

**WBP SG18**

 14<sup>th</sup> November 2012

Bangor

**AGENDA**

The 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Wales Biodiversity Partnership Steering Group will be held in Countryside Council for Wales Office, Maes-y-Ffynnon, Penrhosgarnedd, Bangor (a location map can be found [here](#)). Tea and coffee will be available from 10:00.

TIME	PAPER No:	TITLE	LEAD
10:00	<b>Assemble, tea/coffee</b>		
10:30	1	<b>Welcome:</b> Introduction and apologies	Matthew Quinn
10:35	2	<b>Main Paper:</b> CCW LIFE Natura 2000 Programme	Kathryn Hewitt
11:00	3	<b>Main Paper:</b> Biodiversity Action Reporting System (BARS) Update	Alys Edwards
11:35	4	<b>Main Paper:</b> Wales Biodiversity Implementation Framework	John Watkins
<b>12:35</b>	<b>LUNCH – Please bring a packed lunch</b>		
13:15	5	<b>Main Paper:</b> LBAP Annual Reporting	Sarah Slater
13:45	6	<b>Main Paper:</b> s42 List Amendments	Stephen Bladwell
14:15	7	Papers to Note: - <b>A:</b> Wildlife Crime Update - <b>B:</b> Academic Workshop Outputs - <b>C:</b> Cardiff LBAP Pilot 2012/13 Update - <b>D:</b> Working Together Consultation for the Water Framework Directive	Matt Howells Tracey Lovering Laura Palmer Nick Birula
14:35	8	Feedback from WCMP	
14:40	9	Four Countries Update	
14:50	10	Confirm minutes and actions from last meeting	
15:00	11	AOB	
15:15	12	<b>Date of next meeting</b>  19 <sup>th</sup> February 2013: Swansea Environment Centre	
15:30	<b>Afternoon tea and finish</b>		

A regular train service operates from Bangor see [www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk) for details.

## **WBPSG18**

### **PAPER 01**

**14<sup>th</sup> November 2012**

## **LIFE Natura 2000 Programme for Wales**

### ***Background/Plans***

#### **Aim of the project**

To develop a strategic programme for the management and restoration of SACs and SPAs in Wales for the period 2014-20 and beyond. It will be prioritised, detailed, costed and agreed by relevant stakeholders.

#### **Purpose/benefits of the LIFE Natura 2000 (N2K) Programme**

- To enable Wales to make significant progress towards bringing N2K site features into favourable condition and help meet its commitments under the European Habitats and Birds Directives.
- To provide a basis for obtaining increased levels of funding from all possible sources, and to integrate N2K funding into other financial instruments and policy areas.
- To bring together all relevant stakeholders in the public, private and voluntary sectors to pool the best available knowledge and expertise and obtain the maximum level of approval and support for the plans, so that implementation can begin as soon as possible.

#### **Project Objectives**

- 1) Gather data/information to create a sound evidence base – to include assessments of issues and risks to features, current and potential new management mechanisms, as well as contracts to fill evidence gaps.
- 2) Review current funding arrangement and identify and evaluate potential new sources of funding (via a major contract).
- 3) Produce Action Plans (implementation plans) for every N2K site, plus additional ones for themes and regions, detailing activities, costs, timetables, potential funding sources, priorities and responsibilities.
- 4) Publish the overarching, strategic Programme for N2K sites in Wales, setting out national priorities, principles, total costings and funding.
- 5) Use a range of communications methods to ensure maximum awareness of the project, consultation at all stages and dissemination of the findings.
- 6) Develop the CCW Actions Database to store Programme data and enable results to be easily accessed and updated.

## **Scope**

All N2K sites in Wales, including its territorial waters (i.e. marine and terrestrial sites) will be included. This comprises 20 SPAs and 92 SACs wholly or partly in Wales, with a total area of 703,853 ha. The Programme will consider issues and actions inside and outside Natura 2000 site boundaries.

## **Involvement of stakeholder organisations**

The contribution of stakeholders at all stages is key to the success of the project. The aim is to produce mutually acceptable solutions that can be implemented as soon as possible by those responsible for delivery.

Stakeholders organisations will include those representing farmers, landowners, the fishing industry, site managers, site users, conservationists, regulators, academics, CCW Regions and HQ Groups, other environmental agencies and decision-makers, particularly the Welsh Government.

The project team will attend existing forums, networks and groups, and will meet with individual organisations. In addition there will be an inception event for senior staff and a programme of 24 technical workshops and seminars.

## **Links to other initiatives**

The LIFE N2K Programme will work alongside the Special Sites Programme and build upon work already completed by the SSP (e.g. Actions Database). The SSP will focus on coordinating the delivery of current actions for all protected sites, while LIFE N2K Programme will plan for future actions on N2K sites.

The LIFE N2K team will seek to work with WBP and its component groups as a key stakeholder in their own right, and as a means to communicate with and involve partner organisations.

The Prioritised Action Framework (PAF) for Wales is a separate initiative, but the PAF will inform the development of the LIFE N2K Programme, and the Programme will provide the primary and substantive basis for review and elaboration of future iterations of the PAF.

## **Details**

Project duration	1 <sup>st</sup> Sept 2012 – 31 <sup>st</sup> Dec 2014
Project Owner (Chair Project Steering Group)	David Worrall, CCW, West Regional Director
Project Manager	Kathryn Hewitt, CCW, Terrestrial Ecosystems Group
Project Team	Project Administrator Data Manager Freshwater & Wetlands Coordinator Terrestrial Coordinator Marine Coordinator Species Coordinator

Funding/budget	EU LIFE+ Nature, CCW €1,330,276 / £1,000,000 LIFE: 50% = €665,138 / £500,000 CCW: 50% = £500,000
Contact	LIFE N2K Programme Manager, Countryside Council for Wales, Maes y Ffynnon, Penrhosgarnedd, BANGOR, LL57 2DW Tel: 01248 387184, E-mail: <a href="mailto:K.Hewitt@CCW.gov.uk">K.Hewitt@CCW.gov.uk</a> Web site: <a href="http://www.ccw.gov.uk">http://www.ccw.gov.uk</a>
Supported by LIFE, a financial instrument of the European Community. LIFE 11 NAT/UK/385	
 	

### ***Decision Points***

To endorse the aims and objectives of the LIFE N2K Programme.

To agree to contribute to the project (e.g. provision of information and advice, consultation on outputs, approval of Programme at relevant stages), via the relevant WBP groups.

**WBPSG18**  
**PAPER 02**  
**14<sup>th</sup> November 2012**

**Piloting the UK Biodiversity Action Reporting System (BARS)**

***Background/Progress***

BARS is the only web based system capable of collating and reporting on biodiversity action undertaken anywhere in the UK and its marine environment. WBP and CCW have provided a financial contribution to this system over the last 10 years and have supported its development from a database to a map based system. The system is currently hosted, maintained and developed by JNCC, who also coordinate the Project Board meetings and manage the MoA. The current investment from Wales is £13,000 and the system is freely available to users. BARS has enormous potential to support a range of reporting requirements as well as providing important information to help make decisions on future action priorities. CCW and WBP as financial contributors sit on the BARS UK Project Board and are able to contribute to the annual development programme.

A new map based version of BARS was launched on the 18th April 2012. The new system has been built from the ground up to offer a consolidated pot of action data describing individual actions taken to benefit biodiversity, enabling BARS to offer a range of powerful mapping and summary tools. Actions can then be linked to a project or range of projects enabling the collation of information at different levels.

The new system will provide an important source of evidence to support delivery and reporting of work within the UK to protect and enhance important habitats and species. BARS offers a central tool to collate such data which is typically held in widely distributed sources and in a range of formats.

**What does the new version of BARS offer?**

- Contribute information about your own biodiversity actions, either as standalone actions or as part of a wider project. Each project is represented on their own webpage within BARS comprising their description and details/summaries of the actions grouped beneath them.
- Use the Action Maps to explore the geographic distribution of action data held in BARS and refine your search using a number of filters (habitat, species, date, lead organisation, biodiversity objective etc.). A dynamic legend allows either action status or action type to be readily distinguished by the colour of points or polygons on the map.
- Use the Action Reports to find out how much action is being undertaken for specific biodiversity features or within a specific location.
- Anyone can register a user account on BARS. Once they have they can either submit a request to register a new organisation or apply to join an organisation already registered on BARS.

**Piloting BARS in 2012 / 2013**

Whilst the new system was under development WBP undertook to engage key partners across WBP. Several meetings were held during 2011/12 to discuss potential use of the new system and alignment with existing, internal, action reporting systems.

In parallel WBP has been undertaking a priority action mapping exercise, in order to provide a strategic view of Wales' biodiversity resource and future goals at a national scale. This work can inform the work of a wide range of bodies including the statutory agencies, WG, Local Authorities, NGOs and the private sector and focus action on those habitats/species in greatest need of management. Priority areas identified by 4 of the WBP terrestrial ecosystem groups will be added to BARS as a boundary layer this year. This will help communicate priority areas to other stakeholders as well as showing how action undertaken is aligned to priorities and where gaps exist.

In England BARS has been identified as an important tool to support reporting against their Biodiversity Strategy 2020 outcomes 1a, 1b and 3 (see Annex 01). In Wales national targets and the framework for delivery of these targets are still being developed. Our priority is therefore to build the user community and increase the data on the system. As part of this work the functionality of the new system is tested, enabling feedback and input into the development on an annual basis, to ensure that the system meets our requirements in the future.

WBP and CCW currently have three pilots underway. These aim to test BARS functionality, and explore the role and value of BARS in Wales with a view to using BARS to contribute to a range of reporting requirements including supporting future Wales level reporting.

#### **Pilots**

1. **A new approach to LBAP coordination** and delivery in Wales, piloted by Cardiff Council through their LBAP (see *Paper to Note C*). The work will promote the use of BARS data by local partners and allow easy compatibility with the WBP Ecosystem Groups priority areas, allowing strategic areas to be identified and more appropriate allocation of funding to deliver biodiversity works on the ground.
2. **Grant reporting** using the new 'project' functionality in BARS. Work during 2012/13 will focus on two key grant schemes in Wales; the Welsh Government funded Ecosystem, Resilience and Diversity funding (ERD), administered by CCW and the Environment Wales (EW), Biodiversity Grant Fund, both of which are guided by the WBP Ecosystem Group priorities. Guidance has been produced, and support is available to help those involved. These pilots will test the reporting functionality on BARS and provide feedback to the 2013/14 BARS development programme, and other funding bodies. Both pilots allow reporting against individual projects as well as access to aggregated statistics on total activity undertaken by the ERD or the EW projects. In addition BARS provides a spatial overview of the distribution of the actions supported by these schemes. .
3. **Data transfer** from bespoke systems is an important part of building the data content on BARS. England is currently working to transfer Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) agri-environment action data to BARS and the Environment Agency already transfer action data from their habitat restoration projects on an annual basis. CCW will be transferring action data on species and heathland to BARS in the next few months with the aim of completing this work for the remaining habitats once the Single Body has been established, following which regular updates can be provided

#### **Building BARS use in Wales**

Two formal training events, led by Natural England, were held in Cardiff and Wrexham earlier in the year. The aim of these events was to build a core group of users who can advocate use of the system to the wider biodiversity community. A number of other

informal training events have been held across Wales with Local Authorities, National Parks, Statutory Bodies and NGOs. Two further events will be held in the New Year to update users on new developments and increased functionality and explore future uses.

LBAPs are a key audience in Wales and coordination and communication of their work should be central to any landscape scale approach. To assist this work draft guidance is being developed around representation of BAPs within BARS and project collaboration, which will be circulated shortly for consultation.

The abovementioned grants pilots will also give individuals in several organisations experience of BARS use and will provide real examples to demonstrate how BARS can support different reporting needs within organisations, partnerships and for government and statutory authorities. Future work will look at building BARS in as a condition of grant for different funding streams ensuring that information on biodiversity action is set in the wider context, and supports wider reporting beyond that of the individual funding body. This will also encourage a wider user community.

### **Additional data transfer initiatives**

Without good data content the practical benefits of BARS cannot be fully realised. In order to progress this work Wales will be, to some extent, reliant on work undertaken at a UK level as many of the larger NGOs collate action information centrally across the four countries. Despite these limitations it is envisaged that work will be undertaken at a Wales level to assist some smaller NGOs with data mobilisation. Inclusion of this, as well as National (UK) action data will help inform and encourage partners and projects to both use and contribute to the system.

Initial effort for data import in Wales will focus on Welsh Agri-Environment Scheme (AES) data, to ensure AES work is represented in BARS. Representing this within BARS will help inform local partnerships and better enable them to design and target their own biodiversity action. The proposal is to focus initial effort on biodiversity options under the targeted elements of Glastir Advanced. This work will be supported by Natural England who has already completed this work for England. The availability of action underway thorough Glastir coupled with sites data from the CCW sites database will provide a much more comprehensive view of habitat and species action in Wales.

### **Contribution of BARS to Wales reporting**

Once the Single Body has been established and the review of the Wales Biodiversity Partnership is complete we will build on the work of the pilots to identify how BARS can be used to support delivery of, and reporting on the ecosystem approach in Wales. In the interim however, action data from BARS can contribute and add value to reporting against a number of targets contained within the UK Biodiversity Indicators, most notably A3; B1a; B1b; B6; C2;C3; D2 (Annex 01)

Although BARS cannot help monitor or formally report favourable condition, recovering condition has been defined by the England Terrestrial Biodiversity Group (TBG) to include habitat under appropriate management, i.e. management likely to result in favourable condition being achieved. As such, BARS can help report action equating to appropriate management on sites where habitat condition or management is not otherwise known. In most cases this will be habitat management action not delivered through Agri-environment schemes and occurring outside SSSIs.

## **Additional Development**

The development programme for 2012/13 has been agreed across the four UK countries and will be released in in phases over the next 3-5 months. This development will significantly increase the ability of BARS to support action planning and reporting. Current pilots will inform a development programme in 2013/14.

## **Decision Points**

- To endorse Wales engagement with the BARS and support continued investment in this project.
- To agree that BARS has a role in supporting the reporting commitments of the new Single Body, and of 'A Living Wales' including a commitment to test BARS as a reporting tool for any Living Wales Pilot projects
- To agree the initial focus on Glastir Target Element Biodiversity Actions (Glastir Advanced) and ask Welsh Government to work with WBP to advance this work in 2013/14.
- To encourage use/testing in your own organisations with a view to building the data on BARS including making sure that appropriate staff are identified who have the skills/time to use the system effectively.
- Partner organisations to agree to promote collaboration with LBAPs through the use of BARS where this adds value to local biodiversity action planning and reporting and/or that of your own organisation.

