and gave woodland managers an opportunity to discuss best practice and network. It was suggested that another seminar is arranged for next year.

For the seminar, and for general distribution by LBAP partners, the Project Officer has put together a list of woodland leaflets, booklets etc already available. This has been a useful exercise in gathering information together in one place and highlighting any gaps.

The “Great Trees of Derbyshire Project” has recently gained funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund. This project will help deliver a large number of the actions within the Wood Pasture and Parkland HAP. Project Officer attended an initial meeting with the lead officer work to help the project gain the most from the LBAP partnership.

4.2 Grassland

The Project Officer has met with the Project Officer for Derbyshire Wildlife Trust’s ‘Value In Meadows Project’ to discuss the BAP contributions the project will make and how it is best reported. The project has also received additional funding from the Countdown 2010 grant enabling the project to be funded for 18 months.

Work has continued on the Road Verge Project and it hoped that the verges will be marked and managed according to their prescribed management this summer.

4.3 Wetland

No progress has been made with the wetland habitat group this quarter.

4.4 Farmland

The Farmland Group met in April and discussed progress towards the actions and the draft field margins HAP. The Project Officer has worked with Derbyshire Wildlife Trust on a bid to DEFRA to fund a hedgerow survey for Chesterfield. The bid was successful and the Wildlife Trust was awarded £5,000 which represented 17% of the national grant available. The project will take place over 2 years and will involve volunteers, contractors and community groups. As well as surveying hedgerows the project will also deliver some wider benefits including some of the awareness raising actions in the ancient and or species-rich hedgerow HAP. The Project Officer has also been working with students at Derby University to aid them in their Independent Studies which will also deliver work towards the hedgerow HAP.

5. Implement Species Action Plans

5.1 Mammals

Derbyshire Wildlife Trust’s Water Vole Recovery Project has continued to build relationships with water bailiffs and game keepers in Lowland Derbyshire to continue the mink control programme.

5.2 Crayfish

Discussions at the Peak District and Lowland Derbyshire Crayfish group led to the conclusion that there was sufficient interest and need to produce a Species Action Plan for white-clawed crayfish in Lowland Derbyshire. All relevant partners have been contacted and a date in September has been set to hold a workshop to write the plan.

6. Increasing capacity of partners in key sectors to implement HAPs and SAPs.

6.1 BAP Audits

Following a successful training event for rangers in February further work has been carried out on the BAP audit of Derbyshire County Council’s countryside sites.

7. Increasing contribution to biodiversity targets of aggregates industry.

7.1 Aggregate industry contacts

The Project Officer attended a meeting hosted by OnTrent to discuss issues relating to mineral restoration, BAP habitats and the restrictions associated with East Midlands Airport. Contact has been maintained with the RSPB mineral restoration project and attendance has been booked on a seminar in July to discuss the next phase of the RSPB's proposed toolkit for mineral restoration.

8. Monitoring and Reporting.

8.1 BARS

The Project Officer has attended an advanced training session on BARS. Following the training various links have been put in between the LBAP and the Chesterfield Greenprint to aid reporting and prevent double counting.

9. Community Strategies, Development Plans and similar strategic partnerships.

9.1 Local Strategic Partnerships

The Project Officer has attended an initial meeting of the appropriate a sub-group for the Erewash LSP and made comments on the action plan to include biodiversity issues. Comments have been made on the biodiversity element of the County Council Local Area Agreement.

9.2 Planning documents

No consultation drafts have been received this quarter. The Derby City Nature Conservation Strategy and the Erewash SPD for Biodiversity have both been formally adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

9.3 Training for Planners

The two hour training session 'Biodiversity – the Basics for Planners' was delivered during this quarter to the two remaining local authorities in the LBAP area. In total this session has been delivered to 121 planning officers in 9 different local authorities. A report was written detailing the sessions and includes feedback from the exercise regarding additional information and resources required by the authorities to carry out their function under PPS9. A copy of the report is attached to this report.

10. Engaging local business

The Lowland Derbyshire Biodiversity Partnership had a display at a local business and the environment event. Copies of the Business and Biodiversity booklets were given away and discussions have taken place with Groundwork to include biodiversity information in their packs for small businesses.

11. Raise Funding for LBAP initiatives

11.1 Funding information.

Information has been circulated to LBAP partners on new funding schemes with the appropriate deadlines and criteria.

11.2 Support of Funding bids

The Project Officer has continued to discuss funding for biodiversity projects with LBAP partners. During this quarter the Project Officer has written five support letters for funding bids by various LBAP partners. Since the beginning of 2006, the partnership has heard about at least ten BAP projects which have received funding this quarter. This grant funding amounts to more than £500,000!