

WBP SG15

 10th November 2011

Wrexham

AGENDA

The 15th Meeting of the Wales Biodiversity Partnership Steering Group will be held in the Catrin Finch Centre, Glyndwr University, Wrexham (a location map can be found here http://maps.google.co.uk/maps?hl=en&um=1&ie=UTF-8&q=glyndwr+university+wrexham&fb=1&gl=uk&hq=glyndwr+university+wrexham&hnear=glyndwr+university+wrexham&cid=0,0,2024425812243620427&ei=7Aa4Tv7hEo_jP8QOK14GOBQ&sa=X&oi=local_result&ct=image&ved=0CBwQ_BI) Tea and coffee will be available from 10:00.

TIME	PAPER No:	TITLE	LEAD
10:00		Assemble, tea/coffee	
10:30	1	Welcome: Introduction and apologies	
10:35	2	Main paper: Environmental Data Sharing Charter	Helen Wilkinson
11:15	3	Main paper: Complexity of biological data flow and the recognition of volunteer recorder effort	LRCs Wales
12:00		LUNCH – Please bring a packed lunch	
12:45	4	Presentation: Damselfly Conservation	Claire Install
13:00		Discussion: What can we do to help these species?	
13:15	5	Natural Environment Framework Update	Diana Reynolds
14:15	6	Papers to Note <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A: Wildlife Crime Update - B: LBAP Update - C: Natur Cymru - D: Law Commission Project on Wildlife Legislation - E: Engaging Biodiversity Action Plan partnerships in opportunities to develop social enterprises - F: Local Record Centre data capture using mobile technologies - G: Torfaen Biodiversity Management Systems - H: Changes to the Published Section 42 Bryophyte List 	Ian Guildford LBAP Rep Huw Jenkins Keith Vincent Karyn Pittick Colin Russell Russell Cryer Trevor Dines
14:55	7	Issues from LBAPs	
15:00	8	Feedback from WCMP	
15:05	9	Feedback from Standing Committee	
15:10	10	Confirm minutes and actions from last meeting	
15:15	11	AOB	

15:25	12	Date of next meeting 21 st February 2012: South Wales tbc	
15:30	Afternoon tea and finish		

A regular train service operates from Wrexham see www.nationalrail.co.uk for details.

Wales Environmental Information Steering Group (WEISG): Progress and Next Steps

Background/Progress

The Wales Environmental Information Steering Group has 6 workstreams (Governance, Resource, Data Flow, Data Quality, Technology, Skills). WBP approved a focused new effort on 2 data flow actions whilst collating information on any existing activity on other workstreams:

- To develop and implement a data sharing charter
- To agree data flow roles and responsibilities

The group acknowledged that whilst reviews and activity relating to the Natural Environment Framework and the Single Environmental Body review had diverted members' effort from WEISG activities, there had been progress across all the workstreams. In addressing the amount of time members could dedicate to WEISG it was agreed that the best way to proceed was to have an annual meeting of the steering group and to drive the work forward with specific task and finish groups or projects with improved e-mail updates/communication between meetings.

WBP approved the Data Sharing Charter in February 2011.

Significant updates since then included:

- WG, CCW and WBP signed up to data sharing charter
- Plant Link Cymru (PLINC) and LRC work on drafting a data flow model for plant recorders
- Work towards a Pan Wales agreement for Welsh Government (WG) and Sponsored Bodies to develop a single funding agreement for public sector partners across all 4 LRCs. Wales is leading the way with his approach to LRC funding and progress is being closely watched by e.g. ALERC.
- Sea Trust suite of training courses and WBP funded training events through LRCs
- Partners in Scotland implementing a similar group (SEIF) to complement WEISG.

One issue that was highlighted in WEISG as a priority for WEISG and WG to address is a lack of flow of biodiversity data from WG, FC and EA to LRCs

Plan/Proposals

Priority actions for the next year were agreed as:

- 1) Agree and implement final data flow models for data exchange between plant recorders and LRCs that include publication through the NBN Gateway
- 2) Finalise and implement the Pan Wales LRC Agreement for WG and WGSBs and include data exchange between WG, WGSBs and LRCs

- 3) Resolve constraints to data supply from EA, FC, WG to LRCs
- 4) Prepare a business case for LRCs in Wales as a supplementary document for NEF consultation documents
- 5) Collate details of signatories to the data sharing charter and draft the supporting MoU
- 6) Collate biodiversity use cases to support NEF

Decision Points

To approve the new way of working for WEISG (annual meeting and more frequent updates on project progress during the year)

To endorse the plan for the coming year

Complexity of Biological Data Flow and the Recognition of Volunteer Recorder Effort

Background/Progress

There is an increased requirement for access to biodiversity data, primarily fuelled by a need “to understand the impact of planning and development on the natural environment”¹. These policy based requirements have led many European countries, including France, Germany and Holland, to adopt publicly funded biodiversity recording, capturing data specifically for use by Government. The UK’s approach differs as it uses publicly funded recording mixed with information collected, collated and disseminated by volunteer recorders. This approach provides a low cost option, but is based on widespread rather than targeted survey effort. It relies on the continued motivation of volunteers and reflects the priorities for data collection set by them, rather than those wishing to use the data for decision making purposes. Furthermore, it places an increasing requirement for uniformity on a system developed by volunteers to nurture their interest and understanding of their specialist area of biodiversity.

To establish a path for decision makers to access biodiversity data, the first Local Records Centre (LRC) was established in Wales 10 years ago. This was followed by the completion of a full Welsh LRC network in 2007. During the period following their establishment, LRCs have seen an increased willingness by volunteers to share their data, possibly in an attempt to ensure that it is considered by decision makers, with many of the earlier barriers to data flow being overcome through dialogue and negotiation. Today between 60 and 70% of data across the Welsh LRCs comes from voluntary recorders, and each year the data is fed into an increasing variety of local and central Government decision making processes.

Data flow complexities

Although data is now flowing to LRCs more than ever before, there are a number of issues which need to be addressed. LRCs sit within a complex web of data managers, which include local and national conservation bodies, local County Recorders and National Recording Schemes and Societies, with the NBN Gateway also aiming to hold a copy of all data at a UK level. Data flow between all these players can be highly complex, and without clear data flow routes being agreed by all parties a number of problems can arise. These include unnecessary duplication of records, and more seriously a lack of clarity as to who holds the master or ‘top copy’ of a record, which can result in two or more different versions of a record being in circulation. LRCs and the NBN Gateway are attempting to provide ways to streamline these data flows, for example the paper prepared by NBN Trust January 2010 on ‘*Developing Efficient Effective Data Flow Relations across the NBN Partnership*’, but their

¹ PAMEB (2003) Policy Brief. Environmental Change Institute, Oxford.

presence has inevitably added extra, although necessary, complexity to the system.

LRCs have tended to focus on negotiating access to data through local County Recorders, who collate data for a particular taxonomic group and within a particular geographic area, voluntarily, often on behalf of a National Recording Scheme or Society. This strategy has generally been effective, with Welsh LRCs amassing over 5 million species records, many of these at their most detailed resolution, although there are instances where negotiating access at a regional or national level is more appropriate and leads to more rapid and more uniform access to data.

County Recorders have to deal with ever-increasing complexity in data flows. In the past a local recorder would tend to submit their records to the appropriate County Recorder, who would probably supply annual updates to the appropriate National Scheme and Society. County Recorders now not only have to move data from local to national level within their own discipline, but have to consider how their data are accessed by LRCs and the NBN Gateway. They also need to access data which local recorders and others submit directly to the LRCs. Increasingly there are also a number of online data capture tools being developed, giving an individual recorder even more options on how to submit their data, and crucially to allow their records to be simultaneously accessible to the County Recorder and the LRC.

The complexity of data flow is partly due to a lack of sophistication and uniformity in the way we manage data. The ideal situation would be to use internet portals to allow data users to access records from dispersed databases on a 'real-time' basis, so that all records are drawn 'live' from wherever the master copy is held. It is also becoming possible to enter records in the field using mobile technologies, potentially enabling 'instant' access to records by all relevant players from the moment the species is seen. Technology is still being developed to allow all of this to be possible, and it will require the willingness and ability of all relevant data holders to integrate new ways of accessing data into their systems. However various elements are already being trialled, e.g. WWBIC's ² mobile cetacean recording, BIS³ using web services to pull in data from the from the NBN, and County Recorders verifying records held by Cofnod through their Online Recording system. With these systems on the horizon and continued concerted effort from those involved, a mechanism is emerging that will smooth the complexity in data flow over the coming years.

In the meantime we must rely, in most cases, upon negotiating access to data at the most appropriate level and storing multiple copies of data within the system. During this period it is essential that we clearly define ideal data flow between all the relevant parties, so that those involved are able to gain rapid access with minimum increased effort. An example of this is the ideal data flow model which is emerging from discussions between LRCs and plant recording societies in Wales. It must be recognised that this is not a

² West Wales Biodiversity Information Service

³ Biodiversity Information Service of Powys and the Brecon Beacons

straightforward process, and it may take several years to sort out the complexity of data flow which has evolved over decades and in some cases centuries. It is also likely that there will always be local and regional variation in the ideal data flow scenario. It is crucial that we think about data flow elements when new data capture tools are being developed, furthermore that new work generating biodiversity data should, wherever possible, map out and agree where data should flow at the earliest possible opportunity.

