

Avon BAP Steering Group Meeting
 12th December 2006, 10.00pm – 12.30pm
 Avon Wildlife Trust
 Chair: Kate Jeffries (EN)
 Minutes: Lucy Rogers



Agenda	
<p>1. Introductions & apologies Present: Kate Jeffries (NE), Dan Merrett (BANES), Chris Westcott (NE), Helen Hall (BCC), Melissa Clarkson (EA), Rachel Sharp (AWT), Tim Corner (BRERC), Susan Stangroom (NSC), Lucy Rogers (ABP), Sam Jarvis (NSC), Allan Davies (WEP), Sally Patterson (SGC).</p> <p>Apologies: John Martin (RDS), Karen Renshaw (BANES), Steve Grainger (AWT), Neil Maddison (Bristol Zoo), Michael Legg (JSPTU), Dave Villis (SGC), Rob Spence (FC).</p>	
<p>2. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggested that we should organise a workshop to discuss how to best use all these tools for planning. Need to discuss the new NERC act. • SB will find out how the NM will be updated. TC able to tell us that MN working group meeting soon and discussing how to communicate NM. • Avon BAP bird list – LR, JM and Tim McGrath have discussed modifying the Avon BAP bird list to exclude species such as scarce migratory birds. Complicated but will continue with this with help of volunteer. • Avon Biodiversity Partnership – terms of reference. Sent to partners and several have signed and returned. Some still to return. • Avonmouth water voles – LR to speak to Linda Tucker and HH to discuss way forward. Avonmouth currently covered by EA Tewkesbury office but could change to Bridgewater office and therefore MC. 	<p>LR/ALL</p> <p>LR/JM</p> <p>LR/ALL</p> <p>LR/HH</p>
<p>3. Replacement Chair Many thanks to KJ for chairing the Avon BAP Steering Group. As she is leaving NE on 21/12/06 need a replacement chair for Avon BAP. John Martin is checking whether it is possible for him to take on the role.</p>	<p>JM</p>
<p>4. Mapping SNAs update (LR)</p> <p>BRERC is undertaking this work as a desk to study on behalf of partnership, with some funding so far from BANES. Starting with the Gordano valley SNA as a pilot.</p> <p>The following will be mapped:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Extent of Priority habitat within SNAs 2. Extent of land with high potential for habitat restoration 3. Extent of land with low potential for habitat restoration 	

4. Extent of habitat fragmentation within and between SNAs

BANES want the information to incorporate into LDF and SPDs. Avon BAP using it for directing restoration work, targets and funding bids. AWT using it for Rebuilding Biodiversity projects.

At some point work will need ground truthing.

Desirable to get funding for this work from planners as important for all UAs Core strategies, and BRERC not funded to do it all. Fund through planning dept?

Need to talk to SWRBP about funding mapping and talking to UAs with details about selection of each SNA.

LR/RS

Continue as agenda item for next meeting

LR

5. BARS – progress to date (LR)

Action plan progress summary

- 14 individual action plans.
- So far, progress reporting is complete for 9 of these action plans (species rich grassland, arable farmland, purple moorgrass and rush pastures, woodland, standing open water, watercourse and floodplain, estuary, dormouse and watervole).
- For the remaining 5 action plans (hedgerows, woodpasture, parkland and veteran trees, reedbed and sedgebeds, coastal floodplain grazing marsh and white-clawed crayfish) progress reporting has either not been not been started or is not complete due to only a limited number of responses being received.
- The progress reporting indicates that the vast majority of work by partners towards actions and targets for each action plan is ongoing.
- Reports for ongoing work show that 91% of work is underway, 8% has not been not started and 1% is unknown). Reports for work, which is not ongoing, shows that 38% of work has not been started, 29% is underway, 19% is complete, 10% is unknown and 5% has been abandoned.
- Of the action plans for which progress reporting has not started or is incomplete, again most of the work towards action and targets is ongoing.

One the first reporting round is complete, BARS reporting will concentrate on actions directly related to work resulting from current BAP efforts, and ongoing actions will be archived. Efforts will be made to report with more facts and figures to get a quantitative idea of habitat maintenance and restoration, and species conservation.

6. Update on UA BAP work (UAs)

Nsom SS - Dowlais farm – 78 ha created so far. Nick Michael replacing Pauline Homer, starting in January. Incorporating biodiversity indicators into LDFs. Using NERC act to engage departments to manage own land holdings. Also BARS, GI, biodiversity by

design.

