

Isle of Wight Biodiversity Action Plan

STEERING GROUP

Minutes of the Second Meeting held 9th December 1999 10.30am IWC Seaclose Offices

Present: Paul Airey, Policy and Environment Officer, Isle of Wight Council
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
David Langford, Regional director, Country Landowners Association
Angela Mawle, Local Agenda 21 Officer, Isle of Wight Council
Colin Pope, Ecology Officer, Isle of Wight Council
Anne Riley, Assistant Ecology Officer, Isle of Wight Council
Tim Sykes, Conservation and Recreation Officer, Environment Agency
Tony Tutton, Property Manager, National Trust

Apologies: Peter Keevil, Secretary, National Farmers' Union
Debbie Wicks, Conservation Officer, Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife
Trust

SG99/9 The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed and signed.

SG99/10 At the request of Claire Lambert, an additional agenda item was inserted: Terms of Reference for the Steering Group. These guidelines will assist in producing action as required by national plans (involving strategic policies) and also with action for local priorities. SD offered guidelines from Regional level discussions, and DL offered information from other CLA regions. CP to draw the information together to produce a draft paper which strikes a balance between national and local priorities to be sent out with the papers for the next meeting.

SG99/11 Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting

SG99/4 Launch of local Agenda 21. The major public launch was 9th October in Newport; road shows are now taking place in other island towns until 19th February 2000. Public contribution is being sought by completion of forms/questionnaires and by video interviews. Local Agenda 21 has been sub-divided into 4 areas : sustainable transport, sustainable economy, sustainable resources and environmental stewardship. People have signed up to work on the groups between January 12th and April 2000. The environmental stewardship group is the largest group. The public consultation exercise flagged up the value of the natural environment/landscape to local people. There is a great overlap with local biodiversity, and the potential for using species special to the Island in publicity terms was discussed.

SG99/6a Habitat audit revised and already circulated for comment . An example page of the species audit was made available to the meeting.

SG99/6b Newsletter sent out. Apologies for errors and omissions made; these will be rectified in the next issue.

SG99/6c A further nine groups had signed up to the Partnership

SG99/6d Space has been provisionally reserved in the June issue of Wight Insight to publicise the BAP; there have been preliminary discussions of content with the editor.

SG99/6e Copies of the English Nature Natural Areas document were distributed. A stock is to be held by the IWC Countryside Section.

SG99/7 Trials of the monitoring system by Hampshire to be reported at a later date; CMS system to be used.

SG99/12 Revised habitat audit

The document previously circulated was discussed. The following suggestions were made, and their practicality will be investigated

a) Maps which indicate habitat loss (over the last century etc) could be included; these could also indicate the potential for habitat restoration.

b) Assessment of habitat quality is still problematical in some respects. Habitats have been mapped in accordance with national definitions. However, there is no full survey of the Island.

The Countryside Agency are carrying out a mapping exercise shortly. However, this is related to access, there are no defined land uses and the timescale is unknown, so this may not be helpful for this document. The information in the BAP needs to be fit for 'purpose'.

c) It may help to have tables to link key species with habitats.

d) The design of the table for the species audit needs to be discussed further eg the inclusion of habitat information. The data are based on current knowledge, and need to be regarded as provisional.

e) In some cases, the class of the species would be a more helpful description eg moths

f) A map of the European sites would be useful.

g) An indication of hectareage would be useful on the maps, possibly as bar charts

h) National contexts could also be included

i) Criteria for inclusion of species in audit may need clarification. Some species are currently extinct and it was agreed to include a table of those priority species currently extinct on the Island.

j) Coastal scrub is mapped but not described. It is a component of the soft cliff habitat; discussion as to the best way to show these areas on a map.

k) Reference should be made to South-east England rather than the South-east.

Any further comments should be to the Countryside Section by the end of January 2000

SG13/99 Costings and finance (English Nature not present for the following discussions)

AR outlined estimated costings for a two colour 48 page booklet printed on recycled paper, quoted by the Publications Unit of the Isle of Wight Council. A sample layout had been produced by the designer and was circulated. A print run of 500 would cost in the region of £2500. A source of illustrations in the form of line drawings will be required; these were offered by RSPB and National Trust, and other organisations offered to investigate the request further. Further discussion of the booklet took place. The purpose of any publication needs to be clear. The possibility of producing both a technical audit and a more glossy general interest publication aimed at the public was raised. Public involvement is seen to be an important part of the BAP process.

It was proposed that the present technical audit be taken forward, and further investigation made for a glossy booklet.

Financial contributions would be made by the Environment Agency, English Nature (prior agreement from EN), Wight Wildlife and the Isle of Wight Council.

SG14/99 Timetable for the process

Next Steering Group meeting would aim to sign off the technical audit.

Next newsletter to be produced for June 2000; ideas for content would be discussed in March, with items being offered by RSPB and Wight Wildlife

SG15/99 Progressing the habitat action plans

RG offered to sort species list to see which would fit into habitat action plans, and which might require species action plans. Once this is done, he will call a meeting and report the results to the next Steering Group meeting.

Various possibilities were discussed to produce habitat action plans. Other areas have plans which could serve as a basis, with local knowledge added to tailor the plans for Island use. A consultant could be employed for about 3 weeks to produce a set of draft plans circulated. A brief will be produced for discussion at the next steering group meeting.

PA raised the issue of designated European sites and development pressures and the involvement of the Isle of Wight Council in taking forward the BAP. He felt that the Steering Group would be a good forum in which to discuss these issues, but there is the need to include other officers of the Council. To be discussed further at the next Steering Group meeting.

SG16/99 Progressing the species audit

Over 600 species have been entered into the BAP species database. The birds are the major group still outstanding. SD will be meeting local ornithologists in the afternoon of 9th December, to discuss the way forward.

SG17/99 Any Other Business

a) A letter and leaflet had been received from Land Heritage, which contains an article on

Godshill Organics. Leaflet was circulated. Godshill Organics to be sent details of Partnership, inviting them to sign up.

b) RECORDER 2000, the JNCC data management system is now running in a beta version.

c) A letter has been received from Michael Poland, suggesting that Philip Butchers, might be invited to join the Steering Group. The matter was discussed and it was felt that his experience would be most useful at the level of practical habitat action plans. The Steering Group primarily determines policy. MC to write to Michael Poland

d) SD will put the IWBAP Steering Group on the Regional Biodiversity Forum Mailing List

SG99/18 Agreed action

a) Draft terms of reference for the Steering Group to be written. **Please send any material available from other sources to CP by the end of January**

All/CP

b) **Comments on the technical audit to Countryside Section by the end of January**

All/CP

c) **Offers of illustrative material (line drawings) for BAP by the end of January**

All

c) Linking species to habitats, followed by a meeting to discuss results

RG

d) Draft brief for production of Habitat Action Plans

CP

e) Meeting with local ornithologists

SD

f) Draft paper on forum to discuss BAP and the Isle of Wight Council

PA

g) Letter to Michael Poland

MC

h) Letter to Godshill Organics inviting them to join the partnership

AR

SG99/19 Date of next meeting 3rd April 2000 10.30am Seaclose Offices, Newport