The recognition of volunteer recorder effort

As is evident from the discussion above, the UK's system for managing biodiversity data has volunteer effort right at its heart. It is estimated that there are approximately 100,000 amateur naturalists in the UK, with a large proportion of these actively involved in biological recording. Together, volunteer recorders account for around 70% of all biodiversity data, with certain activities, such as bird monitoring, obtaining as much as 90% of data from voluntary sources⁴. Although significant amounts of data are created by professional recorders, volunteer experts still have an important role to play in reviewing data and ensuring its quality and completeness.

Recent research carried out by the University of Birmingham concluded that a monetary value of up to £5 could be placed on each biological record. Thus the records in the Welsh LRCs would stand at £25 million, with approximately £17.5 million coming from voluntary sources. In the creation of *New Atlas of the British and Irish Flora* it was estimated that volunteer effort amounted to nearly £7 million, with this being coordinated by one paid officer. Furthermore it is estimated that it would cost over £30 million just to replace the UK model with one similar to that adopted in Germany⁵. So in a time when Government has less money to spend, the case for supporting volunteer recorders seems clear, especially if Government wishes to access the data they create.

Plan/Proposals

The huge contribution that volunteer recorders make to the increasing body of biodiversity data needs to be acknowledged. Furthermore, there should be recognition that data collected through voluntary recorders is often of equal or sometimes better quality to that collected by professionals. This is especially true of data which has an established and defined route of expert review to ensure that data quality is maintained.

Volunteer recording must be adequately supported by Government, given its reliance on the data it produces. Long term training and coordination has a key role to play in supporting volunteer recorders. Although Wales has recently created paid coordination posts with two major recording societies (British Trust for Ornithology and Botanical Society for the British Isles), the funding for these is short term and there is likely to be a requirement for similar roles across other interest groups.

⁴ *What counts? Volunteers and their organisations in the recording of biodiversity*, Bell et al., Biodiversity Conservation 2008, 17 3343-3454

⁵ *A top-down or bottom-up model of biological recording in Britain – which is the most sustainable?*, Sarah Whild, Director of Biological Recording Programmes, School of Biosciences, University of Birmingham.

There are often conflicts between what volunteer recorders wish to collect and what policy makers want from the data. These issues need to be more strategically resolved so that those volunteers who are willing and able to assist can better help collect data which will address policy-makers' requirements.

It is hoped that increasing negotiation with national representatives alongside local volunteer recorders, and the increased adoption of models to describe the ideal flow of data, will decrease the data flow complexities discussed above.

Those who are helping to manage data from point of collection to use must be supported. LRCs in Wales are uniquely placed to offer assistance in managing the flow of data; however some of the solutions are technical and may require investment from Government to ensure systems develop maximum public benefit for minimum effort.

It is important that if Government wishes to access biodiversity data from voluntary sources it must demonstrate its ability to share its own data both internally and externally. The Wales Environmental Data Sharing Charter, developed by the Wales Environmental Information Forum, endorsed by WBP and sanctioned by the Welsh Government sets out principles by which this can be achieved.

Decision Points

- WBP to investigate methods of supporting volunteer recording in Wales, especially long-term support for volunteer co-ordination.
- WBP to ensure that data generated by volunteers are used to support decision making.
- WBP members to adopt the Wales Environmental Data Sharing Charter and work with LRCs to ensure practical solutions to ensuring better data flow.
- WBP to support where possible the development and adoption of technological solutions to ease the complexity of data flow.

Roy Tapping

Manager, Cofnod – North Wales Environmental Information Service

Living Wales, the Natural Environment Framework – Core Narrative

Wales' land, water and air - our ultimate resource

Our land, water, seas and air are a finite resource that we need to use wisely if we are to prosper now and in the future.

We make a whole series of demands on our environment and we need to make sure that the way we use the environment can sustain its healthy functioning as well as meeting our immediate needs.

The condition of our rivers and air and the appearance of our landscapes have improved hugely over the past decades as a result of effective regulation of industrial pollution and work to reclaim industrial land.

But the challenges we now face are more complex. Wales' environment is facing increasing pressures from the changing climate that will affect habitats and species, make water more scarce and increase flood risk. There are also complex multiple pressures from our modern uses of land that are leading to poor soil and water quality and increased pressure on species and habitats.

To tackle these challenges we need to make sure we are managing our natural resources as a whole and to understand better how we can get the services we need while sustaining a resilient and healthy environment. This is the **ecosystems approach** that has been adopted by the international community and which Wales is looking to be among the first to build into the way government manages the environment.

Wales leading the way

Maintaining healthy ecosystems is less expensive than treating problems later on. For example, good land management in river catchments can keep water clean and reduce flooding. Well-functioning ecosystems will be more resilient to climate change and extreme weather events.

A recent study has shown that for every pound invested in the natural environment we get ten to a hundred pounds in return. In Wales the environment contributes at least £8.8billion to the Welsh economy every year - 9% of Welsh GDP and one in six Welsh jobs – but it could be worth much more.

Taking an ecosystems approach to managing our natural resources makes economic as well as environmental sense.

What we are doing

In the [Programme for Government](#) the Welsh Government has committed to develop an integrated approach to the way we manage our environment. [A Living Wales - the Natural Environment Framework](#) (NEF) sets out how we will use the **ecosystem approach** to look at the environment as a whole and improve our understanding of its relationship to our social and economic needs, health and well-being.

In early 2012 we're asking for views on our Green Paper which sets out specific proposals for how we're going to do this. It will explain the limitations of our current systems, the challenges we face, and the steps needed to develop a fresh approach. We are asking for views and ideas on the level of appetite for a radical approach and whether the suggested building blocks are the right ones.

The need for change

Up until now we've managed parts of the environment separately rather than managing them together as systems. Regulatory regimes have become increasingly complex over the years as law has developed separately in a series of related areas sometimes resulting in conflicting outcomes applied in a piecemeal way. We've focused on protecting rare or interesting species and habitats in isolation from our other activities and we've reacted to individual pressures one at a time. This way of managing and conserving the environment struggles to tackle complex issues and sometimes presents users of land with an over-complex process of regulation.

This is a problem because by damaging ecosystems we are reducing the natural environment's ability to give us valuable services that underpin our economic, social and personal well-being. And because most of these services aren't paid for, there is no clear way of reflecting the costs of their loss when we make decisions.

Some examples of the challenges

WATER RESOURCES

Even though Wales receives more annual rainfall than many other parts of the UK this does not mean that we can take a continuous and endless supply of water for granted. In Wales rainfall travels quickly to our rivers and so during dry periods our river levels can also drop quickly in response. In addition to causing stresses to the water environment and aquatic habitats in these rivers, this also creates challenges to ensuring security of public water supply and supporting other water abstractions. Currently the Environment Agency estimate that, in approximately 38% of river water bodies in Wales, water is no longer reliably available for new water abstractions.

The combination of climate change, population growth and potential increasing consumption of water per person are likely to cause additional pressure on our water resources in the future. Current climate change projections indicate that natural river flows in Wales could reduce by 40 to 60% in the summer months by the 2050s¹. We are also likely to experience longer and more frequent dry periods in future. Climate change could be causing significant impacts on our water resources as early as the 2020s, although some of these impacts may be masked by natural variability until the 2030s.

With a better understanding of the impacts of these pressures, we will be able to work together to take a long term approach to managing water resources sustainably, putting in place the right planning regime so that the all the options to meet these challenges can be explored and decisions can be made to protect the environment and secure water supplies in Wales in the future.

WATER REGULATION

The water sector is highly regulated, it is required to comply with a wide range of different requirements and deliver a number of other policy objectives. In many cases these different objectives are competing with one another for limited resources to deliver them and, in some cases, are pulling in opposite directions or driving actions that do not deliver good overall environmental outcomes.

We want to find ways to bring together requirements to enable holistic, long term planning that will deliver better environmental outcomes and allow investment to be planned and funded over a realistic timescale.

The structures within the water industry, for example the periodic price review overseen by Ofwat, provide a mechanism that could enable integrated planning for optimised environmental, economic and social outcomes. We will be exploring possible options in this area in more detail in our Water Policy consultation.

FLOOD RISK AND COASTAL RISK MANAGEMENT

With increasing pressures from our changing climate, we are looking at fundamentally different approaches to managing flood and coastal erosion risk. Traditional defences, while remaining part of our armoury, risk putting the communities behind them at a greater threat when flooding does occur. We are therefore putting much greater emphasis on the management of the flood risk as whole, starting with retaining more water in uplands and slowing its rate of movement, allowing more areas of lowland to flood naturally to dissipate impacts. We are also addressing the causes of urban surface water flooding by making urban areas more permeable and introducing sustainable urban draining systems to take excess water out of the drains.

One of the specific challenges will be addressing rising sea levels. This is likely to require us to create new habitats to replace sensitive coastal margins that will be lost to flood risk management measures.

MANAGING HIGH-PRESSURE ENVIRONMENTS

We have a number of local environments, especially on our industrial south coast, where the combination of natural and human-induced pressures is pushing the limits of existing environmental management approaches.

¹ Environment Agency (2008) Climate Change and River Flows in the 2050s. Science Report SC070079/SS1

For example, in Port Talbot management of air quality is challenging because of a combination of atmospheric conditions and the variety of different sources of pollutant emissions from industrial processes, transport and construction, as well as the impact of pollution from elsewhere in Europe.

Addressing these issues requires an approach that works beyond conventional individual regulatory regimes to look at the outcomes for the environment as a whole and potentially innovative ways of reducing pressures.

