

Isle of Wight Biodiversity Action Plan

Minutes of the 36th Steering Group meeting held on 23rd October 2008, 10.30 a.m.
Enterprise House, Newport

Present: Matthew Chatfield, Parks and Countryside Manager, IWC
Richard Grogan, Conservation Manager, Hants & I.W. Wildlife Trust
Jackie Kelly, Natural England
David Langford, Country Land and Business Association
Anne Marston, Assistant Ecology Officer, Isle of Wight Council
Jackie Mellan, Environment Agency
Hugh Milner, Forestry Commission
Mike Pittock, Forestry Commission
Colin Pope, Ecology Officer, Isle of Wight Council
Nicky Rogers, AONB Planning Officer
Les Street, South-East Project Officer, RSPB
Rowan Adams, Island 2000 Trust
Tony Tutton, National Trust
Tina Williamson, Biodiversity Project Officer, Isle of Wight Council

In attendance: Alistair Chisholm, Regrowth Project
Jo McGrath, Environment Agency

Apologies: Tracy Underwood, Island 2000 Trust

SG08/23 Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes were agreed and signed.

SG08/24 Matters arising from the minutes (other than agenda items)

SG07/14 Promoting the NERC duty

CP reported a presentation on the NERC duty to Property Services and Architects at the IW Council. Training of IW Council Development Control regarding the NERC duty is currently being discussed.

MC attended 'Power to the Parishes' event in September promoting effective ways of delivering biodiversity and NERC duties at a local level. 200 attendees including parish councils, voluntary sector. Lots of interest and public enquiry generated by display boards at the event.

Water Vole SAP SG08/06b

RG reported that Graham Roberts is finalising the 3rd Island-wide Water Vole survey on behalf of the Wildlife Trust and is due by the end of Oct 2008.

Action: RG to invite Graham Roberts to attend the BAP Steering Group to present the Water Vole SAP.

Planning Application on land adjacent to Sibden Hill SINC

RG was concerned that no ecological report was produced for the planning application on disused quarry land adjacent to the SINC at Sibden Hill, Shanklin. The land is currently allocated in the UDP for educational purposes. RG will be pursuing this further.

CP commented that this was not uncommon; hopefully the NERC training would mean less chance of this happening in the future.

SG08/25 LRC 6 month progress report

AM circulated the LRC 6 month progress report summarising work since April 2008.

AM has developed the SINC database and called for contributions from members to assist with completing data on habitat management/condition of sites under NI197. The SINC database will be submitted at the end of March 2009.

Action: Forestry Commission to provide data on EWGs SINC's during November; AM will contact other members for assistance early 2009.

SG08/26 Opportunity mapping

This is a SE regional project which aims to identify areas with a high concentration of biodiversity according to prescribed guidelines.

A workshop was held on 8th September with some steering group members and 10 proposed opportunity areas were identified based on the Wildlife Trust's preliminary work. The 10 proposed opportunity areas and accompanying method statement for each area were on display during the meeting.

The work needs to be signed off by the Steering Group but the timescale is tight to meet SE regional requirements.

Action: Parks & Countryside to email members with all maps, statements and methodology for all proposed areas with a call for feedback by 31st October 2008.

SG08/27 BAP Mission Statement

CP circulated a proposed statement which outlines the objectives of the BAP on the Island. This is designed to communicate the aims of the LBAP to a non-BAP audience. This will be particularly useful for other strategy documents and processes such as the LDF, Community Strategy, AONB Management Plan, HEAP etc.

The wording of the objectives were discussed at length. CP requested feedback from the members following the meeting.

Action: Parks & Countryside to email a reminder calling for feedback and deadline for comments.

SG08/28 Progress with HAP reviews

CP reported that work on reviewing the HAPs was underway focussing on the grassland HAPs first.

The 2004 target regarding a new Grazing Officer role was discussed. RG reported that this developed into the Living Landscapes Project carried out by the Wildlife Trust. It was decided to remove the Grazing Officer target from the 2008 HAP update.

DL suggested that "support animal husbandry" be introduced within the Grassland HAPs.

Action: Parks & Countryside to circulate updated HAPs and call for comments from members as and when.

SG08/29 Regrowth Project

Alistair Chisholm introduced the Re-growth Project – a carbon offsetting, climate change and food security planting project which fits in with the Eco Island concept of the Island being carbon neutral by 2020.

AC discussed the following:

- Suitable species for planting in view of climate warming European Walnut and Sweet Chestnut
- Suitable species for planting in view of climate cooling Scots Pine and Juniper
- Looking for FC funding and disused Isle of Wight Council land on which could be set aside for planting schemes.

HM suggested that the climate change approach may be looked upon by FC more favourable than carbon offsetting.

MC said the Council no longer have any plantations/farm estates and therefore land purchase would be required and asked should Walnut be included in new native broadleaf woodland schemes?

Actions: MC to approach Property Services and Jim Fawcett on possibilities of using Council land parcels and will then feedback to Alistair Chisholm.

Alistair Chisholm to email a breakdown of the Regrowth Project accounts to MC.

SG08/30 Designation of new LNRs

Postponed to next meeting.

Actions: Parks & Countryside to follow-up meeting with a call for feedback on the shortlist.

SG08/31 Any other business

a) LS reported that regrettably, Michael Poland was unsuccessful in winning this year's RSPB Nature for Farming Award.

b) NR reported that the AONB Management Plan is being published November 24th and will be open for consultation for 7 weeks until 17th January. Also, the AONB Finest Landscapes Newsletter will be distributed in December and called for submissions from members before November 14th.

c) HM reported that further funding of WGs may be extended to 2010/11, possibly 2011/12 particularly for Red Squirrel SAPs and derelict coppice.

d) RG mentioned the possibility of producing a SAP for Wall Lizards and would be prepared to write one. RG has contacted Island 2000 Trust regarding an appropriate management plan of wall lizard sites.

SG08/ Dates of next year's meetings

Thursday 22nd January 10.30 am

Thursday 2nd April 10.30 am

Thursday 9th July 10.30 am

Thursday 8th October 10.30 am

All of the above will be held at Enterprise House, Newport

Action: Anyone having an item for the agenda please send it to TW 3 weeks before the meeting date to that it can be incorporated and any necessary papers circulated.