## WBPSG18

### PAPER 02: ANNEX 01

14<sup>th</sup> November 2012

## Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services<sup>1</sup>. Outcomes 1a, 1b and 3

- **Outcome 1A:** Better wildlife habitats with 90% of priority habitats in favourable or recovering condition and at least 50% of SSSIs in favourable condition, while maintaining at least 95% in favourable or recovering condition.
- **Outcome 1B:** More, bigger and less fragmented areas for wildlife, with no net loss of priority habitat and an increase in the overall extent of priority habitats by at least 200,000 ha.
- **Outcome 3:** By 2020, we will see an overall improvement in the status of our wildlife and will have prevented further human-induced extinctions of known threatened species.

## UK Biodiversity Indicators<sup>2</sup> A3; B1a; B1b; B6; C2; C3; D2.

- **A3:** Value of biodiversity integrated into decision making
- **B1a:** Area of land in agri-environment schemes
- **B1b:** Area of forestry land certified as sustainably managed
- **B6:** Pressure from invasive species
- **C2:** Habitat connectivity
- **C3:** Status of threatened habitats
- **D2:** Biodiversity and ecosystem services (other)

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.defra.gov.uk/publications/files/pb13583-biodiversity-strategy-2020-111111.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-4229>

## **WBPSG18**

### **PAPER 03**

**14<sup>th</sup> November 2012**

## **Adoption of the Wales Biodiversity Framework**

### ***Background***

To deliver on biodiversity priorities, Wales needs governance arrangements that make the best possible use of the expertise and capacity of statutory agencies, local and national park authorities, and the third sector, whilst providing clarity on authority and accountability. The Wales Biodiversity Partnership, and the strong partnership ethos it espouses, offers a strong foundation upon which to evolve a framework which provides a clear line of sight from strategy to local delivery and fully utilises the distinctive capabilities of all organisations involved. The adoption of the European Union Biodiversity Strategy (EUBS) Common Implementation Framework offers a model which Wales can reflect in its governance arrangements, thus ensuring that the EUBS targets are fully covered, and increasing the potential for Wales to influence policy at member state and EU level.

An outline proposal was discussed at the previous WBP Steering Group meeting, and a workshop to further develop and refine the approach was held at the WBP conference in September 2012. The proposal presented today combines the comments from both those sessions and the recommendations from the review of WBP.

### ***Proposal***

The proposed Wales Biodiversity Framework is included as Annexes to this paper. It includes the intention by Welsh Government to establish:

- A Welsh Government Natural Resources Policy Forum
- A Wales Biodiversity Strategy Board
- Four Working Groups on Natura 2000, the ecosystem approach, Invasive Non Native Species, and Surveillance & Reporting.

The relationship between these groups with each other and any existing groups operating in that arena is outlined in the Framework. The changes to the Wales Biodiversity Partnership as it currently exists relate to clarifying its particular role, scope, and where it receives its operational mandate.

### ***Decision Point***

To endorse the Wales Biodiversity Framework as set out in the Annex, and work with Welsh Government to establish the Framework, review existing activity, and draft precise terms of reference for endorsement by the Wales Biodiversity Strategy Board.

## **Annex 1**

### **Wales Biodiversity Framework**

#### **1. Purpose**

The Welsh Government and its partners have a responsibility as part of the UK to help deliver and implement the EU Biodiversity Strategy 'Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020' (EUBS).

The Wales Biodiversity Framework clarifies the partnership and integrated approach that delivering for biodiversity demands, and provides clarity on accountability and authority for:

1. Advice to Welsh Government in relation to how best to deliver the 2020 targets in Wales;
2. A robust evidence, monitoring and reporting mechanism so we know what we've achieved, and what we still need to do;
3. Integrating biodiversity issues throughout the Welsh position on the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) and Cohesion Policy where practicable; and
4. Harnessing to the full expertise and capacity in a coordinated way to tackle the barriers to halting biodiversity loss as part of an ecosystem approach.
5. Delivery on the ground which informs and is informed by strategic priorities for Wales' biodiversity.

The Biodiversity Wales Framework illustrates the governance relationships for the development of a clear action plan for delivering the benefits of biodiversity in Wales; from strategy to action. It identifies who is responsible and accountable for informing and confirming delivery priorities and programmes, the allocation of effort, and the reporting of progress. The intention also is to ensure that responsibilities are better aligned with the distinctive capabilities of each of the partner organisations, thus strengthening the partnership approach and its potential to deliver lasting benefits for biodiversity.

For Welsh Government, the framework recognises the importance of linking across to other governance frameworks for agriculture, forestry, marine, and water, thus enabling robust and consistent approaches to be adopted which maximise the effectiveness and efficiency of integrated policy and delivery. By reflecting closely the EU's own Common Implementation Framework, Wales is positioned to influence UK and EU approaches to biodiversity.

For Natural Resources Wales, it builds on the Welsh Government's preferred approach for joint working towards shared outcomes, whilst providing clarity for how its biodiversity 'day job' is integrated fully into the Welsh programme for biodiversity.

For local authorities and the third sector it provides representation at a senior level into the programme, as well as clear pathways for local delivery to influence and be informed by strategic priorities.

## **2. Sustaining a Living Wales**

The central proposal of Sustaining a Living Wales is to move to an ecosystem approach to environmental regulation and management. This will mean considering and regulating the environment and its health as a whole rather than dealing with individual aspects separately. It will mean weighing up and setting priorities for the many competing demands on our natural resources to provide different services to society – ranging from the value of the environment in itself, to food production to land for construction. And it will result in us taking steps at both local and national level that will help to maximise the environmental, economic and social opportunities available to us as a nation.

Overall we expect the new approach will:

- improve the resilience and diversity of our environment and its supporting biodiversity;
- provide simpler and more cost-effective regulation; and
- offer greater certainty for decision-makers.

This is an important part of our commitment to sustainable development and to establishing the positive climate for sustainable long-term investment and job creation in both our urban and rural communities that is particularly vital in the current times.

## **3. Headline Priorities for Biodiversity**

The headline priorities in Wales are derived from the Convention on Biological Diversity and the associated Aichi targets, and the response to this by the EU in ‘Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020.’ Wales endorses the vision and target from this strategy, and the plan for Wales and associated governance is intended to enable Wales to both meet its statutory obligations to natural resources and work towards the achievement of the EUBS targets:

### **2050 vision**

By 2050, European Union biodiversity and the ecosystem services it provides — its natural capital — are protected, valued and appropriately restored for biodiversity's intrinsic value and for their essential contribution to human wellbeing and economic prosperity, and so that catastrophic changes caused by the loss of biodiversity are avoided.

### **2020 headline target**

Halting the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystem services in the EU by 2020, and restoring them in so far as feasible, while stepping up the EU contribution to averting global biodiversity loss

The six targets of the EU Biodiversity Strategy, full text included as Annex 2:

- Target 1: Fully implement the Birds and Habitats Directives
- Target 2: Maintain and restore ecosystems and their services
- Target 3: Increase the contribution of agriculture and forestry to biodiversity

- Target 4: Ensure the sustainable use of fisheries resources  
Target 5: Combat Invasive Alien Species  
Target 6: Step-up action to tackle the global biodiversity crisis.

#### **4. Format and Composition of Groups Comprising the Wales Biodiversity Framework**

##### **4.1. Welsh Government Natural Resources Policy Forum**

*Mandate:* To deliver effective integration across and between relevant Welsh Government policy portfolios. Has a general oversight of natural resources issues, including biodiversity, within Wales and Welsh Government and will provide guidance and direction on Welsh Ministers' priorities in relation to policy and implementation to the Wales Biodiversity Strategy Board and other groups. Provides an internal forum for open discussion on natural resource issues, and adoption of consensus on strategic policy issues.

*Format:* The meeting is limited to natural resource related policy leads within Welsh Government, with a view to enabling an open and frank exchange of views and discussion on experiences and challenges.

*Composition:* Director and Deputy-Directors for natural resource policy areas within Welsh Government. The Chair, and responsibility for agenda and secretariat, to rotate through the Divisions.

*Frequency of Meetings:* Quarterly

*Expected Output:* Ensure that the ecosystem approach and the Welsh Government aspirations for Sustaining a Living Wales are taken forward consistently across Welsh Government, and are aligned with EU Biodiversity targets.

##### **4.2. Wales Biodiversity Strategy Board**

*Mandate:* Develop, deliver and communicate priorities for biodiversity in Wales aligned with the targets and objectives within the EU Biodiversity Strategy. Lead on meeting the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Strategic Plan 2011 -2020 Target 17 to develop and commence implementing an effective, participatory and updated national biodiversity strategy and action plan by 2015.

Coordinating, prioritising, and promoting activity to ensure biodiversity conservation (protection, enhancement and restoration) and associated benefits for ecosystem structure and function are planned and delivered at the appropriate scale.

Establish and oversee expert working groups as appropriate, and provide oversight and direction for the activities of the Wales Biodiversity Partnership and its sub-groups. Provide a regular report to the Minister for Environment and Sustainable Development on progress against agreed actions, and forward strategic issues that emerge from the Wales Biodiversity Partnership and/or the working groups.

The operational plan for Natural Resource Wales on biodiversity matters will be derived from the priorities set by the Wales Biodiversity Strategy Board. There should be a clear connection between the direction and priorities in the strategy and the operational activity of NRW on biodiversity.

The Board takes overall responsibility for the Wales Biodiversity Framework, and endorses the establishment and terms of reference and targets for all Working Groups. It ensure that there is clear reporting on progress towards the 2020 target, and that all working groups and the Wales Biodiversity Partnership are held accountable for delivering their agreed programmes.

Leads on the input from Wales to EU activity relating to halting global biodiversity loss (Target 6).

*Format:* 'Executive Group' Chaired by a senior officer of Welsh Government.

*Composition:* Eight to ten members who are senior officers from statutory agencies and NGOs (i.e. Chief Executive Officer or Director level, or equivalent), including the chair of the Wales Biodiversity Partnership.

*Frequency of Meetings:* Quarterly

*Expected Output:* A Wales Biodiversity Strategy, aligned with EU Biodiversity Strategy, and oversight of the associated programmes.

#### **4.2.1. Working Groups**

The purpose of the working groups is to take forward key actions to deliver the strategy in a coordinated way.

Three working groups are proposed for the duration of the strategy, reflecting the need to draw together more explicitly activity which contributes (or seeks to contribute) to delivery of the associated EUBS target. A fourth working group is also proposed to ensure a fit for purpose and streamlined approach to surveillance and reporting on natural resource matters.

The working groups proposed are:

- Nature Conservation and Natura 2000 (Target 1 EUBS)
- Ecosystems and Green Infrastructure Working Group (Target 2)
- Invasive Non-Native Species Working Group (Target 5)
- Surveillance Monitoring and Reporting Working Group

The scope to add further working groups, as required, ensures that the framework can evolve, and that authority and accountability for further working groups on biodiversity are clear from the outset.

All working groups will review current activity and action within their remit, and be responsible for proposing to the Wales Biodiversity Strategy Board how this is to be streamlined into an efficient and effective programme of action within this framework.

*Mandate:* Develop detailed plans and actions to deliver on priorities for biodiversity in areas where: activity needs to be coordinated across a number of projects; new

approaches need to be developed, piloted, or demonstrated; or where there is a need to address new and/or time limited work. Reporting progress, successes, and issues to the WBSB

The Nature Conservation and Natura 2000 WG will subsume the current Outcome 21 Group from the outset, and will review and plan the necessary action for taking forward the 2020 target. It will coordinate the action required to meet Wales' obligations for the management of sites of international and European importance, e.g. Ramsar and Natura 2000.

The Ecosystem and Green Infrastructure Working Group provides a focus for the various activities that have emerged in this area during the development of Sustaining a Living Wales. A UK level group on this area of the EUBS is also proposed, and it is therefore important that the progress and approach in Wales can impact on both the member state approach and the work being directly coordinated by the European Commission.

The Invasive Non Native Species Working Group will replace the Wales INNS Group, but adopt its purpose to provide advice to Welsh Government and statutory agencies in Wales on delivery of the Invasive Non-native Species Framework Strategy for Great Britain as it relates to Wales.

The Surveillance Monitoring and Reporting Working Group includes reporting tasks under the Habitats, Birds, Water Framework, and Marine Framework Strategy Directives, and thus is intended to feature within their associated frameworks. This is essential in order to ensure that effort is coordinated and that, at a time of pressure on resources, opportunities for 'collect once, use often' are fully realised. This group would also provide oversight of the activities and services of the Local Record Centres.

*Format:* Working Groups

*Composition:* Chaired by a relevant senior officer from Welsh Government, with membership drawn from relevant experts from statutory agencies and NGOs who have a direct policy or programme responsibility for work which falls under the remit of the Working Group.

*Frequency of Meetings:* Quarterly

*Expected Output:* Development and delivery of detailed implementation plans which coordinate action effectively.

### **4.3. Wales Biodiversity Partnership**

*Mandate:* The Partnership provides the operational steering group for the implementation of biodiversity priorities in Wales.

It exists to ensure that Welsh priorities for conservation and enhancement of biodiversity are promoted, understood and rooted in policies, strategies and decisions at the local level, including providing a platform to secure the commitment and engagement of local government. The partnership approach can help raise awareness of, and provide a focus for, local biodiversity initiatives which facilitate joined-up local environmental action and stimulate effective local delivery

partnerships to ensure programmes for biodiversity and natural environment conservation are developed and maintained in the long term.

The expertise that the Partnership draws together will be utilised to review and advise on the work carried out by the working groups and its own sub-groups, and ensure that linkages are made between strategy and local delivery.

It is also encouraged to discuss and provide views on issues that require strategic decisions or guidance from the Wales Biodiversity Strategy Board, and to communicate decisions from the Board back to its members. Provide a forum for discussion, debate and consensus on policy matters; recommendations from this activity would be made to the Board.

Provides a platform to share experience, good practice, and lessons learned.

The Partnership will be guided by a work programme decided by the WBSB, and adopted by consensus. The financial support for local biodiversity action provided by Natural Resource Wales will align with the Strategy and the Partnership's work programme.

