

Wales Biodiversity Partnership Conference 2012

Wales Biodiversity Partnership Conference Proceedings 2012

- Biodiversity and Ecosystems Approach in Wales - visioning the future

The fifth Wales Biodiversity Partnership Conference in partnership with the Welsh Government took place at Glamorgan University, Pontypridd on the 12th and 13th September 2012. Morgan Parry, Chair of the Countryside Council for Wales opened the conference and welcomed delegates.

Richard Wakeford, Rural Strategy Consultant and Joe Zammit-Lucia provided the keynote speeches and John Griffiths AM, Minister for Environment, Sustainable Development gave the Ministerial address with over one hundred delegates from a wide-ranging group of organisations in attendance.



Panel discussion. Left to right- Keith Vincent
John Griffiths AM, Richard Wakeford

Morgan Parry

Day 1

Chair: Morgan Parry, Countryside Council for Wales

Keynote Speech: Vision for the future: where do you think you're going? Richard Wakeford, Rural Strategy Consultant

Success in securing biodiversity and growing natural resources depends on being clear about what's to be achieved and taking joined up action in a partnership approach. Setting out challenges regarding the view of future landscapes and securing recovery of nature requires a paradigm shift.

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Attendees were challenged to assess whether daily processes are key to achieving the 'big vision.' There is a need to change from the current model of political leadership, led by public opinion, to a system where politicians are leaders and not followers.

Wales has the potential to do things differently and the Single Body should strive to integrate biodiversity properly through integrated management of land and water demonstrating social and economic benefits as well.

Richard's ideas contained in the talk are summed up in a briefing note -'Vision, outcomes and strategic breakthroughs?' Here Richard Wakeford argues for more strategic thinking in environmental planning, focusing on outcomes and searching out breakthrough strategies.

[Vision, outcomes and strategic breakthroughs?](#)

[Ministerial Address – John Griffiths AM, Minister for Environment and Sustainable Development](#)

The Minister welcomed attendees to the annual WBP conference and emphasised the importance of partnership working, which is key to delivery. The need to enhance designated sites as well as maintain them was also highlighted.

The Welsh Government has contributed to the development of the EU biodiversity strategy, and attendees were encouraged to share their thoughts through the afternoon workshop session: Biodiversity delivery in Wales: a response to the EU Biodiversity Strategy Common Implementation Framework.

There may be a need to develop an action plan on how Wales contributes to biodiversity targets, leading to the development of a Wales Biodiversity Strategy. The long term health of ecosystems and the services they provide will be central to decision making of the Single Body

A statement will be made in the autumn regarding the development of Natural Resource Planning in Wales as well as a timetable for development including how the Environment Bill will be delivered.

The Ecosystem Resilience and Diversity Compliance Funding for 2012/13 has resulted in funding for 33 projects whose outputs will be shared once work has been delivered. However, the Minister was unable to confirm whether funding will be available in future years although all were encouraged to begin to identify future projects should funding become available.

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Finally the Minister informed attendees of the development of an action plan for pollinators and invited those interested to attend a Welsh Government workshop which will result in development of ministerial recommendations, with the programme launched officially in Spring 2013.

The Law Commission's reform project on wildlife law- Dr Keith Vincent, Law Commission

The Law Commission recently launched a [consultation paper](#) on the 14 August 2012 detailing provisionally proposed reforms to the law on wildlife species. Their provisional proposals would entail fundamental reform to the current law in the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, as well as species specific Acts – such as the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. The reforms aim to create a modern wildlife law located in a single statute.

Q&A Session. John Griffiths AM, Richard Wakeford, Keith Vincent

Q) *Steve Bolchover, Volunteer* – Is the Law Commission Review concerned with consolidating or simplifying existing law or is the focus on introducing new, or extending existing, protective measures?

A) *Keith Vincent* – The aim of the review is to accurately transpose European requirements and not to reform the law. The focus of the project is to simplify and codify existing legislation to allow others to carry out their duties more effectively. The project is also able to add new schedules e.g. the introduction of closed seasons for some species, and can add or remove species. It should be remembered though that the reforms suggested will be recommendations only.

Q) *James Byrne, Wildlife Trusts Wales* – Considering the recommendation for a paradigm shift in public opinion, how would Welsh Government achieve this ?

A) *John Griffiths AM* – Addressing this challenge is no easy task. The public should be encouraged to think about wider environmental issues, such as the approach taken with the plastic bag levy in Wales, which has proved very successful in resulting in a behavioural change. Any ideas are welcomed. There should be a move to a strong urban environmental agenda and effective engagement with the public in urban areas. Multiple actions combined can lead to behaviour change. Initiatives are also needed to encourage renewable energy projects etc.

A) *Richard Wakeford* – There is a keenness in Wales to stand out from the UK (Westminster) approach but at times ambitions for the future can outstrip abilities to deliver. The Welsh commitment to sustainable development is be applauded, but resources to deliver are key. We need to be realistic about what is achievable. Communications from environmental charities to their large memberships can assist with behaviour change and lead to a change of attitude from Ministers. The Governments potential for mind-set change is there but responsibility for change is with us all.

Q) *Martyn Evans, Wales Marine Group/Monmouthshire County Council* – The Noxious Weed Act (NWA) includes the spread of Invasive Non Native plants and the role of local authorities in dealing with these should be confirmed with the Law Commission review process. How active should Local Authorities be in dealing with enforcement on private and public land?

A) *Keith Vincent* - The NWA is within the scope of the project however, it is not the role of the project to dictate to Local Authorities how resources should be allocated.

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Q) *Sorrell Jones, Gwent Wildlife Trust* – Recent media coverage has stated that changes will be made to planning policy in Wales to encourage economic growth. How does this sit with Welsh Governments ambitious sustainable development (SD) objectives?

A) *John Griffiths AM* – The Welsh Government is aiming to create a timely and effective system, which is not about changing the strengths of individual strands of SD. The key issue is the time it takes to make decisions and the friendliness of legislation. Decisions should be more evidence based. A general review of the planning system has been undertaken including the establishment of an Independent Advisory Committee. The recommendations will be released this autumn. There is a presumption in favour of SD in all WG policies and there is no weakening of WG's commitment to SD.

Q) *Delegate question*– are the planning professionals significantly engaged with the development of the Living Wales programme and the thinking around the Ecosystem Approach?

