



## Steering Group for the Lowland Derbyshire Biodiversity Partnership

**6<sup>th</sup> July 2011 10.00- 12.30pm**  
**Derbyshire Wildlife Trust, East Mill, Belper**

Jeff Edwards (Natural England) JE	Barry Joyce (Derbyshire CC) BJ
Dave Slinger (Derby City Council) DS	Douglas Moulton (North East DDC) DM
Peter Corke (Chesterfield BC) PC	Adele Rhodes (Bolsover DC) AR
Jane Clement (FWAG) JC	Rachael Coates (Amber Valley BC) RC
Esther Smith (Derbyshire Dales DC) ES	Tom French (Derbyshire County Council) TF
Kieron Huston (Derbyshire Wildlife Trust) KH	Debbie Alston (Project Officer) DA
Tristan Galletley (Forestry Commission) TG	

### Agenda:

#### 1. Apologies received from

Dan Abrahams (Natural England), Gary Wain (Groundwork Derby Notts), Carl Hawke (National Trust) Yvonne Wright (Erewash BC), Kevin Exley (South Derbyshire District Council), Paul Tame (NFU), Steve Wright (BTCV) and Ed Green (Derbyshire Wildlife Trust).

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

Minutes were agreed to be correct. The following action points, which are not covered elsewhere, were to be carried over:

**Action - DWT still to progress to revise habitat creation guidelines**

**Action – KH to find out more about CIL money used in Wales to fund biodiversity work.**

#### 3. LBAP Officers report

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

- Produced two issues of the newsletter and updating the website
- Provided support for partners with audit work, Greenprints, project development and funding bids
- Participated in regional biodiversity meetings, although this has now been largely disbanded as a formal group, the remaining pot of money (c£27k) has been available for the 6 LBAPs in the region to bid into for biodiversity work. DA has put in 3 bids for projects totaling c£7k to cover officer time with the conference, helping others developing projects and funding bids and promoting the new LBAP to partners and the public. Decisions will be made on successful bids in the next week or so.
- Finished the ALSF project with a final report and conference in March.
- Worked with others to revise the LBAP in light of comments from the consultation period.
- Continued to monitor and map progress towards LBAP targets
- Reading and getting to grips with the implications of the Natural Environment White Paper.

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

DA reported that since the finish of the consultation, she had been revising the main text in light of comments. This has included revising the text, revising data and figures as well as looking as how to incorporate species into the document better. DA and KH had a meeting in early March to discuss data issues so that the same figures were used for habitats and also to look at a template for mini species action plans. A 'user's guide' was also brought up in the consultation with a series of training sessions for the documents use by planners etc.

The majority of the text changes have been done, time is still needed to do the species work and incorporate the agreed data.

It is likely that the document will be finalized ready for a launch at the annual conference in Oct/November.

#### **5. Personnel changes**

TF reported that there had been a number of significant changes to key personnel in the LBAP Partnership. Jo Brown has left DWT and is being replaced by either Ed Green or Matt Corney. Dan Abrahams has had to step down as the Chair of the Partnership and there is currently internal debate within Natural England as to who will replace him, but this will be not as the Chair.

DA has also elected to reduce her working hours to part-time (18.5 hours/2.5 days a week), with effect from the end of June. Following a recruitment process Nick Moyes (NM) was the successful candidate and has a start date of 20<sup>th</sup> July. DA will have Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday morning as normal working hours and NM is likely to spread his 18.5 hours over Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.

#### **6. New LBAP Chair**

Due to Dan Abrahams having to step down the Partnership is in need of a new Chairperson. DA felt that as we are moving into a period of change where a figurehead may be more beneficial rather than just a functional Chair. BJ agreed and suggested an ambassador for the partnership would be helpful. Suggestions put forward at the meeting were Tony Hams and Bryan Barnacle (Derbyshire Ornithological Society)

**Action – DA and TF to progress a new Chair and send round information to the rest of the partnership to suggest a new Chair.**

#### **7. Natural Environment White Paper**

DA passed around a summary paper of the NEWP and highlighted some of the key issues. The promised revised England Biodiversity Strategy which was due to be out at the end of June has been delayed.

JE further highlighted the key issues associated with Local Nature Partnerships (LNPs):

- £1million worth of funding was available for existing and new partnerships to bid into to form a Local Nature partnership. Deadline for bids is 31<sup>st</sup> July and this is a one-off pot of money.
- There are expected to be approximately 50 LNPs in England (roughly equivalent to the 49 LBAPs which had historically received NE money)

- There is an expectation to be closely linked to the Local Enterprise Partnerships and work with the Health and Well being partnerships when they are set up.
- They will raise the profile of environmental matters, not just biodiversity
- There is hoped to be a minimum of overlap between LNPs.

DS said he saw LNPs and LBAPs are two different entities. The LNPs being an umbrella for the LBAP or several LBAPs.