*Format:* Forum

*Composition:* It will be the responsibility of Natural Resource Wales to provide a senior officer to Chair the Partnership, and ensure there is adequate secretariat support. The current WBP secretariat arrangements (agreed until 2014), with small adjustments to reflect the new relationships required by this Wales Biodiversity Framework, provides a useful starting point and continuity during the establishment of Natural Resources Wales. The membership of the Partnership is made up of organisations, not individuals, and each representative must have authority to make resource and policy commitments in support of the delivery of the Partnership work programme.

*Frequency of Meetings:* Every six months, plus an annual conference.

*Expected Output:* Coordinated and effective local action for biodiversity, and the maintenance of a pool of biodiversity expertise in Wales.

#### **4.3.1. Wales Ecosystem Groups and Species Expert Group**

*Mandate:* Technical groups of leading experts on each of Wales' ecosystems, who help to inform priorities and actions. They derive their work programmes from the approved WBP work programme. Develop advice and guidance on appropriate action to halt biodiversity loss and aid recovery of ecosystems and biodiversity.

They identify research and information gaps relevant to securing the protection and restoration of biodiversity and ecosystems in Wales, and communicate these via the Wales Biodiversity Partnership to the Surveillance, Monitoring and Reporting Working Group.

The Species Expert Group supports the conservation (protection, enhancement and restoration) of Wales' priority species' their habitats and, their supporting structures and functions in the wider environment.

inform policy development, delivery and action through provision of appropriate biological data and scientific evidence; and to facilitate the use of species as measures of success in delivering sustainable development and ecosystem restoration.

The groups will also service, by commission and expressed in the Partnership Work Programme, the conservation and biodiversity priorities that emerge for agriculture, forestry, and marine.

*Format:* Expert Groups

*Composition:* Natural Resources Wales will provide the lead and support for each of the groups to ensure that their activity is fully integrated into its operational activity.

*Frequency of Meetings:* As required to deliver priorities set out by the Wales Biodiversity Strategy Board and Working Groups.

*Expected Output:* The specific outputs of the groups will depend on the technical requirements of a Wales Biodiversity Strategy, but can be expected to include such activity as: delivering expert workshops to promote best practice management of habitats and ecosystems based on field experience and the latest conservation science; providing an informed view of biodiversity and ecosystem conservation requirements; synthesised advice directly or via the Wales Biodiversity Partnership to Welsh Government's Biodiversity Strategy Board, statutory authorities and others with management responsibilities; reviews and updates of habitat/ecosystem needs in line with the Wales Biodiversity Strategy and the multi annual work programme of the Wales Biodiversity Partnership.

## **5. Summary of Relationships and Accountability**

The diagram at Annex 3 illustrates the Wales Biodiversity Framework. It also includes for each of the groups within the Framework some, but not all, of the existing groups and forums at European, UK, and Wales levels where the group would provide the link to and from Wales and to the Wales Biodiversity Strategy. As part of establishing formal terms of reference, each group would be required to review all such groups that fall within its remit with a view to streamlining both the number and the relationship.

**Welsh Ministers** establish the policy direction and the **Welsh Government Natural Resources Forum** provides the coordination across Welsh Government of subsequent priorities and negotiating positions.

The **Wales Biodiversity Strategy Board** derives its mandate from Welsh Ministers priorities and their statutory obligations, and translates this into a strategy and maintains oversight of the implementation of the resulting programme. It decides on the work programmes of the **Working Groups** and the **Wales Biodiversity Partnership**.

The **Wales Biodiversity Partnership** provides the operational steering group and support for local biodiversity action.

## **Annex 2: The EU Biodiversity Strategy Targets**

### **Target 1**

To halt the deterioration in the status of all species and habitats covered by EU nature legislation and achieve a significant and measurable improvement in their status so that, by 2020, compared to current assessments: (i) 100% more habitat assessments and 50% more species assessments under the Habitats Directive show an improved conservation status; and (ii) 50% more species assessments under the Birds Directive show a secure or improved status.

### **Target 2**

By 2020, ecosystems and their services are maintained and enhanced by establishing green infrastructure and restoring at least 15 % of degraded ecosystems.

### **Target 3**

A) Agriculture: By 2020, maximise areas under agriculture across grasslands, arable land and permanent crops that are covered by biodiversity-related measures under the CAP so as to ensure the conservation of biodiversity and to bring about a measurable improvement(\*) in the conservation status of species and habitats that depend on or are affected by agriculture and in the provision of ecosystem services as compared to the EU2010 Baseline, thus contributing to enhance sustainable management.

B) Forests: By 2020, Forest Management Plans or equivalent instruments, in line with Sustainable Forest Management (SFM)<sup>21</sup>, are in place for all forests that are publicly owned and for forest holdings above a certain size\*\* (to be defined by the Member States or regions and communicated in their Rural Development Programmes) that receive funding under the EU Rural Development Policy so as to bring about a measurable improvement(\*) in the conservation status of species and habitats that depend on or are affected by forestry and in the provision of related ecosystem services as compared to the EU 2010 Baseline.

### **Target 4**

Fisheries: Achieve Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) by 2015. Achieve a population age and size distribution indicative of a healthy stock, through fisheries management with no significant adverse impacts on other stocks, species and ecosystems, in support of achieving Good Environmental Status by 2020, as required under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive.

### **Target 5**

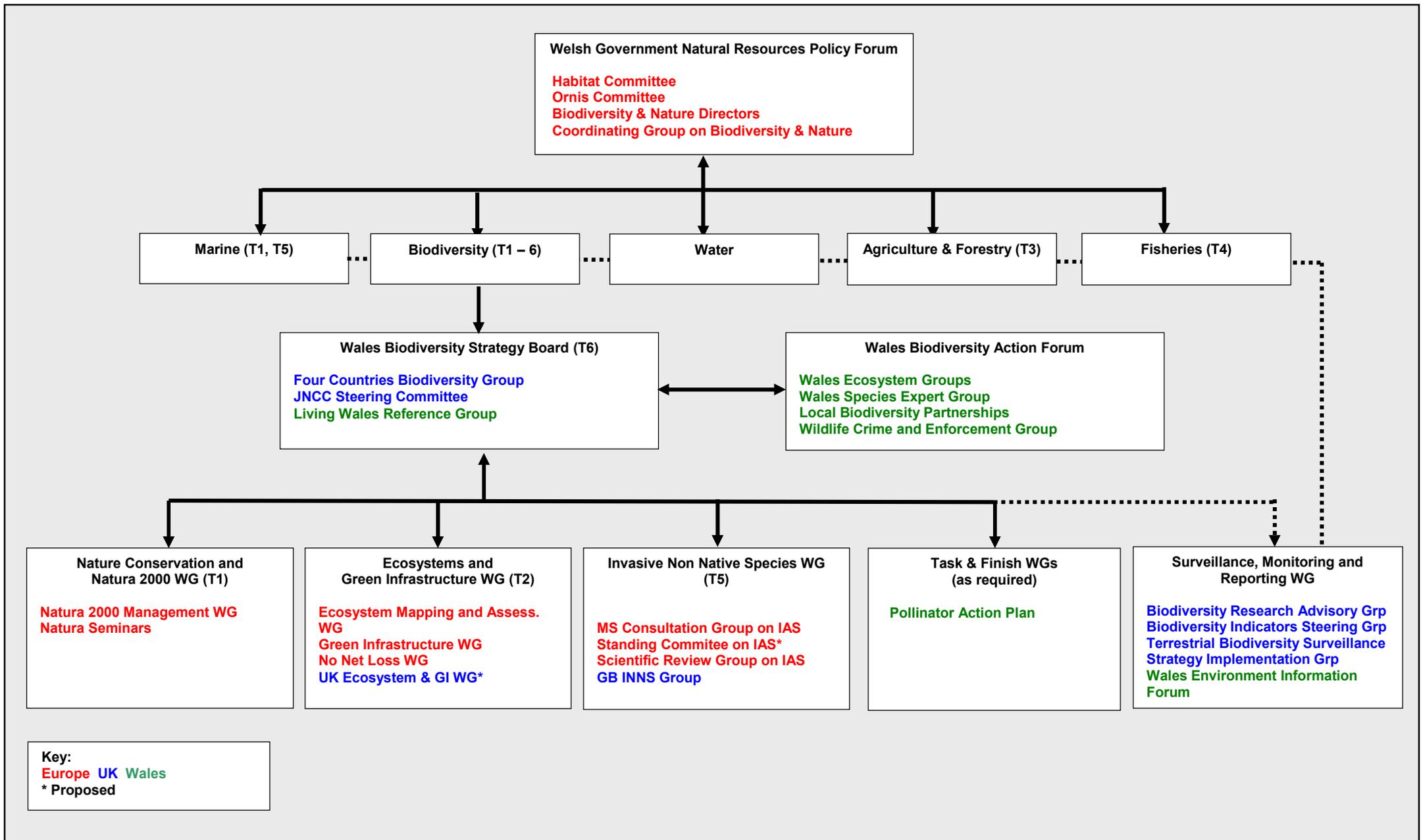
By 2020, Invasive Alien Species and their pathways are identified and prioritised, priority species are controlled or eradicated, and pathways are managed to prevent the introduction and establishment of new IAS.

### **Target 6**

By 2020, the EU has stepped up its contribution to averting global biodiversity loss.

### Annex 3

## Biodiversity Wales Framework: responding to the EU Biodiversity Strategy Common Implementation Framework



**WBPSG18**  
**PAPER 04**  
**14<sup>th</sup> November 2012**

***Title: Local Authority and National Park Biodiversity Officer Group Projects update***

***Produced by: Local Authority and National Park Biodiversity Officer Groups***

***Background/Progress***

Local authority and National Park biodiversity officers from both south and north Wales hold regular meetings to discuss issues of common interest and to progress regional and joint initiatives. This paper to note summarises some successes, regional projects and planned future projects across Welsh LBAP areas.

<b>Project title: Wildlife site surveys</b>			
<b>Project description:</b> Wildlife site work is going on in a number of North Wales Local authorities. Gwynedd and Flintshire both received funding through the planning improvement grant to undertake this work. Gwynedd are undertaking surveys of a sample of their candidate wildlife sites. In Flintshire the North Wales record centre, Cofnod will be undertaking a desk based review of boundaries with future ground truthing. A similar project has also been undertaken in Anglesey.			
		<b>LBAP area</b>	<b>Contact</b>
<b>Ecosystem services enhanced</b>	Enhanced protection of wildlife sites could improve carbon store, wildlife value, pollination	Gwynedd, Flintshire and Anglesey County Councils	Emily Meilluer <a href="mailto:EmilytheaMeilleur@gwynedd.gov.uk">EmilytheaMeilleur@gwynedd.gov.uk</a> Sarah Slater <a href="mailto:sarah.slater@flintshire.gov.uk">sarah.slater@flintshire.gov.uk</a>
<b>Biodiversity Gain delivered</b>	Improving the evidence base for planning policy		

<b>Project title: Hay meadows project</b>			
<b>Project description:</b> A small project to investigate the viability of a project for hay meadows, to identify hay meadows and to find out if there is a market for hay and to match hay producers and those who want hay.			
		<b>LBAP area</b>	<b>Contact</b>
<b>Ecosystem services enhanced</b>	Potential enhancement of grassland habitats improving carbon storage, pollination	Gwynedd County Council	Emily Meilleur <a href="mailto:EmilytheaMeilleur@gwynedd.gov.uk">EmilytheaMeilleur@gwynedd.gov.uk</a>
<b>Biodiversity Gain delivered</b>	Improve the incentives for creating hay meadows		

<b>Project title: North East Wales Orchard Recovery Project</b>			
<b>Project description:</b> Implemented the EDR Funded project over last winter, planted 1000 heritage variety fruit trees over a range of 50 community, school and private sites, undertook school visits, produced an introduction to orchard			

management booklet and ran a well-attended management workshop, the success of the project will be followed up this winter by replacing trees lost in the first year through natural loss. We hope to continue education elements of the project through Flintshire forest schools Plas Derw.			
		<b>LBAP area</b>	<b>Contact</b>
<b>Ecosystem services enhanced</b>	Food production, healthy lifestyles, urban wildlife, pollination	Flintshire County Council, Denbighshire County Council	Sarah Slater <a href="mailto:sarah.slater@flintshire.gov.uk">sarah.slater@flintshire.gov.uk</a>
<b>Biodiversity Gain delivered</b>	Creation and enhancement		

<b>Project title: Swinchiard brook awareness project</b>			
<b>Project description:</b> Following a successful HLF bid, this is a 2 yr. community project led by TCV focussing on improving community use of urban green space with biological recording at the heart of the project and producing teacher and community group activity packs.			
		<b>LBAP area</b>	<b>Contact</b>
<b>Ecosystem services enhanced</b>	Urban wildlife, quality of life, education	Flintshire County Council	Sarah Slater <a href="mailto:sarah.slater@flintshire.gov.uk">sarah.slater@flintshire.gov.uk</a>
<b>Biodiversity Gain delivered</b>	Awareness, biological recording		

<b>Project title: Biodiversity Improvement Project(Conwy CBC) and NERC Audit (DCC)</b>			
<b>Project description:</b> In Denbighshire a biodiversity NERC Audit has been successfully undertaken in Denbighshire County Council with departments signing up to action to enhance biodiversity. A Conwy a review of biodiversity performance led to an improvement plan which was endorsed by the Green Programme Board (GPB). The GPB consists of members and officers and oversees all the Council's environmental projects (others include carbon reduction, eco schools). Implementation of the improvement plan is reported quarterly to the board, which ensures high level commitment to the project across the Council. This does not mean that implementation is easy or straightforward, but commitment at this high, corporate level certainly helps!			
		<b>LBAP area</b>	<b>Contact</b>
<b>Ecosystem services enhanced</b>	Potential for a range	Conwy County Borough Council	Anne Butler <a href="mailto:Anne.Butler@conwy.gov.uk">Anne.Butler@conwy.gov.uk</a>
<b>Biodiversity Gain delivered</b>	Awareness and proposed action		

<b>Project title: Biodiversity Areas</b>			
<b>Project description:</b> The awareness of the Council's Biodiversity areas is increasing with a widespread signage project. The signage explains why the grassland is only cut once a year. These areas are gaining political acceptance and are being proposed as cost-saving measure within the Council.			
		<b>LBAP area</b>	<b>Contact</b>
<b>Ecosystem services enhanced</b>	Increase in diversity, Improvements for pollinators, Carbon storage, Quality of life, Urban wildlife	Conwy County Borough Council	Anne Butler <a href="mailto:Anne.Butler@conwy.gov.uk">Anne.Butler@conwy.gov.uk</a>
<b>Biodiversity Gain delivered</b>	40 biodiversity areas created		

<b>Project title: Peatland Restoration Project (Ongoing)</b>			
<b>Project description:</b> Restoration of an area of blanket bog/raised mire habitat at Ffridd Uchad, near Rhyd Ddu. Approximately 17km of drains to be completely blocked as part of the project. Site has been fenced/marked already, and ditch blocking is due to begin in October 2012.			