A) *John Griffiths AM* –Work is underway within Welsh Government to engage all relevant departments, including planning. However, we have a challenge to strengthen cross cutting work. e.g. how Natural Resources Planning will interact with Planning.

A) *Richard Wakeford*– Reliance on planning guidance documents is not helpful. Plans should be developed with visions for local areas on new ways of working which address these types of SD issues and planning decisions. We need to ensure that realistic growth is focused in the right places. There is a need to reply on the work of Local Planning Authorities to develop locally appropriate plans.

Q) *Laura Palmer, Cardiff City Council* – Can the Minister provide clarity over earlier comments? Will there be a presumption in favour of sustainable development or a presumption in favour of sustainable development where appropriate?

A) *John Griffiths AM* - Ultimately decisions will lie with the Local Planning Authorities and these will continue to operate as normal. An appropriate balance is needed.

Q) *John Clarke, RSPB Cymru* – Can Richard make any recommendations from the process in Scotland that may be applicable to Wales?

A) *Richard Wakeford* – Encouraging statutory bodies to work together is key and can deliver more efficient use of resources, allowing single individual to speak with authority on issues in any given area. Collaborative working also allows new and innovative partnerships to be developed. This form of working is easier to achieve in a smaller country and Wales has the opportunity to be an exemplar.

Q) *Valerie Forsyth, Welsh Bee Keepers Association* – Himalayan balsam and Japanese knotweed are vital to bees and other pollinators. There is a need to keep pockets of these species to benefit pollinators.

A) *John Griffiths AM* – The development of a Pollinators Action Plan will need to consider these issues and be informed by multiple opinions and evidence. Both species present serious challenges which will need to be addressed. Key is to prevent establishment in the first place.

A) *James Burn, Wildlife Trusts* – We need useful plants for pollinators; native species.

Q) *Mike Scott-Archer* – The Heritage Bill must be integrated with the Ecosystem Approach. Access to our heritage interest is very important and should be borne in mind.

A) *Richard Wakeford* – I'm in agreement, for example the Snowdon steam railway line, a tourist attraction, now runs along the abandoned railway line. The footpath and bridal path network are very important in making our cultural heritage accessible.

Q) *Morgan Parry* – We use the term 'Wise-use' in species legislation – protecting species for their intrinsic value. Is there a place for protecting species for own sake rather than for human use?

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A) *Keith Vincent* - There is a place for protection of species for welfare reasons; equally there are species we may not wish to protect e.g. pheasant numbers, or we would be dealing with the consequences of too many.

Q) *Chris Roberts, Torfaen County Council* – Torfaen Development Plan would have benefitted from advice from CCW and Government to advise on biodiversity and the Ecosystem Approach. We have one officer dealing with all environmental issues from recycling to fly-tipping. Support is needed to stimulate change and ensure an Ecosystem Approach. There is a risk attached to making changes now. There is also no funding pot for biodiversity action needed.

A) *John Griffiths* – Local Authorities have their own electoral integrity and are key delivery agencies. The Simpson agenda seeks collaboration on good practice, resources and expertise. Welsh Government Planning officials work closely with Local Authority Planners including LDP's. The Ecosystem Approach is a new concept and will require new ways of working. Welsh Government need to continue to work closely and clarify what is required. Welsh Government will be working up systems of delivery.

A) *Richard Wakeford* – We need to work with developing tools; adapting existing tools doesn't always work.

Natural Environment Resource Planning-Russell De'ath, Living Wales Programme

The presentation set out the outcome of the recent Sustaining a Living Wales green paper consultation, particularly in relation to the proposals around natural resource management planning.

The paper sought views on the development of integrated local resource management planning to inform the sustainable use of our natural resources as a whole. This is proposed to provide a common framework for decision-making for environmental regulators and managers.

Another consultation question sought views the scope for a single spatial framework for natural resource planning in Wales. As stated in the document, possible uses for a 'natural resource plan' might be: informing national infrastructure planning; providing a framework for investment in positive environmental improvement; identifying key environmental constraints to be addressed to enable socio-economic opportunities, and; providing a firm basis for taking a regulated approach to appropriate compensatory measures.

The presentation summarised the views of respondents to the consultation questions, and set out the Government's next steps in developing policy options for taking forward these considerations.

Q) *Joe Zammit-Lucia* – How do you engage with wider stakeholder/the general public?

A) *Russell De'ath* – Welsh Government have been developing a stakeholder engagement plan, although it must be recognised that some messages are too complex and possibly not

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appropriate for the general public. The Living Wales team have been working with the people and engagement team in Welsh Government to tackle these issues.

Q) *James Byrne, Wildlife Trusts Wales* – what will these pilots test?

A) *Russell De'ath* – The specifics of the pilots still need to be agreed, but likely to include community benefits etc.

Q) *Celia Thomas, Pembrokeshire Coast National Park* – In development of the Living Wales programme there is a need to consider agricultural land, which accounts for approximately 80% of the total land mass in Wales.

A) *Russell De'ath* – The Living Wales team are beginning these discussions with other WG departments, including agriculture.

Diversity in Welsh Upland Waters for Ecosystem Service Sustainability- the role of biodiversity in maintaining and improving ecosystem services: - Dr Isabelle Durance, Cardiff Sustainable Places Research Institute

Probing the link between biodiversity, ecological function and river ecosystem services.

There is growing consensus that inappropriate valuation of the world's ecosystem services have led to widespread errors in environmental management with associated social disbenefits. Freshwater ecosystems are a prime example: when managed appropriately, they provide major services such as fish production, water supply, nutrient transport, health benefits and recreation. However, these services have been compromised extensively because they are seldom recognised in channel, floodplain and catchment activities. Pressures on river ecosystem services will grow in future as land use intensifies, water demands increase and climate changes further.

Sustainable management of river ecosystem services depends on understanding the processes that underpin them. In particular, there is a need to quantify how services depend on river organisms and ecological functions. In this presentation, I describe a major NERC funded project aimed at addressing the need. DURESS - Diversity in upland rivers for ecosystem service sustainability – is a £3 million trans-disciplinary research programme focussed on four river ecosystem services that are explicitly biodiversity-mediated: water quality regulation; decomposition; fisheries and recreational fishing; and the cultural value of river birds.