DECLINING BIRD POPULATIONS

A number of our iconic birds, such as the curlew and lapwing, are currently in very sharp decline. At present we cannot be certain of the reasons for the decline in breeding pairs of these species but believe they are as a result of a combination of a range of factors.

In order to address these declines, we are likely to need a range of interventions beyond the traditional habitat designations and agricultural funding, as well as greatly improved understanding of what within the whole ecosystem is leading to the pressures.

TACKLING DIFFUSE POLLUTION

In assessing our river and water quality under the Water Framework Directive, the total impact of diffuse pollution from a range of sources has become clearer.

Land use management practices, in different forms, have a significant impact including direct rural and agricultural pollution, forestry and land drainage. It is clear that we need to take a holistic approach that addresses the different sources of pollution.

The Environment Agency has also carried out more detailed river walks in three rural catchments and the chart below highlights the issues leading to failures in those catchments. These results make clear the significant role that land management and farming practice do play in causing diffuse pollution.

Changing farming practices, such as fencing off waterways from animals and changing the way slurries and fertilisers are applied, can help to reduce diffuse pollution while potentially also reducing long-term costs for farmers. Some of these practices are long standing and there is a significant engagement and behaviour change component to the action that we need to take alongside clear, effective regulation and appropriate incentives.

SOIL CARBON

Welsh soils hold a significant stock of carbon, cycle nutrients essential for plant growth and buffer and dilute pollution. Ensuring that carbon remains in our soils by keeping our uplands wet, and ideally trapping more carbon by re-wetting areas that have been drained, rather than have carbon escape to the atmosphere, is a key climate change policy aim but one that will become more difficult as we experience drier weather.

Done well, action on upland wetlands can also help to address water quantity and quality, enhance the prospects for nature and provide benefits for land managers.

SHELLFISH HEALTH

The Environment Agency Wales has been leading a multi-stakeholder study of the causes of cockle mortality in the Burry Inlet off Llanelli.

The second phase of this work is nearing completion and has identified a range of pressures and found that some of them, such as changes in water quality, are less significant than first feared.

Taking forward work to strengthen the health of the fishery will require a range of approaches across the different regulatory regimes, including potential piloting of different approach in different parts of the fisheries to see which are most effective in helping the cockles reach maturity.

What the new approach could mean

The approach is essentially about integrated natural resource management.

We currently produce a number of national environmental plans and policies that set a spatial context for decisions about the environment but we do not currently bring these together into a single framework. Our main spatial policies in the environment currently cover renewable energy, flooding, water quality and resources, waste infrastructure, landscape and nature conservation.

Bringing together existing processes, resolving conflicting aims and identifying opportunities for improved outcomes by linking common aims more clearly, could help us to create simpler systems that are better able to deliver the outcomes we need as a society.

This will be particularly important as climate change and other inescapable impacts mean we will increasingly need to find new habitats to replace those which will be lost and to help species move and adapt to change. Positive habitat creation will be an important way of tackling longer term pressures.

For businesses

A Living Wales should lead to more efficient and simpler processes, such as:

- Enabling businesses to plan better with clearer information at an earlier stage and encouraging collaborative, innovative design leading to multiple outcomes;
- In the longer term it will reduce the need for 'jumping through hoops' one permit after another which can currently be costly and difficult to manage;
- better economic outcomes where we have been missing opportunities;

For people

A healthier environment and better access to green space.

For fisheries

27th October 2011

Rivers, lakes and seas that sustain healthy fisheries through good regulation benefiting everyone now and into the future.

For farmers and landowners

Thriving rural communities with profitable businesses as part of a sustainable environment, where society values ecosystem services such as food, timber, water which are provided by a well-managed Welsh countryside.

For foresters

Considerable growth in woodland creation to deliver climate regulation and other objectives as a central part of natural resource management.

For wildlife

Investing in enhancing and creating habitats which means ecosystems can function fully and are more resilient to change.

For regulated industries

A more integrated system of environmental management which is administratively simple, cost-effective but protects and enhances our environmental assets.

For planners & developers

A simpler regulatory system based on assessing the risk to the ecosystem and a clearer context for decisions.

For policy makers

Sustainable development as the central principle which all policies are developed and delivered, and through which our natural capital is enhanced.

For further information please visit the [Living Wales](#) area of the Welsh Government website.

A LIVING WALES - GENERIC TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Natural Environment Framework Programme will identify and implement solutions which will:

- Create compelling visions for a sustainable future based on positive social, economic and environmental outcomes
- Stimulate positive actions for ecosystems health, diversity and resilience so securing the long term sustainability of ecosystems and their services
- Meet the requirements of any new EU or UN targets for biodiversity and ecosystems
- Be fully compliant with the UN Convention on Biological Diversity and the EU Environmental Directives
- Be more efficient and effective than current/existing systems
- Function increasingly successfully within the current financial and economic context

PHASE 3 WORK AREAS

1. Developing legislation
2. Improving regulation
3. Trialing area and national planning
4. Integrating assessments and standards
5. Developing tools and market instruments
6. Improving policy integration and delivery
7. Engagement and communications
8. Gathering and sharing evidence

Title: Wildlife Crime Update

Produced by: Sgt Ian Guildford, South Wales Police/Countryside Council for Wales

Background/Progress

A guide to dealing with crime in woodlands was officially launched on the 14 July at Troserch Woodland, Llangennech.

Operation Birch - investigation into the illegal trade in wild taken birds, this matter is still progressing and offences are currently being considered by the complex case unit of the CPS.

Since the last steering group meeting the Welsh wildlife crime enforcement group has met at CCW's offices in Cardiff Bay. The actions from the meeting dated 22.9.2011 are attached (Appendix 1). One of the actions for this group is looking at Welsh Wildlife Crime priorities, this is work in progress and will be finalised at the next meeting of the Enforcement Group.

The Welsh Wildlife Crime Conference will take place at the Dyfed Powys Police HQ's on Wednesday 23rd November 2011, papers relating to this can be found at Appendix 2.

The South Wales Police are in the process of identifying new officers to take up the role of PWCO's within the force, it is anticipated that there will be 11 new officers in place prior to the end of November; an induction day has been arranged for these officers on 2.11.2011 at the Forestry Commission offices in Resolven. In addition to this a number of new officers are due to be appointed within Dyfed Powys and it is hoped to run a one week Wildlife Officers course within Wales for all the newly appointed officers.

A Welsh Wildfire Enforcement Working Group has been formed to look at the issues of wildfires within Wales, they have met on two occasions (15th July and 20th September 2011) work is on going including the production of an enforcement guide relating to wildfires.

On the 2nd November 2011 a meeting of the UK Tasking and Coordination Group and the PAW Steering Group took place in London, Sgt Guildford provided an update on matters relating to Wildlife crime in Wales including an overview of the work of the Enforcement Group.

On 14th July 2011 representatives from all four Welsh Police Forces met together with Chief Superintendent Gwyn Thomas to discuss progressing and improving the response of the four Welsh Police Forces to wildlife crime, a

number of issues were discussed and actions are progressing including internal reviews in each force on the way the force deals with wildlife crime.

Deer Strategy – Sgt Andy Scourfield is arranging two half day training sessions for local officers who patrol areas around the Afon Forest area, the training session will hopefully raise awareness of local officers in relation to the problem of Deer Poaching in the run up to Christmas. These sessions will compliment the Wild Deer Management in Wales' strategy which was recently published.

One area of wildlife related crime that has seen a dramatic increase in the past twelve months has been the theft of Rhino Horns from museums and other establishments, since March this year 50 horns have been stolen across Europe including 5 within the UK. This has also included 4 fake horns that were put on display in replacement for the original horns. Interpol are currently looking at an organised crime group who they believe are responsible for these thefts.

Law Commission review of Wildlife Crime – The commission aim to publish provisional proposals for reform in June 2012. This will be followed by a three month public consultation. A final report with recommendations and draft bill is planned to be published by mid 2014. The Enforcement working group aim to make contact with the Law Commission to ensure an early exchange of views in relation to Wildlife Crime within Wales.

Cases

Ryan Howells from Ferndale in the Rhondda appeared at Rhondda Magistrates Court on 13th October 2011 where he pleaded guilty to three offences under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. These related to the possession of two Goshawks which he had failed to register in accordance with the requirements of the WCA 1981 and a false registration application for one of these birds. He pleaded guilty to all 3 offences and was fined £200 plus £85 costs and a £15 victim surcharge.

Three people have been reported for summons to court after an operation to clamp down on illegal cockling in the Dee Estuary, Flintshire.

The case against a 39 yr old man from Cheltenham who drove a Vauxhall Frontera up Snowden will now be heard at Crown Court. Another man is also facing charges for a similar offence involving the same vehicle.

After a lengthy and often complex investigation two persons have been summonsed with third party damage to the LLwyn, Llanrahedr SSSI. The case will be the first Section 28 offence to be taken on by the CPS and will be a landmark prosecution. – the case is due to be heard on 31.10.2011.

A 19 year old male from Blaenau Ffestiniog received a formal police caution after admitting an offence under the 1828 Night Poaching Act. The offence

occurred at Llangybi, where the offender admitted trespassing on land and setting his dog on rabbits.

The following cases are various stages of investigation:

South Wales

- False application to export Rhino Horn
- Damage/Disturbance to Great Crested Newt habitat
- Illegal possession of wild owls
- Illegal laundering of wild taken raptors into the legal market.
- Third party damage to a SSSI during a building development.