		LBAP area	Contact
Ecosystem services enhanced	Water regulation Climate regulation	Snowdonia National park Authority	Gethin Davies <a href="mailto:g.davies@eryri-npa.gov.uk">g.davies@eryri-npa.gov.uk</a>
Biodiversity Gain delivered	Approx. 30ha of blanket bog restoration		

Project title: Himalayan balsam control (2010 – present)			
<p><b>Project description:</b> Controlling the spread of Himalayan balsam in and around Llyn tegid SSSI/SAC. It was surveyed and mapped by SNP Wardens in 2010 and work programmes have been undertaken over the last 2 summers (2011 and 2012) in controlling the invasive species (SNP Wardens and volunteer groups such as Cymdeithas Eryri, Coleg Meirion Dwyfor, Scout groups and local Rotary branch). The results of the project are that approximately 10km of riverside bank has been cleared so far and over 700 bags of balsam collected. Work will continue next year, with the aim of extending control to other catchments within the Park.</p>			
		LBAP area	Contact
Ecosystem services enhanced	Water regulation, improved diversity	Snowdonia National Park Authority	Gethin Davies <a href="mailto:g.davies@eryri-npa.gov.uk">g.davies@eryri-npa.gov.uk</a>
Biodiversity Gain delivered	Invasive Non Native Control		

Project title: Barn Owl Project			
<p><b>Project description:</b> This project is now in its 7<sup>th</sup> year, it has installed barn owl boxes throughout the counties in north east wales. Although probably in its last year of installing boxes the boxes will continue to be monitored by licenced experts and volunteers. The box use rate by breeding barn owls has been high indicating a need as natural breeding sites are lost.</p>			
		LBAP area	Contact
Ecosystem services enhanced	N/A	Wrexham, Denbighshire and Flintshire County Councils	Emma Broad <a href="mailto:Emma.broad@wrexham.gov.uk">Emma.broad@wrexham.gov.uk</a>
Biodiversity Gain delivered	Increased understanding of barn owl populations, habitat creation		

Project title: Pembrokeshire INNS Task & Finish Group			
<p><b>Project description:</b> To examine the current status of INNS in the County and scope for potential threats. Aim to prioritise effort and promote knowledge sharing across the partner organisations.</p>			
		LBAP area	Contact
Ecosystem services enhanced	Too early to report	Pembrokeshire	<a href="mailto:anthony.rogers@pembrokeshire.gov.uk">anthony.rogers@pembrokeshire.gov.uk</a>
Biodiversity Gain delivered	Too early to report		

Project title: Farmland Bird Winter Feeding Project			
<p><b>Project description:</b> Working with local farmer, bird groups and bird recorders to provide supplementary feed for wintering bird species and recording the impact on local populations.</p>			
		LBAP area	Contact
Ecosystem services enhanced		Vale of Glamorgan	<a href="mailto:acrowe@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk">acrowe@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk</a>

<b>Biodiversity Gain delivered</b>	Increase habitat for LBAP bird species and invertebrates		
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<b>Project title: Ewenny River Invasive Species Management</b>			
<b>Project description:</b> Initiated by the Pencoed Anglers. Members of the Bridgend Biodiversity Partnership will work together to coordinate a strategic approach to eradication and management of invasive species in the Ewenny river catchment. Balsam Bashing events were held in 2012 at the top of the catchment by the anglers and the Biodiversity In Common project officer. The project hopes to develop with continued liaison between partners and the continued identification of land owners. Aspirations to expand project to include other rivers in Bridgend.			
		<b>LBAP area</b>	<b>Contact</b>
<b>Ecosystem services enhanced</b>	Fresh Water	Bridgend & Vale of Glamorgan	Geoff Hobbs <a href="mailto:Geoffrey.hobbs@bridgend.gov.uk">Geoffrey.hobbs@bridgend.gov.uk</a> 01656 643196
<b>Biodiversity Gain delivered</b>	Removal of invasive species	Bridgend & Vale of Glamorgan	

<b>Project title: Water vole habitat quality/fragmentation survey</b>			
<b>Project description:</b> This project would look at linkage, habitat quality and enhancement opportunities in the areas around the known water vole site at Morfa Berwig, Llanelli. The output of the survey would be a map/GIS layer showing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• existing areas of good habitat,</li> <li>• sub-optimal habitat that could be improved,</li> <li>• Sites where habitat could be engineered to link the above, etc., and ideally some landowner engagement (and hopefully support)!</li> </ul> This could then be used to build a project bid with external funding, and link into other strategies such as DC/WW need to store surface water in the catchment.			
		<b>LBAP area - CARMARTHENSIRE</b>	<b>Contact</b> Isabel Macho – <a href="mailto:IMacho@carmarthenshire.gov.uk">IMacho@carmarthenshire.gov.uk</a>
<b>Ecosystem services enhanced</b>	Flood prevention/water storage		
<b>Biodiversity Gain delivered</b>	Ultimately increased suitable habitat for water voles, improved coastal grazing marsh and wetland habitats. Increased connectivity of suitable habitat.		

<b>Project title: Brown hairstreak butterfly – volunteer winter egg surveys and habitat management</b>			
<b>Project description:</b> Survey and monitoring of the important brown hairstreak butterfly populations in Carmarthenshire and working with landowners to undertake habitat management work – on hedges and scrub areas. Engagement with volunteers, public events and awareness raising. This project is in its 10 <sup>th</sup> year.			
		<b>LBAP area - CARMARTHENSIRE</b>	<b>Contact</b> Isabel Macho – <a href="mailto:IMacho@carmarthenshire.gov.uk">IMacho@carmarthenshire.gov.uk</a>
<b>Ecosystem services enhanced</b>	Well managed hedgerows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• prevent loss of soil from fields.</li> <li>• reduce the amount of polluting fertilisers, pesticides and sediment</li> </ul>		

	<p>that reach watercourses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• regulate water supply for crops</li> <li>• reduce the rate of flow of water within catchments</li> </ul> <p>Cultural services - value of hedges – important in Carms landscape</p>		
<b>Biodiversity Gain delivered</b>	Increased suitable hedgerow/scrub habitat for the brown hairstreak butterfly, Increased connectivity of suitable habitat.		

<b>Project title:</b> Llechryd natural play and wildlife area			
<b>Project description:</b> Working with RAY Ceredigion (play group provided with funding to improve play areas across the county) and housing association Tai Cyntraf, created the first natural play area and wildlife site within a development site in Ceredigion. This site includes log piles, an insect hotel, native planting, pollinator beds and wildflower meadow. As well as a willow dome, mounds with planks of wood on, fallen tree branches and a stone walled bench (unfortunately not dry stone wall as originally planned). Alternatively this area may have become a concreted standard play area. Although not perfect and lessons to be learnt, this was the first of its kind in Ceredigion and both RAY Ceredigion and Tai Cyntraf are looking to do more in the future, which we will be working with.			
		<b>LBAP area</b>	<b>Contact</b>
<b>Ecosystem services enhanced</b>	Water retention Purification of air Crop pollination Carbon sequestration Climate regulation	Ceredigion	Leanne Bird <a href="mailto:Leanne.bird@ceredigion.gov.uk">Leanne.bird@ceredigion.gov.uk</a> 01545 572142
<b>Biodiversity Gain delivered</b>	Lowland meadow Street trees Food and habitat for pollinators and other insects Awareness raising to RAY Ceredigion, Tai Cyntraf and residents		

<b>Project title:</b> Bee Orchid Project			
<b>Project description:</b> A project to protect and manage two areas in Newport for the preservation of Bee Orchid			
		<b>LBAP area</b>	<b>Contact</b>
<b>Ecosystem services enhanced</b>		Newport City Council	Lucy Kelly <a href="mailto:Lucy.kelly@newport.gov.uk">Lucy.kelly@newport.gov.uk</a>
<b>Biodiversity Gain delivered</b>	Protection of a dwindling species		

<b>Project title:</b> Accessible Natural Greenspace			
<b>Project description:</b> Project to identify Accessible Natural Greenspace within Newport			
		<b>LBAP area</b>	<b>Contact</b>
<b>Ecosystem services enhanced</b>		Newport City Council	Lucy Kelly <a href="mailto:Lucy.kelly@newport.gov.uk">Lucy.kelly@newport.gov.uk</a>
<b>Biodiversity Gain delivered</b>	Retaining greenspace		

<b>Project title: Tree Planting at Maesglas Landfill</b>			
<b>Project description:</b> A tree planting project to enhance biodiversity, to provide screening and also to contribute towards the Green Lung			
		<b>LBAP area</b>	<b>Contact</b>
<b>Ecosystem services enhanced</b>		Newport City Council	Lucy Kelly <a href="mailto:Lucy.kelly@newport.gov.uk">Lucy.kelly@newport.gov.uk</a>
<b>Biodiversity Gain delivered</b>	Enhancing Biodiversity, contribution to the Green Lung proposals.		

<b>Project title: Winter Bird Feeding Project</b>			
<b>Project description:</b> Taking forward the Winter Bird Feeding Project. Adding two new areas, monitoring and managing these areas.			
		<b>LBAP area</b>	<b>Contact</b>
<b>Ecosystem services enhanced</b>		Newport City Council	Lucy Kelly <a href="mailto:Lucy.kelly@newport.gov.uk">Lucy.kelly@newport.gov.uk</a>
<b>Biodiversity Gain delivered</b>	Raise awareness of Biodiversity conservation. To benefit farmland birds. To encourage other communities to adopt the same project.		

<b>Project title: Forgotten Landscapes Project</b>			
<b>Project description:</b> The 'Forgotten Landscapes' describe the area surrounding and including the Blaenavon Industrial Landscape World Heritage Site in south Wales. This globally significant landscape was formed over many centuries through the combined efforts of nature and man.			
During the Industrial Revolution the hillsides around Blaenavon became pitted with mines and quarries, blackened by the tips of colliery spoil, and dissected by tram roads and railways. However, as the industries of the area began to decline, this landscape became forgotten. Over time vegetation re-colonised the spoil and wildlife began to return.			
Today this fascinating landscape is rich in history and wildlife, and plays a vital role in our understanding of the heritage of the area. The area is now the focus of the Forgotten Landscapes Project. This ambitious scheme aims to manage the natural habitat and wildlife of the area, and conserve the historic features that form the distinct character of the local landscape.			
		<b>LBAP area</b>	<b>Contact</b>
<b>Ecosystem services enhanced</b>	Provisioning – Education and management for wild foods, including game, fungi, honey etc. as well as producing hydroelectricity reducing carbon footprint and fossil fuel use. Regulating – Flood alleviation, water quality improvements Supporting – Improving pollination opportunities and connectivity Cultural – Encouraging sustainable recreation and discouraging unsuitable recreation, education on historical assets, species / habitat identification training etc.	Torfaen County Borough	Kris Roberts <a href="mailto:Kris.roberts@torfaen.gov.uk">Kris.roberts@torfaen.gov.uk</a> <a href="http://www.forgottenlandscapes.org.uk/the-project/">http://www.forgottenlandscapes.org.uk/the-project/</a>
<b>Biodiversity Gain</b>	Heathland management Bracken management		

<b>delivered</b>	Pond / reed bed creation Grazing management Red grouse and lapwing management		
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<b>Project title: Bute Park Project</b>			
<b>Project description:</b> Initiated by the new Friends of Bute Park the project has 2 elements. The first is to change the mowing regime in selected areas to enhance species diversity; through 2012 these areas are being surveyed to assess the existing seed bank. The second element is to trial different tools with the Friends Group to help them collect biological and conservation action information. This has included creating a photobucket page and providing training on using this and iSpot, training was also provided on identifying indicator species for various habitats and with the group identification aids produced.			
		<b>LBAP area</b>	<b>Contact</b>
<b>Ecosystem services enhanced</b>		Cardiff	Laura Palmer <a href="mailto:lpalmer@cardiff.gov.uk">lpalmer@cardiff.gov.uk</a> 02920873268
<b>Biodiversity Gain delivered</b>	Neutral grassland restoration/creation, awareness raising, increase in recording of various species – as a preliminary project detailed gain will be calculated later		

<b>Project title: Natural Assets Project</b>			
<b>Project description:</b> To restore, maintain and add value to the natural heritage of Monmouthshire. MCC have contracted Gwent Wildlife Trust to support the preservation and enhancement of SINC sites and to encourage local involvement with these at a grass roots level. This activity is supported through the provision of small capital grants to local community groups or individual land owners to maintain and enhance these “natural assets.” This project is one of a series of projects supported under Axis 3 of the Rural Development Plan (match funded by CCW) and forms part of Business Plan 2 for the period March 2011 to December 2013.			
		<b>LBAP area</b>	<b>Contact</b>
<b>Ecosystem services enhanced</b>	All	Monmouthshire	Danielle Fry <a href="mailto:daniellefry@monmouthshire.gov.uk">daniellefry@monmouthshire.gov.uk</a> 01633 644963
<b>Biodiversity Gain delivered</b>	Improved management of important sites More sites identified and therefore avoided, mitigated or compensated for through the planning process		

<b>Project title: Internal department BAPs</b>			
<b>Project description:</b> The Public Rights of Way Biodiversity Action Plan (PRoW BAP) was created with the aim of ensuring that biodiversity is taken into account in the planning and carrying out of all maintenance operations, improvement schemes and other public rights of way work. The document was successfully completed in 2011 but the process of delivering it is an on-going one. We are now beginning to roll this approach out across other departments, the first of which will be highways and our grounds maintenance teams.			
		<b>LBAP area</b>	<b>Contact</b>

<b>Ecosystem services enhanced</b>	All	Monmouthshire	Danielle Fry <a href="mailto:daniellefry@monmouthshire.gov.uk">daniellefry@monmouthshire.gov.uk</a> 01633 644963
<b>Biodiversity Gain delivered</b>	Greater consideration of, and therefore increased retention and enhancement of, important habitats and species.		

