



Lowland Woodland HAP Group Meeting 17th January 2006, EN Office, Bakewell.

Present:

Tristan Galletly (Forestry Commission) **Chair** Nick Law (Derbyshire Wildlife Trust)
Glynis Foster (Derbyshire CC) Stephanie Birkinshaw (EDWP)
Peter Lowe (Woodland Trust) Ron Barker (Chesterfield BC)
William Thornhill (Chesterfield BC) Tom Watts (Chesterfield BC)
Debbie Court (LD Biodiversity Partnership) **Note taker**

Apologies:

Annie Cooper (Derbyshire CC), Steve Holdsworth (Forest Enterprise), National Forest, George Brydon (Derbyshire CC), Leon Hayward (BTCV), Hazel Earnshaw (Severn Trent), Carl Hawke (National Trust), Dan Abrahams (English Nature), Marion Horton (Groundwork Erewash Valley), Beverley Rhodes (Derby City Council), Patrick Mountain (Derby College - Broomfield), Dave Frost (Small Woods Association)

1. Matters arising

Estate contacts:

Peter Lowe said that he should be the main contact for woodlands on the Welbeck estate.

2. Project Updates

a) Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland under 2ha project.

Dan Abrahams reported that the student undertaking the desk based project has so far digitised 100 sites using Sanderson's 1835 map. About 70% of the coverage of the map is within the Lowland Derbyshire LBAP area. So far the rough breakdown is:

North East Derbyshire – 30 sites
Derbyshire Dales – 30 sites
Amber Valley – 15 sites
Bolsover – 10 sites
Erewash – 3 sites
Chesterfield – 1 site

Work has now begun on looking at the area not covered by Sanderson's including south Derbyshire, high peak, south and west Derbyshire Dales, south Erewash and Derby City.

So far this amounts to about 150ha of newly identified potentially ancient woodland.

Peter commented that there are anomalies in the Provisional Ancient Woodland Inventory, such as mis-identification of PAWS.

It was agreed that if any LBAP partner has identified any anomalies in the Inventory or has any additions they should send details to Dan Abrahams who will co-ordinate the information and send to Keith Kirby at Peterborough. **Action ALL**

b) East Derbyshire Woodland Project

Steph gave an update on the East Derbyshire Woodland Project, including having sent out tenders for the woodland planting. The Forest Schools initiative is still going well and the DCC Education Dept is very keen, and they are currently looking to encourage more schools to get involved.

c) Great Trees of Derbyshire Project

Dan Abrahams reported that Derbyshire Wildlife Trust and the Woodland Trust have made a joint bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for surveying and training involving local communities. Dan has received around 1100 records of veteran trees including recently more than 90 from the ranger at Allestree Park, Derby.

Dan has also submitted all of the records received so far to the Woodland Trust's Ancient Tree Hunt and the Derbyshire contribution makes up about 20% of the total records!

Peter reported that there is currently an internal debate at the Woodland Trust on size thresholds for tree species. Most of the studies and figures available are based upon studies in southern Britain.

Nick said that we must remember to recognise the next generation of veteran trees.

d) GIS project

Tristan reported that the latest on the GIS project was that they are awaiting a slimmed down version from the consultants that does not need a MAPINFO or ARCVIEW backdrop to use it. They should get the CD before the end of the financial year.

3) Habitat Action Plan progress

Tristan reported that the winter 2005/2006 woodland creation grant applications had resulted in 9 applications in Derbyshire, all of which were in the East Derbyshire Woodland Project area (and thus were in the Lowland Derbyshire LBAP area). This will result in 47.05ha of mixed broadleaved woodland being planted, the majority of which will during this planting season.

The question was asked whether we had an up to date layer of National Forest Tender Schemes. Tristan said he would do annual GIS layers for woodland creation in the National Forest dating back to 1994, if possible and distribute to partners.

Action: Tristan

4) Grant aid for woodland

Tristan reported that the Woodland Improvement Grant (WIG) and the Woodland Management Grant (WMG) opened for applications in November 2005. This will close for existing applicants on 10th Feb 2006 and will then be opened for new applicants to spend the remainder of the years money until 31st March 2006. It will open again on 1st April for new applications in the new financial year.

The Higher Level Scheme, part of the Environmental Stewardship Scheme, has some woodland options which have a higher payment than the England Woodland Grant Scheme.

There needs to be some guidance from the Rural development service (RDS) as to how much and what they will pay for. Tristan will liaise with RDS.

Action: Tristan

5. Woodland HAP revision

Debbie gave a quick update on the revision of the woodland Habitat Action Plans. There was now a separate background document detailing information on Lowland Derbyshire woodlands, including their composition and distribution. This was on the Derbyshire Biodiversity website at http://derbyshirebiodiversity.org.uk/lbaps/hap/Background_information_woodland_HAPS.pdf.