Using river microbes, invertebrates, fish and river birds at all levels from genes to food webs, we are testing the hypothesis that: “Biodiversity is central to the sustainable delivery of upland river ecosystem services under changing land-use and climate”. We seek to assess quantitatively i) the links between biodiversity and service delivery; ii) how river biodiversity affects the resilience of ecosystem service delivery through time; iii) define how changes in catchments and climate affect services delivered by river biota in order to inform improved

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management. At spatial scales ranging from experimental catchments to whole regions, and temporal scales from sub-annual to inter-decadal, the work focusses on upland Wales as a well-defined European region that is sufficiently data rich and in which rivers are a major feature.

Cross-border and partnership working in the restoration of Fenn's, Whixall & Bettisfield Mosses raised bog National Nature Reserve - Dr Joan Daniels, Natural England

Fenn's, Whixall & Bettisfield Mosses SSSI straddles the Welsh/English Border and at 948 ha is Britain's 3rd largest raised bog. Over the last 21 years, cross-border and partnership working has been essential in achieving the landscape-scale successful restoration of the 670 ha NNR at the centre of this bog, which was so nearly destroyed by intensive mechanised commercial peat cutting. Partnerships have been crucial at all stages from acquisition, determining management techniques, and planning, justifying and monitoring the restoration of the mire to repickle the peat archive, enhance boggy bio-diversity and safeguard our future climate. Partnerships have also been critical in promoting mire restoration and reasons for not using peat to the public.

Soapbox Session: Every Child Outdoors Wales- Jon Gruffydd, Real World Learning Partnership Cymru

On 22 May 2012 RSPB Cymru launched a bilingual report entitled Every Child Outdoors Wales. This report has drawn together the diverse literature and schools inspectorate's research into the variety of benefits to children of contact with nature. This is presented along with evidence of the benefits to the environment of children engaging with it, the declines in such childhood experiences (the Extinction of Experience, and nature-deficit disorder), and research from Ipsos MORI, commissioned by the RSPB into the public's views on these issues.

The report summarises five key areas where RSPB Cymru believes government action should be taken, and these are concerned with: funding and guidance, the teaching profession, the value of outdoor learning, schools inspection and access to green spaces.

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DAY 2

Chair: Matthew Quinn, Director, Environment and Sustainable Development, Welsh Government/ Living Wales Programme Lead

Forest Health-implications and responses to the pathogen (*Phytophthora ramorum*) outbreak in Wales. Forest Research/Forestry Commission Wales

The outbreak of *Phytophthora ramorum* in Japanese Larch has meant large areas of forest in South Wales have been felled. The reasons for this response will be explained, its effectiveness discussed and provide the latest information on the spread of the pathogen in Wales.

Q) *David Jenkins, Coed Cymru* – Is there a need to train a wider group of individuals in identification of presence of *Phytophthora*?

A) *Owen Hoddy* – Yes this may be appropriate and FCW are happy to come and provide further advice or talks to groups and organisations if required. Contact Owen Hoddy for further information owen.hoddy@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

Q) *Alison Heal, Ceredigion County Council* – Should there be a move to preventative felling rather than reactive felling?

A) *Owen Hoddy* – Preventative felling may not be suitable as pathogen is transported in a number of ways (birds, air, recreation etc.) There are also not sufficient numbers of contractors available to undertake this work.

Q) *Andrea Rowe, Vale of Glamorgan County Council* – Is there any evidence for how long trees continue to produce spores after felling?

A) *Owen Hoddy* – There is a growing body of evidence around this topic and a number of papers can be found online. Please contact Owen Hoddy for further information owen.hoddy@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

Q) *Alison Jones, Caerphilly County Borough Council* – Has research been conducted on vaccinium as a host plant?

A) *Kevin Issard, FERA* – This research is currently on-going and FERA are awaiting the results.

Building the marine evidence base in Wales: - Dr Catherine Duigan, Countryside Council for Wales and the Marine and Freshwater Ecosystem Group (CCW)

It is widely promoted that the Welsh Government is committed to evidence based decision making. Equally as an Assembly sponsored environment body the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) requires evidence to support its operations. In particular, CCW uses the best available information to underpin biodiversity action, environmental management, site selection, and policy related advice.

This presentation will explore what is meant by evidence in an environmental context, and explain how it has been collected at various scales and used in different situations by CCW in the Welsh marine environment. Much of this evidence has been collected in partnership with a wide range of organisations, universities, consultancies and citizen scientists. Special emphasis will be placed on the efforts made by CCW to organise and present its data in a spatial form. It will also be demonstrated that Wales has a very important legacy of long-term monitoring datasets.

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State of the environment assessments will be discussed in the context of the creation of the new single body, recent UK reports (Charting Progress 2 – the State of UK Seas; UK National Ecosystem Assessment) and future challenges (Marine Strategy Framework Directive). It will also be recognized that there are still critical gaps in our knowledge of the marine environment in Wales and high priority research needs will be suggested.

Graham Oliver, National Museums Wales – There is a need for evidence on how changes in the marine environment are interpreted and a need for increased resources in both time and funding for the marine environment.

Q) *John Clarke, RSPB Cymru* – What are the key drivers for evidence collection and how do you prioritise which gaps are filled?

A) *Catherine Duigan* – Best approach is to prioritise areas where a significant amount of work has already been undertaken in the first instance. Access to data from other sources such as industry should also be sought as this could help significantly.

Local Biodiversity Action- reflecting local biodiversity, reflecting local values:- Richard Wistow, Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council

In the far distance past, when LBAPs were first mooted, the 'how to do' guidance notes emphasised and re-emphasised the importance of 'local'. Local was key: bottom-up was good: LA21 and LBAP were joined at the hip. At the time it posed the question as to what 'local' meant. So what 'locally' have we really achieved? What locally is the LBAPS greatest success?

Rhondda Cynon Taff sits in the middle of the south Wales Valleys. An area which was generally considered to be derelict and devoid of biodiversity. Local naturalists knew better, but no one asked them, and few visited from outside: the area was largely discounted as a biodiversity hole, a place to be driven around, or quickly through. In the 1990s, the CCW Phase I Habitat Survey produced multi-coloured maps which started to open eyes, but as the first tentative LBAP steps were being 'toddled', biodiversity expectations were low. Biodiversity was expressed in generic 'could be anywhere' words.