<b>Project title:</b> PCC Biodiversity Audit			
<b>Project description:</b> Two-part project: Phase one is a desk-based study collating data on all mapped Powys County Council landholdings to establish the extent and quality of authority's semi-natural land-holdings across all service areas. Holdings have been cross-referenced with some known datasets, e.g. ancient woodland, designated sites, Phase 1, etc. plus proximity to local communities and the public rights of way network. Phase two will involve analysis of aerial photo and known species records plus ground truthing to produce a detailed mapped dataset of sites to i) to provide baseline BAP habitat information for LBAP delivery and ii) identify opportunities within the PCC estate to enhance biodiversity and/or improve public access to green space where possible.			
		<b>LBAP area</b>	<b>Contact</b>
<b>Ecosystem services enhanced</b>		Powys	Emma Guy <a href="mailto:emma.guy@powys.gov.k">emma.guy@powys.gov.k</a> 01597 827599
<b>Biodiversity Gain delivered</b>			

<b>Project title:</b> Countryside Connections – Swansea’s Nature Network ending 2014			
<b>Project description:</b> Countryside Connections is an exciting new project all about connecting people to their local countryside. Through Rural Development Plan funding (Weslh , the project provides learning, volunteering and funding opportunities to people and communities across rural Swansea, helping them to appreciate, care for and enjoy their local environment.  Countryside Connections is funded specifically to work with and bring benefits to rural communities. As such, participation in events and activities is restricted to residents of Swansea's rural wards - Gower, Mawr, Pennard, Pontarddulais, Fairwood, Llangyfelach, Bishopston and Penclawdd.  Events: Our exciting events programme can help open your eyes and ears to the wealth of amazing wildlife which lives on our doorstep. Learn how to identify local mammals, birds, butterflies, plants and the other creatures which make up Swansea's rich biodiversity.  Volunteering : We can provide you with the opportunity to volunteer in some of Swansea's best wildlife sites, where you can learning a variety of countryside and conservation skills whilst helping to improve habitats for our plants and animals. No previous experience is necessary, but if you have skills to offer we'll gladly welcome them.  Education: Through the John Muir Award, we're working with local schools to enable children to discover, explore, conserve and share wild places. This project is part-funded through the Rural Development Plan for Wales 2007-2013 which is funded by the Welsh Government and the European Union			
		<b>LBAP area</b>	<b>Contact</b>
<b>Ecosystem services enhanced</b>	?	Swansea	01792 635777 <a href="mailto:helen.grey@swansea.gov.uk">helen.grey@swansea.gov.uk</a>
<b>Biodiversity Gain delivered</b>	?		

<b>Project title:</b> Communities and Nature (CAN) Swansea’s Nature Network – ending 2014?			
<b>Project description:</b> Communities and Nature (CAN) Swansea’s Nature Network is an innovative initiative which will capitalise on Swansea’s natural environment by promoting and improving access to and enjoyment of a network of 12			

wildlife sites and natural open spaces.

The sites include: Cadle Heath, Mynydd Cadle Common, Hillside Wildlife Corridor, Garth Farm, Killay Marsh Kilvey Community Woodland

Activities achieved include: establish the Nature Network Brand, market Swansea Nature Network as a destination, provide welcoming gateways to sites, provide bilingual interpretive materials, develop routes between sites with service providers, remove physical barriers to access, and provide a coherent network of in site footpaths.

Communities and Nature (CAN), to be co-ordinated by CCW, is one of the strategic projects of the Convergence Programme.

		LBAP area	Contact
Ecosystem services enhanced	?	Swansea	01792 635777 <a href="mailto:Lea.Halborg@swansea.gov.uk">Lea.Halborg@swansea.gov.uk</a>
Biodiversity Gain delivered	?		

**Project title:** Reconnecting South Wales` Dragons

**Project description:** Amphibian and Reptile Conservation's (ARC) application to the Welsh Government Ecosystem Resilience and Diversity Fund 2012/13

The project will deliver habitat creation at sites in South Wales designed to link known populations of BAP priority species (great crested newt, toad and all reptiles) through community involvement, training, survey and practical habitat works. In particular the project aims to create pond networks, open mosaic habitats and dwarf shrub heath areas connecting with deciduous woodland edge.

The proposed habitat creation winter months of 2012/13 will also benefit a multitude of plant, invertebrate, bird and small mammal species in addition to amphibians and reptiles.

Also available to deliver talks and volunteer training in amphibian and reptile survey techniques. .

		LBAP area	Contact
Ecosystem services enhanced	<p><b>Provisioning services:</b> fresh water/ air genetic resources</p> <p><b>Regulating services:</b> air quality improvement, climate regulation flood elevation hazard noise regulation, pollination disease/ pest regulation water/air/soil purification</p> <p><b>Cultural services:</b> recreation/ enhanced aesthetic appearance, education/ training, health/ wellbeing</p> <p><b>Supporting services:</b> nutrient/ water cycling, primary production, soil formation</p>	South Wales	Amphibian and Reptile Conservation's (ARC Peter Hill <a href="mailto:Peter.Hill@arc-trust.org">Peter.Hill@arc-trust.org</a>
Biodiversity Gain delivered	BAP wetland species		

**Project title:** Buglife West Glamorgan Stepping Stones for Wildlife

**Project description:** WREN (Waste Recycling Environment) Buglife has been enabled to undertake a 3 year project to work on five brownfields, in Swansea and Neath Port Talbot

Buglife City & County of Swansea, Neath and Port Talbot County Borough Council, entomologist and local people passionate about wildlife.

Survey work is scheduled to take place between April and September 2013 and is training will take place for a range of sample methods including sweep netting, spot searches, beating, pan traps, pitfall traps and light traps.

		LBAP area	Contact
Ecosystem services enhanced	<p><b>Provisioning services:</b> Nectar/ pollen, fresh water, fresh air, genetic resources</p>	Swansea	01792 635784 <a href="mailto:jo.mullett@swansea.gov.uk">jo.mullett@swansea.gov.uk</a>

	<p><b>Regulating services:</b> air quality improvement, climate regulation, flood elevation hazard noise regulation, pollination, disease/ pest regulation, water/air/soil purification</p> <p><b>Cultural services:</b> recreation/ enhanced aesthetic appearance, education/ training health/ wellbeing, community ownership</p> <p><b>Supporting services:</b> nutrient/ water cycling, primary production, soil formation</p>		
<b>Biodiversity Gain delivered</b>	Open Mosaic Habitats on Previously Developed Land Nectar rich native wildflower species Supporting grassland invert, mammals, birds		

Project title: Discovering Swansea and Gower’s Ancient Woodland –proposed Awaiting HFL decision			
<p><b>Project description:</b> Cynefin: Mapping Wales’ Sense Of Place” is a pan-Wales HLF project by Archives and Records Council Wales (ARCW) which aims to digitise all the tithe maps of Wales.</p> <p>“Discovering Swansea &amp; Gower’s Ancient Woodland” is a local extension of this project, a partnership project currently between the West Glamorgan Archive Service and Nature Conservation Team but also including many other organisations groups and individuals.</p> <p>The Gower AONB together with the western fringes of the city of Swansea are important sites of ancient woodland. However relatively little is known about their current extent, state of health and how they have been affected by human activity. “Discovering Swansea &amp; Gower’s Ancient Woodland” aims to learn more about our ancient woodlands to help make informed decisions to preserve and improve their biodiversity: in the process people will gain an increased appreciation of this irreplaceable asset.</p> <p>“Discovering Swansea &amp; Gower’s Ancient Woodland” will be divided into 2 main elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk based comparison of the newly digitised tithe maps with existing ancient woodland map data, aerial photos and old OS maps – winter 2013</li> <li>• Ground survey verification of the current health and extent of ancient woodland (recording ancient woodland features, indicator species and ancient/ veteran trees) – spring 2014</li> </ul> <p>There will also be a university, schools and general public outreach part to the project also which will run in parallel with this volunteer element.</p>			
		<b>LBAP area</b>	<b>Contact</b>
<b>Ecosystem services enhanced</b>	<p><b>Provisioning services:</b> Nectar/ pollen, Wood/ nuts/ fruit, fresh water/ air, genetic resources</p> <p><b>Regulating services:</b> air quality improvement, climate regulation, flood elevation hazard, noise regulation, pollination, disease/ pest regulation, water/air/soil purification</p> <p><b>Cultural services:</b> recreation/ enhanced aesthetic appearance, education/ training, health/ wellbeing, community ownership</p> <p><b>Supporting services:</b> nutrient/ water cycling, primary production, soil</p>	Swansea	01792 635784 <a href="mailto:jo.mullett@swansea.gov.uk">jo.mullett@swansea.gov.uk</a>

	formation		
<b>Biodiversity Gain delivered</b>	Nectar rich species (native and non-native) supporting inverts, mammals, birds		

<b>Project title:</b> No title –proposed			
<b>Project description:</b> Working with Parks Department to extend pilot wildflower/ nectar rich roundabout/ verge planting			
		<b>LBAP area</b>	<b>Contact</b>
<b>Ecosystem services enhanced</b>	<b>Provisioning services:</b> Nectar/ pollen, fresh water, fresh air, genetic resources <b>Regulating services:</b> air quality improvement, climate regulation, flood elevation hazard, noise regulation, pollination, disease/ pest regulation, purification of water/air /soil <b>Cultural services:</b> recreation/ enhanced aesthetic appearance, education/ training, health/ wellbeing, community ownership <b>Supporting services:</b> nutrient/ water cycling, primary production, soil formation	Swansea	01792 635784 <a href="mailto:jo.mullett@swansea.gov.uk">jo.mullett@swansea.gov.uk</a>
<b>Biodiversity Gain delivered</b>	Nectar rich species (native and non-native) supporting inverts, mammals, birds		

<b>Project title:</b> Local Seed Subgroup			
<b>Project description:</b> Project to promote the use of local provenance seed using local donor sites and receiver sites in CCBC or Caerphilly LBAP partners' ownership. The demonstration project set up 3 donor sites and 3 receiver sites. Using a seed forage harvester seed will be collected from selected donor sites, dry and spread on receptor sites with a view to demonstrating how to increase the area of species rich grassland in the county borough using local provenance seed. The harvester and expertise can be loaned and expertise disseminated to LBAP partners and neighbouring authorities.			
		<b>LBAP area</b>	<b>Contact</b>
<b>Ecosystem services enhanced</b>		Caerphilly LBAP	Maggie Iles <a href="mailto:ilesm@caerphilly.gov.uk">ilesm@caerphilly.gov.uk</a> 01495 235450
<b>Biodiversity Gain delivered</b>	Species rich grassland restoration/creation, awareness raising and creation of local provenance seed bank.		

<b>Project title:</b> Planning Gain to deliver LBAP objectives			
<b>Project description:</b> Planning application for a major 400kv Electricity Substation at Hirwaun Industrial Estate - restoration of an outstanding lowland peat bog representing a depositional (palaeo-ecological and palaeo-environmental) record of approximately 9000 years, as planning gain/mitigation.			
		<b>LBAP area</b>	<b>Contact</b>
<b>Ecosystem services enhanced</b>	Water regulation Climate regulation	RCTCBC	Richard Wistow

	Preservation of geomorphological/ post glacial feature		
<b>Biodiversity Gain delivered</b>	Lowland Peat bog restoration	RCT CBC	Richard Wistow

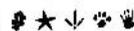
There are a few Local Authority areas that have not provided information above:

Merthyr & Blaenau Gwent has recently experienced changes in staff and officers are essentially too new to be able to comment.

Neath Port Talbot - Lost their Biodiversity Officer last year (end of temporary contract - no agreement to extend) and have also just lost our Habitat Project Assistant (to another post). Currently negotiating internally to get the post advertised. If not successful it will mean minimal project work and no co-ordinating capacity for LBAP delivery.

### **Action Requested**

That the Steering Group note and endorse the work of the LBAP officer Groups. **YES/NO**



## Section 42 List Amendments

### Amendments to Wales' Priority Species and Habitats List: section 42 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006

#### **Background**

The section 42 list of habitats and species of principal importance in Wales is the definite list and is a key requirement of the NERC Biodiversity Duty. The list is a key reference for all statutory and non-statutory bodies involved in operations that affect biodiversity in Wales. The s42 list is used to guide decision-makers such as public bodies, including local and regional authorities, in implementing their duty under section 40 of the NERC Act 2006 with regards to the conservation of biodiversity.

The duty extends beyond just conserving what is already there to carrying out, supporting and requiring actions that may also restore or enhance biodiversity.

The list is also a key decision-making tool for all organisations involved in wildlife conservation and countryside/marine management including statutory and non-statutory, the private and non-government sectors as well as community groups and individuals. The status of those species and habitats on the list is a key measure of the effectiveness of policy and practical responses to international, national and local obligations to biodiversity conservation and our commitment to a sustainable Wales.

The list was last updated in November 2011.

#### **Proposals**

This paper details the proposal to amend the list in the context of two key elements:

1. Revision to the vascular plant section – removing two species that do not occur or are now considered extinct in Wales (i.e. regionally extinct) and adding one species that was omitted due to an administrative error.
2. Addressing a key gap in the list of priority habitats for Wales - the addition of ffridd, also known as coedcae or upland fringe, as a habitat of principal importance to biodiversity conservation in Wales. Ffridd is a uniquely Welsh habitat which has high biodiversity value, is culturally important and is a significant landscape feature throughout the uplands of Wales.

#### Revisions to the vascular plant section

This particular section of the list needs amending with the removal of two species. The removal of these species will; ensure a correct representation of species on the s42 list and; ensure resources are not inadvertently directed towards these species (however small and for whatever reason) at the expense of other priority species and habitats:

- 1.1 Removal of *Juniperus communis subsp. hemisphaerica* (a *Juniper*) – genetic analysis undertaken on behalf of CCW (Squirrell *et al* 2008) has determined this subspecies does not occur in Wales. NB - should not be confused with *Juniperus communis* which does occur and is the focus of important conservation action.

1.2 Removal of *Pulicaria vulgaris* (small fleabane) – only historic records exist of this species in Wales and it is now considered to be lost and unlikely to be recovered. As such it is recommended it be removed from the list until such a time as its presence can be re-established.

