

Isle of Wight Biodiversity Partnership



Minutes of the 60th Steering Group meeting
9th October 2014, 10.30 am Seaclose offices, IWC, Newport

Present: Colin Pope – Senior Ecology Officer, IWC
Richard Grogan – HIW Wildlife Trust
Richard Black – RSPB
Belinda Walters - CLA
Claire Hamilton – Fisheries & Biodiversity Officer, Environment Agency
Ian Boyd – Arc Environmental
Carol Flux – Natural Enterprise
Fiona Hanna – AONB Lead Officer
Mark Larter – Natural England

Apologies: Matthew Chatfield, Tony Tutton, Jay Doyle

In the absence of Matthew, Colin Pope chaired the meeting

SG14/23 Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes were agreed and signed.

SG14/24 Matters arising from the minutes (other than agenda items)

The Isle of Wight Deer Position has now been finalised. Belinda asked whether it was now in the public domain. Richard G said that the Mammal Society website was promoting Tim Brayford's view of deer on the Island and RG had sent them our Position Statement.

- **Action: MC chased up to ensure Statement was on WOW website**
- **Action: Statement to be circulated to The Deer Initiative FH**

Mark said that internal discussions with regard to NELMES had restarted but did not know when a statement would be released.

SG14/25 'Towards Sustainable Countryside'

A paper regarding the future of the Isle of Wight Council countryside estate had been agreed by Executive Cttee on 7th October. The recommendation is:

To seek proposals from third parties for the management of the countryside sites through a prospectus process consistent with the Council's current aims and aspirations for the estate.

The full paper can be seen at <http://www.iwight.com/Meetings/committees/Executive/7-10-14/PAPER%20H.pdf>

Members of Executive agreed that the countryside was an important asset to the Island that needed as much support as possible in its upkeep.

Matthew has been seconded from his post as Parks, Countryside & Rights of Way Manager for a period of one year to a project with two objectives, namely:

1. To deliver a sustainable management arrangement for sites currently managed by the IW Countryside Section
2. To resolve issues surrounding Pan Country Park and establish a sustainable management regime for that site.

There was a general discussion around this subject. Richard G said that there was potential for significant issues with taking on the service.

- **Action: MC to keep partners involved with developments**

SG14/26 'Garden Isle' building in biodiversity

'Garden Isle' is a marketing initiative brought forward by Visit Isle of Wight. Currently, it appears to be focussed upon parks and gardens rather than the wider countryside. However, National Trust and AONB were meeting with David Thornton to lobby for expanding the breadth of the 'Garden Isle' marketing campaign to include the countryside.

- **Action: Fiona to keep Steering Group informed of developments if there are opportunities for Steering Group partners to become engaged.**

SG14/27 Local Record Centre Report

The quarterly report for July – September was discussed. Going forwards management of the Local Record Centre will be taken over by the AONB Unit. The Steering Group will still oversee the work of the LRC.

- **Action: Quarterly report attached with these minutes**

SG14/28 East Wight Landscape Project and AONB Management Plan

Fiona outlined progress on the EWLP and highlighted projects for which biodiversity was a key component.

With respect to biodiversity actions within the AONB Management Plan, Fiona said that the Biodiversity Steering Group could be a key body to oversee delivery. She was considering the possibility of an NIA approach to biodiversity delivery on the Island.

Key Action: PLEASE SEND FUTURE STEERING GROUP AGENDA ITEMS TO FIONA & MATTHEW IN ADVANCE OF AGENDAS BEING CIRCULATED

SG14/29 AOB

Carol reported that Island Rivers work was progressing slowly.

Plant Positive work for this year has now been completed. She is investigating funding for work next year. She is concerned that Himalayan Balsam is now growing close to Island Rail Line and could potentially be spread.

Big Tree Plant. There are still many nursery trees waiting to be planted.

- **Action: Please contact Carol if you know of sites that could accommodate tree planting before the end of January.** Sites need to be in areas of community development but this could include sites adjoining public rights of way.

Richard G said that Mammal Society were producing a SE Mammal Atlas and that he needed mammal records by the end of October to submit for the Atlas.

IWLRC had been contacted by the Mammal Society independently and would be providing records for the Atlas.

Richard B said that RSPB were in a position that they felt the development proposals at Marsh Farm presented the best solution for the resolution of the site and that they would be supporting the application.

Mark outlined the work that he is currently doing on the Island. He also said that NE has set up a national team to provide Land Advisors with technical support and a regional Ecology Unit who are available to come out on site and provide advice.

Claire reported that Water Primrose had now been eradicated at one of its two Island sites (Holden Farm) but control at the second site was on-going.

Belinda wished to flag up that Coastal Access was likely to become an issue again over the coming months.

Dates of next meeting

Dates for next year's meeting were set as follows:

- **Thursday 15th January**
- **Thursday 12th March**
- **Thursday 16th July**
- **Thursday 15th October**

All meetings will take place at Seaclose offices, Newport, unless otherwise advised.