



Progress Report October 2005 – December 2005

**By Debbie Court
Biodiversity Project Officer**

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1. Linkages to national and local BAPs.

1.1 UK BAP.

No contact has been made with UK BAP partnership throughout this quarter.

1.2 Regional

The Regional Biodiversity Forum has now employed a regional biodiversity co-ordinator. The Project Officer has now met with the officer and discussed various issues.

The regional LBAP officers have not met during this quarter but progress since September was fed through to the Regional Biodiversity Forum which met in December.

1.3 Links with neighbouring LBAPs

Close contact and liaison has been maintained with the Peak District and National Forest LBAPs. Contributions were received for Derbyshire Biodiversity News. The LBAP officer for the National Forest left during the quarter. The Project Officer provided training for the Peak District to help set them up on BARS (Biodiversity Action Reporting System).

The Project Officer attended a number of the Peak District HAP groups to ensure every opportunity is taken to work on county initiatives to achieve BAP targets where it is appropriate.

1.4 Greenprints

The Project Officer attended the Chesterfield Greenprint Steering Group and provided a holistic county-wide overview as well as giving key contacts from LBAP partner organisations to help achieve Greenprint targets.

The Bolsover Greenprint Steering Group had an inaugural meeting in December. The Project Officer agreed to chair future meetings as Bolsover District Council do not have a dedicated officer to take the Greenprint forward. As with the Chesterfield Greenprint meetings this will ensure that partners are engaged and holistic opportunities to take forward projects are maximised.

2. Local Feedback

2.1 Annual Forum

The date of the 2006 Annual Forum has been confirmed as 14th September and will be held at the Genesis Centre in Alfreton.

2.2 LBAP Steering Group

Discussion took place at the September Executive Steering Group to alter the structure of the LBAP support and steering. Preparations were made during this quarter for the first Steering Group meeting in January with 30 organisations invited. The meeting will focus on how the various organisations can work together more effectively to achieve the LBAP targets. To help this discussion a chart of all the LBAP actions has been produced showing which ones have been achieved and which still need action.

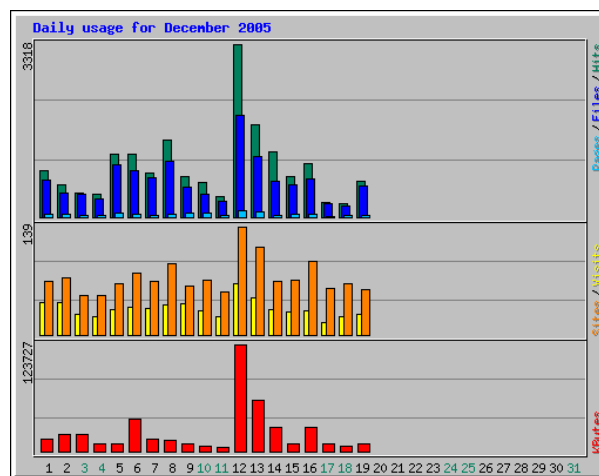
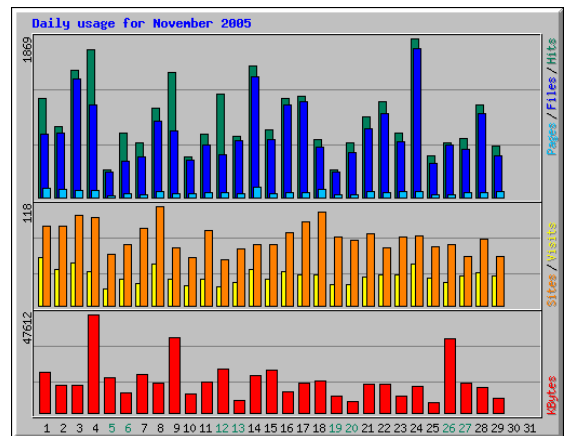
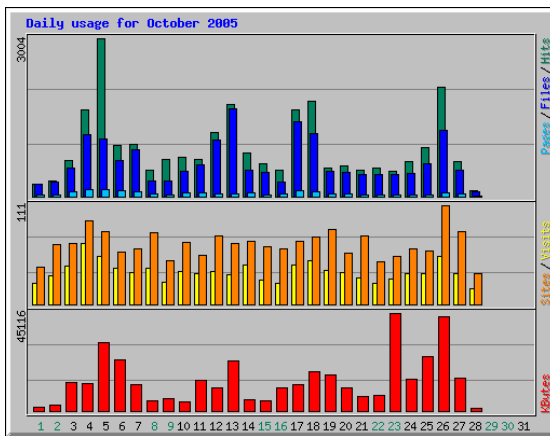
3. Making the LBAP accessible.

3.1 Website

The usage of the Derbyshire Biodiversity website has continued to increase throughout the quarter.