BJ suggested that the LNP area might be better if the area aligned to the LEP or even the 6C's GI area.

DM said it would fit with a Green Infrastructure and would be useful once the Community Infrastructure Levy would come in 2014. He also noted that both Chesterfield and North east Derbyshire are in both the Derby, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Nottingham LEP as well as the Sheffield City Region LEP.

KH suggested that the LBAP should sit separate to the LNP.

Two suggestions of areas were put forward:

- a) Wild Derby suggestion led by Derby University
- b) Erewash Valley (Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire)

Both were discussed, but were considered to be too small in scale. DA reported that at the LBAP Exec the previous week Ed Green from DWT has suggested that he would talk to the Chief Exec at Notts Wildlife Trust about a joint approach for LNP status. This would align the LNP with the LEP. The others at the meeting agreed that this would be a sensible suggestion to support a joint approach with Notts.

JE further highlighted the key issues associated with Nature Improvement Areas (NIAs):

- The Government are looking to designate 12 pilot areas, this will be decided by competition, initial expressions of interest would be in by the end of September.
- Areas likely to be between 10,000 and 50,000ha in size
- Delivery will start in April 2012 with a good partnership established, improvement and engagement with community to gain support for the areas.
- There is £7.5 million available in a Defra fund, NE can help with the bid

JE thought that a range of areas would be chosen nationally including urban, upland, estuary etc. Each area would need a unique selling point. More information about NIA and the competition would be available in the Defra website soon.

Following a discussion, a number of potential NIA areas were suggested for the LBAP area:

- Trent valley
- Limestone Journeys area
- Derwent Valley
- National Forest
- Erewash Valley

JE said that if IBDA's (Integrated Biodiversity Delivery Areas) wish to continue into the future they are encouraged to apply for NIA status. TF reported that the South Peak IBDA was still 'alive' albeit only in name. There is going to be a meeting to discuss the South Peak IBDA on 22<sup>nd</sup> July.

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

There are a number of biodiversity delivery projects which are either currently 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 was worked up, led by DWT and submitted in June. A decision is expected mid July.
- b) Limestone Journeys – a Landscape Partnership (HLF) project in the magnesian limestone part of Bolsover. The £1.9 million, 5 year project has now started and is currently delivering year 1 projects, which includes a small grants fund for landowners and community groups. Creswell Heritage Trust is the lead organisation in the project.
- c) 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.
- d) Three Rivers project – DWT has submitted a couple of funding bids to continue the work of the Water for Wildlife project and if successful will hope to shift emphasis to the Derwent, Trent and Dove catchments under the.
- e) WildDerby – DS reported that the WildDerby project survived the initial Council budget cuts discussions.

In addition to the above TG reported that the England Woodland Grant Scheme was still going and applications to the Woodland Bird Grant had been good, applications are still being received. An outbreak of *Phytophthora Ramorum* had been found in larch on the edge of the Peak District and the Forestry Commission will be putting on a seminar for woodland owners on 21<sup>st</sup> July.

**Action: TG to send invitation to DA who will distribute to appropriate partners for their information.**

ES reported that due to the localism bill and national planning framework proposals, the timetable for Derbyshire Dales District Council's core strategy is likely to be revised. AR, DM and RC said that this would also be likely for Bolsover District Council, North East Derbyshire District and Amber Valley Borough Council.

PC reported that DWT and Chesterfield Borough Council are working together on projects and funding bids to support the delivery of the Greenprint.

JC said that FWAG were busy working in the Limestone Journeys project and attending Derby market to talk to farmers.

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

TF reviewed the situation to date in relation to funding. Since Natural England's financial support of the LBAP had ceased at the end of April, there was a significant hole in the LBAP's annual finances, amounting to some £20,000. TF confirmed that Derbyshire County Council will continue to contribute £10,000 per annum for the foreseeable future, but would wish to see that other partners were also contributing. TF had sent around the usual request for funding letter late in 2010 and had a number of replies saying that funds has been requested in budgets, but little was confirmed and no invoices had been sent this year. TF requested that those partners who are able to confirm the funding do so asap so that invoices can be sent.

**Action: Partners to confirm with TG if they are able to fund the LBAP this year asap.**

DS confirmed that Derby City were able to contribute £2k this year, RC confirmed that Amber Valley Borough Council could also contribute. ES said she would follow this up.

JE reported that Service Level Agreements with delivery outputs are used to fund the Birmingham and the Black Country LBAP

DS suggested that a half page list of bullet points are sent the request for funding letters, detailing what the LBAP can do for contributions. This would then be used in any committee reports.

## **10. AOB**

TG reported that the Forestry Commission is due to be re-organised to include the East of England, East and West Midlands.

## **11. Date of next meeting**

**10am -12.30pm 25<sup>th</sup> January 2012. Venue TBC**