

## Steering Group for the Lowland Derbyshire Biodiversity Partnership

#### 25th January 10 -12.30pm Winster Studio, Cromford Mill, Cromford, Derbyshire

#### Present:

Anna Evans (Derbyshire Wildlife Trust)
Annie Cooper (Derbyshire County Council)
Beverley Rhodes (Derby City Council)
Carl Hawke (National Trust)
Charlotte Winnert (Chesterfield Borough Council)
Dan Abrahams (Natural England)

Dave Slinger (Derby City Council)
Debbie Court (Lowland Derbyshire Biodiversity
Partnership)
Rachael Coates (Amber Valley Borough Council)
Tristan Galletly (Forestry Commission)

#### 1. Apologies received from:

David Arnold (Derbyshire Dales), Jo Brown (Derbyshire Wildlife Trust), Kevin Exley (South Derbyshire District Council), Paul Tame (National Farmers Union).

#### 2. Project Officer's verbal report

Debbie gave a quick update on progress since July 2006:

- The Regional Biodiversity Strategy was launched in November 2006.
- The Annual Forum on 14<sup>th</sup> September was a great success with 64 people attending.
- The Annual Report for 2005/6 had been printed and distributed
- Three issues of Derbyshire Biodiversity News had been produced and distributed
- There has been a continued increase of usage of the Derbyshire Biodiversity website.
- Work had been carried out on BAP audits for DCC Countryside Service and Severn Trent Water (Carsington only).
- A biodiversity workshop was delivered for a national mineral conference
- Biodiversity training had been delivered for Chesterfield Borough Council Rangers and Derby City
  officers
- Progress had been entered onto BARS

Debbie distributed an update on target progress (attached) A number of issues were discussed. There was a concern that there could be double counting for some LBAP partners. Carl reported that internal discussions at the National Trust said that the majority of the work was funded by EWGS and CSS so would be reported nationally via FC and NE. This however, would not a representative picture of progress at a local level.

Dan reported that the NE database GENESIS is only used for HLS agreements and a separate system is used for recording ELS agreements. He was unsure about the level of interrogation of the system. It is however one of the only ways the hedgerow and field margins targets are to be achieved so some sort of reporting is necessary to check progress.

Due to delays in the European Parliament approving the Rural Development programme for England budgets have not been approved for the EWGS and HLS this year. As a result the National Forest Tender Scheme is closed for this year.

The Derbyshire Wildlife Trust will be producing a Wildlife Site condition report which may help with the target progress. This is due in the spring.

## 3. Implementation strategy

Debbie distributed a paper which highlights the actions which have not been started and which require further resources (attached). It was agreed that the paper needed some background information adding to it so it could be a stand alone document. Debbie will also write short project briefs for the potential projects identified.

## 4. Report from HAP groups

#### Woodland

The Woodland Group met recently and discussed how to achieve the shortfall in ASNW in EWGS. One option is to fund some landowner visits and advice either via FWAG or an externally funded project. Dan has since spoken to Jonathon Marsden about funding a number of landowners visits via FWAG. Dan will pursue this. A woodland surveying seminar has been discussed for 2008 and the Great Trees of Derbyshire Project will be doing a seminar on veteran tree management in the winter of 2007. The Project has received to date 2050 veteran tree records.

#### Wetland

The wetland group were still without a formal chair and progress on actions has been slow. The current knowledge of data had been discussed and progress was being made on providing a baseline date of information. Grass-wrack pondweed a UK BAP priority species had been re-found in the county, this time in the Erewash Canal.

#### Grassland

Of the 40 HAP actions, 10 are completed and 30 are underway. Currently the main action is being achieved by the Value in Meadows project and the Wild About Grassland project. There are some issues with the current level of scoring required to get into HLS and this will have an effect on LBAP target achievement. Debbie reported that progress had been made with the Road Verge Reserve Scheme.

#### **Farmland**

A farmland group had been set up to work on the hedgerow, field margins and farmland birds action plans. Attendance had been disappointing but some progress had been made. Hedgerows were being surveyed in Chesterfield and in two parishes in South Derbyshire.

#### 5. Species update

A draft species action plan for the White-clawed crayfish had been produced and circulated for comments. This should be finalised by the end of the month.

Funding for the Water Vole Recovery project was running out in April 2007.

#### 6. Greenprints

#### **Bolsover**

The Bolsover Biodiversity network meet quarterly and are looking at a number of small scale projects which the local wildlife groups can take part in.

#### Chesterfield

Hedgerows were being surveyed by a DWT. A crayfish survey had shown that crayfish had disappeared from the River Hipper in Chesterfield but were still present in the Bar Brook just into North East Derbyshire.