The charts and tables below have been produced from the statistics package for the website. The number of visits refers to the number of visitors the website receives each day. This will include

repeat visitors. (The 'Kbyte figures' refers to the amount of information that is looked at, so pages with pictures and documents downloaded increase this figure).



	Oct 2005	Nov 2005	Dec 2005 (1 st – 19 th)
Total Hits	25944	27191	18335
Total Files	18249	22029	13254
Total pages	1709	1734	1119
Total visits	1015	1018	643
Total KBytes	396608	454814	426504
Total Unique Sites	624	*	*
Average hits per hour	38	39	40
Average hits per day	926	937	965
Average files per day	651	759	697
Average pages per day	61	59	58
Average visits per day	36	35	33
Average Kbytes per day	14165	15683	22448
			* calculation unreliable due to a technical error

The website has been used to publish final drafts and completed versions of HAPs and newsletters and LBAP partners have been sent e-mails with links to the relevant section of the website to download the documents. However no such e-mails were sent to LBAP partners during October and November so all of the usage for those months would have been from outside enquiries and users. The website is now getting an average of 35 visits per day and it has been noted that usage has increased during weekends and evenings showing that the general public and local groups are now using the site.

Various documents and news items have been added since the launch and the numerous links continue to be checked to ensure they are up to date.

3.2. Newsletter

The second issue of Derbyshire Biodiversity News was published on 9th December. This was put on the website on 12th December and an e-mail with a link was sent round to LBAP partners.

The website statistics package showed that during December almost 600 copies of the newsletter were downloaded. In addition a further 500 copies were sent out by post and distributed at events.

3.3 Talks

The Project Officer has continued to receive requests for talks. The Biodiversity Jigsaw talk was delivered by the Project Officer to four local groups including Dronfield and District Natural History Society (6th October, 35 people), Long Eaton Natural History Society (17th October, 28 people), North East Derbyshire Field Club (10th November, 38 people) and Burton Archaeological and Natural History Society (15th December, 25 people). In addition the Project Officer was invited to a committee meeting of the Friends of Belper Park to talk about how the group can help deliver LBAP targets on their Local Nature Reserve.

Work has continued on the development of a 14 hour training course to be delivered as an evening class as part of the Chesterfield Greenprint. Chesterfield Borough Council has agreed to subsidise 25 places on the course for residents.

3.4 Annual Report

During the quarter 240 copies of the 2001-2004 Lowland Derbyshire BAP Progress report were downloaded from the website.

4. Implement Habitat Action Plans

4.1 Woodland

Work has taken place looking at progress achieved under the Woodland Habitat Action Plans. Having looked at Forestry Commission records it appears that 788.5ha of Ancient Semi-natural woodland (ASNW) and 1,017ha of Plantation on Ancient Woodland Site (PAWS) are subject to a management grant under a Woodland Grant Scheme a Wildlife Enhancement Scheme or have a Forest Plan approved by the Forestry Commission. This represents 48% of the known ASNW and 72% of the PAWS resource in the LBAP area.

Following a recent Forestry Commission seminar on the new England Woodland Grant Scheme discussions have now taken place regarding contacting the remaining ASNW and PAWS owners. It has also been agreed to host a seminar for ancient woodland owners in May to inform them about the new grant and encourage them to take more of an active approach to management on their sites.

4.2 Grassland

The Project Officer facilitated a successful road verge meeting between with the Highway Engineers at the County Council, the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust and Peak District National Park. It was agreed to designate 30 'notified road verges' in Derbyshire in 2006. Each will have a signpost and a prescribed management plan. This will help achieve LBAP targets in the Peak District, Lowland Derbyshire and National Forest LBAPs.

Derbyshire Wildlife Trust has been successful in achieving funding for their 'Value In Meadows Project'. The £35,000 from the Esmée Fairburn Foundation will enable the Wildlife Trust to recruit a project officer to work with grassland owners in the Peak fringe of Derbyshire. This project will be a major contributor to the achievement of the grassland LBAP targets.

4.3 Wetland

No progress has been made with the wetland habitat group this quarter.

4.4 Farmland

A final draft of the ancient and/or species-rich hedgerows Habitat Action Plan has been produced and distributed to the Farmland Group as well as having been put on the website. The Project Officer has also produced a nine page document on farmland habitats in the LBAP area. This provides all the background information on definitions, and distribution of hedgerows and cereal field margins. This has been put on the website with all the other habitat background documents.

5. Implement Species Action Plans

5.1 Mammals

Following comments received following the final draft of the Water Vole SAP Derbyshire Wildlife Trusts Water Vole officer has produced the finalised version of the SAP. This has taken some time as agreement was needed on some of the more controversial aspects of the action plan.

5.2 Invertebrates

The Project Officer produced a 'Biodiversity and invertebrates' display for the Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Entomological Society (DANES) Insect Show on 5th November. The show was attended by more than 200 people including many of the county insect recorders.

