



## Steering Group for the Lowland Derbyshire Biodiversity Partnership

17<sup>th</sup> January 2011 10.00- 12.30pm  
Derbyshire Wildlife Trust, East Mill, Belper

### ***Dan Abrahams Chair (Natural England) DAb***

Beverley Rhodes (Derby City Council) BR  
Gary Wain (Groundwork Derby Notts) GW  
Dave Slinger (Derby City Council) DS  
Peter Corke (Chesterfield BC) PC  
Jane Clement (FWAG) JC  
Kieron Huston (Derbyshire Wildlife Trust) KH

Kevin Exley (South Derbyshire District Council) KE  
Rebecca Brunt (Environment Agency) RB  
Rachael Coates (Amber Valley BC) RC  
Tom French (Derbyshire County Council) TF  
Debbie Alston (Project Officer) DAI

### **Agenda:**

#### **1. Apologies received from**

Paul Tame (NFU), Esther Smith (Derbyshire Dales DC), Steven Wright (BTCV) Douglas Moulton and Helen Fairfax (NEDDC), Sam Lattaway (National Forest Company) and Jo Brown (Derbyshire Wildlife Trust).

#### **2. Minutes from last meeting and matters arising**

3) DAI had circulated information on the progress towards the LBAP targets, this was also in her Oct 2009-Oct 2010 progress report which was circulated to partners.

4) DAI had circulated information on LBAP Review and organised leads.

**Action - DAI to arrange meeting with KH to discuss outstanding data issues**

**Action – DAI to continue to use links in the finished LBAP document**

DWT has looked at the habitat creation guidelines with a view to revising them in line with the 2011-2020 LBAP areas

**Action – DWT still to progress**

5) Annual Forum organised and held on Oct 2010.

7) UK BAP update – covered under item 6

8) TF had received an example SLA from JB and had discussed issue with DCC colleagues. Due to the current financial situation it, was suggested that this should be looked at again when the future picture was clearer

**Action – TF to continue to look at the issue of continued funding with the possibility of inflationary increases from partners.**

#### **3. LBAP Officers report**

DAI gave a brief update of her activities since the last meeting in June:

- Produced two issues of the newsletter and updating the website

- Provided support for partners with audit work, Greenprints, project development and funding bids
- Organised and holding the 2010 Annual forum in October where 55 people attended
- Continued to monitor and map progress towards LBAP targets
- Participated in regional biodiversity work and meetings
- Managed the ALSF project, where the surveyor had surveyed 16 aggregate sites and amongst other things had found new colonies of Dingy and Grizzled skipper butterflies.
- Was audited by a Natural England auditor in November as part of NE's look at 15 organisations nationally where NE money is spent. The Lowland Derbyshire LBAP was one of two LBAPs audited. DWT was also audited too as part of two Local Record Centres audited. This looked specifically at the outputs from the MOA specifically looking at the value for money that NE funded projects
- Project managed the LBAP review

#### **4. LBAP Review discussion**

Following the discussion of the revised LBAP format at the last meeting DAI had worked with others to develop the draft 2011-2020 LBAP. The LBAP includes a number of separate documents including an introduction, generic action plan, 8 area actions plans and their back ground documents as well as a 5 background habitat documents. The draft is on the website and was sent out as a consultation draft on a CD to all 96 partners and other interested parties in early December. The consultation period closes on 21<sup>st</sup> January.

DAI reported that she had a number of responses so far. The response, to date, had positive with no major issues raised, most points related to minor inaccuracies and small additions.

DAb asked those at the meeting if they had any comments on the draft that they wanted to raise.

DS pointed out that it is important to engage with those organisations and key individuals within those organisations who have access to resources. He suggested having a punchy executive summary and also a short summary for use in briefing papers and committee reports.

BR said it needed to refer to the NERC Duty and make clear links to other agendas such as health and climate change.