Today we have a much clearer, colourful, and exciting picture of the County Borough's biodiversity. It has been gradual, slow, somewhat piece-meal, and patient, and perhaps (as a result) 'sustainable'. It is based on local recorders, local reports, planning application information, and CCWs and others data. It hopefully will never be complete, and the story we can now tell is increasingly one about RCT and not 'any old where LBAP land'. We can now talk about the locally distinctiveness which makes up the County Borough's wealth of biodiversity and makes RCT special for its own special reasons. Over the years the LBAP has encouraged,

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engaged, observed, debated, collated and collected the pieces of information which have wafted past and we can now talk about the place and the places within it. So in amongst management projects, planning delivery, biodiversity events, awareness raising and the rest, the greatest success has been the understanding of RCT's biodiversity which has emerged. An understanding which increasingly underpins the LBAP objectives and opportunities that are pursued.

Keynote Speaker: Conservation: Moving From Crisis to Opportunity: - Joe Zammit-Lucia

As we continue with difficult economic times and broader social issues, conservation issues risk slipping down people's list of priorities. How do we create a new vision that is capable of energizing people and garner widespread support for the conservation agenda? This presentation will present an eight point plan for how such a new vision might be built.

A key message: We need to ask ourselves 'How do we communicate?' We need to be clear and use accessible language.

We need to use opportunities that present themselves in times of economic hardship; and use these opportunities to build a stronger future

We need to remind ourselves of the many achievements to date: the far increased level of environmental awareness, the notable increase in species conservation, in energy conservation, investment in green energy etc. All of these achievements provide a strong foundation on which we can build our house. But we mustn't lose sight of the top 10 things people care about. We need to present our concerns with understanding and regard to the concerns of other sectors and individuals. We need to talk to people using appropriate language and not depend on our current narrative. We should look to build a slow, but steady rise in people's interest in their environment.

What does a sustainable future look like? It needs to look better than what we have now. It needs to be tangible, positive and aspirational.

Projects need to always include people and positive gains. Joe provided, as an example, the Spanish mink project which provided huge gains for the community but wasn't promoted in this way. Instead the project missed a trick and centred project promotion on gains for the mink, a species which most people in the community had never seen or recognised a connection with. People need to understand 'How this relates to my life'.

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How do we move from activism to environmentalism? Can we look through a people lens to the environment? What does our society require of an Energy Bill? What green benefits can we achieve?

Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature by William Cronon. A useful read that challenges some sacred cows.

Finally, we cannot depend on charity to fund our work. Public funding is important but we can't rely on this either. We need sustainable funding through tangible funding, by adding value to what we do, for people.

Biodiversity and Community:- multiple benefits through community engagement:- Alison Jones, Principal Ecologist, Caerphilly County Borough Council

There is a huge gap between the public perception of biodiversity and our own informed view. We all know that if we are going to be successful in protecting and managing our biodiversity we need to win over the local community to work with us rather than against us. But how do we do it? When it comes to community engagement we need to think outside the box and make sure that whatever we are doing for biodiversity also benefits the day to day lives of the local population. Caerphilly County Borough has tried all sorts to change opinions on biodiversity from a negative to a positive and although it is still a work in progress are starting to see some benefits.

Ecosystem Restoration:- Experiences from the Covert Coch mire restoration project, RSPB Ynys-hir reserve- Ross Willis, RSPB Cymru

The area of lowland raised bog in the UK retaining a largely undisturbed surface is estimated to have diminished by around 94% from an original c95,000 ha to c6,000 ha at the present day.

Ceredigion holds approximately two thirds of the lowland raised bog resource for Wales including the two largest Welsh raised bog sites, Cors Fochno and Cors Caron, placing a significant responsibility on local delivery of the Welsh BAP target for this habitat with this county.

Covert Coch, part of the RSPB Ynys-hir nature reserve on the Dyfi estuary, is a 13 ha fragment of a once extensive wetland along the Dyfi estuary which was drained and planted with conifers towards the end of the 19th century.

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Wherever the conifers would not grow an impenetrable thicket of *Rhododendron ponticum* colonised from adjacent woodlands where it had been planted as game cover.

An area of Sitka spruce was removed in the 1970's and in 1996, with Forestry commission grant aid, the process of improving access and *R.ponticum* removal began. Further grants from the Environment Agency, Forestry Commission and CCW enabled work to continue until 2006 when, with Pheonix/CCW grant aid, the removal of the conifer plantation and final control of *Rhododendron* followed.

Water level management began with blocking of internal drainage ditches to create localised flooding and two sluices were installed to retain high water levels on the entire site. Following the site clearance, the re-emerging mire vegetation had to compete with a vigorous invasive scrub (mainly Birch and Willow) and seedling *Rhododendron ponticum*.

In response, a major and on-going hand-weeding programme has been in place and stock control features installed to allow the introduction of light grazing by Welsh mountain ponies.

[Biodiversity and Ecosystems- stepping up to the challenge](#): - Rachel Sharp, Wildlife Trusts Wales/Wales Environment Link

These are dynamic times for nature conservation in Wales, new legislation, a new body and a Living Wales. We have all heard about the ecosystem services approach but what does this actually mean? After over a year of discussing the NEF, are we any nearer a NEF-topia world where biodiversity is truly valued by society?

There seems to be many questions and uncertainties, however, one thing we do know is that we failed to achieve our biodiversity targets. Blame doesn't achieve anything so the only option is to face new challenges. Recognising our place in a sustainable Wales where environment, society and the economy are treated equally is one such challenge. But with a degraded biodiversity surly there needs to be an added focus in our work? Or is the real challenge for us to undertake a cultural change to be more aware of the economic needs of Wales?

Closing Keynote:- Reflections on biodiversity and nature conservation achievements and future challenges; - Morgan Parry Chair of Countryside Council for Wales

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Morgan reflected on the two days of the conference, and briefly on the two decades of CCW's work in nature conservation, articulating his concerns for the future: on business pressure for deregulation, and public ambivalence about protected areas, arguing that the new Single Body should be good for biodiversity in Wales. He stressed the importance of communicating the links between ecosystems and biodiversity. Reminding the audience that much of our work may concentrate on action to restore degraded habitats, which will require the use of many tools, including perhaps rewilding of some areas. Morgan asked the audience whether a Biodiversity Strategy was needed to address these issues. And suggested that the Wales Biodiversity Partnership was the forum in which this could be discussed.

Morgan reminded us that sustainable development is quoted as being 'the central organizing principle' of Welsh Government but questioned whether Government are clear what they mean by this? Will they demonstrate this through the Living Wales Programme? Sustainable Development arose due to developing countries being unable to raise their standards due to the lack of control they had over their natural resources. Morgan urged us not to lose sight of where this concept came from.