6. Increasing capacity of partners in key sectors to implement HAPs and SAPs.

6.1 BAP Audits

Further work has been carried out on the BAP audit of Derbyshire County Council's countryside sites. Information has been added to a number of separate GIS layers which have fed into the base BAP GIS layers for the LBAP areas. The following areas have been calculated for the County Council's Countryside Service sites

(Priority habitats for the Countryside Service to concentrate on are shown in **bold**):

55ha of Ancient Woodland

150ha of non-ancient mature woodland

400ha of Plantation woodland (less than 25 years old)

4ha of wet woodland

50ha of species-rich grassland

21ha of semi-natural grassland (not species-rich)

200ha of created grassland (less than 25 years old)

7ha of heathland

20ha of standing open water (including 11ha of canal)

3ha of swamps

3ha of reedbeds

This has provided the Countryside Service with a number of priority habitats to concentrate their management efforts on and develop separate projects and funding bids.

Work has begun on a BAP audit for land owned by Erewash Borough Council. Currently priority habitats have been mapped for the Local Nature Reserves further discussion is needed with the Borough's Park officers to complete the audit.

7. Increasing contribution to biodiversity targets of aggregates industry.

7.1 Aggregate industry contacts

Information regarding mineral allocation and LBAP gain has been provided to the RSPB for their national overview of the aggregate industries contribution towards LBAP targets. Contact has been made with a biodiversity officer working for the Quarry Products Association in Northern Ireland to share ideas.

8. Monitoring and Reporting.

8.1 BARS

Training has been delivered to the Peak District National Park Authority on setting up their LBAP in BARS. The Project Officer has also agreed to provide training to Severn Trent Ltd, a major LBAP partner, on setting their corporate BAP up on BARS and linking it to LBAPs including the Lowland Derbyshire and Peak District LBAPs.

Work has also begun on a simple factsheet for LBAP partners to enable them to input LBAP progress directly onto BARS.

9. Community Strategies, Development Plans and similar strategic partnerships.

9.1 Local Strategic Partnerships

The Project Officer has maintained contact with the Local Strategic Partnership in the county and attended meetings in Amber Valley. Recommendations have also been made as part of the revision of the Derbyshire-wide Community Strategy.

9.2 Planning documents

The Project Officer has provided comments on Derbyshire and Derby's Local Transport Plan, Erewash Borough Council's SPD for biodiversity and Derby City Council's Nature conservation strategy. Comments were also provided on the draft guidance notes that are due to accompany PPS9.

9.3 Training for Planners

Discussion has continued with Derby City Council regarding the delivery of 3 training sessions for planners and land managers including biodiversity, protected species and Wildlife Sites. The Project Officer led the first one hour session on 17th October 'Biodiversity – the Basics', Derbyshire Wildlife Trust led the second session, the Derby City 'Wildlife Alert Map' on 7th November and the final session will be delivered by the Project Officer, Derbyshire Wildlife Trust and English Nature on 12th January.

The Project Officer delivered the 'Biodiversity- the basics' training session to Bolsover District planners on 20th October and to the Conservation and Design team at Derbyshire County Council on 2nd December. Bookings have now been made to deliver the session to Amber Valley, South Derbyshire, Erewash, Chesterfield and other planners at Derbyshire County Council planners in the New Year.

The Project Officer arranged a seminar on 'Biodiversity and Local Development Frameworks' on 18th November. It was delivered by the Association of Local Government Ecologists (ALGE) and was attended by 40 people in the East Midlands including 13 Derbyshire local authority planners and 7 other Lowland Derbyshire LBAP partners. After the course ALGE finalised their publication 'Framework for Biodiversity'. The Project Officer provided some final comments on the document and has publicised its availability on the ALGE website to all planners and LBAP partners in Derbyshire.

9.4 Training for rangers and land managers

The Project Officer delivered a biodiversity workshop at the Derbyshire County Council Countryside Day. Sixty rangers attended and were given background information in biodiversity and also were able to look at their sites and come up with management suggestions to enhance them.

Arrangements have been made to deliver a similar training session for Chesterfield Borough Council rangers and a more in depth session to Derbyshire County Council North Area rangers in the New Year.

10. Engaging local business

The Project Officer attended a training day on Corporate BAPs arranged by Middelmarsh. The day included presentations from businesses who had produced BAPs and some of the pitfalls and advantages associated with them. Discussion has taken place since with Derbyshire Wildlife Trust on how to engage with business better.

11. Raise Funding for LBAP initiatives

11.1 Funding information.

Information has been circulated to LBAP partners on new funding schemes with the appropriate deadlines and criteria.

11.2 Support of Funding bids

The Project Officer has continued to discuss funding for biodiversity projects with LBAP partners and has written supporting letter to accompany applications where appropriate.