Gwent

- Breach of bat licence.
- Deer poaching – three persons arrested.
- Obstruction of bat roost.
- Illegal poisoning of wilds birds

Dyfed Powys

- Unconsented operations on SSSI (notified for Marsh Fritillaries)
- Unlicensed display of protected animals
- Interference of a Badger Sett
- Release of non native species – Signal Crayfish

North Wales

- Interference with a Badger sett - in court 17/11/11.
- Badger baiting case.
- Schedule 1 bird nest destruction.
- Bat roost case.
- Bat roost destruction case.
- Newt disturbance.
- Finch trapping.

Plan/Proposals

Action Requested

- Form a task and finish team to carry out next step NO
- Approve us to carry on as suggested above YES
- Ask all WBP members to comment on the format of the report YES

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

Meeting held at Countryside Council for Wales Offices, Cardiff.
10.30am Thursday 22nd September 2011

Present

Gwyn Thomas – Dyfed Powys Police (Chair)

Countryside Council for Wales (CCW)	Iwan Hughes v/c
Crown Prosecution Service (CPS)	Peter Jones v/c
Dyfed Powys Police (DPP)	Pete Charleston
Dyfed Powys Police	Matthew Howells
Environment Agency Wales (EAW)	Rhys Hughes
Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service (MWWFRS)	Richie Hammond
North Wales Police (NWP)/CCW	Rob Taylor v/c
South Wales Police (SWP)/CCW	Ian Guildford
South Wales Police/Forestry Commission (FC)	Andy Scourfield
South Wales Police/MWWFRS	Jo Jones
Welsh Government (WG)	Rachel Hodson
Welsh Government (WG)	Mark Stafford

Apologies.

Barbara Spence, Forestry Commission Wales

Eryl Lloyd, North Wales Police, Environment Agency Wales

Colin Thomas, Gwent Police

Sue Eddy, NWCUC

Simon Williams UKBA

Keith Hogben, RSPCA

Chris John, British Waterways

The group wish to thanks the Countryside Council for Wales for providing the use of office and video conferencing facilities.

Outstanding actions

	Action	By	By whom	Outcome
4	To complete review of existing EA/NWP's information sharing and data sharing agreements (ISA & DSA's) with a view to them being utilised as a template by other partners. When draft is complete consideration to be given as to whether ACPO lead can sign on behalf of all 4 Welsh forces.	October 2011	Eryl Lloyd	ISA has been agreed between NWP & EAW. Eryl offers to be lead for taking forward work on ACPOC ISA's between EAW and other interested parties.
4g	To investigate the work being done on the Gazateer project by Tony Bracey	September 2011	Rachel Hodson	Continuing work, report to be submitted to next meeting
4h	Chair to take NWP/EAW ISA to CC Arundale to explore ACPOC involvement	January 2012	Gwyn Thomas	
4i	Partners to identify points of contact with Eryl Lloyd for other ISA's to be progressed	January 2012	All	
9	To consider how a complete picture of wildlife crime in Wales might be achieved through the collation and submission of	January 2012	WG, RSPCA, UKBA	EA Wales submitting incident returns. Welsh Government has had no

	incident returns to the National Wildlife Crime Unit.			incidents to report in recent months but provide returns. Reports from UKBA and RSPCA to be made at next meeting
16	All to provide written input on their roles and responsibilities	October 31 st 2011	All	Document to be completed by 31102011 for uploading onto WBP website. Outstanding contributions to be made by 20102011

Actions arising from presentation provided by Patrick Lindley on bird crime in Wales

24	Establish if NWCUC have produced offender profiles in relation to bird crimes in particular egg collecting	October 2011	Sue Eddy	c/f from June meeting
25	Establish what evidence there is to support a suggestion that incidents of finch trapping increase during times of economic hardship.	October 2011	Keith Hogben	c/f from June meeting
26	Chair to meet with force WCO's (including Gwent) to discuss how to embed wildlife crime into core Police business	June 2011	Chair	Meeting took place August 2011. Chair will have regular meetings with force wco's after each wpcpegw meeting
27	Establish if UKBA in Wales are aware of any export of finches to Mediterranean countries	January 2012	Simon Williams	c/f from June meeting
28	To look at NWCUC's analysis of bird of prey persecution to identify any Welsh Problems and to identify actions needed to address those problems.	January 2012	Lead WCO's	Work in progress, report to be made at next meeting
29	CCW to ensure that suspicions of criminal behaviour within the licensing system that they are actioned.	June 2011	Iwan Hughes	CCW and WG have processes in place for such eventualities
30	RSPB to establish whether bird of prey hotline is still active	October 2011	Patrick Lindley	Circulate result to members by email
31	RSPB to provide link to birdcrime reports	October 2011	Patrick Lindley	Circulate result to members by email

Actions relating to the Welsh Wildlife crime strategy delivery plan are circulated separately.

Actions relating to AOB

33	Chair to meet with CFO Andy Thomas to discuss wildfires	October	Richie Hammond	Meeting still to be arranged.
33a	Presentation to be made to meeting on wildfires.	January 2012	SWP/SWFRS/MWWFRS	Wildfires to be a standing item on agenda.
33b	An enforcement guide relating to wildfires to be produced	October	Andy Scourfield	Guide produced. Wildlife group has been constituted.
33c	Terms of reference to be forwarded to Chair	October 2011	Andy Scourfield	Terms of reference to be forwarded to Chair
33d		October 2011	Jo Jones/Peter Jones	CPS to be involved in wildlife working group. Recent case

				decision to be forwarded to CPS for comment/review
34	Welsh Deer Strategy	January 2012	Andy Scourfield	The actions identified in the Welsh Deer Strategy accepted in principle. The issue of road traffic collisions involving deer is not one that involves crime and therefore not an issue for this group.
34a		January 2012	Force wco's	To consider and report on the extent of criminal offending relating to deer.
35	Law Commission review of wildlife legislation	October 2012	Rachel Hodson	To circulate information she has received from the commissioners. To provide Pete Charleston with Law Commission contact.

Next meeting

It is hoped to hold the next meeting in January 2012 at Welsh Government Buildings, Aberystwyth. Date of meeting to be identified and circulated. Ian Guildford/Iwan Hughes will provide a presentation that will lead to the adoption of Welsh wildlife crime priorities by the group. (Deferred by time constraints)



Bioamrywiaeth Cymru
Biodiversity Wales



PARTNERIAETH BIOAMRYWIAETH CYMRU

WALES BIODIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP



Y 9^{fed} GYNHADLEDD YNGHYLCH TROSEDDAU'N YMWNEUD Â BYWYD GWYLLT A'R AMGYLCHEDD 2011

Dydd Mercher, 23 Tachwedd 2011

Mae'n bleser gennym eich gwahodd i'r 9fed Gynhadledd ynghylch Troseddau'n Ymwneud â Bywyd Gwyllt a'r Amgylchedd yn 2011. Bydd y Gynhadledd yn cael ei threfnu ar y cyd unwaith eto gan Gyngor Cefn Gwlad Cymru a Heddlu Dyfed-Powys, â chefnogaeth Gweithgor Atal Troseddau yn erbyn Bywyd Gwyllt a Gorfodi'r Gyfraith Partneriaeth Bioamrywiaeth Cymru. Byddem yn falch iawn pe gallech ymuno â ni yn y Gynhadledd a fydd yn dechrau am 9.30am ar 23 Tachwedd 2011. Y lleoliad yw'r cyfleusterau cynadledda newydd yn y **Ganolfan Reoli Strategol, Pencadlys yr Heddlu, Llangynnwr, Caerfyrddin**. Mae'r ganolfan hon tua milltir o orsaf drenau Caerfyrddin.

Nod y Gynhadledd yw lleihau troseddau'n ymwneud â bywyd gwyllt a'r amgylchedd drwy annog sefydliadau sydd â diddordeb i gyfathrebu, cydweithio a chyfnewid gwybodaeth. Yn ychwanegol at hyn, drwy rannu'r wybodaeth a'r arbenigedd hwn, i ddatblygu dealltwriaeth a chynyddu ymwybyddiaeth, gallwn hybu'r gwaith o warchod a gwella'r cyfoeth o fywyd gwyllt, cynefinoedd a thirweddau sydd gennym yng Nghymru.

Bydd cyfle i arddangos gwybodaeth neu gynnwys cyhoeddiadau yn y pecynnau i'r cynadleddwyr. Cysylltwch â ni os hoffech fanteisio ar y cyfle hwn.

Os ydych chi a/neu gydweithwyr eraill yn awyddus i ddod i'r gynhadledd, dylech lenwi a dychwelyd y ffurflen archebu lle amgaeedig. Mae'r gynhadledd ychydig yn wahanol eleni (un diwrnod yn unig) felly ni fyddwn yn codi tâl. Gwnewch yn siŵr eich bod yn llenwi pob rhan o'r ffurflen. Cofiwch hefyd mai dim ond hyn a hyn o lefydd fydd ar gael yn y Gynhadledd eleni.

Byddem yn ddiolchgar pe gallech nodi ar eich ffurflen archebu lle ym mha iaith y byddai'n well gennych siarad yn y Gynhadledd. Bydd hyn yn ein helpu i benderfynu a fydd angen gwasanaeth cyfieithu ar y pryd yn y trafodaethau.

Amgaeir agenda ddrafft er gwybodaeth.