Below is a summary of progress towards the mixed broadleaved woodland targets since 2002:

- Favourable management in all (1640ha) Ancient Semi-natural woodland –**currently 788ha (48%)**
- Favourable management in 90% (1257ha) Plantation on Ancient Woodland Sites – **currently 1017ha (72%)**
- Favourable management of 100ha of mature secondary woodland –**currently 155ha**
- Creation of 500ha of new woodland – **currently 425ha** (approx 200ha in National Forest)

A draft revised lowland mixed broadleaved woodland HAP had been circulated prior to the meeting. Various comments were made at the meeting and will be incorporated into a version which will be sent out for comment as a final draft.

A wet woodland HAP and Wood pasture, parkland and veteran trees HAP will also be circulated in due course for comments

Debbie will revise these in line with discussions and send around for comment.

Action: Debbie

The draft HAP needs a 'Vision' and Glynis had done some initial work on this and showed everyone a map and a table she had done some work on based on the Landscape Character Assessment work. Everyone agreed that this was a good idea and would provide some focus to the 'appropriateness' of here creation and management work should take place. She will do some more work on this and distribute for comments by mid February.

Action: Glynis

6. Biodiversity Action Reporting System (BARS)

Debbie gave a demonstration on how to input LBAP partners progress reports into BARS and gave out an information sheet with step-by-step guide.

LBAP partners are now expected to input their progress against relevant action when they have time, ideally once every 6 months. **Action: ALL**

7. Ancient Woodland management Seminar

Debbie reported that following on from discussion at the last meeting progress had been made on a seminar on the management of ancient woodland. Tristan had confirmed that the Forestry Commission are bale to support this up to about £500. This would include accommodation and catering. Debbie had booked a room at Cromford Mill which will hold a maximum of 50 people.

The draft programme for the day is as follows:

Morning:

- Talks- Ancient woodland, what, where etc in a UK and local context – Debbie/Dan
- Grant Aid for ancient woodland management – Tristan
- Restoration of Plantations of Ancient Woodland Sites – Peter

Workshops – Woodland surveying – Nick

- Woodland management – Dave Frost/Mark Oram
- Woodland Archaeology – Peter/Sheffield Hallam staff.

Afternoon

Visits – Bow Wood - Peter

- Shining Cliff Wood – Rhododendron management and Veteran Trees – Dan/Albin
- Derwent Valley area – Protected Species and coppicing – Woodland Owner/Debbie

It was agreed that Debbie will construct a flier for the event that various people can distribute to their various contacts and members etc by the end of Feb **Action: Debbie**

Tristan – to distribute to agents

Steph – to distribute to contacts

Dave Frost – to SWA members

DWT – to appropriate Wildlife Sites Owners

It could also be sent to CLA and NFU for inclusion in their newsletters.

It was agreed to make the seminar free to private woodland owners and LBAP partners.

8. Woodland management literature

Debbie asked if any of the LBAP partners have booklets/leaflets on aspects of woodland management.

Woodland Trust: Reports on- Ancient Trees, restoration of PAWS

Forestry Commission- Various booklets on woodland management by type (including wet woodland, lowland mixed broadleaved woods) and ‘So you own a woodland?’

Derbyshire Wildlife Trust – leaflets on value of Veteran Trees, rides, glades and margins, and woodland restoration.

National Forest – ‘Create a farm woodland’

English Nature – various publications on ancient woodland.

Miscellaneous – RSPB manual on woodland management for birds

- Veteran Tree manual.
- On Trent habitat pack
- Landscape Character of Derbyshire

It was agreed to have a list of all these publications and where they are available to distribute at the seminar. Debbie will compile a list and circulate for comment. **Action: Debbie**

9. Partner updates.

Woodland Trust – Currently applying for money from the Derbyshire Environment Trust to carry out access improvements to protect habitats in Owler Carr Wood SSSI. Also applying jointly with DWT for money for Veteran tree Surveying.

Derbyshire County Council - the 2 tree inspectors have made progress on assessing highway trees. The Landscape Architects are working with counter parts in other counties on the relevant parts of various forward planning East Midlands strategies.

Derbyshire Wildlife Trust – Nick reported that during 2005 they had surveyed more than 450ha of woodland in 36 separate sites (almost 5% of the LBAP area resource). There are 3 woods which will go to the Wildlife Sites Panel for designation as Wildlife Sites. They are working with one owner towards a EWGS application. In addition a volunteer will be looking at ancient woodland indicator plants and the Wildlife Sites team are looking at condition assessments for all Wildlife Sites.

Chesterfield Borough Council – Carried out some underplanting in West Wood restocking with rowan and oak in the gaps. They have also carried out some thinning work in Chatsworth Calke in Middlecroft (one of the original EDWP plantations). In addition they are considering applying for Woodland Management Grant for west Wood and Cobnar Wood.

LBAP update- The website was now online (www.derbyshirebiodiversity.org.uk)

- Two newsletters have been issued giving information out to the partnership
- Work has begun on an implementation strategy for the LBAP.
- A Regional BAP co-ordinator has been appointed to oversee the East Midlands LBAP co-ordination and administer the new SITA fund.

11.. Date of next meeting –18th July 2006 at 10am at English Nature’s office in Bakewell.

After the meeting we will have a site visit somewhere – any suggestions/offers?
Black Rocks was suggested as an option.

Debbie Court
23rd Jan 2006.