1.3 Addition of *Valerianella rimosa* (Broad-fruited cornsalad) - an administrative error meant it was not transferred from the previous Wales biodiversity priority list (s74 of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000) to the current s42 list.

#### Addressing a key gap in the priority habitats section

The addition of ffridd (coedcae or upland fringe) - ffridd presents a mosaic of irregular and diverse habitats at the interface of 'the uplands' and what is generally considered 'lowland' farmland although it may include areas on the hill edge. It is dynamic in nature and generally has a long history of changing cycles of management and will often display the successional stages of key wildlife habitats. The variety of vegetation, communities and structural features make this a habitat of high diversity.

A large proportion of the resource of Welsh priority habitats and Habitats Directive Annex 1 habitats is found in the ffridd but because these tend to occur in smaller patches of an irregular nature they are currently difficult to protect, for example very little ffridd is included within our protected site network. The variety of vegetation communities and structural features provide ideal habitats for many species (including a high proportion of protected and priority species) to complete their life cycles. Ffridd also provides an ecological link between the lowlands and uplands allowing vertical movement of species in response to climate change.

Ffridd is an important historic landscape within which evidence of early settlement and land-use are preserved to a far better extent than in the lowlands.

Designation of ffridd as a Section 42 habitat would have a number of key benefits. It will allow us collectively (Government, WBP, NGO sector etc) to:

- Develop and implement appropriate management prescriptions for Glastir and future agri-environment schemes
- Bring additional resources into Wales through a range of funds (e.g. Wren, Biffa) to promote grazing initiatives. For example, ffridd lends itself to grazing by traditional and rare breeds, funding could be used in the development of niche marketing of products.
- Provide greater focus for research and survey work – for example, better mapping of ffridd would provide information for the ongoing review of Special Protection Areas (SPAs)
- Contribute to Wales meeting duties under European legislation. For example, Article 3 places a duty on Welsh Government (WG) to preserve ffridd as it incorporates important habitat strongholds (diversity and area) for wild bird species.

#### **Decision Points**

1. To endorse the proposal to amend the s42 list as outlined in the paper above and for the reasons detailed in the attached annex.
2. To agree to take the amendments to the Minister for official approval and action.

**WBPSG18**  
**PAPER 05: ANNEX 01**  
**14<sup>th</sup> November 2012**

## **Proposal for a new terrestrial habitat on the section 42 list**

### ***Suggested names: Ffridd (Upland Fringe, Coedcae)***

#### ***Description***

In many parts of Wales there is a distinctive transitional zone on the lower hillsides where moorland gives way to more fertile low-lying farmland. This upland margin, often known in Wales as ffridd or coedcae, has a distinctive habitat composition with elements characteristic of both upland and lowland habitats. Analysis has shown the ffridd to be one of the most diverse and least fragmented parts of the Welsh landscape.

In most areas, the upper limit of enclosure marks the upper boundary of ffridd, although there are examples of vegetation typical of ffridd located above this boundary. The lower limit is usually well delimited by continuous intensively managed grassland. In areas where there is a high proportion of semi-natural habitat in the lowlands this differential can be more difficult; although often a break in slope divides the ffridd zone and the lowlands.

The vegetation found in the ffridd is predominantly semi-natural, any areas that consist entirely of improved grassland or conifer plantation would not be included within the definition of existing habitat.

The dominant land management in these areas is extensive livestock grazing. In some areas of ffridd, great complexity in the structure and composition of vegetation has been created by variations in the intensity of management over time.

Our current understanding of ffridd is at a broad scale. Further research work to characterise the vegetation mosaics and associated species assemblages would be necessary to refine the definition. The issues with definition are very similar to those resolved for Open Mosaic Habitats on Previously Developed Land and it will be possible to follow the same structure of definition used for that habitat.

#### ***Biological features***

The vegetation consists of elements of both the uplands and the lowlands. The details that follow are taken from a classification of 1km squares that identified ffridd areas (Blackstock *et al*, 2010). This analysis requires further refinement at a finer scale to provide accurate figures on vegetation composition but is used here to provide an indication.

Semi-natural grassland (acid and marshy grasslands) and improved grassland compose half the land area of the ffridd with large contributions from heath, bracken and conifer plantations. Both bracken and heath occur at their highest concentrations in the ffridd zone.

**Table 1.** Area of Phase 1 habitats in ffridd 1km squares

Phase 1 habitats	% cover
Broadleaved woodland and scrub	2
Conifer plantation	11
Semi-natural grassland	31
Improved grassland	19
Continuous bracken	9
Heathland	18
Mire and swamp	6
Open water	1
Build-up, rock, other misc	3

A large proportion of the resource of several priority habitats is found in the ffridd, in particular, lowland dry acid heath, lowland wet heath, lowland marshy grassland, lowland acid grassland and upland oakwood. Another common component of the upland fringe is wood pasture, a habitat that is not captured by the Phase 1 figures. The mature (often veteran) trees (Good et al, 1990) found in this habitat are a much over looked resource. The fresh water habitats, ponds and head waters, found in ffridd are likely to be important because of their high quality, as they are neither acidified as in upland freshwater nor eutrophic like the majority of lowland examples.

Plant assemblages tend to be transitional between upland and lowland communities, although there are several species for which ffridd is an important stronghold. Closely grazed acid grassland provides excellent habitat for grassland fungi assemblages and although survey information is patchy, ffridd appears to hold a large proportion of species-rich grassland fungi sites. Eight out of the known top ten Welsh grassland fungi sites are found in the ffridd and many of the Welsh grassland fungi sites are of international importance (Griffith et al, 2006).

Information on lichens in the ffridd is sparse as targeted and systematic survey work has never been undertaken. However it is clear from ad hoc records that ffridd habitat supports significant lichen interest in many parts of Wales, mainly associated with rock habitats (outcrops, boulder & scree), although Lobarian lichen communities can be found on scattered mature trees. A number of nationally scarce species seem particularly associated with ffridd of low to middle elevation, such as *Halecania spodomela*, a species that is locally frequent on well-lit boulder slabs in ffridd throughout Wales. The nationally rare Red Data Book *Protoparmelia atriseda* has the majority of its known sites on ffridd hillsides in Wales. In Radnorshire, *Rhizocarpon ochrolechia* was recently discovered on Beacon Hill on rock outcrops in ffridd, only the second record for Britain and the first for Wales. The second record in Wales for *Cladonia borealis* was discovered on south-facing ffridd in the Cyneiniog valley. At the Gilfach reserve near Rhayader, a superb area of ffridd hillside, outcrops and boulders on Yr Wyloer support greater than 40 notable lichen species (the richest recorded lichen flora in Britain). Some of these species are the only known site in Britain, including *Rhizocarpon submodestum* and the recently described lichenicolous fungus *Llimoniella fuscatae*, plus entities still awaiting description, including a new *Lecidea* species and another undescribed *Rhizocarpon* species

Higher plants characteristic of ffridd vary across Wales and often include species declining in the wider countryside. Typical taxa include *Trollius europaeus*, *Wahlenbergia hederacea*, *Platanthera bifolia*, *Vicia orobus*, *Gymnadenia borealis*,

*Hammarbya paludosa*, *Carex dioica*, *Crepis paludosa*, *Lycopodium clavatum*, *Huperzia selago*, *Selaginella selaginoides*, *Viola lutea* and *Botrychium lunaria*. Various studies show the existence of upland races, some of which, are characteristic of ffridd landscapes (eg. the large-fruited *Crataegus monogyna*, seemingly adapted to large winter migrant thrush populations).

Ffridd holds diverse bird communities that are usually distinct from those of adjacent moorland or lowland (Fuller *et al* 2006; Conway *et al* 2010). It is frequently the close proximity of different habitats forming diverse mosaics that is important for these species. Bracken, in particular, is an important component for these species. Several species, tree pipit, yellow hammer, linnet, twite and whinchat, have higher densities in ffridd habitat than in any other part of the landscape.

#### Examples of how priority bird species use Ffridd

- Ring ouzel – use a mosaic of heather, bracken and rock outcrops/scree and grass on ffridd for nesting and foraging.
- Hen harrier – forage along the moorland edge for key prey species such as meadow pipit.
- Yellowhammer – use a mosaic of mature gorse, scrub, bracken and grass on ffridd areas for nesting sites and foraging.
- Twite - use a mosaic of heather, bracken and rock outcrops/scree and grass on Ffridd for nesting and possibly foraging (though typically main feeding opportunities are found in valley bottoms).
- Chough - use scree and short grassland within ffridd for foraging

There is a scarcity of information on invertebrates in the ffridd as surveys tend to focus on either the uplands or the lowlands. Butterflies are the best recorded group and ffridd has been found to be an important habitat for butterfly species that depend upon open canopy bracken such as pearl-bordered fritillary (*Boloria euphrosyne*), small pearl-bordered fritillary (*Boloria selene*) and historically high brown fritillary (*Argynnis adippe*). Other invertebrate species that have strong holds in the ffridd are also dependant on bracken or mature trees.

In many areas, water voles (*Arvicola terrestris*) have been driven to higher altitudes by mink predation. Areas of slow flowing water and marshy grassland in the ffridd provide valuable habitat for water vole. Ffridd also acts as an important link between refuge populations in the uplands and lowland populations. Although there is no specific information on bat usage, the large blocks of semi-natural vegetation found in the ffridd are likely to be important foraging areas for many bat species.

The upland fringe with its associated mosaic of wet and dry habitats and, just as importantly, its structural diversity, is a valuable habitat for several of our native reptiles and amphibians. Common lizards (*Zootoca vivipara*) and adders (*Vipera berus*) extend into the uplands and can be commonly found in the ffridd zone. This connected intermediate habitat area is particularly important for adders which are increasingly threatened with habitat fragmentation. Amphibians, particularly palmate newts (*Lissotriton helveticus*) and common frog (*Rana temporaria*), utilise wetland habitats in the ffridd zone for breeding purposes as well as utilising the mixed terrestrial habitats for foraging.

### **Functional Importance**

## Diversity

Ffridd not only has a distinctive habitat composition but it also provides unique structural and compositional diversity not found anywhere else in the Welsh landscape. Analysis of the 1km square vegetation data shows that ffridd is a very diverse landscape, both spatially and in composition. Ffridd has the highest mean habitat diversity per 1 km square when compared to coastal, lowland and upland landscapes (Blackstock *et al*, 2010).

Table 2. Shannon diversity index for Phase 1 habitats within 1 km squares.

<b>Landscape zone</b>	<b>Diversity Index</b>
Coastal	1.04
Lowland	0.98
Ffridd	1.35
Upland	1.07

Other spatial analysis of ffridd vegetation, confirms that it is a highly heterogeneous landscape often composed of complex habitat mosaics. The vegetation mosaics are both structurally and spatially diverse providing ideal habitats for the many species that depend upon a range of vegetation to complete their life cycle.

### Low fragmentation and high connectivity

Ffridd acts as a refuge for many lowland species, for example yellowhammer. Habitats that have become increasingly rare and fragmented in the lowlands remain at higher cover and larger blocks in the ffridd (Blackstock *et al*, 2010). Species that depend upon larger areas of semi-natural habitat or particular combinations have found a refuge from lowland habitat fragmentation in the ffridd zone.

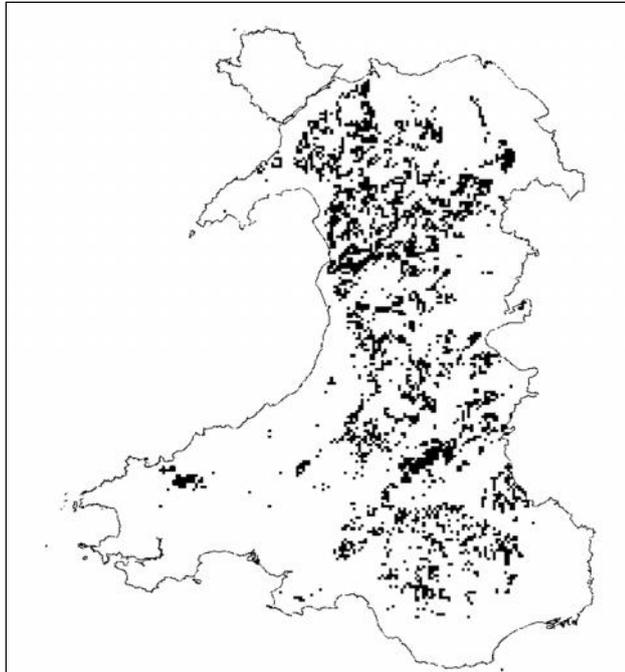
Large contiguous areas of semi-natural vegetation are rare in lowland Wales. 95% of semi-natural vegetation blocks outside the uplands cover less than 10 ha and only 12 blocks cover over 500 ha. Of these, 10 out of the 12 are found in the upland fringes (Blackstock *et al*, 2010). These large areas supporting semi-natural vegetation are likely to be important for biodiversity conservation.

Networks produced to examine ecological connectivity in the landscape (Watt *et al* 2005, Latham *et al*, 2008) show that there is a correlation between high connectivity and ffridd 1km squares. This demonstrates that ffridd is an important component of habitat networks. Ffridd appears to provide links both between upland and lowland habitat patches but also as a continuous band below the uplands. This connectivity will allow species to disperse and to adapt to climate change and should not be underestimated. Adaptation to climate change maybe particularly relevant for ffridd as it includes altitudinal ranges, different aspects and diverse structures, providing species with the ability to adapt to changing conditions and to make vertical and horizontal movements as they seek suitable habitats to fulfill their various life-cycles.

Recent research (Manning *et al*. 2009, Fischer *et al*. 2006) highlights the ecological value of elements of the landscape that provide continua of resources for biodiversity. In the face of shifting approaches to land management in response to external pressures such as climate and economics, ffridd is consistent with similar dynamic habitats that are of global importance for biodiversity conservation.

### ***Geographic distribution and extent***

Ffridd is found throughout Wales at altitudes between 100m and 450m. It is usually associated with the edge of uplands but isolated areas of ffridd do occur where the topography of the land doesn't reach the necessary altitude for true upland.



**Figure 1.** Distribution map showing 1km squares containing ffridd.

Figure 1 shows the distribution of 1 km squares that include some ffridd based on the analysis previously mentioned (Blackstock *et al*, 2010).

There is currently no estimate of the area of ffridd in Wales. According to this analysis 13 % of the 1 km squares in Wales contain some ffridd.

