

## Isle of Wight Biodiversity Partnership



Minutes of the 50th Steering Group meeting  
29<sup>th</sup> March 2012, 10.30 am Enterprise House, Newport

**Present:** Matthew Chatfield - Parks & Countryside Manager, IWC  
Fiona Hanna – Lead Officer, AONB  
Joel Bateman – Projects Officer, AONB  
Colin Pope – Senior Ecology Officer, IWC  
Helen Rawlinson – Natural England  
Mike Pittock - Forestry Commission  
Jay Doyle - Forestry Commission  
Belinda Walters – Regional Director, CLA  
Les Street - SE Project officer, RSPB  
Richard Grogan - Head of Conservation, Hants & IW Wildlife Trust  
Debbie Whitfield - Senior Biodiversity Officer, Hants & IW Wildlife Trust  
Sarah Bignell – Hants & IW Wildlife Trust

Apologies: Claire Hamilton, Tony Tutton, Ian Boyd, Richard Black, Richard Lemon, Debbie Tann

### **SG12/07 Minutes of the last meeting**

The minutes were agreed and signed.

### **SG12/08 Matters arising from the minutes (other than agenda items)**

#### *SINC review*

The recommendation to approve new and revised SINC, discussed at the last Steering Group meeting, is close to being accepted by IWC. After this time, the new SINC can formally be incorporated into the Local Plan.

### **SG12/09 Local Nature Partnerships (LNPs)**

Debbie Whitfield gave an update with progress on setting up an LNP. The first Steering Group meeting took place on 12<sup>th</sup> March. Ian Boyd attended on behalf of IW Biodiversity Steering Group and Natural Enterprise. The developing LNP has had major difficulties in engaging with LEPs (two LEPs cover Hants & IW) and health & wellbeing sectors. At present LNPs have no clear role and LEPs have no duty to engage with LNPs. Debbie Tann has organised a joint letter to the Minister Caroline Spelman and her team, signed by chairs of 25 developing LNPs, in the hope of securing a meeting to discuss concerns and ideas with the Minister and her team. The key purpose of the meeting is to try and agree on a strategy that will give LNPs the credibility, confidence and the means to help deliver the important objectives of the Natural Environment White Paper going forward.

You can keep up to date with developments by subscribing to the blogsite:

<http://hantswightlnp.wordpress.com/>

Or by keeping an eye on the regularly updated LNP website: [http://www.green-space.org.uk/southeast/online\\_forum/viewtopic.php?f=23&t=136&sid=4870579bd6c62b2d4cf436aceb9abdbd](http://www.green-space.org.uk/southeast/online_forum/viewtopic.php?f=23&t=136&sid=4870579bd6c62b2d4cf436aceb9abdbd)

### **SG12/10 Jigsaw Project**

Sarah Bignell (Wildlife Trust), explained that, as a result of PTES funding, the Trust are about to embark on a one year project to investigate how dormice are colonising new woodland Jigsaw planting. She would be looking at four sites, setting up tubes and boxes to survey for dormice. Some small mammal trapping would also be carried out.

Sarah and Debbie left at this point to visit the survey sites.

### **SG12/11 Implementing the England Biodiversity Strategy**

There was little public information on implementation of the England Biodiversity Strategy but Helen had previously circulated an internal briefing note which highlighted the current position. This document provoked some discussion, including the role of our Steering Group. The majority view was that the group served an important role locally and that, as national guidance becomes clearer and more specific, our group is likely to play an important role in delivering the England Strategy at a local level.

Helen then went on to talk about SSSI favourable condition review. The condition tables for most IW SSSIs are being reviewed and Helen asked for assistance with information to assist with this process. It was felt that, for some complex sites, it might be helpful to organise local workshops involving individuals who are able to contribute.

**Action: HR to contact individuals and the group to assist with updating condition assessments.**

#### **SG12/12 Environment Agency IW Catchment Officer**

This item was held over as neither EA representatives were able to attend the meeting.

#### **SG12/13 Bioblitz 2012**

This year's Bioblitz will be held on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> July at the National Trust carpark at Compton. Joel reported on arrangement that were being made and urged everyone to attend and hold events, if possible. Further details will be sent out nearer the time.

**Action: Please attend Bioblitz event at Compton carpark on 25<sup>th</sup> July.**

#### **SG12/14 Local Records Centre Report**

The quarterly report for December to March was presented and will be circulated with the minutes. The most important issue is that the GIS habitat layers have finally been returned from Geodata in Mastermap format to be incorporated into the Habitat Data Capture tool leading to a regional habitat data set. This will still require further work locally but this is an important and long-overdue milestone.

Work has been progressing in delivering species data sets onto the NBN. All IW lichen data is now on the NBN and searchable at full resolution. All IW fungi and marine fish records have been digitised this winter and will be loaded onto publicly accessible national databases over the next few months.

#### **SG12/15 Any Other Business**

- **IW Red Squirrel Forum.** Jay reported that the group had met on 9<sup>th</sup> March. There was concern amongst those present with regards to the Red Squirrel Survival Trust's proposal to reintroduce red squirrels into The Lizard and West Penwith in Cornwall. JD said that he was proposing to draft a letter on behalf of the Forum expressing dismay at proposals to reintroduce red squirrels into England. The Steering Group advised that contact should be made with FC and NE mammal specialists to ascertain their views on the proposals before drafting a letter to be circulated amongst members of the Forum.
- **Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust.** Richard reported that the Wildlife Trust is launching the acquisition of Sandown Meadows, an 18ha floodplain reserve, next week. He also reported on the National Trust's Leonardo da Vinci three day conference taking place in April at which several members of the steering group were contributing. RG distributed copies of the recently published Summer Walks leaflet. He also requested that, at the next Steering Group meeting, we have a presentation from a Planning Policy officer on implementing the recently published National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- **Forestry Commission.** Mike described efforts to tackle reports of deer loose on the Island. The Forestry Commission is committed to doing what it can to ensure that the Island remains free of deer. Since his targeted request for information earlier this year, the only reports have been of 2 red deer on Chris Clarke's land at Cridmore. FC committed two

wildlife rangers to spend 3 days at Cridmore, without success. This illustrates the difficulty of killing deer if present in low numbers, even large deer in open landscapes. MP reminded members that the next Woodland Forum meeting was on \*\* at Great Park Farm. MP informed the group that the Waitrose wood-fuel plant will come into operation next week. Wood will be provided by a mainland contractor but using timber from the Island. The plant will require 2-3 tons of wood per year

- **AONB** Fiona reported that the HLF East Wight Landscape Partnership Project bid was submitted at the end of February with a decision expected in mid July. She said that an East Wight Waterways Review had been produced by Jon Cox and was available to anyone interested. Joel refereed to the Isle-Spy book due to be released shortly and expected to retail at £2-3.
- **Fritillary butterflies** Jay referred briefly to the Southeast Recovery project and proposals by himself and Mike to survey for pearl-bordered fritillary in Parkhurst Forest later this spring. He would report back on this at the next Steering Group meeting.

#### **Date of next meeting**

**Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> July 10.30am at Enterprise House:**