Sustainable development needs to be practised across all sectors, Morgan advocated. He added that as Richard Wakeford earlier suggested, perhaps Wales could consider publishing annual figures on the Economic, Social and Well-being per capita.

He closed with a plea for conservation professionals to be clearer HOW they think biodiversity should be protected: through government action, through market-based approaches, through voluntary effort or through rewilding – simply letting go.

Workshop Sessions

Biodiversity Delivery in Wales: Facilitator- Welsh Government

Strategy and Board

1. Need a clear strategy / action plan – actions / needs
 - Who is it aimed at?
 - How do we get biodiversity reported at a local level?
 - Board – Engagement / Representation across sectors (sp. WG departments)
2. Improve connection from local, national, UK, EU
 - Agreed common goal
 - More authority to deliver biodiversity at LA level
 - Requirement to report
3. Needs a financial action plan alongside a strategy – time bound
4. Action Plan at national down to local level – visual
5. Influencing negative drivers that have prevented wider progress
6. Work backwards from 2050, 2020, to determine who needs influencing along way
 - Means of accessing novel sources of funding
7. Strategy
 - High level targets – relatable at local level
 - Demonstrate how Biodiversity delivers other strategies' targets e.g. economic development, well-being
 - Reviewed annually
 - Identify indicators – local, regional , WG
 - Roles / responsibilities clearly defined e.g. WG, SB (core of their work programme), NGOs, LA

Biodiversity Partnerships

Mandate:

Wales Biodiversity Forum

- Do we have one?
- If so why don't we know?
- Not embedded

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Links between members of partnership

- Do they work?
- Are they there?

Composition:

NGO, LAs, Universities, volunteers, other GOs, → need stronger links, more support and funding to those delivering outcomes

- Must have clear outcomes!
- Must be reportable/measurable – is it working?

Output:

To halt loss of biodiversity

- Need more £££, less strategies! Fund work on ground.
- Connect relationship between SB and grant holders to enable delivery

Integration of Biodiversity into Everything (strategies, departments, etc.)

No proliferation of groups because of limited capacity.
No further strategies unless have teeth.

Initial Thoughts

- More detail required
- Who owns which elements?
- Do we need Biodiversity Strategy? WBP working on ground. Need to build on this.
- Wales Biodiversity Action Plan?
- Strategy would help prioritise and put in context / sign up by Minister
- What about action plans from Environment Strategy?
- Strategy needs to be X Government. Biodiversity needs to underpin Ag/ WFD...
- Look at existing structures / mechanisms. Capacity / resource issues.
- Having right people on right groups with authority
- Circulate list of groups to WBP for comment on gaps
- Why have separate pollinator plan?
- Who is strategy for/aimed at?

Land Use in Wales: Main facilitator -Richard Wakeford

VISION – Multifunctional Countryside

- RW identified the challenge as how we balance the competition for all of these uses of land, by using government tools of regulation and financial incentive
 - Biofuels
 - Renewable Energy: wind and hydro
 - Cultural and recreational services
 - Food production

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- Woodland

ISSUES IDENTIFIED BY DELEGATES

- Land ownership
- Food Security

LEVERS

What levers are available to challenge the issues and achieve the vision?

In tackling the two issues of both land ownership and food security one possible lever discussed was a **minimum production law** after the purchase of land, or possibly taxing land that is not productive in terms of its agricultural production value or its biodiversity value. **Compulsory Purchase Orders** (CPOs) were also suggested as a possible lever to insure appropriate land use balance.

In tackling solely the issue of food security, discussed were; private garden vegetable incentives, **profit sharing schemes for private landowners** and **Community Supported Agriculture** (CSA) schemes. As mainly involved in grassroots movements, how would Welsh Government support such schemes as CSAs from the top down? Suggestions involved the lever shouldn't be fiscal support, but supporting community organisations in setting up CSAs.

Despite these possible levers, what is really needed is a starting point before we can decide if and how land use can be improved. So before a methodology is outlined to achieve a set goal or vision, a clear statistical or valuation starting point needs to be present. What is needed before anything else is an **audit of land use**. We need evidence, in order to plan what levers to use, in order to change mindsets and thus change the way land is used for the better. For example current CENSUS data only records agricultural use of land and not its biodiversity use. Until we can gather a complete data set of land use

including the valuing of ecosystem services such as biodiversity, we are essentially planning in the dark and cannot expect to successfully balance a multifunctional countryside.

Something that also needs to be considered is to what extent do these levers influence behavioural change.

FOLLOW UP

After the workshop, which had speculated about stronger powers the Welsh Government might take, came an announcement from the Scottish Government, reproduced overleaf:

A proposed bill to give more power to Scotland's communities could see the biggest transfer of power since devolution.

The proposed Community Empowerment and Renewal Bill would give more power to Scotland's communities.

The exploratory consultation on the Bill, which was yesterday debated at the Scottish Parliament, is currently seeking views on a range of ideas which could see more power in the hands of communities:

- Urban right to buy – extending the right that currently exists for rural communities to buy land to urban communities.
- Right to take over unused or underused public sector land and buildings – either the right to request a transfer, or possibly a presumptive right to take over a public sector asset when it can be shown it is unused or underused and the asset owner was not able to show plans for future use.

- Right to use and access unused land – where it can be shown that land, in public or private sector ownership, is unused or underused and the asset owner is not able to show plans for future use. This could include a “community right to grow”, giving communities a right to access unused land and plant flowers, crops or trees.
- Community compulsory purchase – communities often identify areas of land or a building in their area that are unused and causing problems and could be brought back into use. Currently local authorities have powers to compulsorily purchase property if it is in the public interest to do so; communities could be given similar powers.
- Participatory budgeting – giving communities more direct control over how public sector money is spent in local areas.
- Overarching duty to engage – to replace individual duties to engage with communities placed on different public sector bodies with one overarching duty.
- Unused or underused and the asset owner is not able to show plans for future use. This could include a “community right to grow”, giving communities a right to access unused land and plant flowers, crops or trees.

Action Learning Sets- how can they help biodiversity?

