

Item	Actions
<p><b>1. Introductions &amp; apologies</b></p> <p><b>Present:</b> John Martin (RDS), Robert Moreton (local farmer), Nck Mould (Duchy), Tim McGrath (AWT), Robin Marshall-Ball (BASC), Lucy Rogers (Avon Biodiversity Partnership).</p> <p><b>Apologies:</b> Alison Slade (SGC), Karen Renshaw (B&amp;NESC), Susan Stangroom (NSC), Mark Connelly (Cotswold AONB). Gordon Milward (Avon Gorge &amp; Downs), Dan Merrett (B&amp;NESC), Dave Willis (SGC), Jan Walters (BCC), Les Davies (Mendip Hills AONB), Mark Smith (FWAG), Matthew Bufton (HMP Leyhill), Mike Rogers (Hawk &amp; Owl Trust), Nick Ward (BTCV), Sally Pattison (B&amp;NESC), Stuart Hales (AWT), Craig Stenson (AWT), James Field (NSL&amp;M project), Tim Corner (BRERC), Helen Hall (BCC), Samantha Jarvis (NSC), Rupert Higgins (Wessex ecological consultancy).</p>	
<p><b>2. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• JM will contact Ann Fay of British Horse Society</li> <li>• JM to email ES briefing note to group – John will update us during this meeting.</li> <li>• JH – map of all sites SSSIs and SNCIs – Maps have been produced see item 5</li> <li>• JH – contact LA's and discuss SNCI data. Assume this has been done.</li> <li>• JH to convene meeting of local knowledge experts in April – Jenny did this. Met with Jenny Phelps.</li> <li>• RS to liase with MS over event in Summer 2005 – Successful FWAG event at Folly Farm</li> <li>• Marine Week – not as successful as hoped, perhaps because held during school holidays when families away.</li> </ul>	<b>JM</b>
<p><b>3. Forthcoming merger of RDS, EN and parts of CA to form Natural England (JM)</b></p> <p>Due to merge in 2006, new organisation will carry out work of all 3 organisations including awarding grants, giving advice and information, designating Sites of Special Scientific Interest, access and recreation, Agri-environment schemes, and enforcing the associated regulations.</p> <p>Action – JM to send round info</p>	<b>JM</b>
<p><b>4. Update of state of play with Environmental Stewardship (JM)</b></p> <p>Not as many applicants as RDS had expected and IT difficulties in particular have slowed things down. Difficulties include IT system, problems with application packs, mapping, complexity of Farm Environment Plans (FEPs) and problems with Rural Land Register. FEP process currently being reviewed but unlikely to change radically ES as just approved by European Commission. Most land owners presently concerned with</p>	<b>JM</b>

<p>registering land for the SPS (single payment scheme). Action – JM to send round Q &amp; A on agri-environment scheme.</p>	
<p><b>5. Grassland project update (LR)</b> Main points of update since the last meeting are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In consultation with FWAG about taking lead on project.</li> <li>• Applying for SITA funding – December?</li> <li>• Need ideas for match funding, and how to manage grassland better.</li> <li>• 3K from EN to scope up project</li> <li>• Sites identified and mapped with help from RDS.</li> <li>• Plan to get sites into Environmental Stewardship scheme</li> <li>• 3-5 year project dependent on funding</li> <li>• Full time project officer and part time marketing officer.</li> </ul> <p>Discussed that will need mechanism for increasing number of sites, particularly if lots of sites are registered as part of the agri-environment scheme.</p>	
<p><b>6. Updates round the table</b></p> <p>TM – ‘Rebuilding Biodiversity’ project based on Nature map. Linked to planning, business etc, RSS, AWT looking at landscape scale grazing, woodland management, planting, hedgerow management etc in Gordano Valley, Gordano ridge and Failand, where there are large land owners so easier to achieve project objectives. Complements grazing project. Partnership project: partners are local farmers, managers, statutory agencies, FC, Natural England. Applying to charitable trust to support this.</p> <p>TM - Batscapes and North Somerset Levels and Moors trust engaging with local landowners. Also involved in Agri-environment scheme for trust sites. Have new reserve at Portishead.</p> <p>RMB – Farmland bird day at Wrington very successful and well attended. And hope to repeat in future. Also flight pond day in May well attended and successful.</p> <p>RM – South Glos council have money for ‘dormice on doorstep’ project, and will advertise for post.</p> <p>LR – General update on other partnership work – pond project, Birdwatch etc.</p> <p>NM – Successful seminar recently held for tenant farmers. Have offered tenants help with agri-environment scheme. Also outlined some successful management projects.</p>	
<p><b>7. AOB</b></p>	
<p><b>8. Next meeting date</b></p> <p>7<sup>th</sup> March 2006 at 10 am at Duchy of Cornwall Offices</p>	