



Lowland Wetland HAP Group Meeting

18th November 2008, Markham Vale Environment Centre

Present:

Helen Perkins (Derbyshire Wildlife Trust)
Richard Taylor (Derbyshire County Council – Countryside Service)
Carl Hawke (National Trust)
Jayne Walker (Scott Wilson)
Julia Bastone (FWAG)
Rebecca Brunt (Environment Agency – Lower Trent)
Chris Monk (Derbyshire County Council – Countryside Service)
Debbie Alston (LD Biodiversity Partnership) **Note taker**

Apologies:

Beverley Rhodes (Derby City Council), Deanne Gow (British Waterways), Tom French (Derbyshire County Council), Shirley Freeman, Paul Bennett (Severn Trent Water), Andy Pollock (Derbyshire County Council, David Hunter (Trent Rivers Trust) and Charlie Horsford (DWT),

1) Wetland Habitat Targets

A. Standing Open Water

100ha of standing open water on SSSIs in favourable/recovering condition by 2010 – Progress to date: 96ha by end of 2007/8 (as per Annual Report)

50% of standing open water on Local Wildlife Sites in favourable management – Progress to date: unknown at present

Work achieved:

- Creation of 0.5 mile of canal at Killamarsh/Eckington
- Derby University is undertaking a study on Mapperley Reservoir on any effects of the coal extraction from Lodge House.
- Dredging work at Kirk Hallam lake during 2008/9
- The National Trust has requested internal funding to support a 'Clear Lakes 2020' project (combining MMB, Poulter and proposed Doe Lea catchment projects). FWAG has been contracted to undertake farm visits in the upper reaches of the valley around Hardwick Hall. Carl is looking for matching external funding.

Future work planned:

- Derbyshire County Council is undertaking major restoration work on Cromford Canal which should bring remaining 4ha into recovering condition
- Debbie to calculate number of LWS with standing open water in favourable condition using LWS information **Action: Debbie**
- Derbyshire County Council is looking at wetland work in the lakes in the LNR.

B. Ponds

Create 30 ponds by 2010 – Progress to date: 24 created by end of 2007/8 (as per Annual Report plus 4 in MEGZ)

Restore 30 ponds by 2010 – Progress to date: 28 (27 restored by end of 2007/8 as per Annual Report plus 1 at Kedleston)

Future work planned:

- At least another 4 ponds to be created through the MEGZ scheme
- Creation of 1 pond on SSSI at Kedleston in 2008/9
- Restoration of further ponds by Derby City Pond wardens (subject to funding)
- Creation of 3 ponds/scrapes as part of Living Bird Table project at Shipley Country Park
- Possible restoration of 1 pond by Severn Trent Water at Foremark Reservoir via HLS
- National Trust is in the process of undertaking a fish survey and looking at bio-manipulation on the Row Ponds at Hardwick. Likely that the top pond (water voles present) will be de-fished.
- Derby City is looking to fund a pond officer for the City

C. Swamp, mires, fens and reedbed

Designate all appropriate sites as SSSI and LWS (0 SSSIs and 8 LWS) by 2010 - Progress to date: 7 LWS designated

Achieve management on 5 reedbeds over 2ha – 4 by end of 2010 - Progress to date: 4 under management

Achieve management on 50ha of swamp by 2010 - Progress to date: 68ha under management by end of 2007/8 (as per Annual Report)

Create 30ha of reedbed by 2010 - Progress to date: 29.44ha by end of 2007/8 (as per Annual Report)

Create 30ha of swamp by 2010 - Progress to date: Unknown at present

Future work planned:

- There will be some reedbed created in MEGZ
- There will be some reedbed created at Ogston SSSI via HLS
- Debbie to look at mineral restoration schemes to assess other reedbed and swamp creation planned – **Action: Debbie**

D. Rivers and Streams

Designate all appropriate sites as SSSI and LWS by 2010 - Progress to date: No further SSSI or LWS designations for this habitats have been made.