#### Derby

The veteran tree survey is producing good results to feed onto the planners Wildlife Alert map. There were looking to set up more Local Nature Reserves and Friends of Groups.

#### Erewash

DWT working with Erewash Borough Council has identified a number of priority habitats and species. Work is staring on a draft document and support within Erewash Borough council is being gained.

#### **North East Derbyshire**

The consultation of the draft has finished and work is continuing on internal support within North East Derbyshire District Council before the document is launched.

#### 7. Funding

Annie highlighted the current funding situation for Debbie's post. She thanked those LBAP partners who responded to her letter asking for money. Natural England have agreed to put £15,000 into the post and Derbyshire County Council have upped their contribution for 2007/8 to £10,000. As a result Debbie's post

has been extended until April 2008. There is still a need for other LBAP partners to contribute in 2007/8 if they can.

An opportunity has arisen to make the LBAP co-ordinators post part of the establishment within Derbyshire County Council, but would remain a 'hosted post'. In order for this to happen there is a need for LBAP partners to sign up to a 3 year agreement. This would be from April 2008 until April 2011. £35, 000 a year is need to support the post and provide some money for Annual Forum, etc.

**National Trust** – Carl reported that the National Trust had received a grant from BIFFA to buffer the ponds and creates wetlands for white-clawed crayfish at Calke Abbey.

**Derbyshire Wildlife Trust** – Anna reported that DWT is currently looking for funding to keep the Water Vole Recovery project and the Water for Wildlife Project going. It is likely to be combined into one project and have a number of outcomes:

- Water Vole and otter monitoring
- Mink control
- Working with landowners in the Trent Valley Lower Dove, Erewash valley, Chesterfield Canal and Rother valley, West Derby wetlands (Markeaton, Mackworth etc)
- The project will also hope to have some capital money for practical work

Natural England has given DW £5k for the Water for Wildlife project and the national Trust may also have some money for mink control work.

DWT is also looking to find the additional match funding for the Value In Meadows project. They have recently heard they have been successful in gaining £250,000 from the HLF for a Schools Ground Project

**Chesterfield Borough Council** – Charlotte reported that she had recently submitted a bid to SITA for grassland hedgerow work on Norbriggs Flash.

## 8. Awareness raising

Dave Slinger reported that the BBC had been in contact with him about their Breathing Places campaign. He is going to a meeting in February and will feed any relevant information back to the LBAP partnership.

Carl reported that the BBC had been filming at Calke Abbey for their Nature's Calendar programme.

Derbyshire Dales have declared Matlock Woods a LNR, which is about 30ha.

#### 9. Planning

David Arnold reported that at Derbyshire Dales District Council they were working on a Supplementary Planning Document for landscape character and design. They are currently consulting on the scoping report for the SA.

Dave Slinger reported that there was potentially a very exciting biodiversity gain that may come from a large scale development adjacent to the River Derwent.

Jo Brown was attending the DEFRA seminar on Wildlife Sites and would report any relevant findings through the partnership.

Debbie reported that she had arranged a Planning for Protected Species training course for 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2007 at Poolsbrook Country Park, Chesterfield. The course is aimed at planner and has been certified by the RTPI for CPD hours. Places will be subsidised for LBAP partners contributing to the LBAP co-ordinators post. Debbie will send more information when it becomes available.

Debbie also reported that Flora Locale have arranged a training course for landscape architects and planners and developers on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2007 at Carsington Water looking at using native seeds for habitat creation in developments. More information will be available soon.

#### 10 Annual Forum

Debbie reported that the date of the 2007 Annual Forum is now confirmed as 11<sup>th</sup> October at Masson Mill, Cromford. The theme so the day will be wetland and it will be a joint event with the Peak District LBAP. Invites and booking forms are likely to be sent out in June or July.

#### 11. Natural England and BAPs

Dan gave a quick update on Natural England. The team which covers the LBAP area is the Peak to Trent team. Within the team there are three teams. Dan is based within the land management and SSSI team. It is likely that the BAP work may fall to the Government and Communities team and it may be Ruth Fish, team leader who attends the LBAP Steering Group and Exec in the future.

**12. Date of Next meeting** 20<sup>th</sup> June 2007 Committee Room 1, County Hall, Matlock.

## **Update on LBAP Targets (Dec 2006)**

The following information provides an update on progress towards the targets for the Habitat Action Plans.

The source of the information is cited in brackets for auditing purposes.