Gobeithio y bydd y Gynhadledd yn ddiddorol ac yn ddefnyddiol i chi.

Yr eiddoch yn gywir

Ian Arundale
Prif Gwnstabl
Heddlu Dyfed-Powys

Yr eiddoch yn gywir

Roger Thomas
Prif Weithredwr
Cyngor Cefn Gwlad Cymru



Bioamrywiaeth Cymru
Biodiversity Wales



PARTNERIAETH BIOAMRYWIAETH CYMRU
WALES BIODIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP

THE 9th WILDLIFE AND ENVIRONMENTAL CRIME CONFERENCE 2011
Wednesday 23rd November 2011

We are very pleased to invite you to the 9th Wildlife and Environmental Crime Conference 2011. The Conference will once again be jointly hosted by the Countryside Council for Wales and Dyfed-Powys Police, supported by the Welsh Biodiversity Partnership – Wildlife Crime Prevention and Enforcement Working Group. We would very much like you to join us for the Conference which will **commence at 0930hrs on the 23rd November 2011. The venue is the newly opened conference facility at the Strategic Command Centre, Police HQ, Llangunnor, Carmarthen.** This facility is situated approximately one mile from Carmarthen railway station.

The aim of the Conference is to reduce wildlife and environmental crime by encouraging communication, co-operation and the exchange of information between interested organisations. Also by sharing this knowledge and expertise to further understanding and raise awareness, we can advance the conservation and enhancement of the rich wildlife, habitat and landscapes of Wales.

There will be the opportunity to display information or include publications within the delegate packs. Please contact us if you would like to take up this opportunity.

If you and/or other colleagues would like to attend, please complete and return the enclosed booking form. This year, due to the change in the format of the conference (one day only), there will be no charge. Please make sure that you complete your form in full. Please also note that spaces at this year's Conference will be limited.

We would appreciate it if you could kindly indicate on your booking form in which language you would prefer to contribute at the Conference. This will help us to determine whether or not simultaneous translation will be required during the proceedings.

A draft agenda is enclosed for your information.

We hope you will find the Conference both interesting and useful.

Yours faithfully

Ian Arundale
Chief Constable
Dyfed-Powys Police

Yours faithfully

Roger Thomas
Chief Executive
Countryside Council for Wales

**Cynhadledd ynghylch
Troseddau'n ymwneud â
Bywyd Gwyllt a'r
Amgylchedd 2011**

**The Wildlife and
Environmental Crime
Conference 2011**

**DYDD MERCHER
23 TACHWEDD 2011**

**WEDNESDAY
23 NOVEMBER 2011**

Agenda

- 09.30 am – 10.00 am **Cyrraedd a chofrestru**
Arrival and registration
- 10.00 am **Agor y Gynhadledd**
Y Prif Gwnstabl Ian Arundale – Heddlu Dyfed-Powys
Opening of Conference
Chief Constable Ian Arundale – Dyfed-Powys Police
- 10.10 am Roger Thomas
Prif Weithredwr, Cyngor Cefn Gwlad Cymru
Chief Executive, Countryside Council for Wales
- 10.20 am Astudiaeth Achos 1 / Case Study 1
Prosiect Gweilch y Ddyfi - Dyfi Osprey Project
Emyr Evans – Rheolwr y Prosiect / Project Manager
- 10.50 am Astudiaeth Achos 2 / Case Study 2
Gwastraff Anghyfreithlon – Trosedd yn erbyn Bywyd Gwyllt?
Illegal Waste - a Wildlife Crime?
Clive Walker & Steve Barker
Swyddogion Gorfodi, Tîm Troseddau'n ymwneud â'r
Amgylchedd, Asiantaeth yr Amgylchedd Cymru
Enforcement Officers, Environmental Crime Team, Environment
Agency Wales
- 11.10 am **Te / Coffi**
Tea / Coffee
- 11.25 am Astudiaeth Achos 3 – **SoDdGA**
Case Study 3 – **SSSI**
PS Rob Taylor – Heddlu Gogledd Cymru/CCGC
North Wales Police/CCW

11.45 am Astudiaeth Achos 4 – ‘**Carchar am Daflu Gwastraff Anghyfreithlon**’
 Case Study 4 - '**Prison for Fly tipper**'
PS Andy Scourfield –
Heddlu De Cymru/Y Comisiwn Coedwigaeth
South Wales Police/Forestry Commission
Leighton Case –
Uwch Swyddog Gorfodi Gwastraff, Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Senior Waste Enforcement Officer, Neath Port Talbot Council

12.05 am Cwestiynau a threfniadau'r gweithdai
 Questions and workshop arrangements

12.30 pm **Cinio/Lunch**

Gweithdai – bydd y cynrychiolwyr eisoes wedi dewis dau weithdy o'r rhestr isod	Workshops – delegates will have already chosen two workshops from those below
1. Gwybodaeth <i>Colin Pirie, Uwch Swyddog Gwybodaeth, Uned Genedlaethol Troseddau Bywyd Gwyllt</i>	1. Intelligence <i>Colin Pirie, Senior Intelligence Officer, National Wildlife Crime Unit</i>
2. RSPB <i>Patrick Lindley, Uwch Swyddog Cadwraeth (Rhywogaethau), RSPB, Swyddfa Gogledd Cymru</i>	2. RSPB <i>Patrick Lindley, Senior Conservation Officer (Species), RSPB, North Wales Office</i>
3. Hela <i>Steve Harris, Swyddog Ymchwiliadau, Y Gynghrair yn erbyn Chwaraeon Creulon</i>	3. Hunting <i>Steve Harris, Investigations Officer, League Against Cruel Sports</i>
4. Cynnyrch fferyllol, llysiuol a chosmetig yn y DU ac yn y fasnach ryngwladol <i>Madeleine Groves, Gerddi Botaneg Brenhinol, Kew</i> <i>Guy Clarke, Asiantaeth Ffiniau'r DU</i>	4. Pharmaceutical, herbal and cosmetic products in UK and international trade <i>Madeleine Groves, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew</i> <i>Guy Clarke, United Kingdom Border Agency</i>

13.30 pm – 14.30 pm Gweithdy 1 / Workshop 1

14.35 pm – 15.35 pm Gweithdy 2 / Workshop 2

15.35 pm **Te / Coffi**
 Tea / Coffee

15.50 pm Sesiwn cloi / Closing session

16.15 pm Diwedd / Close

**THE WILDLIFE AND ENVIRONMENTAL CRIME CONFERENCE 2011
BOOKING FORM
(Please complete in BLOCK CAPITALS)**

Full Name (Title).....

Organisation:.....

Position:.....

Correspondence Address:.....
.....

Postcode:.....

Telephone No:..... **Fax Number:**.....

E-mail Address:.....

Signed:..... **Date:**.....

PLEASE SELECT **TWO** FROM THE WORKSHOPS LISTED

Intelligence

Colin Pirie, Senior Intelligence Officer, National Wildlife Crime Unit

X

RSPB

*Patrick Lindley, Senior Conservation Officer (Species), RSPB,
North Wales Office*

Hunting

Steve Harris, Investigations Officer, League Against Cruel Sports

**Pharmaceutical, herbal and cosmetic products in UK and
international trade**

*Madeleine Groves, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.
Guy Clarke, United Kingdom Border Agency*

Buffet lunch provided - Please advise of any dietary requirements

PLEASE TICK: I would prefer to contribute: in Welsh in English

Please contact Matthew Howells on the e-mail address below if you wish to contribute to the delegates pack

Please complete one booking form for each delegate. Please keep a copy of this booking form for reference purposes.

Please return this form by 7th November 2011 to: june.harries@ccw.gov.uk, or CCW, Beechwood Office, Talley Road, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire. Tel: 01558 825800 Fax 01558 823467
For further details please e-mail: matthew.howells@dyfed-powys.pnn.police.uk

Title: Local Authority and National Park Biodiversity Officer Group Actions

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.

Successes

- **Powys: Afon Cain Access Scheme:** Sustainable community wetland area comprising ponds, scrapes and swales with native planting on former grazing land, designed to improve river quality. Delivered by volunteers from local community groups and schools, with support from the Environment Agency, and a small Community Strategy related grant for the native planting scheme. View pictures at: <http://www.goodmangraphics.co.uk/Llanfyllin-Riverside-Project/>
- **Conwy: Conwy County Borough Council Biodiversity Improvement Project:** CCBC has given a corporate mandate to produce the Biodiversity Improvement Project. The Biodiversity Improvement Project has identified ways in which the whole Council could improve its practices for the benefit of biodiversity. Having a directive from the top will increase the likelihood of the recommendations being implemented.
- **Powys: Rhayader Community Wildlife Project:** Led by Rhayader 2000 with support from local natural history society volunteers, Rhayader by Nature, and the Radnorshire Wildlife Trust. Funded by CCW, the Big Lottery Awards for All fund, Powys County Council's Community Welcome Scheme and Community Enablement Support Fund. Three way-marked routes, illustrated leaflets, viewing benches and interpretive panels. Also four 'Wildlife Areas', an artificial sand martin nesting bank above the River Wye, swift nesting boxes built into St Clement's church tower.
- **Gwynedd: Habitat workshops:** Bringing the Local Biodiversity Partnership and ecosystem groups together to discuss priority actions for the area, prioritising meaningful actions with input from the ecosystem groups.
- **Carmarthenshire: Mynydd Llangyndeyrn Common project:** Aggregates Levy funding to reinstate grazing on common and restore BAP habitats.
- **Newport: Biodiversity in Schools project:** BiS Officer in post for 2 ½ years delivering biodiversity and outdoor education support to 58 schools in Newport, and delivery of habitat creation and management in School grounds to provides outdoor learning opportunities in line with curriculum

objectives. Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council has also developed a similar project for schools in Blaenau Gwent.

