

Isle of Wight Biodiversity Partnership

Minutes of the 62nd Steering Group Meeting

12th March 2015, 10.30am Seaclose Offices, Newport



Attendees

Matthew Chatfield (IW Council)
Richard Grogan (HIWWT)
Jay Doyle (Forestry Commission)
Claire Hamilton (Environment Agency)
Ian Boyd (Arc)
Tony Tutton (National Trust)
Fiona Ellis (AONB)
Margaret Spencer (AONB)
Anne Marston (LRC)
Dr Ben Rushbrook

Apologies

Mark Larter (Natural England)
Debbie Tann (HIWWT)
Carol Flux (Natural Enterprise)
Peter Taylor (Environment Agency)
Georgianna Barnard (Forestry Commission)
Belinda Walters (CLA)
Richard Black (RSPB)

Matthew Chatfield chaired the meeting

1. Apologies for absence:

The Chairman gave apologies for those unable to attend.

2. Minutes of the last meeting:

The minutes were agreed and signed

3. Matters arising (other than agenda items):

The East Wight Landscape Partnership (Down to the Coast Scheme) is all coming together.

- **Action: Biodiversity Projects to be discussed at next meeting.**

SINCS – Query re changes to the SINC Register being adopted by Local Authority? MC spoke to Wendy Perera. There has been an administrative delay as they are awaiting an agreed approach to sign-off.

BAP Membership – An Invitation has been extended to IWNHAS and this has been accepted. A representative will attend when available.

AONB Management Plan –

- **Action: The meeting with Island Roads has been postponed but will be re-arranged.**

Island Roads have the same obligations as Highways previous had regarding Knotweed and Ragwort on Highway land. It was wondered whether Island Roads' staff should receive training in recognising non-native species.

4. Local Record Centre Report:

Report for Mar 2015 distributed.

Recorders Conference has been held. Interest was received re electronic recording and training of volunteers is underway.

Any suggestions for next year's conference to AM please.
Natural England and the Environment Agency have confirmed support for local record centres for next year. The Council has also confirmed commitment.

Annual agreement with Forestry Commission re Woodland Planning Grants to be arranged. Query re charge for data for small woodland areas – is there a special rate for small areas?

5. Presentation re Crayfish on the Isle of Wight:

Dr Ben Rushbrook gave a presentation on his study into conservation of white-clawed crayfish. Report is a working document and input is welcomed.

Conducting a feasibility study looking at the possibility of having Ark sites for white-clawed crayfish on the Isle of Wight as there are no records of their predator, signal crayfish, on the Island. Also investigating whether there were ever white-clawed crayfish on the Island as critical to whether this would be a re-introduction or an introduction. Ecosystem of Isle of Wight must be secured and there must be no negative impact on the Island ecosystem.

Concern re white-clawed crayfish eating fish eggs e.g. brown trout.
Concern re lack of fresh water areas on Island and those are impoverished and lacking in minerals already. Still water sites are also suitable e.g. ex-aggregate sites are also suitable so there is the possibility of actually creating a still water site. Looking for sites which will be self-sustainable in the future.

Any potential sites or desktop avenues for investigation appreciated.

Report to be updated and distributed to partnership

6. Forestry Services/Forest Enterprise Organisational Update:

The Government is continuing with the woodland policy across England. The Forestry Commission is to continue administering the Grants programme working closely with Natural England to administer Stewardship Grants. The new grant system is to be a points based system targeted to delivery outcomes e.g. flood prevention and alleviation. Georgianna is the expert in this area.

Jay is looking after the public estates with the establishment of a Forest Enterprise within the public sector rather than the Civil Service.

All will need to be more self-sustaining over the coming years and all is subject the outcome of the next election.

7. AOB

- 1) Bioblitz** – Thurs 28 May 15 at St Helen's Duver co-hosted by NT as part of their Coast 2015 celebrations. Invitations to be sent out in the next couple of weeks. Please let us know if you can assist on the day.
- 2) Deer** – A New website has been set up re deer on the Island
- 3) Wild Boar** - A paper has been produced by the CLA re national consultation on the status of wild boar.

- 4) ***Brachypodium pinnatum* (Tor Grass)** – Spreading over Culver but grazing is keeping it in check.
- 5) **irecord training** – Possibility of arranging training for National Trust staff if needed.

Next meeting Thursday 16th July 2015, Seaclose Offices