#### 1. Lowland Mixed Broadleaved woodland

- Achieve positive management in:
  - 1,640ha ASNW 788ha (from EWGS Forest Plans only)
  - 1,260ha PAWS 1017ha (from EWGS and Forest Plans only)
  - 100ha secondary woodland 54.16ha (from EWGS only)
  - 1,000 of woodland planted since 1980 987ha (859ha (NF), (66ha DCC) 62 ha (STW Carsington) NB the woodland in management figure may need adjusting following discussion with the National Forest.
- Plant 500ha of new woodland by 2010 527ha (375ha by 2005 + 72 ha (NF 2006) + 80ha (2006 EGWS))

## 2. Semi-natural grassland

#### Neutral Grassland 945ha (200-300 sites)

- Secure positive management on 50% by 2008 (125 sites) & 75% (188 sites) by 2010 2
- Secure positive management on 20 species-rich road verges by 2010 2 (more in progress)
- Create 50ha by 2010 8.65ha (LBAP partners and HLS)
- Restore 200ha by 2010 13.75ha (LBAP Partners and HLS)

#### Calcareous grassland 70ha (25-30 sites)

- Secure positive management on 50% (15 sites) by 2007 unknown
- Secure positive management on 2 road verges by 2010 0 (some in progress)
- Create 25ha by 2010 15.3ha (LBAP Partners only)
- Restore 50ha by 2010 1.3ha (LBAP partners only)

#### Acid Grassland 709ha (180-220 sites)

- Secure positive management on 50% (100 sites) by 2010 unknown
- Secure positive management on 2 road verges by 2010 0
- Create 50ha by 2010 0ha
- Restore 100ha by 2010 0ha

#### 3. Heathland

- Maintain current extent 85ha (Calculated from GIS layer 2006)
- Restore 12ha of heathland Oha (7.14ha of DCC heathland proposed for restoration)
- Create 10ha of heatland 7ha (7ha started by FC)

## Standing Open Water:

- Initiate measures to achieve favourable management on all standing open water in SSSIs achieved and 50% of standing open water in Wildlife Sites – unknown.
- Identify areas for action then identify target for pond creation by 2007

#### Rivers and streams:

- Ensure all sites that qualify as SSSIs and WS are designated by 2010 unknown
- Get 300km of river and stream into appropriate management agreements unknown
- Carry out river restoration schemes on 10km of river unknown

#### Lowland Swamps, reedbeds etc

- Ensure all sites that qualify as SSSIs and WS are designated by 2010 unknown
- Achieve management on all reedbeds over 2ha − 3.12ha (DCC figures only)
- Achieve management on 50ha of swamp, mire etc unknown
- Create 30ha of reedbed 6ha (DWT and STW only)
- Create 30ha of swamp unknown

#### Floodplain Grazing marsh:

- Ensure all sites that qualify as SSSIs and WS are designated by 2010 unknown
- Bring 250ha of floodplain grazing marsh into management unknown
- Create/restore 50ha of floodplain grazing marsh unknown

#### **Hedgerows:**

- Bring an additional 100km of hedgerow into management 2.728km (LBAP partners only)
- Plant 50km of species-rich hedgerow 0.5km (LBAP partners only)

### Wet Woodland (currently under revision):

• Maintain current extent – 150ha (calculated from GIS layer 2006)

## Lowland Wood Pasture, Parkland and Veteran Trees (currently under revision)

Maintain extent -

### Main barriers to achieving targets:

- 1. Some achievement against targets is unknown need information from LBAP partners and from GENESIS about targets achieved via agri-environmental schemes, especially for the hedgerow targets!
- 2. Uncertain funding for EWGS and HLS in short term
- Targeting statements for HLS are too high to encourage participation.
   Additional resources (beyond EWGS, and agri-env schemes) to achieve management on sites (LBAP partners and wider countryside) and advice for enabling landowners to apply for grant aid.

**Debbie Court** Jan 2007

## **Outstanding Projects for LBAP Implementation until 2010**

## Status of LBAP actions (Dec 2006)

		Allonia (Dec						
Habitat	Total No of	Actions	Actions Ongoing/	Actions Behind	Actions Not	Actions	No of Actions completed or ongoing/	% of actions completed or ongoing/
Action Plan	Actions	Completed	underway	schedule	started	abandoned	underway	underway
Lowland Mixed Broadleaved woodland Wood	19	2	11	4	2	0	13	68.42
Pasture, Parkland and Veteran Trees	27	4	22	0	1	0	26	96.29
Wet Woodland	34	4	20	1	9	0	24	70.58
Semi-natural grassland	40	10	27	3	0	0	37	92.5
Standing Open Water	25	3	14	1	7	0	17	68
Swamps, fens, mires and reedbeds	21	1	10	2	8	0	11	52.38
Rivers and streams	26	2	13	2	8	1	15	57.69
Floodplain Grazing Marsh	21	0	11	1	9	0	11	52.38
Ancient and Species-rich hedgerows	17	2	11	1	3	0	13	76.47
Heathland	12	0	10	0	2	0	10	83.33
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Species Action Plans								
Oak Polypore	10	0	10	0	0	0	10	100
Water Vole	47	3	40	3	1	0	43	91.48
Total	242	28 (11.57%)	149 (61.57%)	15 (6.19%)	49 (20.24 %)	1 (0.41%)	177	73.14