- **Awareness Projects:** Gwynedd: Hedgehog project: Hedgehog recording, community engagement, school visits, Conwy and Anglesey Schools projects, Denbighshire wildlife gardening project.

Regional project case studies:

- **Flintshire/Denbighshire: Alyn Valley Himalayan balsam project:** working with a large project group including, local authorities, EA, NWWT, local conservation and volunteer groups attempting to eradicate Himalayan balsam from the Alyn valley, now in its 3rd year. The project has succeeded in greatly reducing the amount of Himalayan balsam in the upper catchment and raising awareness about the issues surrounding Himalayan balsam.
- **Conwy/Denbighshire/Flintshire/Wrexham: North East Wales Barn Owl project:** To gain an understanding of the distribution of the barn owl across north east Wales. The project raises awareness, installs and monitors nesting boxes and provides advice to landowners.
- **Denbighshire/Flintshire/Wrexham: Urban bat project:** 2nd year of this project working with the Bat Conservation Trust getting communities involved in bat recording by loaning out detectors to volunteers who undertake a basic bat survey of their local area.
- **South East Wales Winter Bird Feeding project:** 5 Local Authorities (Torfaen, Newport, Monmouthshire, Caerphilly, Blaenau Gwent) and Gwent Wildlife Trust have been implementing a project to sow crops and provide feeding opportunities for wintering farmland birds, using Environment Wales funding.
- **South Wales Wetlands project:** The Environment Agency is helping local authorities in south east Wales (Caerphilly, Merthyr Tydfil, Bridgend, Rhondda Cynon Taff, Vale of Glamorgan, Newport, Blaenau Gwent, Torfaen and Monmouthshire) identify and develop a series of 'mini' projects and supporting these through £30,000 collaborative funding. The aim will be to restore and create wetland habitats including ponds, wet woodland and marsh.

Planned future projects

- Flintshire/Denbighshire: Alyn and Wheeler Living Landscapes project with focus on habitat connectivity along the river valleys
- Torfaen Biodiversity Management System: Russell Cryer (TCBC) currently developing a 'biodiversity management system' as part of evolving LDP; looking at shifting decision making to a more upfront approach using a tiered site system.
- North Wales: Awareness & Recording project working with Cofnod
- Conwy: An investigation into the development of a large-scale riverside ecosystem project
- Carmarthenshire: Project to undertake Sea buckthorn clearance at Pembrey dunes - £20k funding to undertake work this winter.
- Conwy: An investigation into a large-scale moorland project with the RSPB and other partners
- South East Wales Wildlife Sites Project: SE Wales LA's, Wildlife Trust and SEWBReC have formed a working group to look at a regional Wildlife Sites

project aimed at delivering habitat management on grassland and heathland sites in need of restoration.

Action Requested

- That the Steering Group note and endorse the work of the LBAP officer groups

YES/NO

Title: Natur Cymru update & plea

Produced by: Huw Jenkins, Marketing Manager, Natur Cymru

Background/Progress

Natur Cymru helps members of WBP to communicate through the 1,200 subscribers / 2,800+ readers of the magazine. Members of **NATUR** (The Welsh Institute of Countryside and Coastal Management) receive a subscription to Natur Cymru as part of their membership benefits.

The 40th edition of Natur Cymru covered a wide range of subjects including reptiles, moths, BTO Cymru, lichens, upland conservation, giant hogweed, etc. Edition 41 (December 2011) will have a marine theme plus articles covering slime molds and the Natural Environment Framework. The theme for edition 42 will be Brecon Beacons.

We have started a '**50 years ago**' feature to draw attention to the digitisation of our predecessor, Nature in Wales, which was published from 1955 to 1987. The combination of Natur Cymru and Nature in Wales provides a valuable resource for researchers.

In addition to the magazine we help get messages across through social media (blogs, tweets and YouTube) and recently added a new film about the Anglesey Grazing Animals Partnership.

To encourage debate and awareness of conservation issues we have just launched the 4th nature writing competition with over £1,000 of prizes donated by WWF Cymru, Tŷ Newydd and the Wildlife Trusts. Closing date 31st March 2012. Full details at <http://www.inspired-by-nature.org.uk/>

Plan/Proposals

If you have a story that would make a good article for Natur Cymru -
If you need help creating case studies, films, blogs etc -
If you would like to contribute to the Natur Cymru blog -
Please let us know.

Action Requested

We ask all WBP members to get in contact if they have a story to tell and to help promote the writing competition.

Contact: huw.naturcymru@btinternet.com 01766 590272.

Title: Law Commission Review of Wildlife Management Law

Produced by: The Law Commission. The Law Commission is an independent agency established by the Law Commissions Act 1965, tasked with reviewing the law of England and Wales. Our standard process lasts about three years and concludes with a report and a draft Bill to be laid before Parliament. We can also recommend legislation by the National Assembly for Wales if we consider it appropriate. Prior to publication of the final report and draft Bill, we conduct extensive consultation – both informally and through a consultation paper setting out our detailed provisional proposals for reform.

Background/Progress

We are undertaking a project on wildlife management law as part of our 11th programme of law reform. The project was proposed by DEFRA. The 11th programme of law reform was launched on 18 July 2011.

Our project's focus is on those provisions that allow for the management of wildlife, for instance the relevant sections of Part 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, the Game Acts, the Deer Act 1991, the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010. The first Act transposes many of the obligations placed on the UK by Directive 79/409/EEC – the Birds Directive. The last transposes many of the obligations in Directive 92/43/EEC – the Habitats Directive.

Whilst our project involves the consideration of habitats provisions, and wider environmental obligations as part of the context, our remit is confined to reform to the species specific provisions.

Plan/Proposals

The project's intention is to create a simplified legal regime which balances appropriately the (potentially) competing interests involved in wildlife management, and allows those subject to the law to clearly understand their rights and obligations.

The project will consider:

- conservation provisions for species populations;
- provisions allowing for exploitation, such as the Game Acts;
- welfare and cruelty provisions relating to wild animals;

- wildlife criminal offences, including those relating to the sale of wild animals and their derivatives; and
- control of Invasive Non-Native Species.

We are currently at a preliminary stage in developing our suggested reforms. We are interested in exploring alternative methods to those currently adopted for the regulatory framework. Any option taken, of course, would necessarily have to transpose our EU obligations fully.

It is not part of the project to specify the level of protection afforded to a particular species. Furthermore, specifically excluded from the project is reform to, or repeal of, the Hunting Act 2004.

We intend to publish our consultation paper on wildlife management in summer 2012. Consultation will run until October 2012.

Contact: keith.vincent@lawcommission.gsi.gov.uk

Action Requested

- Ask all WBP members to participate in our consultation YES

Title: Engaging Biodiversity Action Plan partnerships in opportunities to develop social enterprises

Produced by: Welsh Government Social Enterprise Unit

Background/Progress

The Natural Environment Framework asserts the need to think imaginatively about funding and resourcing biodiversity action and, where possible, integrating outcomes for nature with other sustainable outcomes.

The Welsh Government recognises social enterprises as businesses which have primarily social or environmental objectives and which principally reinvest profits into those business or community.

The Welsh Government supports social enterprise business models through its funding of specialist business support organisations such as The Wales Co-operative Centre; The Development Trust Association; and Social Firms Wales. Funding is also provided for the sector representative organisation, The Welsh Social Enterprise Coalition, which meets regularly with the Minister for Business, Enterprise, Science and Technology.

There are many examples of social enterprises specialising in environmental issues and, in particular, biodiversity. These include Ecodyfi and their work on leading the UNESCO Biosphere Programme; The Longwood Woodland project supported by Coedlleol; the Cwm Harry Land Trust who are involved in a bio regional project; and Moelyci.

www.ecodyfi.org.uk

<http://www.longwood-lampeter.org.uk/history.html>

http://www.coedlleol.org.uk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=9&Itemid=12&lang=en

<http://www.cwmharrylandtrust.org.uk/about.html>

<http://www.moelyci.org>

A social enterprise conference being held on 16 and 17 November at the Richard Ley Centre in Swansea, organised by Wales Co-op and the Welsh Social Enterprise Coalition and would be beneficial for anyone wanting to learn more about this area as well as those already working in the sector:

www.walescooperative.org/social-enterprise-wales-conference-2011

Plan/Proposals

We would like to offer Local Biodiversity Action Plan partnerships an opportunity to make use of free advice and guidance on how to establish local social enterprises that could deliver biodiversity action alongside economic or social outcomes across Wales.

Partnerships meet regularly in three regional groups: Greater Gwent Biodiversity (GGBAG) Action Group; Glamorgan Biodiversity Action Group (GLAMBAG); and the North East Wales Biodiversity Network.

We'd like to offer presentations - covering a brief introduction to the Natural Environment Framework and an overview of the potential for social enterprises in Wales to each of the regional meetings during 2012.

Action Requested

- Approve us to carry on as suggested above YES/NO

Title: Local Record Centre data capture using mobile technologies.