### ***Reasons for recommendations***

#### Habitats for which the UK has international obligations

The following Annex 1 habitats occur in the ffridd landscape (habitats in bold are priority EU features):

- Water courses of plain to montane levels with the *Ranunculion fluitantis* and *Callitricho-Batrachion* vegetation.
- Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix*
- European dry heaths
- *Juniperus communis* formations on heaths and calcareous substrates
- Calaminarian grasslands of the *Violetea calaminariae*
- **Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (*Festuco-Brometalia*)**
- *Molinia* meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (*Molinion caeruleae*)
- Hydrophilous tall herb fringe communities etc.
- Transition mires and quaking bogs

- Depression on peat substrates of the *Rhynchosporion*.
- Alkaline fens.
- **Species-rich *Nardus* grassland**
- Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (*Androsacetalia alpinae* and *Galeopietalia ladani*)
- Calcareous and calcshist screes of the montane to alpine levels
- Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation
- Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation
- **Limestone pavements**
- Caves not open to the public
- Atlantic acidophilous beech forests with *Ilex* etc.
- ***Tilio-Acerion* forests of slopes, screes and ravines**
- Old sessile Oakwoods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum*

Habitats important for key species including species for which the UK has international obligations

Those species with international obligations are highlighted in bold.

Mammals

Foraging habitat for **bat species** and habitat for water vole (*Arvicola terrestris*).

Birds

Grass dominated - skylark, wheatear, chough

Bracken and grass dominated mixtures - chaffinch, tree pipit, willow warbler, stonechat, wheatear and chough

Bracken dominated - redstart, robin, tree pipit, wren and willow warbler.

Bracken and Heather dominated mixtures – whinchat and stonechat

Grass, heather and *vaccinium* dominated mixtures - meadow pipit, ring ouzel, **hen harrier** and **merlin**

Heather dominated - meadow pipit and ring ouzel

Gorse mixtures - wren, stonechat, linnet, dunnock, yellowhammer and whitethroat

Woodland - blackbird, blue tit, chaffinch, garden warbler, black cap, great tit, pied flycatcher, redstart, song thrush, robin, willow warbler, wren and chiffchaff (ring ouzel in sparse broadleaves)

Scree, acid grassland dominated - chough.

Non-vascular plants

Ffridd is the stronghold for grassland fungi assemblages including the section 42 species: *Clavaria zollingeri*, *Hygrocybe spadicea*, *Microglossum olivaceum* and *Geoglossum atropurpureum*.

The lichen flora of ffridd landscapes is very rich and diverse containing many nationally scarce and rare species including *Halecania spodomela*, *Protoparmelia atriseda*, *Rhizocarpon ochrolechiaae*, *Cladonia borealis*, *Rhizocarpon submodestum* and *Llimoniella fuscatae*.

## Invertebrates

Key invertebrate species include high brown fritillary (*Argynnis adippe*), pearl bordered fritillary (*Boloria euphrosyne*), small pearl bordered fritillary (*Boloria selene*) butterflies, welsh clearwing (*Synanthedon scoliaeformis*), white-spotted sable moth (*Anania funebris*) and *Procas granulicollis* (a BAP weevil)

## Vascular plants

Threatened higher plant species of the ffridd include the S42 priority species *Gymnadenia borealis*, *Hammarbya paludosa*, *Lycopodium clavatum*, *Lycopodiella inundata*, *Trollius europaeus*, *Platanthera bifolia*, *Pseudorchis albida* and *Vicia orobus*. *Juniperus communis* is found in ffridd in the several areas, especially around Nantmor where both subsp. *communis* and *nana* grow together. Other rare species include *Antennaria dioica* (which has occurred widely in the upland fringe but is now extremely rare), *Gnaphalium sylvaticum* (possibly now extinct in Wales) and *Meum athamanticum*. The eyebrights (*Euphrasia confusa*, *E. scottica*, *E. micrantha*, *E. nemorosa*, *E. anglica* and especially *E. rostkoviana*) are also plants of the upland fringe. A rare hybrid sedge, *Carex x deserta*, is wholly confined to a couple of ffridd habitats in Britain. Several rare *Sorbus* species are found almost exclusively in the ffridd and the newly identified *Betula celtiberica* may well prove to be very much a plant of this landscape.

## **Habitat at risk**

Precise historical information for ffridd is lacking, but analysis of available data (Milsom *et al*, 2003) clearly shows that there has been widespread loss of semi-natural vegetation and net replacement by improved grassland and conifer plantations in rural areas and development in more urban ones. In rural areas, modern machinery that can be operated on steeper slopes than in the past is leading to intensification on previously extensively managed land. In more urban areas development, such as housing, is leading to habitat loss. Other small-scale or infrequent developments such as wind turbines and proposals to extend or create new reservoirs are collectively causing habitat loss.

Another threat appears to be abandonment and reduced management. For example, a recent study in North Wales (Gritton, 2012) looking at the condition of heath in the ffridd found that the condition of dry heath, in particular, appears to be declining with a loss of heather and spread of western gorse. This is likely to be due to reduced management. Abandonment in the south valleys has resulted in rank vegetation and allows regular uncontrolled fires.

Small scale woodland creation has occurred in the ffridd landscape for many decades. There is no doubt that small blocks of woodland add to the diversity and species interest in the upland fringes. However, many of the species that depend upon the ffridd zone are species of open habitats. Large scale tree planting leading to the loss of mosaics could be damaging if located in sensitive areas.

Areas of scattered trees and wood pasture are characteristic of some types of ffridd. Many of these trees, although often small and stunted, are veterans and support invertebrate and lichen communities. They risk clearance however as their age and importance is frequently unrecognised.

Invasive species pose a significant threat in some areas of the upland fringe. *Rhododendron ponticum* invasion is a problem particularly in Snowdonia and Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) spreads readily on neglected areas in

parts of south Wales. Large feral goat populations in areas of north Wales are damaging existing trees and preventing the establishment of replacements.

As with most habitats both climate change and nitrogen deposition pose a long-term threat to the ffridd landscape.

Few areas of ffridd have received statutory protection as SSSI. The upper limit of enclosure often delimits upland sites and lowland sites are usually selected from habitat or species surveys that do not include the ffridd zone. This has led to the situation where large proportions of the priority habitat resource and areas important for foraging raptors have not been considered for notification. In fact lack of recognition and awareness of ffridd's importance due to insufficient information are in themselves a threat. Many of the habitats present in the ffridd are already represented on the s42 list, however, mosaics of small areas of these habitats interspersed with unprotected habitats such as bracken do not receive the recognition nor the protection that larger areas of such habitat would have. Yet these diverse mosaics have an extremely high biodiversity value.

***Name of proposing organisations***

Countryside Council for Wales, RSPB Cymru, Butterfly Conservation Wales, Plantlife Cymru

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**WBPSG18**  
**PAPER TO NOTE A**  
**14<sup>th</sup> November 2012**

**Title: Wildlife Crime Update**

**Produced by: Sgt Matthew Howells, Dyfed Powys Police / Countryside Council for Wales**

***Background/Progress***

The Welsh Wildlife Crime Enforcement Group met at the CCW Llandarcy offices on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> July 2012. . The actions from the meeting dated are attached (Appendix 1). This was the last meeting chaired by Ch.Supt. Gwyn Thomas of Dyfed Powys Police as he retired at the end of July. His successor is likely to be Chief Inspector Mark Bleasdale, also from Dyfed Powys Police who will chair his first meeting in November.

Chief Constable Ian Arundale (Welsh Association of Chief Police Officers (WACPO) also retired in June and Temporary Chief Constable Jackie Roberts, of Dyfed Powys Police has taken over the Wildlife Crime Portfolio for the foreseeable future until the Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC) elections in November. Once elected the PCCs will then appoint their Chief Officer Groups so the WACPO Wildlife lead may well change as a result.

Ian Guilford's replacement has not yet been found. Interviews are taking place on the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> November. Five officers from South Wales Police have been shortlisted. It is hoped that the officer will be in post by the end of the year. In the meantime wildlife incidents for the South Wales Police area continue to be coordinated by Sgt Andy Scourfield.

Sgt Rob Taylor, North Wales Police secondee to CCW was recently awarded the runner up prize for the UK Wildlife Crime Officer of the year at the National Wildlife Crime Conference. This is the third time that he has been awarded the prize. His collection of cuddly Pandas is growing at such a rate he may well be opening a zoo before long.

The Police Schools Liaison Programme has been tasked with creating a Wildlife lesson for schools. Linda Roberts is progressing well with this with the lesson plan currently with the translators.

The Welsh Wildlife Crime Conference has been postponed this year. The creation of the new environment body in Wales will provide the focus for the conference next year instead.

## **Cases**

LLwyn, Llanrahedr SSSI update - The two North Wales men who pleaded guilty to an offence of third party damage to the SSSI have been ordered by the court to restore the woodland. This will be at a cost of several thousand pounds to them. This case is quite significant in that it was the first SSSI case prosecuted by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS)

A case against a Newport man for carrying unconsented work on the Caeau Blean-yr-Orfa Site of Special Scientific Interest is now listed for trial for the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> November. It is hoped that I can update the meeting on the 14<sup>th</sup> as to its conclusion. Of interest to partners this case has raised some interesting issues with regards to 3<sup>rd</sup> party material that is created in such an investigation. This can be explained in more detail post trial.

The case against a Cardiff man regarding a false application to export a Rhino Horn which was purchased for £43,384 (including charges) has resulted in the forfeiture of the item. Losing the Rhino horn has hit him harder than the fine.

### ***Action Requested***

- Approve us to carry on as suggested above

YES/NO

**WBPSG18**  
**PAPER TO NOTE A: ANNEX 01**  
**14<sup>th</sup> November 2012**

**Welsh Biodiversity Partnership – wildlife crime prevention and enforcement working group.**

Meeting held at Countryside Council for Wales, Llandarcy.  
10.30am Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> July 2012

Present  
Gwyn Thomas – Dyfed Powys Police (Chair)

Countryside Council for Wales (CCW)	Iwan Hughes (Phone)
Dyfed Powys Police (DPP)	Pete Charleston
Gwent Police	Colin Thomas
Gwent Police	Rob Maddocks
Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service (MWWFRS)	Richie Hammond
National Wildlife Crime Unit	Andy McWilliam
R.S.P.B.	Pat Lindley (Phone)
South Wales Police	Mark Goulding
Welsh Government (WG)	Kathleen Carroll
Observer	Ian Guildford

Apologies.  
Peter Jones, CPS  
Eryl Lloyd  
Rob Taylor  
Matt Howells  
Andy Scourfield  
Jo Jones  
Rhys Hughes  
Keith Hogben

The group wish to thank Countryside Council for Wales for providing the use of meeting room, telephone/video conferencing facilities.

**Actions**

	Action	By	By whom	Outcome
4j	To work with other forces to see the NWP/EAW ISA and DSA being used across Wales. Discussions already taking place with SWP and EA	July 2012	Eryl Lloyd	Eryl not present, update to be provided in October 2012
4k	Gwent Police to provide point of contact to Eryl	May 2012	Rob Maddocks	Done, action discharged.
4l	To circulate the gazetteer paper provided by Rachael to all members for noting.	April 2012	Pete Charleston	Done action discharged.

	To forward paper to Eryl for reference and action.			
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34c	To consider production of standard operating procedures for offences relating to deer poaching	July 2012	Andy Scourfield	Written update provided. Further update needed for October 2012
34d	To establish whether force command and control systems create automatic links from keywords to guidance documents.	May 2012	Rob Taylor Colin Thomas Matthew Howells	Update from Gwent received. Others to report in Oct 2012
34e	To provide written briefing to other Welsh lead wco's	May 2012	Andy Scourfield	
37	Production of an all Wales wildlife crime report for 2011	End of July 2012	Iwan Hughes/Rob Taylor	Draft received, Rob to be asked to consider further matters.  Rob Taylor/Iwan Hughes to provide update by end of July 2012
40	Group to consider production of a series of guidance notes for officers investigating wildlife crime dependent on outcome of actions 34c and 34d	July 2012	Chair	To be considered further on completion of action 34c.
41	Group will take up an offer from CCW to feature on one afternoon the work of the group on their stand at the Royal Welsh Show (23 <sup>rd</sup> -27 <sup>th</sup> July)	July 2012	Richie Hammond	Initiative due to be delivered at RWS on Wednesday 25 <sup>th</sup> July 2012
42	Develop a short 10 min presentation on Landscape Crime (dvd and PowerPoint), which can be presented by leaders at various local Forest Schools within the Torfaen area and then rolled out into Gwent. (Not to be confused with the work on-going with WAG and the National School Curriculum).	July 2012	Rob Maddocks	On going project being undertaken in association with Torfaen schools. Update to be delivered in Oct 2012
42a	Consideration being given to Gwent Police producing a wildlife crime dvd	Oct 2012	Colin Thomas	
43	To consider the delivery plan for 2013	July 2012	All	Further consideration required by all for next meeting in Oct 2012.  Suggestions received to date include linking the delivery plan to: -  Recommendations produced by the EAC inquiry into wildlife crime  Considering the work being carried out by the law

				<p>commission's review of wildlife crime.</p> <p>Considering how the group will work with the Single Environment Body</p> <p>Tasking and Coordinating</p>
44	To produce a calendar of key events.	July 2012	All to email Pete Charleston with details of events key to the work of this group	Information received from Gwent others to provide same please.
45	To consider the production of sanitized intelligence bulletins.	Oct 2012	Andy McWilliam	
46	To identify dates for meeting during the next 12-18 months.			Agreed that future meetings will be held on the 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday in October, January, April and July

Next meeting

Next meeting to be held at 10.30am Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2012 at the Forestry Commission Office, Resolven, Neath.

Gwent Police will host the meeting on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2013.

**WALES BIODIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP ACADEMIC WORKSHOP 2012,**  
**National Museum of Wales, Cardiff, 11 September 2012**

**Produced by: Tracey Lovering, WBP Ecosystems Adviser**

***Background***

The Academics Workshop<sup>1</sup> was held with 2 main aims;

1. WBP academic representatives will understand how they can contribute to our work through enabling research links with Wales, UK and international institutions/ organisations; and specifically, agreeing to lead on priority work related to meeting research needs/evidence gaps identified by WBP advisory groups.
2. WBP will gain an understanding of how our evidence work can contribute to wider research developments in Wales, UK and overseas; to reinforce connections and forge links thereby ensuring that Wales' biodiversity and ecosystem research adds value to the evidence pool informing policy development.