Facilitator: Diana Reynolds Living Wales Programme, Welsh Government

Things that we're doing already:

- + We are all committed to no net loss
- + lots of positive projects are contributing

to biodiversity gain

+ we are talking to each other and working together

Enhancements:

+ Provide opportunities for people - children, parents and other adults to explore/discover nature for themselves

Do differently:

+ Not biod as an add on but as a core part of all curricula (as outlined in the education for sustainable development and global citizenship strategy)

+ Do more inter-generational work

Our one wish:

+ Focus on creating habitats - hold next year's conference entirely on the topic of creating/identifying tools to create habitat and how to remove barriers to creating habitats on our land and land that we have no control over (ie moving from no net loss to net gain)

Things we will do:

+ Encourage Sean re: our wish and next year's conference

+ Encourage Tracey to run workshops with real land managers/owners to help understanding of the barriers/opportunities to work together (a whole series of useful sessions before next conference)

+ Hold at least one proper Welsh workshop next time (Diana or Alison)

+ Encourage real workshops (not mini lectures) that give people chance to talk and listen

+ Ask Sean to invite the Minister for agriculture to the conference next year

+ Be reflective and persistent in our daily work

How do we prepare for the effects of climate change in the natural environment sector along with other competing pressures? Main facilitator: Lucy Corfield- Welsh Government

Increased drought and other climate change effects may have a profound impact on biodiversity and important habitats, affecting vital services that the natural environment provides for Wales and its people. The UK Climate Change Risk Assessment highlighted a number of key risks for the natural environment sector. The Welsh Government's Climate Change Strategy recognizes that climate change poses a significant risk to sectors across Wales and looks to build capacity and embed adaptation in the sector through the development of Sectoral Adaptation Plans. The workshop is looking for key stakeholders views to how we mainstream adaptation in the Welsh Governments Living Wales Programme - both through the delivery of the functions of the Natural Resources Body and the implementation of the ecosystems approach across Government. This will apply to public bodies as well as the wider environment sector.

Aims of day

- To understand how to build resilience in the natural environment sector through the Living Wales Programme.

Structure of the session

Item	Lead by
Welcome and introductions	Lucy Corfield
The Living Wales Programme and Climate Change – An introduction was given covering the LWP approach and how climate change can be used as a driver for the LWP and how it also needs to be looked as a risk to the LWP.	Steve Spode
The impacts of climate change on the natural environment and a suggested way forward – a presentation was given outlining the impacts of climate change with headline messages from the UK Climate Projections 2009. A review was then given on the consequences of climate change on the natural environment sector with a suggested way forward utilising Defra’s Conserving Biodiversity in a Changing Climate guidelines.	Rob McCall
Welsh Government Policy Response- An outline was given on how the Welsh Government is dealing with the impacts of climate change, including details on the Sectoral Adaptation Plan process and issues to consider when mainstreaming climate change adaptation.	Lucy Corfield

Discussion - How do we embed adaptation into the Living Wales Programme?

Group facilitated discussion looking at how to embed adaptation into the natural environment sector.

Facilitator
Rob McCall
Scribe
Lucy Corfield

Workshop issues discussed:

How do we embed adaptation into LWP

- There are short term problems of dealing with the variability of extreme weather, whilst dealing with long term climate change.
- Utilise public health initiatives such as clean air and water.
- A key aspect of adaptation is to build resilience. We need to ensure we have systems in place to do so.
- Need to look at adaptation of the natural environment for new species coming in.
- We need to force some changes through, as it is not just about the environment but civilisation.
- Look at incentives/breeding systems
- Reverse the question from impacts to resilience.
- It raises question about focussing in on one area, adaptation is essential for everything e.g. human society

What's already being done in the natural environment sector surrounding the impacts of climate change?

- The Wildlife Trust and RSPB are already doing work around adaptation, biodiversity, etc.

What are the barriers for integrating adaptation in the natural environment?

- There needs to be engagement with farmers as they have a large role to play and are integral for adaptation in the natural environment sector.
- Our farming incentive based approach is not appropriate and needs to be looked at and revised to make them more suitable.
- Adaptation will be more and more difficult with demands on land.

What are the opportunities for integration adaptation in the natural environment?

- There are opportunities for linking up with other areas to get multiple benefits e.g. health, flooding, etc.
- Use water resources as a start
- River catchments can be looked at and cleaned up which will give ‘win, wins’ with other areas e.g. biodiversity, health, reduction in flooding, etc.
- Need to look at connectivity and just get on with it.
- Look at private land and how it will also be impacted on and how it can also be utilised to help adaptation e.g. hill farmers may want to look at costs from flooding.
- The Water Framework Directive can be utilised fully to stop farmers working up to the edge of rivers, which will reduce pollution, etc.
- Show farmers how much money they have been wasting with the use of fertiliser, which will improve the natural environment and reduce cost for the farmers.
- Mainstream adaptation into farm advisory – change the way people are incentivised.
- Buying husbandry of water like other countries e.g. US and South West England
- Identify secondary impacts
- The costs of cleaning up agriculture land will bring huge opportunities for water companies

Workshop Session 12th September - ‘Working Together’- future challenges for our water environment, Environment Agency Wales. Main facilitator Ceri Jones

Background

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. The workshop set out the steps the Environment Agency is taking to develop and implement the 2nd River Basin Management Plans in support of the formal consultation on ‘Working Together’, which runs until December 2012. The consultation questions were discussed and how we can work together and explore future aspirations.

Contributors

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Workshop outputs -

Consultation Questions for our 3 River Basin Management Plans

1. How do you think the Environment Agency can create an approach that gives everyone the opportunity to contribute to the River Basin Management Plan?

- At a strategic level there needs to be an engagement plan to target the key issues such as land management.
- By targeting those who have a role to deliver environmental improvements.
- Decision makers within organisations need to be included as without their commitment it will be harder for others within that organisation to contribute resources.

- Using education to improve people’s awareness of the purpose of the River Basin Management Plans and the role they can contribute. Such as the Yellow Fish campaign that Keep Wales Tidy are delivering, using existing education centres such as the Taff Valley centre and the Universities.
- There are existing networks that could be used better. This will avoid duplication and ‘over engagement’.

STREAMLINING THE Local Biodiversity Action Plan approach. Main facilitator: LAURA PALMER MIEEM – ECOLOGIST CARDIFF COUNCIL

A short presentation was given outlining the work done so far on the Cardiff LBAP Pilot. To date four essential elements for a successful LBAP have been identified. These were explored in the presentation and the workshop exercises were designed to see how we can make best use of these elements.

HABITAT GUIDANCE

A need has been identified to have a single reference for habitat descriptions and condition assessment allowing for differences in botanical knowledge and survey technique.