Produced by: Colin Russell, Manager, West Wales Biodiversity Information Centre (WWBIC)

Background/Progress

Collecting and managing data in a spatial format can be time consuming, create problems in duplication and require further time and resources in validation. New technologies have recently become available at an affordable cost through the release of Not for Profit licence scheme by Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) which enabled WWBIC to provide a solution which addresses some of the issues.

In 2010 Sea Trust were looking for a system which would simplify their management of data, avoiding the need for paper on boat based surveys, and where this could be uploaded quickly and efficiently to the main database in the LRC. The system chosen was a mobile recording application, ArcGIS Mobile (AGM) designed for touch screen devices where data can be uploaded to a database in ArcGIS Server (AGS) based at WWBIC as soon as an internet connection or cellular network is available.

Sea Trust received funding for the project from CCW and Briggs Marine, WWBIC invested in increased server capacity and the installation of AGS. Alongside this was the development of a mobile application for use on a tablet computer and/or smartphone by Dr. Rob Davies working with Cliff Benson and his colleagues in Sea Trust. Trials were carried out on shore and at sea until the system satisfied the requirement. It is now used by Sea Trust on all boat and ferry surveys and a demonstration of data capture and editing was executed live, in real time at the recent WBP conference.

Plan/Proposals

WWBIC wishes to move forward with the technology, to develop tailored applications for terrestrial recording which would benefit a range of recorders, groups, societies. Tailoring applications to the user group and the use of touch screens and drop down menus means that once applications are developed, they are simple to use and require very little training. The use of the system means the data is captured once to one location and is available to be viewed or edited on a desktop or by fieldworkers via a cellular network. The web interface would also be tailored to the client requirements. The data once captured can be published through open geospatial formats meaning that LRC clients with multiple offices could access the data quickly. This coupled with the use of cellular networks to capture the data opens up new

possibilities e.g. rapidly collating monitoring/survey effort from widely dispersed locations or perhaps in reaction to critical events.

Decision Points

To note that WWBIC welcomes approaches by members who wish further information or wish to work with WWBIC to develop applications.

Title: Biodiversity Management Systems Project

Produced by: Russell Cryer: Project Officer (Torfaen CBC)

Background/Progress

This is the first paper to the steering group.

Project active since July 2011. Scheduled to finish 15 December 2011.

Plan/Proposals

The Biodiversity Management Systems (BMS) project is developing new ways of working to manage biodiversity issues within planning and project design/inception in Torfaen. The project proposes a four tiered land classification for biodiversity that will provide information targeted on the decisions made within different Service Areas in the Council. This approach could be used to manage all ecosystems services to provide a coherent approach to managing green infrastructure.

Objectives

- To develop new processes in the Council to support decision making relating to the wise use of green infrastructure assets in the borough.
- To provide evidence to the Welsh Government that an ecosystem services approach can be used to deliver sustainable outcomes in a Local Authority;

The two objectives are complementary to the development of a working model for national strategies and local delivery of effective green infrastructure management.

Outcomes

- Effective decision support to protect and manage green infrastructure
- Faster decision making (especially in planning)
- Improved ecosystem services achieved from green spaces
- Increased funding to improve green infrastructure
- Ecosystem Service management at the heart of TCBC priorities
- Evidence of effective delivery mechanism for NEF/NER

Background

Decisions that affect Green Infrastructure are effectively asset management decisions. Which sites are appropriate to develop? What is the optimum management of a site to gain the most services? Such decisions are currently poorly served with the information available to the decision makers as it is generally in a language associated with technical issues and the legislative and policy drivers. Through the BMS project, information on biodiversity assets will be simpler to use by planners deciding on whether a development

is acceptable or not. The best opportunities for environmental enhancement will also be much clearer.

The same methodology of four tiers and a project register can be used to spatially plan all other ecosystem services e.g. recreation, tourism, water management, community involvement. If all of the services that green infrastructure assets could provide are spatially planned and analysed in the same “language” within GIS, it will be clear which assets provide the most services now and which assets could be enhanced, or managed differently to provide more services in the future.

The tiered information would create a Local Authority natural resource plan directly related to day to day decisions made by all work areas on asset management. Whilst providing a realistic delivery mechanism for national natural resource planning, these systems would need to rely on the national systems to provide information in the same “language”. Criteria used for establishing tiers and identifying the best opportunities for enhancement would need to be compatible at all relevant scales. National, sub regional and local scales will be necessary within the national process. Development of the optimum suite of natural resource plans will be most effective if it is a coordinated consideration of the needs of both national and local decision makers. This project will be able to provide the perspective of a local decision making body to the development of the national approach.

The Torfaen natural resources plan (NRP) would sit alongside the LDP as a central organising plan within the Council. The NRP would provide the information required by the Authority to allocate economic development sites appropriately through the LDP and to protect critical assets through Development Control. The NRP would also provide a ready made register of offsetting projects to help facilitate sustainable development.

There is strong commonality of objectives with national planning improvement, communities first and scrutiny agendas. All these processes aim to make the planning process faster; more effective at delivering sustainable outcomes; and with effective monitoring and scrutiny. The project offers a realistic deliverable mechanism for improved outcomes for all of these programmes as well as NER/NEF.

The Welsh Government legislative programme includes Sustainability, Environment and Planning Bills by 2014. Implementation of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) must be complete by 2014 (including time for examination in public). Local Authorities are currently within prescribed programmes for adopting LDPs (Torfaen examination in public scheduled for June 2012). Development of policy streams including the NER and NEF is in progress.

The outcomes from all these programmes could affect the implementation of the proposed systems. Equally however, the proposed systems could usefully inform these programmes.

Subject to funding, the Torfaen project could usefully be extended to summer 2013 (LDP scheduled adoption) - feeding into and learning from the national legislative and policy programmes.

Proposed phases of extension of BMS project

Taking the current BMS project as Phase 1, the following phases are proposed: Phase 2: to 31 Mar 2012: Extend BMS project to all ecosystem services on green infrastructure; Provide evidence to NER / NEF programmes; Phase 3: to 30 Jun 2012: Provide detail on systems up to public inquiry; Incorporate into approach to CIL; Coordinate with national/regional scales; Phase 4: 1 to 30 Jun 2013: Develop detailed valuation criteria; monitoring protocols and design guide; Disseminate case study,

Action Requested

- Ask all WBP members to engage with the project as necessary YES



Title: Changes to Bryophyte S42 List

Produced by: Sam Bosanquet, Plant Link Cymru & Wales Species Expert Group.

Background/Progress

The original Section 42 bryophyte list was derived from the UK BAP list and only a single Welsh priority was added – Prince of Wales Feather-moss *Leptodon smithii*. Since then, six UK BAP mosses were added to the S42 list in 2011; 3 were originally believed to be extinct and 3 were discovered new to Wales between 2008 and 2010.

The production of *A Bryophyte Red Data List for Wales* (Bosanquet & Dines, 2011) has allowed the identification of 16 additional mosses and liverworts that are under serious threat in Wales. Addition of these to the Section 42 list will allow action to be taken to protect them. Significant threats to them include climate change, increasingly coarse fen and dune vegetation, changes in mining activity and water level changes in ravine woodlands. One more UK BAP moss was discovered new to Wales in early 2011 and therefore also needs to be added to the S42 list.

Oceanic/Atlantic woodlands are one of Wales' most important habitats and many have already been identified as SAC and SSSI. Oceanic bryophytes have long been considered 'safe' because the deep ravines in which they grow are relatively remote from man's influence, and no oceanic bryophytes were included on the UK BAP list because of this perceived lack of threat. There is now a significant threat in the form of Hydro Electric Power (HEP) schemes, which have the potential to reduce the critical humidity level in ravine systems and thus damage desiccation intolerant mosses and liverworts. Recognition of the rarest oceanic species on the Section 42 list is one way of protecting sites, but the habitat as a whole is in need of additional protection. An 'Oceanic Ravine Bryophyte Assemblage' has been identified using combinations of species in a similar way to the Section 42 'Lobarion' lichen community.

The S42 list does not include species thought to be extinct in Wales. Two extinct species therefore need to be removed from the list. In addition, two species may warrant removal because of recent downgrading of their GB conservation status (Hodgetts, 2011) and because their apparent UK declines are likely to be artefacts of local recording.