KH had a query over the part of the Claylands area which was within the Erewash area. DAI said that the initial area boundaries were based upon the regional landscape character work. He also wondered if there was scope to include assemblages of other species in the action plans such as farmland and woodland birds. DAI said that would be fine, so long as we had a good baseline data to set meaningful targets from. KH also pointed out the maps need to clarify between the priority and sub-priority grasslands.

DS wondered if that as we are setting the plan for the next ten years, whether the targets are challenging enough? DAI said that the draft targets were based upon what had been achieved in the last LBAP period, the proposed work from either funding project work or land restoration and a bit of aspirational thinking. She welcomed comments on those, in particular those which were too high or too low. KH commented that we need to bear in mind that for most of the areas the "easy wins" have already been achieved and we had those landowners

who were less keen to make alterations to their working practices left. JC said that the CAP reform may help by ensuring landowners entered ELS to receive their single farm payment.

DAI said she had received some favourable comments from DCC's Landscape team, they had also been very helpful in drawing up some of the text for the area plans.

DS said that there needs to be some consistency in the difference between the vision and objectives for the plans and where appropriate ie Derby and possibly Chesterfield to include people in the visions.

KH commented that open mosaic habitats needed to be included in the area plans, but in some cases this was not easy as the habitats themselves includes other habitats. TF agreed that their status needed to be higher, so that their presence and importance in planning terms was not overlooked.

DS commented that it would be helpful if the LBAP review were able take into account the forthcoming Government White Paper, which was supported, although it was noted that this was dependent upon the White Paper being published on time.

This list of partners in the draft document represented current partners and perhaps needed to include potential partners to help achieve the actions and targets, especially where this included engaging with other agendas to achieve our outcomes.

KE said that from a local authority perspective the areas did not matter that they did not reflect administrative boundaries and thought that it would be a useful document for medium sized development proposals. RC agreed and said that the challenge may be to get the planners to use the document, so suggested having a brief guide for planners and developers with some follow up training.

DS also suggested thinking how the document might be used by others and this should influence how the hyperlinks are set up.

The use of biodiversity opportunity mapping was raised. DAI said that she was disappointed by the outputs from the regional opportunity mapping which had been produced for Derbyshire and the Peak District and was in discussions with Warren Priest from the East Midlands Biodiversity Partnership to see if this could be developed.

It was agreed that DAI would review the draft in light of comments and would look to have a launch of the 2011-2020 LBAP in the spring or early summer 2011.

**Action – DAI to work with key partners to revise the document in light of comments.**

## **5. Update on the national UK BAP process**

DAb updated the group on the latest status of the Integrated Biodiversity Delivery areas (IBDAs) around the country. Over 20 IBDAs had been identified throughout the country. Eight of which had been designated as pilot areas for working up concepts and partnerships. One of these pilots is the South Peak and Fringes IBDA which included all of the area in the Peak Fringe area action plan as well as the White Peak, South West Peak and parts of Staffordshire (Churnet valley), 180,000ha in total. Several meetings had been held and the lead officer,

Dave Parker from Natural England had responded to requests for information from the England Biodiversity Group but steerage from the national level had been poor. There was still confusion as to whether the presence of an IBDA or not would help or hinder project funding bids.

DAI reported that information in the last six months from the England Biodiversity Group had been low. The Lawton Review, which was released in September, raised a number of important issues which is hoped will be picked up by the Natural Environment White Paper due to be published this spring.

DAI reported that she had had quite a lot of involvement in the regional biodiversity partnership, including a number of workshops and products which unfortunately did not get finished. The East Midlands Biodiversity Partnership was currently in a state of uncertainty and had not met since September. A workshop was due to take place on 21<sup>st</sup> January to discuss any possible future which DAI will attend.