Resource	Purpose
Habitat sheets	Single reference for all widely used survey techniques
Tailored training	Encourage local groups to record specific species allowing condition assessment

Roundup – It was felt that the single habitat reference was a positive step to creating a generic, across the board resource. A standard definition of “good condition” is needed. More information may be needed such as soil condition. Local group training will be very group specific and needs would vary. Barriers may include the distance volunteers need to travel, a lot of effort is put in to training people but only a few actually take it up, there are access issues to private land, upland areas, farmers and less populated areas.

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers and local conservation groups are the backbone of conservation in Wales. A need has been identified to utilise them more efficiently while supporting and encouraging them.

Resource	Purpose
Photobucket instructions	Tailored photograph storage instructions.
BARS screenshots	A sample look at the new system

Roundup – Engage volunteers through Reporter Champions who are responsible for recording actions within a group, including a Reporter Champion network. Set targets and incentivise volunteers to upload records e.g. competitions, prizes. Use case studies to demonstrate where data made a difference (tell volunteers). Consolidate record systems – organisation specific lists, iSpot, LRCs, Outcome 21 database.

To engage volunteers in the new BARS system their contributions should be acknowledged/valued, training is important, consider the ability to upload actions on an ad hoc basis – non-organisation linked. Develop a BARS app for use in the field. Rebrand BARS – make it more accessible, change the logo and interface.

INFORMATION CAPTURE

We have always called for more information from our local groups. Taking a more visual, landscape scale approach to the LBAP actions could help facilitate better data capture.

Resource	Purpose
Recording sheet	The simplest way of collecting information, can be tailored for groups working on a single site by locking the location column.
BARS screenshots	A sample look at the new system

Roundup – The simplified and tailored approach to data capture was seen as a good idea, including uploading photos onto the internet for id, the ease for records to be passed on to the LRCs, using technology and the output of giving a better strategic understanding of ecology. It was felt necessary to have a clear set of guidelines that are easy to understand and give a number options. It was also felt that a map of community groups would be of use. Overall this should fit into a more tiered approach – Species/habitats/ecosystems – organisations Policy (NERC) etc.

It was felt that the ecosystem approach should be centre, including green infrastructure mapping included in BARS. It was also noted that BARS needs to be 100% ready for use and must take into account differences in local authority areas.

STRATEGIC LBAPs

Mapping systems are becoming increasingly easy to access and use and make a bolder, more reliable statement than lists of actions. The Cardiff LBAP proposals are to create strategic corridor maps and couple these with the new BARS system

Resource	Purpose
Habitat corridor maps	Priority areas identified by action type available as maps.
BARS aspirational maps	Priority areas mapped on BARS as aspirational actions.

Roundup – Habitat corridor mapping was felt to be an effective tool to assist LBAPs but not an alternative. They could be used to link in other benefits for people – spiritual, ecosystem services etc. The LBAPs can be much simpler and should be used to put the maps in context. These need to be overlaid onto ecosystem service maps. It would be useful to map where the volunteers are. The question was asked could the maps be a toolkit to support BARS?

On mapping the corridors as aspirational areas on BARS the group felt that this may help link to other benefits, it would also allow them to be used as a planning tool, it may remove the necessity to survey in some cases and it could focus opportunity. However, not everyone understands maps and their use would be limited in more rural areas.

In response to the question can BARS deliver the BAP across Wales the groups asked if it was more public friendly, is the reporting sufficient and can the aspirational maps be shown.

MOVING ON

The purpose of this workshop was to ensure that current work was on the right track. With a few tweaks the Cardiff LBAP Pilot will take forward the proposed projects with the following priorities:

- 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.

Effective partnership Working- Building New visions to make your projects more effective. Facilitator: Joe Zammit-Lucia

A group discussion was held and several questions were posed:

Can you re-word all your project titles with people at their centre. If not, should we re-think our projects?

How do we get the Environment into people's top 10 concerns? Maybe we have to link it with other issues, such as the economy.

How can we enthuse the public, building on what they want, their objectives.

Getting people re-connected to the countryside.

Using art, literature, they are more powerful than science.

People think of conservationists as too negative, it has been shown that a negative message switches people off.

He posed the question, why save rare species? If we can't explain our rationale to people in ways that make sense to them, it becomes more like a religion – 'just because', which turns people off.

Human interest story - ensure in there; even if you don't think there is, there will be.

Examples of proven successes given by workshop attendees, using this approach:

1. 'Festival of Ideas' - free pizza for ideas; buying in people with inspiration from elsewhere.
2. Multicultural gardens - unusual vegetables to try and cook-up sessions, medicinal plants & traditional uses, folklore, recipes, language
3. Medicinal gardens have benefits for invertebrates as well as people – e.g Cowbridge Medicinal Garden; Swansea - Sustainable Projects Trail
4. Marine Tank - Martin Evans's example

WBP - Could we have a 'Peoples Projects' page on our web-site where we provide links/short para/project leads?

Place Station website <http://www.theplacestation.org.uk/about>

What's in it for me? People want to and need to know this. Remember this and add into your planning and interpretation

'We'll try it. If you don't like it, we'll take it back to how it was.' Giving people the confidence to make changes with an option to return to previous stage if not liked.

Ffridd – its importance and vulnerability. Main facilitator Clare Burrows CCW

Background

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 as ffridd (or coedcae) in Wales, has a very different habitat composition from either the uplands or the lowlands. Yet this zone has received little conservation attention; habitat and species surveys and statutory designations all tend to concentrate on either upland or lowland, with little regard for the area in between. Recent research on ffridd bird assemblages, spatial analysis of Wales-wide data and a new potential threat have raised the profile of ffridd. There is a growing appreciation of its importance. This workshop examined the strength of case for proposing ffridd as a section 42 habitat; considering the definition, importance and vulnerability of the ffridd.

Contributors

13 representatives drawn from local government, statutory and voluntary sector organisations participated in the workshop.

Workshop outputs –

Consultation Questions

1. *What is everyone's image of ffridd and can we reach a consensus on a definition?*

- There was agreement that altitude was not a useful measure.
- Everyone agreed that vegetation composition was an important element.
- Most contributors thought that vegetation mosaics should be included in a definition.
- Most contributors thought that ffridd should be restricted to land below the upper limit of enclosure, but there were contributors with the opposing view. This could be down to geographic variation. One contributor felt that if the definition were to extend above the upper limit of enclosure the term 'ffridd' would be inappropriate as it has a specific meaning to land owners.
- The importance of slope was discussed. In some areas ffridd is restricted to steep slopes but in others it occurs on relatively flat land.