Full details of the selection of proposed additions to the Section 42 bryophyte list are given in the Excel document 'Section 42 bryophyte section 2011'. If the following suggestions are adopted then there would be 52 bryophyte species on the Section 42 list, plus the Oceanic Ravine markers. This

compares with 51 birds, 186 invertebrates, 78 vascular plants and 69 lichens. Suggested additions and deletions are as follows:

1. Current UK BAP species newly recorded in Wales

This species should be added to the S42 list:

Taxon group	UK BAP species to add to S42 list	Year and location of record	Source of information
Bryophyte	<i>Orthotrichum pumilum</i> (Dwarf Bristle-moss)	Abergavenny, 2011	Sam Bosanquet

2. Species identified as meeting Section 42 criteria following the production of A Bryophyte Red Data List for Wales

These species should be added to the S42 list:

Taxon group	UK BAP species to add to S42 list	Section 42 evidence
Bryophyte	<i>Aloina rigida</i> (Rigid Aloe-moss)	Only extant in Wales at one site, CR on <i>Bryophyte Red Data List for Wales</i>
Bryophyte	<i>Bryum intermedium</i> (Many-seasoned Thread-moss)	The last Welsh record came from Flintshire in 1988, all 6 dune systems where it grew have lost their population
Bryophyte	<i>Bryum muehlenbeckii</i> (Muehlenbeck's Thread-moss)	Two Welsh colonies are disjunct from Scotland. This species requires regular inundation and is especially vulnerable to HEP developments.
Bryophyte	<i>Buxbaumia aphylla</i> (Brown Shield-moss)	Only three Welsh records, one 19th century, not relocated in 2007 at its only 1990s site nor in 2009 at its 1960s site. The ecology of this species in GB/Wales urgently needs investigation.
Bryophyte	<i>Cephaloziella massalongii</i> (Lesser Copperwort)	2011 survey revealed colonies at 6 Welsh sites, but most populations are exceptionally small and vulnerable
Bryophyte	<i>Dicranodontium asperulum</i> (Orange Bow-moss)	The population at Llyn Bochlwyd is the southern most in the UK and is thought to be vulnerable to climate change or changes to the lake
Bryophyte	<i>Fossombronina fimbriata</i> (Fragile Frillwort)	More than half of recent (post-1980) British records are from 6 sites in Pembrokeshire. No Welsh colony has more than 10 plants and the entire Welsh population is <40 individuals (21 in Pembs, 1 in Carms, 3 in Brecs and <10 in Caerns)
Bryophyte	<i>Grimmia arenaria</i> (Nodding Donn's Grimmia)	There are recent (post-1980) records from only 4 of the 8 Welsh sites, and three of these colonies consist of fewer than 10 cushions. The small population size and vulnerable habitat of drystone walls make this moss highly threatened
Bryophyte	<i>Leiocolea fitzgeraldiae</i> (Fitzgerald's Notchwort)	Cwm Idwal is at the southern edge of the global range of <i>Leiocolea fitzgeraldiae</i> , making this species especially vulnerable to climate change in Wales.
Bryophyte	<i>Meesia uliginosa</i> (Broad-nerved Hump-moss)	The only Welsh site, Tywyn Aberffraw, is the southernmost in the UK. The GB decline has been most severe in the south. Sand dune

		habitats are especially vulnerable and difficult to manage.
Bryophyte	<i>Paraleptodontium recurvifolium</i> (Drooping-leaved Beard-moss)	The only recent Welsh records come from Cwm Dyli (1988) and Rhaeadr Ogwen (1990), and populations at 6 other Welsh sites have been lost in the 20th century. At least 3 former sites are ravines with HEP proposals.
Bryophyte	<i>Pseudocalliergon lycopodioides</i> (Large Hook-moss)	Extant at single sites on Ynys Mon and in Glamorgan, but lost from Pembrokeshire since 1960s. The remaining sites are dune systems, which are highly vulnerable to ecological change
Bryophyte	<i>Radula voluta</i> (Pale Scalewort)	Most of the 12 Welsh sites have recent records, but this species has a very restricted range in Wales, UK and Europe and is highly vulnerable.
Bryophyte	<i>Sematophyllum demissum</i> (Prostrate Signal-moss)	Entire GB population is in north Wales. Most colonies are extremely small, often restricted to 1 or 2 rocks at a site, and one site supports the majority of the Welsh (and therefore GB) population. This species is highly vulnerable to Hydro Electric schemes.
Bryophyte	<i>Tomentypnum nitens</i> (Woolly Feather-moss)	All 11 Welsh sites were revisited in 2008-2010, only 4 colonies are still extant, there are rank vegetation and scrub invasion problems at all sites, exacerbated by air pollution.
Bryophyte	<i>Tortula canescens</i> (Dog Screw-moss)	Severely threatened by scrub invasion on coastal slopes. Perhaps lost from all 6 recorded Welsh sites already, but 1970s records from two need to be followed up.

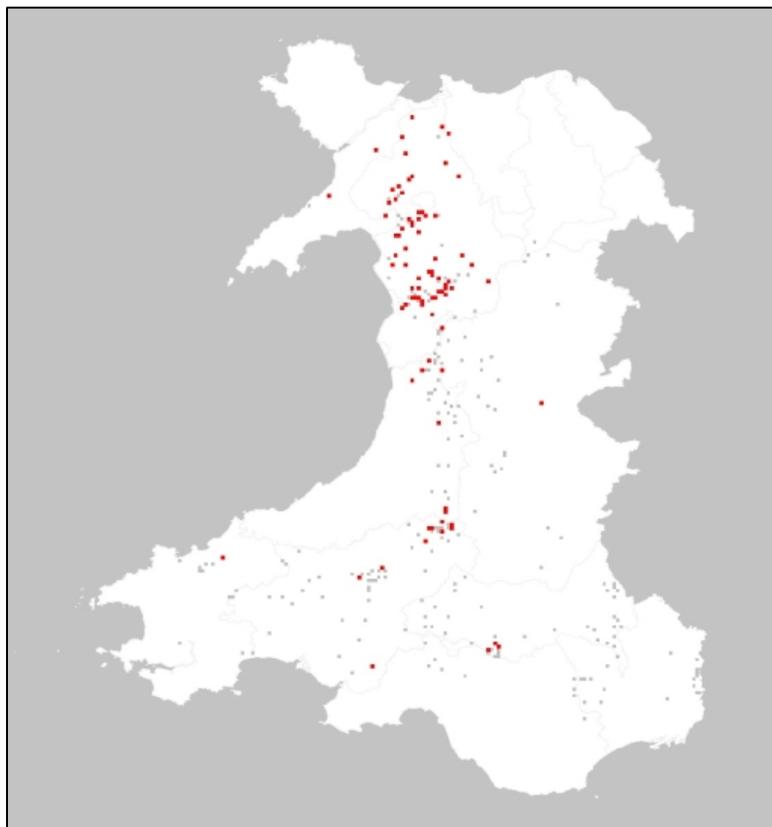
4. The Oceanic Ravine Bryophyte Assemblage

An Oceanic Ravine Bryophyte habitat is likely to be present if a site supports:-

Any one of the following species
<i>Aphanolejeunea microscopica</i>
<i>Campylopus setifolius</i>
<i>Daltonia splachnoides</i>
<i>Drepanolejeunea hamatifolia</i>
<i>Hageniella micans</i>
<i>Harpalejeunea mollerii</i>
<i>Leptoscyphus cuneifolius</i>
<i>Metzgeria leptoneura</i>
<i>Paraleptodontium recurvifolium</i>
<i>Plagiochila exigua</i>
<i>Plagiochila heterophylla</i>
<i>Radula voluta</i>
<i>Sematophyllum demissum</i>
Three or more of the following species
<i>Adelanthus decipiens</i>
<i>Andreaea megistospora</i>
<i>Dicranum scottianum</i>
<i>Fissidens polyphyllus</i>
<i>Jubula hutchinsiae</i>
<i>Lepidozia cupressina</i>
<i>Lepidozia pearsonii</i>
<i>Radula aquilegia</i>

Five or more of the following species
<i>Anastrepta orcadensis</i>
<i>Colura calyptrifolia</i>
<i>Douinia ovata</i>
<i>Heterocladium wulfsbergii</i>
<i>Hygrobiella laxifolia</i>
<i>Hygrohypnum eugyrium</i>
<i>Isothecium holtii</i>
<i>Marchesinia mackaii</i>
<i>Plagiochila bifaria</i>
<i>Plagiochila punctata</i>
<i>Platyhypnidium lusitanicum</i>
<i>Porella pinnata</i>
<i>Rhabdoweisia crenulata</i>
<i>Sphenolobopsis pearsonii</i>
Eight or more of the following species
<i>Bazzania trilobata</i>
<i>Fissidens bryoides</i> var. <i>caespitans</i>
<i>Hyocomium armoricum</i>
<i>Lejeunea lamacerina</i>
<i>Lejeunea patens</i>
<i>Lophocolea fragrans</i>
<i>Plagiochila spinulosa</i>
<i>Saccogyna viticulosa</i>
<i>Scapania gracilis</i>
<i>Solenostoma paroicum</i>
<i>Sphagnum quinquefarium</i>

The Section 42 Oceanic Ravine Bryophyte habitat, thus defined would be present at 85 sites in Wales, as mapped below (red squares: Oceanic Ravine Bryophyte Assemblage present; grey squares: ravine assessed but found not to support the Assemblage):-



4. Species extinct in Wales

These species should be removed from the S42 list:

Taxon group	S42 species extinct in Wales	Evidence
Bryophyte	<i>Atrichum angustatum</i> (Lesser Smoothcap)	Only Welsh record was poorly localised from 1926; presumed extinct and no actions suitable
Bryophyte	<i>Fissidens serrulatus</i> (Large Atlantic Pocket-moss)	Only Welsh site, in Meirionydd, resurveyed in 2009; presumed extinct and no actions suitable

5. Species for which evidence of decline is likely to be an artefact

These species should be removed from the S42 list:

Taxon group	S42 species extinct in Wales	Evidence
Bryophyte	<i>Grimmia elongata</i> (Brown Grimmia)	Downgraded to VU in 2011 GB Redlist and evidence for decline is based on paucity of revisits to remote localities
Bryophyte	<i>Rhytidiadelphus subpinnatus</i> (Scarce Turf-moss)	Downgraded to NT in 2011 GB Redlist as new sites have been discovered and the decline is probably not genuine

Plan/Proposals

We ask that WPB formally accept the above revisions and that the Section 42 list available for download on the WBP website is amended to include them.

Action Requested

- Approve us to carry on as suggested above

YES/NO