# Actions that have not been started (Lead partners in brackets):

## **Data Gathering and Sharing:**

- Is all the River Habitat Survey information digitised? Where are the gaps? (Local Records Centre)
- Need to initiate Floodplain Grazing Marsh GIS layer (DWT)
- Need to identify suitable river restoration sites (EA)
- Need to identify suitable reedbed, floodplain grazing marsh restoration and creation sites (EA/DWT)

## Interrogating data:

 Using Woodland GIS project data to prioritise PAWs restoration, sites for landowners liaison on management, and grant aid (FC)

## **Monitoring strategies:**

 Need to develop monitoring strategies for the majority of the habitats (LBAP Partnership)

## **Awareness Raising:**

Organise Public events for:

- Floodplain grazing marsh (Wetland Group)
- Swamps, reedbeds etc (Wetland Group)
- Rivers (Wetland Group)

## Organise:

• Woodland Seminar 2008 (LBAP co-ordinator)

## **Management Advice:**

Develop guidance for:

- Wet woodland restoration (Woodland group)
- Floodplain grazing marsh management (Wetland Group)
- Swamp etc management (Wetland Group)
- River restoration and management (Wetland Group)

Set up a number of demonstration sites for:

- Reedbed (Witches Oak Water?)
- Standing Open water (Carsington?)
- Floodplain Grazing marsh (Erewash Meadows/Wyver Lane?)
- Wet woodland (Sledge Wood Woodland Trust?)

#### Research:

- Research further Parkland and Wood Pasture sites (to update GIS layer) (NE/DWT)
- Research further Ancient Woodland under 2ha (to update GIS layer) (NE)
- Look at the impact of deer on woodland regeneration/condition (Woodland group)
- Research river restoration techniques and successes distribute to LBAP partners (EA)
- Research/survey Exposed Riverine Sediments (ERS) (EA)
- Interogating the Historic Landscape Character information for information on heathland and hedgerows (DCC Landscape team)

## Surveying:

- Hedgerow surveying in all parts of the LBAP except Derby City and Chesterfield (DWT)
- Surveying and Identifying Floodplain Grazing Marsh (DWT/EA)

#### Miscellaneous:

- Explore possibilities of Woodland Products Market, esp relating to recent woodland creation (FC)
- Develop a strategy for and carry out control of invasive species (Wetland group)

## Projects started that need more resources

- Road Verge scheme
- Visiting and advising landowners of BAP habitats
- Surveying and monitoring BAP habitats (in addition to Wildlife Sites work)
- Water vole work
- Practical land management (maintenance, restoration, creation)

## 'Generic' projects that need continued resources

- Website updates
- Quarterly newsletters
- Annual LBAP progress reports
- Annual Forum and ad-hoc BAP related seminars/training sessions
- Secretariat for LBAP meetings
- Co-ordination of LBAP partners and expansion of the partnership
- Work on new Species Action Plans
- Finalisation of Field Margins HAP
- Updates of BAP background documents
- Review of LBAP in 2010
- Monitoring the progress of the LBAP (BARS etc)
- Ensuring the LBAP is represented at Regional level and corresponding with the UK BAP
- Co-ordinating awareness raising and fundraising activities.
- The need to sort out data issues and ensure that all LBAP partners have access to appropriate information and information is updated accordingly

The above and more can be achieved by the continued employment of a LBAP co-ordinator.

## Other projects

Updates of various data sets and GIS layers

## Ways of achieving outstanding LBAP projects

- Designing specific student projects for specific LBAP partners to oversee
- Designing specific volunteer projects for specific LBAP partners to oversee
- LBAP partners 'volunteer' to take on an extra action, in partnership with others
- 'Decision making' actions are made at Habitat Action Group meetings
- Specific project briefs are written for distinct projects which need external funding. Appropriate funding is sought and applied for (this could include sponsorship).
- Some projects can be divided up into Greenprint actions which could be funded locally
- Additional funds are raised through opportunistic working
- LBAP partners put money into an LBAP fund where projects are prioritised for action