Achieve appropriate land management agreements on 300km of rivers/streams by 2010 - Progress to date: unknown at present

Carry out 10km of river restoration schemes by 2010 - Progress to date: Unknown at present but likely to be a max of 1km (River Trent at Drakelow)

Issues:

The Markeaton and Mercaston Brook (MMB) Project has helped get 80% of the catchment into ELS – but what has this actually achieved?

Rivers have recently been added to the UK priority habitats list – no national targets have been set to date

Future work planned:

MEGZ will help (chemically) restore the River Rother. via reedbeds

Proposed development of the Staveley Chemical works adjacent to the River Rother will help to (chemically) restore it

Projects associated with MEGZ will measure river quality .

Action: Jayne to supply this info to Debbie

E. Floodplain Grazing Marsh

Designate all appropriate sites as SSSI and LWS by 2010 - Progress to date: No further SSSI or LWS designations for this habitats have been made.

Bring 250ha of floodplain grazing marsh into appropriate land management by 2010 - Progress to date: unknown at present

Create/restore 50ha of floodplain grazing marsh by 2010 - Progress to date: unknown at present

Issues:

The resource is unknown but is likely to be centred on Rivers Dove, Derwent, Ecclesbourne, Erewash and Rother. It was suggested that this could be a combination of aerial photos and the EA's floodplain line

Action: Debbie to compile a student/volunteer project

F. Wet Woodland

Achieve favourable management on 24.56ha of wet woodland on SSSIs by 2010 - Progress to date: 24.56ha in favourable recovering condition

No creation targets have been set - Progress to date: 10.34ha has been created via National Forest Tender Scheme

Issues:

Current GIS layer for wet woodland identifies 147.77ha of wet woodland within LBAP area, although it is recognised that this is not a comprehensive study.

Future work planned:

- Debbie to look at mineral restoration schemes to assess other wet woodland creation planned and map that created in National Forest - **Action Debbie**
- MEGZ will create a small area of wet woodland

2. Data

Carl and Jayne agreed to send Debbie their digitised habitat maps for their sites so that this information can be added to the 'master' habitat GIS layers.

Action: Carl & Jayne

3. Humber Basin River Management Plan update

Carl is now the NGO rep on the River Basin management panel. Under the Water Framework Directive, each river would achieve good ecological condition by 2015. Our LBAP is covered by the Humber Basin management plan, this is due for public consultation beginning on 22nd December.

More information from <http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/subjects/waterquality/955573/1458449/1458624/?version=1&lang=e>.

4. Invasive Species

Rebecca and colleagues ran a workshop on Invasive Species as part of the LBAP Annual Forum. Notes are on the website at www.derbyshirebiodiversity.org.uk.

Invasive species were identified as a significant factor in the Humber Basin River management plan process.

Due to a crassula infestation Derby City will be infilling a pond at Dale Road, Spondon but creating a new open upstream to replace it.

Derbyshire County Council is continuing to try and control the crassula on Pleasley Country Park and Peter Fidler Reserve.

5. Million Ponds Project

Chris reported that the Ponds Conservation Trust's 'Million Ponds Project, Phase 1 (2008-2012)' had received funding from Tubney Charitable Trust and was due to create a network of 5,000 new high quality ponds in England and Wales. The project is due to be officially launched next year. More information from www.pondconservation.org.uk.

6. Water for Wildlife Project

Helen gave a quick update on the Water for Wildlife Project which is concentrating on the Dove catchment Charlie is continuing with mink control work in the upper catchment and Helen has been researching sites to target for work and surveys in 2009.

7. Water Voles

During 2008 Helen has been managing a project to collate national data for water voles and mink. As part of the UK BAP reporting round an updated distribution map had been produced from this data (2003-8). It was proposed that this information would be made available via the NBN Gateway at the 10km resolution. The map showed presence in 901 10km grid squares and showed losses in south Wales and no recovery in south west and Cumbria. The Midlands area showed up well. It was proposed to have an annual update of the information. This data will be used, in Year Two of the project, to produce alert mapping and local and regional key areas maps.