Delegates were invited to contribute to the day's discussions from across academic institutions in Wales, with representation from Cardiff, Swansea, Aberystwyth, Bangor & Glamorgan Universities, Centre for Ecology & Hydrology (CEH) Bangor, Wales Environment Research Hub (WERH), National Museum of Wales, National Botanic Garden. All representatives were drawn from the pool of WBP Academics recently engaged with supporting WBP through membership of WBP Ecosystem and Species Expert Groups<sup>2</sup>. Additional delegates were WBP Ecosystem Group Chairs, Welsh Government (WG) Officials, CCW Climate Change and Habitat Specialists, Environment Agency and GIS Consultancy.

Shaun Russell (WERH) chaired the day, with presentations given by Steve Spode (WG), Tracey Lovering (WBP) and Dr Geoff Proffitt (Swansea University). Delegates split into themed workshops to consider how WBP and WG may meet evidence gaps<sup>3</sup>, through working closely with academic institutions and securing appropriate links. Specific Actions were agreed per group<sup>4</sup>.

**Workshop Thematic Groups<sup>5</sup>**

1. Biodiversity specific: species and habitat declines; species dispersal; genetics; fragmentation; landscape scale science; permeability; habitat management
2. Biodiversity and ecosystem health, and ecosystem services

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<sup>1</sup> WBP Academics Workshop 2012 provided as Paper to Note D (page 48-49) & Workshop Programme within Annexe 01 (page 50-51) for WBP SG17 10 July 2012.

<sup>2</sup> Delegate list provides further information (Appendix 01).

<sup>3</sup> Full list of evidence gaps provided by WBP Ecosystem and Species Expert Groups and Invasive, Non-native Group is available on request.

<sup>4</sup> Specific actions are available on request.

<sup>5</sup> Thematic Group outputs are available on request.

3. Climate change, adaptation and mitigation/ Pollution; eutrophication, atmospheric nitrogen etc

### **Workshop Outcomes:**

1. WBP academic reps better understand how they can contribute to the biodiversity work of WBP, and how this work can inform the Welsh Government Living Wales Programme and Single Body<sup>6</sup> to deliver the Ecosystem Approach effectively, through restoration and maintenance of healthy ecosystems and their biodiversity.
2. WBP will work with Welsh Government to identify research gaps which may impact on the development and delivery of the WG Living Wales Programme. Evidence gaps identified by Welsh Government will be incorporated within the *WBP Research Strategy*<sup>7</sup>.
3. WBP academic reps will raise awareness among the wider academic community of the research priorities identified by WBP, and will establish links between WBP Groups and institutions within Wales, UK and internationally.
4. WBP and WG better understand the possibilities, and limitations, to working more closely with the academic community to resolve evidence gaps. A mutually beneficial programme of work has been agreed between WBP and the academic representatives present, co-ordinated by WBP<sup>8</sup>, to enable delivery of the *WBP Research Strategy*.
5. The Academics Group meeting proposed for Feb 2013 will, with WERH and WBP, provide a focal link for academics currently engaged across WBP Groups, and wider academic community, to work together to enable the *WBP Research Strategy*. The group will seek to identify new and innovative ways to address the evidence gaps presented, including opportunities for collaborative work across Departments, Institutions and Sectors.
6. WBP will disseminate the outcomes of the WBP Academic Workshop through the academic community, WG, WERH, and wider communication. The *WBP Research Strategy Project Outline*<sup>9</sup> will set out the delivery stages, project leads and timeline to address the evidence gaps. The *WBP Research Strategy*<sup>10</sup> will be produced in early 2013, to provide an overview for Wales of the research required to inform biodiversity and ecosystem health restoration, and prevention of further loss. The strategy will link in with current research, and research reviews occurring elsewhere in the UK and overseas. Wales will thereby establish its contribution within this field.

### **Existing Research Links within WBP (Provided by WBP Academics)**

Dr Peter Dennis provides the Secretariat to the UK Biodiversity Science Committee (UK BSC)<sup>11</sup>. The UK BSC will represent the UK biodiversity science community and will serve as the constituted advisory committee for The Royal Society Global

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<sup>6</sup> This will undertake the current duties of the Countryside Council for Wales, Environment Agency in Wales and Forestry Commission in Wales. It will also have the potential to undertake further functions currently delivered by other organisations. The new Body will become operational on 1 April 2013.

<sup>7</sup> WBP Research Strategy, Project Outline (see below)

<sup>8</sup> Co-ordinated by TL

<sup>9</sup> WBP Research Strategy, Project Outline (see below)

<sup>10</sup> To be agreed by WBP Steering Group @ WBPSG18 Meeting, 14 Nov 2012.

<sup>11</sup> Replaces UK National Committee for Biodiversity

Environmental Research Committee (GERC). Members of the Committee include representation from the UK Biodiversity Science Advisory Group (BRAG); the committee also have a remit to engage and represent priorities from DIVERSITAS. Links to the Biodiversity & Ecosystem Services Sustainability Programme (BESS), funded by NERC, are made through Dr Jan Hiddink, University of Bangor (Programme Advisory Group) and Dr Isabelle Durance (lead PI of the DURESS<sup>12</sup> project - Diversity in Upland Rivers for Ecosystem Service Sustainability).

## **Proposal**

### **WBP<sup>13</sup> RESEARCH STRATEGY - PROJECT OUTLINE (SEPTEMBER 2012)**

<b>Step</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Completion Date 2012-13</b>	<b>Lead/s<sup>14</sup></b>
1	WBP Academic Workshop, Cardiff	11 Sept	TL
2	Evidence gaps table - modify and provide to MB	18 Sept	TL
3	Climate Change evidence gaps - provide comments to MB	29 Oct	RMcC
4	Marine evidence gaps - prioritise and breakdown top 4 gaps into meaningful research projects and provide to MB	15 Oct (tbc) Delayed due to staff resources	Marine Ecosystem Group/PB
5	WG to provide evidence gaps which may impact on the development and delivery of the Ecosystem Approach of the Living Wales Programme to TL	5 Oct (tbc)	RT
5	Project Proposal template <sup>15</sup> forwarded to workshop academics and WBP Groups for agreement	30 Oct	TL
6	Academic community comments on evidence gaps - collated, completed and provided to TL	16 Nov	MB & GP
7	Feedback on evidence gaps provided to WBP Groups/Chairs & WG. Research Project Proposal (RPP) template & guidance provided to Groups.	20 Nov	TL
8	WBP to circulate gaps to wider partners to ensure gaps not being met elsewhere & collate responses	21 Nov	TL
9	WBP Groups to 1) address comments provided by academic community & discuss further with given academic lead where needed, 2) identify their priority research projects from evidence gaps table and, 3) agree research project leads/gap who will then submit Project Proposals & Risk Assessments <sup>16</sup> to TL	20 Dec (tbc)	WBP Groups/Chairs/Research Project Leads

<sup>12</sup> <http://nerc-duress.org/>

<sup>13</sup> Wales Biodiversity Partnership <http://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/en-GB/HOME>

<sup>14</sup> Leads: TL (Tracey Lovering); RMcC (Rob McCall); PB (Paul Brazier); RT (Rhian Thomas); MB (Mike Bruford); GP (Geoff Proffitt); SR (Shaun Russell)

<sup>15</sup> Research Project Proposal Template ([Appendix 02](#))

<sup>16</sup> Risk Assessments will be provided to researchers by those commissioning the work, with knowledge of the sites and issues.

10	RPPs & associated Risk Assessments to be uploaded to shared web-site to facilitate any final comments & selection of projects by academic institutions	20 Dec	TL
11	Publish WBP report on WERH & WBP website: <i>WBP Research Strategy</i> including register of WBP evidence gaps/research needs	31 Jan '13 (tbc)	TL/SR
12	Academic Group, led by Mike Bruford & Geoff Proffitt to meet at WEH (tbc) to discuss project proposals, opportunities for collaboration between institutions and departments, and advise re. specific projects where useful.	28 Feb '13 (tbc)	MB/GP/SR/TL
13	Academic department leads to contact WBP Group research project leads & TL to agree arrangements per selected project. Register needed.	31 March '13 (tbc)	Academic Leads/TL/ Research Project Leads
14	Preparation for Research Projects	Sept '13	Academic Leads/TL/ Research Project Leads
15	Research Projects underway	From October '13	Academic Leads/TL
16	Revision of evidence priorities begins cycle again: to identify priority projects to be delivered 2014-2015	Sept '13	TL/WBP Chairs

Coordinator: Tracey Lovering  
WBP Ecosystems Adviser  
[t.lovering@ccw.gov.uk](mailto:t.lovering@ccw.gov.uk)  
Office: 01970 631177  
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### ***Action Requested***

- Approve us to carry on as suggested above

YES/NO

## WBP Academics Workshop 2012 – Delegate list

Dr Shaun Russell (Chair)	Wales Environment Hub <a href="mailto:s.russell@bangor.ac.uk">s.russell@bangor.ac.uk</a>
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## WBP ACADEMIC/VOLUNTEER RESEARCH PROJECT PROPOSAL

*N.B. Please expand as required*

<b>Project title:</b>			
<b>Lead Organisation:</b>		<b>Project leader:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>			<b>Email:</b>
			<b>Tel:</b>
			<b>Mob:</b>
<b>Collaborating institutions:</b>			
<b>Location:</b>			
<b>Start date:</b>		<b>Completion required by:</b>	
<b>Project rational/ What is the specific question being asked?</b>			
<b>Can this project be divided into more than one project? <i>If yes, clarify above</i></b>			
<b>Aims:</b>			
<b>Scale of project?</b>	<b>Site-specific? <i>Name site &amp; any designation.</i></b>	<b>Range of sites? <i>Name sites &amp; any/ designation.</i></b>	<b>Suggested site/s/locations?</b>
<b>Access to previous data/reports on site?</b>		<b>YES/NO</b>	<b>RA<sup>1</sup> attached</b>
<b>Logistics managed by:</b>		<b>YES/NO</b>	<b>Researcher</b>
			<b>YES/NO</b>
<b>Opportunity for follow-on student placement with Lead Organisation?</b>			<b>YES/NO</b>
<b>Training element/skills required:</b>			
<b>Expected deliverables:</b>			
<b>Resources required:</b>			
<b>Any special considerations:</b>			

Return completed form to: [t.lovering@ccw.gov.uk](mailto:t.lovering@ccw.gov.uk) Tel: 01970 631177 / 07779 010580

<sup>1</sup> RA: Risk Assessment

**Title: Streamlining the LBAP approach**

**Produced by: Laura Palmer MIEEM – Ecologist Cardiff Council, report on behalf of WBP and CCW**

***Background/Progress***

At WBPSG 16 (21st February 2012 Item 6) Laura Palmer outlined the Cardiff LABP review project running from April 2012 – March 2013. The project aims to move to a map based LBAP communicating linkages between local and national priorities and reflecting developments in national policy.

At this stage 4 key areas for work have been identified. At the WBP Conference in September a workshop was used to assess these areas and look at national and local ways of dealing with them.

The table outlines the areas identified, the specific needs and national and local projects to meet these needs.

Key area	Need identified	National project	Local project
Habitat Guidance	Single reference for habitat descriptions and condition assessment allowing for differences in botanical knowledge and survey technique	Single reference for all widely used survey techniques and condition assessed by Wildlife Sites Guidance	Working with local group to produce training and other resources on indicator species
Volunteers	Volunteers are the backbone of conservation in Wales, they should be utilised more efficiently while support and encouragement should be forefront of our work	The new BARS system will allow volunteers to report local work and see where it fits in to the national picture	Setting up Photobucket page and providing training on this and iSpot for local groups to help them with biological recording
Information Capture	Although widely used historic data capture techniques can be updated to allow better use of emerging technologies to capture and report on data	The new BARS system enables all users to assess the merits of projects before and after completion	Local groups can be trained in using tailor made recording sheets
Strategic LBAPs	The lists of actions that make up the LBAPs of Wales are difficult to translate and maps make a bolder, more reliable statement	Wales Ecosystem Groups mapping	LBAP maps made up of strategic areas including priorities for survey, maintenance, enhancement and creation. This focuses resources without unduly limiting them.

The workshop results were very positive and a roundup will be published with the conference feedback. In terms of taking the project forward the following projects have been prioritised for trial Nationally and in Cardiff:

- Re-drafted Local Sites Guidance – to be presented to WBPSG in February
- Continue the population of and training in using the new BARS (national)
- Work directly with groups involved in LBAP partnerships on information capture including developing local tools for biological data capture and action capture through BARS
- Create a spatial version of the Cardiff LBAP as a demonstration on how priority areas can be used to focus resources
- Incorporate ecosystem services once we receive definitions of these.

### ***Plan/Proposals***

The projects outlined above will be taken forward coordinated by Laura Palmer.

The original SINC working group will be reconvened over the winter and the revised Local Sites Guidelines will be scheduled to be presented to WBPSG 19 for approval.

Work on the new BARS system is already underway within WBP.

Laura Palmer to continue with local group project and creating a spatial version of the Cardiff LBAP. A report on these will be available for WBPSG 20.

### ***Action Requested***

- Form a task and finish team to carry out next step  
Re-convene SINC working group. YES

**WBPSG18**  
**PAPER TO NOTE D**  
**14<sup>th</sup> November 2012**

**Title: Working Together Consultation for the Water Framework Directive**

**Produced by: Nick Bialynicki-Birula, Environment Agency Wales**

***Background/Progress***

The River Basin Management Plans set the strategic approach to delivering the European Water Framework Directive in Wales. Planning for the second of three River Basin Planning Cycles has begun with the 'Working Together Consultation'. No one organisation can do it alone. Working across sectors and co-delivering in partnership are essential if we are to improve and maintain the water environment in Wales.

But what does Working Together mean?

We are looking for innovative approaches to effectively engage partners in River Basin Planning as we move into a new organisation in Wales. We want you to contribute ideas for how we can improve how we work together and to explore future aspirations.

For information on how to get involved in the consultation contact [Ceri Jones](#) or [Kyle Young](#) and visit the consultation [website](#). The consultation closes 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2012.

***Plan/Proposals***

The Environment Agency requests that WBP SP members contribute their views on working together.

***Action Requested***

- Ask all WBP members to contribute to the Working Together Consultation through the website and provide additional comments relevant to the Single Body in Wales and cross boarder River Basin Management directly to Kyle Young and/or Ceri Davis YES