

Isle of Wight Biodiversity Action Plan

STEERING GROUP

Minutes of the Fourth meeting held 11th July 2000 10.30am IWC Seaclose Offices

Present: Matthew Chatfield, Senior Countryside Officer, Isle of Wight Council
Sarah Dawkins, Conservation Officer, RSPB
Richard Grogan, Wight Wildlife Officer
Claire Lambert, Conservation Officer, English Nature
Colin Pope, Ecology Officer, Isle of Wight Council
Anne Riley, Assistant Ecology Officer, Isle of Wight Council
Tony Tutton, Property Manager, National Trust
Debbie Wicks, Conservation Officer, Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife
Trust
Robert Wolton, English Nature

Apologies: Paul Airey, Policy and Environment Officer, Isle of Wight Council
Fiona Dixon, National Farmers' Union
David Langford, Regional Director, Country Landowners Association
Angela Mawle, Local Agenda 21 Officer, Isle of Wight Council

SG00/07 The minutes of the last meeting were agreed and signed.

SG00/08 Matters rising from the minutes (other than agenda items)

SG00/15 Designated European sites and development pressures. A meeting has been held between IWC, English Nature, and the Environment Agency to discuss the issues. It would be useful for the Steering Group to become involved in wider discussions once the biodiversity process is better developed.

SG00/03 After discussion the terms of reference were modified to read as follows

IW BAP STEERING GROUP

TERMS OF REFERENCE

To steer BAP processes on the Island to make an effective contribution to the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) and local BAP objectives and targets

- To facilitate the partnership working for biodiversity conservation on the IW to ensure effective communication and co-ordination with others.
- To develop, monitor and encourage the implementation of local biodiversity objectives and targets and an overview of their relationship to regional and national targets.

- To promote an understanding of, and support for, biodiversity conservation priorities and to recommend action by local and regional agencies.
- To act as a focus for biodiversity expertise and advice on the Isle of Wight.
- To ensure that progress with UK BAP objectives and targets is monitored and evaluated, and to facilitate the national reporting process, the measuring of sustainability indicators and State of the Environment assessments.
- Share good practice, facilitate networking and maintain momentum with the BAP.
- To work within the framework of sustainable development and Agenda 21.

SG00/05 RG questioned the linking of possible grouped habitat action plans to existing fora/organisations. It was emphasised that these had only been examples and that no decisions had been made. Further discussion of the BAP process was the main agenda item of this meeting.

SG00/04 BAP document. Members of the Steering Group expressed their approval of the booklet which was distributed at the end of last week. AR circulated the list of organisations who had received the publication and asked for other names to be added as necessary. Just over 100 complementary copies had been distributed and a further 80 have been sold, including small stocks held by three bookshops and the public libraries.

The arrangements for the launch were briefly discussed. About 70 people were expected, including 10 Councillors. Speeches were to be made by the Leader of the Council, Mrs Shirley Smart; Matthew Chatfield on behalf of the Steering Group and Ian Woolley, the Chief Executive Officer of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust.

After lunch, at about 2pm there will be transport available to Arreton Down. The IWC PR and Media Office have arranged for a photographer to attend.

SG00/08 Progressing the Action Plan

CP distributed a document relating to the requirements of the BAP process and the role of a project officer, and led the subsequent discussion. The following points emerged:

1 Management of the process would be by the Steering Group; if a consultant were to be employed then they would report back at intervals to the Steering Group. It was agreed that the project should buy in suitable expertise. Jonathan Cox, ecological consultant, has already been contacted and has expressed an interest in being involved in the project. He would be prepared to attend the next meeting of the steering group. This was agreed by the Steering Group.

2 If the post is more than 50% funded by English Nature, it will have to go out to tender, but if the money is paid into the BAP account held by the Council, to support the project in whatever way is most appropriate, the tendering process will not be necessary.

3 A decision needs to be made as to whether a Project Officer is needed; however funding is limited to approximately £8000 which is insufficient for either a full or part time post, considering the range of skills and experience required. There was broad agreement that a short term consultant should be contracted to move on the production of action plans. The specification of the contract should include

- setting up groups with interest/expertise in particular habitats
- facilitation of workshops leading to the production of plans
- writing of plans

4 It was emphasised that the resulting plans should be useable, integrated and be the stimulus for direction of new resources.

5 It was considered important that priorities should be set in the next few weeks – which habitats should be tackled first? The IW BAP Classification (see page 46) should be used as the definitive list for this exercise (rather than broad groupings such as woodland etc) and the reasons for selection of priorities be clear eg looking at the Isle of Wight in the context of the south-east. SD and DW would be able to give examples of the prioritisation process from other areas.

Action SD/DW

All members of the Steering Group are asked to rank these habitats and submit a list of their ten highest habitats, ranked in order and with a rationale, to Anne Riley by 28th JULY 2000. The replies will then be collated and circulated to SG members for discussion and decision at the next meeting.

Action ALL

6 It was considered important that targets set now should be achievable and more progressive and ambitious targets be set later.

7 Education and awareness plans were considered difficult to write and implement. Using flagship species can be a good way to raise public awareness. Each Action Plan should address education and awareness.

8 Targets should also be staged. It was suggested that we should aim for up to 4 or 5 plans per year.

9 it was agreed that Isle of Wight Council should continue to act as banker for the project. The Isle of Wight Council and English Nature will consult to agree the framework for transfer of the funding.

Action MC and RW/CL

SG00/09 Any Other Business

There was no time to discuss further matters.

SG00/10 Date of next meeting

Wednesday 13th September 2000 10.30am at the Seaclose Offices of the Isle of Wight Council.