Since the last meeting the water vole received full legal protection. Natural England has produced some guidance documents which are downloadable from

<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/conservation/wildlife-management-licensing/>. There is some concern over how work which do not require a licence will be looked at, Helen agreed to try and clarify this **Action: Helen**

In Derbyshire 17 water vole monitoring sites have been done – 13 were positive. Still present at Cromford Canal, but no recovery at sites where water voles lost from several years ago e.g. lower Ecclesbourne area, lower Derwent. Populations still hanging on along Henmore Brook in Ashbourne. DWT is liaising with Environment Agency re EAs flood alleviation strategy for Ashbourne which could create some new suitable habitat up stream of the town. A new population has been found at Onslow Farm where FWAG is working on a HLS scheme.

There is a local resident who has been helping with mink along the Cromford Canal. Possibility of putting some more rafts out to monitor mink populations. DWT can supply. For areas outside mid-lower Derwent catchment and Dove catchment DWT can't currently supply rafts, but Helen will send mink raft specifications to those who would like to construct some for other areas. **Action: Helen**

Jayne reported that there was a good water vole population in the MEGZ area and she agreed to pass information onto DWT

Action: Jayne

8. White-clawed crayfish

Debbie reported that survey work this summer found a good population still at Wingerworth Lido but none left, only signals along the lower part of the River Moss.

Carl reported good populations in the lakes, especially around the weirs, at Kedleston and that hygiene information had been given out to the anglers. At Calke phase I of the BIFFA project had created rockeries and a buffer wetland upstream of the ponds. The 2nd phase will be to partially dredge Betty's pond. ECUS will be monitoring crayfish at the site for the next two years.

Derby City had commissioned a crayfish survey of the lower reaches of the Markeaton brook and white-clawed crayfish found were in single figures.

Monitoring work carried out at Holmebrook Valley Park, Chesterfield, and they were still there doing well.

White-clawed crayfish were reported to be present at Osmaston and had been re-found by N.Mott and C. Horsford along Shirley Brook.

British Waterways had not been able to survey Codnor reservoir this summer but a few had been found nearby as part of a planning application.

There are a number of historic and other sites that need surveying for white-clawed crayfish, Debbie and Helen to compile a list and try and source funding.

Action: Debbie & Helen

Helen agreed to collate all crayfish records together.

Action: Helen

Helen reported that some discussion had taken place regarding ark sites at the Peak District riparian species meeting and Helen had agreed to find out current thoughts on number of ark sites needed in areas.

Action: Helen

Possible ark sites:

- A pond in Ticknall quarry could be used as a potential ark site.
- Opportunities at MEGZ

9. Great crested newts

Chris reported that in the absence of an updated protected species GIS layer he had updated the great crested newt layer.

10. Otters

The DWT Otter data set showed that otters were doing well in the county. Data was a bit thin from the east of the county, probably due to lack of 'otter spotters'. The biggest threat to otters is roads and traffic during periods of flood. Helen showed a map of the distribution of otter road casualties in the county. The last of which was 15th Nov 2008 near Elvaston Castle.

Debbie suggested putting in some bids into the Local Transport Plan for otter ledges where issues have occurred

Action: Helen and Debbie

11. Date of Next Meeting – to be confirmed but likely to be 3rd and 4th week in April combined with a site visit the new wetland site at Raynesway, Derby

The meeting was followed by a very informative talk and site visit around the Markham Growth Regeneration Zone site looking at the wetland and riparian species issues. This was led by Jayne Walker, Senior Environmental Scientist for Scott Wilson.

Jayne's contact details:

Scott Wilson, Royal Court, Basil Court, Chesterfield, S41 7SL
Tel 01246 244665
Mob 07825 382103