



## Lowland Derbyshire Biodiversity Steering Group 26<sup>th</sup> February 2009

### Present:

Dan Abrahams **Chair** (Natural England)  
DAb  
Ed Green (Derbyshire Wildlife Trust) EG  
Kevin Exley (South Derbyshire District Council) KE  
Peter Corke (North East Derbyshire District Council) PC  
Rebecca Brunt (Environment Agency) RB

Tristan Galletly (Forestry Commission) TG  
Adele Rhodes (Bolsover District Council) AR  
Antony Udueni (Amber Valley Borough Council) AU  
Beverley Rhodes (Derby City) BR  
Tom French (Derbyshire County Council) TF  
Debbie Alston (Project Officer) DAI

### Apologies were received from:

Yvonne Wright (Erewash Borough Council), Carl Hawke (National Trust), Warren Priest (EMBP) WP, Steve Wright (BTCV), Mike Hase (Derbyshire Dales District Council), Dave Slinger (Derby City Council) and Lucinda Chapman (North East Derbyshire District Council),

### 1. Matters Arising

AR stated that since the last meeting the responsibility of reporting under NI197 had now been devolved to the top tier authorities, not the District and Borough Councils. TF reported that he was the officer responsible for reporting under NI197 for Derbyshire County Council and was working with DWT to ensure this met with DCC's monitoring requirements and national guidance.

DAI reported that the telephone exchange alterations at DCC had not gone ahead yet and her direct dial number will change from May when a new system comes in.

### 2. Project Officer's Report

DAI gave a verbal update on her work since the last meeting in June 2008

- Two issues of Derbyshire Biodiversity News
- Annual Forum 2 days joint with Notts BAG with 140 attendees
- Produced Annual Report
- Took part in UK reporting round 2008
- NERC Duty audit for DDDC and started on one for SDDC
- Started work on a park audit for AVBC
- Carried out a BAP audit for Severn Trent Water at Foremark and Staunton Harold
- Drafted fundraising and communication strategies
- Produced and distributed NEC Duty information to 162 parish and town councils
- 81 LBAP partners including 13 PCs and 36 local groups and 1 landowning estate
- Supported partners to develop projects and find funding
- Worked with partners to develop the Derwent Valley Project and ALSF project
- Started work on GIS layers to quantify and locate action for this BAP period and help guide the next BAP revision

### 3. 2009 Annual Forum

DAI presented a draft structure for the 2009 Annual Forum. The suggested draft theme is 'wildlife recording' and a provisional date had been booked at Derby University for Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> September. It was suggested that the event was opened up to the general public and should be free. This will require significant (about £5,000) financial support from the LBAP partnership.

**Action: DAI to work up programme and work with DWT to try and negotiate the price with the University.**

#### **4. Funding and Communication Strategies**

DAI explained that as part of the MOA with Natural England each LBAP had to produce a funding strategy and a communication strategy by the end of March 2009. She had e-mailed to Steering Group Members the draft of each. An exercise was then undertaken to ask Steering Group members to rank each of the actions in the plans. These will be used in the final strategies.

**Action: Any further comments on the draft strategies to DAI by 16<sup>th</sup> March 2009**

One issue that was discussed was the current difficulty of issuing Partnership press releases via Derbyshire County Council. If it was not possible to resolve this other partners may be willing to do this on the Partnership's behalf.

**Action: DAI and TF to meet with DCC publicity dept to discuss**

#### **5. Feedback from East Midlands Biodiversity Partnership**

In WP's absence DAI reported that the East Midlands Biodiversity Partnership is developing a website which should be on-line by the end of March. Their annual conference is on wetlands and coasts and will be on 4<sup>th</sup> March. Many partners had attended the recent 6C's consultation events looking at biodiversity opportunity mapping.