## **Action – DAI to keep the partnership informed of developments**

### **6. Update from partners on project development/future funding and funding bids**

There are a number of biodiversity delivery projects which are either current seeking funding or continuation funding:

- a) Lower Derwent Valley Landscape Partnership – a Landscape Partnership (HLF) project to work within the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site and its buffer zone. Stage I bid is being worked up and will be submitted by the end of February with a decision expected in the summer. The project, as well as delivering biodiversity targets, will include a training element which will be delivered by DWT and the Eco Centre at Wirksworth.
- b) Limestone Journeys – a Landscape Partnership (HLF) project in the magnesian limestone part of Bolsover. This £1.9 million, 5 year project will start in early 2011 when a project team has been recruited and will include biodiversity enhancement projects. Creswell Heritage Trust will be leading on the project.
- c) Derwent Scheme – An Environment Agency scheme to work in the flood plain of the River Derwent around the Duffield and Belper areas to re-naturalise the river and aid with flood defence work.
- d) Mercaston and Markeaton brook project – received funding from SITA for a part-time officer to work with landowners in the catchment to renew and update ELS agreements with a view to improving the water quality of the lakes in the Kedleston SSSI and habitats for white clawed-crayfish.
- e) Local Record Centre – KH currently working with species groups to validate records, especially for UK BAP species to produce local distribution maps. Funding beyond March 2011 currently uncertain.
- f) Wild About Nature – GW reported that funding for part of his post (Countdown 2010) was due to run out in April and that the Groundwork team were currently putting in a variety of funding bids for money. GW was also working on smaller applications to fund work on non AVBC sites.
- g) Veteran Trees project – DWT's continuation of the veteran tree project had been successful from HLF funding. This project will focus on practical measures to save and extend the life of veteran trees.

- h) Water for Wildlife project – DWT has submitted a couple of funding bids to continue the work of the project and if successful will hope to shift emphasis to the Derwent catchment.
- i) WildDerby – As part of a spending review, Derby City Council is looking at the funding for the WildDerby project, with a council decision expected soon. BR is looking at launching a veteran tree warden scheme in the City and at other funding. There is a potential wetland project in the Bramble Brook area as part of flood defence work.
- j) Aggregate Levy Sustainability project – DAI had managed this project to quantify the BAP targets achieved by mineral extraction. Funding will end of this discrete project in mid March. A seminar will be held on 4<sup>th</sup> March in Derby on biodiversity and the mineral extraction industry.
- k) A £3.5 - £4 million soft engineering project in the Hatton, Scropton area by the Environment Agency.

In addition to the above PC reported that the Chesterfield Greenprint had been reviewed and re-launched and TF said that Derbyshire County Council had signed a HLS agreement for the north area and had made a commitment to designate three LNRs (Pleasley Pit Country Park, Williamthorpe Nature Reserve and Bluebank Pools) by the summer.

## **7. Financial support for LBAP Officer Post from partners**

TF reviewed the situation to date in relation to funding. The LBAP currently receives funding from a number of sources including Natural England, via Memorandum of Agreement, Derbyshire County Council, and other partners. DAI has also brought in money from project work and small contacts. There is currently a small working reserve which has built up over recent years, which on its own could keep the partnership going for a short while. Natural England is due to contact all LBAPs with MOAs to inform them whether there will be funding for LBAPs beyond March 2011.

TF sent all contributing partners a letter in October requesting funding for 2011-2012. Whilst it is accepted that many organisations are unable to respond until their budgets are settled, TF made a plea to partners to do their best to find out and respond as soon as they are able to.

BR suggested that partners consider funding for the LBAP officer's post when writing funding bids. DAI said that funding for two LBAP Forums had been successfully written into the Wild About Nature Countdown 2010 project which had certainly helped to fund these events.

KH said he was aware that in part of Wales, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) money was being used to fund LBAP work including co-ordination.

**Action – KH to find out more and pass onto DAI and TF**

## **8. AOB**

BR highlighted the importance of the LBAP website and newsletters and asked that this information should be passed to partners. DAI said that, as part of the consultation, she had put a table requesting partners give their opinion on the value of various LBAP resources including the website, newsletters and events. Once the consultation had finished DAI hoped to be able use this information to feed back to partners.

Following on from 2010 as the International Year of Biodiversity, 2011-2020 is the (UN) International Decade of Biodiversity.

**9. Date of next meeting**

**10am -12.30pm 6<sup>th</sup> July 2011. Venue TBC**