SGlos SP – BARS, writing action plans, guidance notes for horses in landscape and hedgerows on development sites, awareness work, new reserve at severn beech.

BCC HH – writing BAP, need help to finish from consultant or AWT. Finished grassland HAP. Planning work ongoing.

BANES DM – nothing to report as only just started.

May be possible for AWT, BANES, SGlos and rest of Avon to work together on White clawed crayfish and water vole work.

UAs and LR to catch up about BARS in New Year

LR/UAs

7. Funding sources available for BAP work (All)

Keep as agenda item for every meeting to discuss as necessary, so all can use this as forum to discuss funding.

Avon BAP funded by partners contributions, grassland/pondways projects and AWT funding for project work.

Potential new projects from Avon BAP include urban project, arable project, veteran tree project, and water vole project. Also field boundaries project in Cotswolds from BRERC, and SGlos Severnside.

8. Lucys role in pondways and grassland monitoring (LR)

Grassland

Good meeting recently with BANES and FWAG to discuss start of project and roles of partners.

Mark will concentrate on capital works and restoration of grassland at 3 sites. Lucy and Mark will work on new sites and further funding. Lucy will work on monitoring:

- BARS and BAP targets, NBN, SNAs, BRERC reporting
- Habitat mapping for NE– extent maintained and restored
- Link to Avon BAP Agri group
- SITA monitoring – Entrust targets

Amy Coulthard will be the new NE contact as KJ is leaving.

Pondways

Pondways project officer has been recruited – Lydia Robbins, starting 2nd January.

Lucy will line manage new post and:

- BARS and BAP targets, NBN, SNAs, BRERC reporting
- HLF monitoring

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring in more funding 	
<p>9. Champions update (LR)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project started on 01/10/06, details in MoU between AWT and BZG. • Aiming at young adults (16+), and older adults (40-50 yrs). • Need to spend first 6 months of this project on preparation, with market research to determine what these groups are interested in, in terms of becoming Wildlife Champions. • Aim to launch in Spring 07, start small, with possibility of increasing project. Project could be advertised in Zoo and AWT magazines. • Staff at Zoo and staff at AWT each brain storming how to engage these groups with this project. • Then will have workshops with public, facilitated by BZG. • May try and link in with climate change • Each pack will contain an introduction and background on climate change. It will contain information on the species chosen, the contacts and groups to work with and the challenges to meet over the coming year. • Champions will be rewarded by a certificate and/or plaque plus a celebration event at the end of the year. 	
<p>10. Lucys work plan 2007/8 (RS)</p> <p>Work plan circulated for comments. LR may do project work next year on Marine Bill. Important to work on development and planning, and SNAs as very relevant to Avon at present but difficult to get funding for this. TC to put forward business case.</p>	TC
<p>11. Biodiversity by Design, - Avonwide approach (All)</p> <p>AWT, FOA and BRERC wrote report in 2006, with funding from CA. Report mapped GI in Avon. Now have more money from ODPM (55K) for a phase 2 GI project to look at 4 sites, one in each UAs area in Avon, to look at strategic picture of how to incorporate GI into development, and show developers how it can be done. Still discussing with WOE partnership about new project. See Powys County Council Website (www.powys.gov.uk/) for details of GI.</p> <p>Needs collating into format for developers. Could also produce leaflets for church yards, golf courses.</p> <p>NSC have produced a biodiversity check list for developers</p> <p>GI is the level above biodiversity by design. AWT will have 4 biodiversity by design sites by 2008 – CREATE centre, Congresbury station, 2 golf courses – in SGlos and Nsom.</p>	
<p>12. Our position on renewables (All)</p> <p>Severn Estuary Conservation Group have produced a position on the Severn Barrage, AWT sit on this group. Current issues also include wind turbines, port expansion and Bristol airport.</p> <p>Need an overall position on these issues. Need to be strategic.</p>	

<p>3 turbines have been given pp in Avonmouth, but there will be many more applications, and need to know how many turbines is OK and how many is too much in terms of environmental impact on birds and bats. Not enough known about impact at present. Radar technology available to assess nocturnal bird movements. Developers might pay for radar.</p> <p>In addition applications coming in to plant Myscanthus for biofuel, not clear what to do.</p> <p>Need a proactive approach to this – think about best places to put these things, rather than where not to put them.</p> <p>Need to convene workshop to discuss Avonwide approach. LR and HH to talk to Charlotte Pagendam.</p>	LR/HH
<p>13. AOB</p>	
<p>14. Next meeting date and location Tuesday 29th March at AWT</p>	