2. Does ffridd have sufficient importance and distinctiveness to justify addition to the section 42 list?

In addition to the areas of importance covered in the presentation, contributors felt that ffridd was important as:

- A refuge for lowland habitats and species
- Unfragmented landscapes containing the largest, continuous, single blocks of lowland semi-natural habitat
- Habitat networks, contributing considerably to connectivity in the landscape
- Areas for access and recreation
- Supplying ecosystem services – clean water, flood alleviation, carbon storage
- A visually attractive element in the landscape
- Cultural reasons

3. Is ffridd under threat and does it require protection of any sort?

Threats were perceived as coming from:

- Intensification
- Abandonment
- Changing management practices
- Tree planting
- Wind farms

4. Do you agree with taking forward a proposal to add ffridd to the section 42 habitat list?

Virtually all the contributors agreed that a proposal to add ffridd to the section 42 list should be taken forward. They felt that it currently had little protection as often the S42 habitats present were in small patches within larger mosaics which makes it difficult to make a case for their importance. Bracken, although a very important component, currently has no protection.

Key Messages from workshop

1. Ffridd was felt by all present to be an important habitat complex that currently receives inadequate recognition and protection.
2. Further work will be necessary before ffridd can be defined in detail and mapped.
3. There is a paucity of information on the species present in ffridd and their habitat requirements.

4. There are currently several threats to ffridd that could, at least in part, be mitigated against by the raised awareness and the increased protection that section 42 status would confer.

Follow Up Actions

What	Who leads	By When
Organise a meeting with key stakeholders not present at WBP conference to discuss proposing ffridd as a S42 habitat	Countryside Council for Wales	October 2012
Using the feedback from the workshop session and follow-up meeting, write a paper for WBP proposing ffridd as a S42 habitat	Countryside Council for Wales	October 2012
Present proposal to WBP Steering Group	Countryside Council for Wales and RSPB	November 2012
Further actions will depend on the decision of the WBP Steering Group		

Invertebrates in urban areas: Buglife's plans and priorities: Facilitators Craig MacAdam, Clare Dinham, Buglife

Buglife – The Invertebrate Conservation Trust is the only organisation in Europe devoted to the conservation of all invertebrates: from bees to beetles, and spiders to snails. Buglife was one of the first conservation organisations to highlight the ongoing loss of brownfield habitats – and the serious consequences of this for biodiversity – and has been working to conserve brownfield wildlife since 2004.

Craig McAdam and Clare Dinham gave a presentation on Buglife's current work on brownfield habitats; urban parks and green roofs and will introduce the West Glamorgan Stepping Stones project.

A brief outline of the talk is as follows:

Introduction to Buglife

Why invertebrates are important

Advocacy – lobbying parliament, campaign work

Protected species work

Protected species work, practical conservation, landscape scale projects such as Buglife's Brownfield Stepping Stones projects, pollinator projects such as B-Lines,

research and reporting, outreach work to enthuse and inspire members of the public, species workshops and advice sheets.

West Glamorgan Stepping Stones project

Article 1. Primary aims, methods and outputs

Article 2.

Collate biodiversity data for all 5 project sites to include invertebrates, reptiles and flora

Restore/enhance 48ha of Open Mosaic Habitat

Bring c. 100ha of OMH into favourable management

Habitat Management:

Selective scrub clearance to promote establishment of species rich grassland and heathland

Creation of bare ground scrapes and bee banks

Creation of wildflower rich grassland

Creation of habitat piles/hibernacular

Management of invasive non-native flora where appropriate and practical

Biodiversity monitoring focussed on areas of habitat creation/restoration

Alert mapping - identifying sites within Swansea/NPT that contain OMHPDL UKBAP Priority Habitat.

Brownfield best practice workshop aimed at planners, developers, land managers, ecologists, consultants etc.

Outreach and Awareness raising – Bioblitz', establishment of volunteer groups, training, wildlife walks, bug/reptile ID workshops, moth trapping

Project partners – Tata Steel Port Talbot, Neath Port Talbot Council, Swansea Council.

Additional partners – Bumblebee Conservation, Amphibian and Reptile Conservation, Swansea University.

The project is funded by WREN

Workshop discussions

What opportunities are there for invertebrate conservation in Wales?

Where will the biggest opportunities be?

Species/habitat work

Preserve habitats for people and wildlife

Integrated press management in Wales

Building links with groups such as industrial archaeologists

What are the barriers to invertebrate conservation in Wales?

Concerns were raised as to the levels of interest surrounding invertebrates and their conservation.

It was considered that more knowledge is needed for some groups in order to understand their ecology and how to manage sites appropriately.

The perception of 'bugs' was raised as an issue, which is largely down to lack of understanding and appreciation of the important role that invertebrates play in terms of ecosystem services such as pollination. Education and public engagement is an important means of rectifying this.

Baseline data is lacking for many sites. Without this information it is difficult to know which sites to protect – those involved with managing sites expressed some difficulties when it comes to invertebrates due to lack of baseline data. There was also the concern of 'where to begin' given the vast number of species. Resources were also an issue particularly within Local Authorities – where will funds come from to pay for survey work/what should we be surveying for?

Links between departments within Local Authorities need to be improved

Buglife's B-lines and Buzzing projects are a means to increase pollination resources for invertebrates, to build positive relationships with land owners and to engage with members of the public. Interest in these types of projects was expressed and information has been provided to delegates; urban parks being the focus for 'Buzzing' projects.

A Wales Pollinator Plan is to be launched in spring 2013, and Welsh Government will be holding a workshop prior to its release.

Brownfield sites

Wales has a large brownfield resource including coal and slate mining spoil and former heavy metal smelting works. Many brownfield sites are within Local Authority ownership and Local Wildlife Site series'. Site remediation was considered an issue, i.e. top soiling and tree planting on coal mining spoil for aesthetic purposes as opposed to allowing the area to re-colonise naturally.

Further to the WBP Conference Clare Dinham visited Rhoose Point, with Erica Dixon, ecologist at Vale of Glamorgan. This former quarry is an excellent example of a brownfield site that can work for both wildlife and people.

Responding to the impacts of *Phytophthora* pathogens on forests and other habitats: Forestry Commission Wales, Commons Vision Ltd, FERA, Forest Research. Main facilitator: Chris Tucker

Workshop write up to follow