**Action: DAI to find out when pilot 6C's Biodiversity opportunity mapping methodology is ready and send to steering group members.**

#### **6. Feedback from Habitat and Species Sub-groups**

**Woodland** – TG gave a quick update on progress. The woodland group were continuing to work up the Derwent Valley project, targeting landowners not already in agri-environmental schemes. FC and the RSPB had developed a Woodland Birds Project which had resulted in an 80% Woodland Improvement Grant available for woodland work and creation. The RSPB is currently drawing up woodland management guidance for 16 target species. DWT, working with volunteers, has been mapping orchards in Derbyshire. Currently 470 individual sites had been mapped and it is hoped that 10% will be surveyed to a national methodology standard in the next few months.

**Wetland** - DAI reported that the Humber River Basin Management Plan was currently under consultation as part of the Environment Agency's River Basin Management Plan work, Lowland Derbyshire falls with the Humber catchment. DAI was working with Helen Perkins (DWT) to discuss options for holding a small scale consultation event to feed into the larger process. It was noted that in comparison with other regions the information for Derbyshire was poor, as were the aspirations for improvement.

**Grassland** – DAb reported that following consultation with DWT a number of good quality grassland sites had targetted and were going into HLS schemes. The Wild About Nature project had also received continuation funding from Countdown 2010.

**Farmland**- DAI reported that an RSPB project had received Countdown 2010 to fund a Farmland Bird Officer to work in lowland Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire to generate interest and work up application for arable HLS schemes. This should hopefully help to achieve the short-fall in the arable field margin targets.

#### **7. Local Wildlife Sites update**

EG reported that the Local Wildlife Sites Panel which had met the previous week, had designated 12 new totalling almost 60ha, 5 extensions totalling 5ha, and 1 reduction 1ha and no site deletions. The condition assessment of Local Wildlife Sites was in its final draft stages and should be produced in the Spring.

#### **8. Greenprints**

**Chesterfield** – DAI reported that CBC were in the final stages of declaring Norbriggs Flash as a LNR and were currently producing a Green Infrastructure study to help inform their LDF.

**Bolsover** – AR reported that following the decision to use BDC's internal monitoring system for the Greenprint there was a meeting scheduled for the following week to review progress. The Bolsover Countryside Partnership had continued to work with local community groups and on biodiversity work on both BDC and DCC land. The Bolsover Biodiversity Network meetings had agreed to have some site visits over the summer period for community groups to share ideas and best practice.

**North-East Derbyshire** – The Greenprint is finished. PC had written an accompanying NEDDC Biodiversity strategy which included specific local authority actions from the Greenprint and the NERC Audit report written by DAI.

**Erewash** – A formal consultation exercise had taken place on the Erewash Greenprint. Following comments final changes were being made ready for a launch later in 2009.

**WildDerby** –BR reported that Derby City were looking to undertaken a review of the document in 2009. Also the Council was looking at the delivery and reporting of indicator NI197. Elm Wood was due to be declared a Local Nature Reserve in June 2009 and survey work was due to take place on Mickleover Meadows this summer with a view to LNR declaration next year. BR was hoping to do a leaflet on the LNRs to show their value and specific habitats and species. Wild Week was due to take place in June where three ponds would be created. BR had developed and submitted a SITA bid for a pond project to help support the Derby Pond Warden Association. The Council was also undertaking a Green Infrastructure Study.

#### **9. Local Record Centre Update**

EG reported that there had been little progress made on the formation of a county-wide Local Record Centre and web based options were being explored.

#### **10. Funding**

European funding was available for environmental projects via the LEADER fund for Bolsover and North East Derbyshire (except Dronfield) and they were keen to receive conservation projects.

See <http://www.bned-leader.co.uk/>. for more information

DAI reported that in the course of writing the funding strategy, she had found out that £1.75 million had been received from external sources by partners for LBAP related work. An additional £4.8 million had been spent on Countryside Stewardship and Environmental Stewardship Schemes in the LBAP area.

Funding for 6C's GI project will open from 6<sup>th</sup> March.

DAI reported that the Awards for All fund was due to close on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009.

#### **14. Planning**

KE reported that three proposals in SDDC are likely to have biodiversity gain as part of the design including proposals at Drakelow, Toyota and Highfield Farm.

TF commented that there were ongoing mineral applications being dealt with at DCC but noting new had recently come in.

#### **Date of Next meeting**

14<sup>th</sup> July 2009 – DAI to confirm venue