

Ayrshire Local Biodiversity Meeting

Location: County Buildings, Wellington Square, Ayr

Date: 4th August 2011

Attendees: Alan Edger; Anneke Freel; Angus Clarke; Bruce Davidson; Bruce Philp; Lorna Jarvie; Marina Pugh; Zoe Clelland; Natalie Fleming

Apologies: Gill Smart; Gillian McIntyre; Iain Hossack; Lynsay Barr; Cameron Sharp

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Proposed by Bruce Philp and seconded by Alan Edger

2. Haps & Saps Update

Coastal – F Ross; I Hossack

Reported that consistent progress is being made on the majority of actions, only the coastal woodland is still a little slow. However BD informed group, Skelmorlie woodlands had a successful application for a woodlands improvement grant – work will include Rhododendron ponticum removal ; deadwood removal and planting; in addition SRDP application has been submitted in relation to Hunterston – 10Ha re maintenance & 10Ha re planting.

FR reported on the success of the Dunes in June, the event covered 2 sites on the Ayrshire coast – Skelmorlie in the north and Maidens / Turnberry in the south. New records collected and was very successful to bring lots of different specialists together; all were keen to do a similar event next year. IH could not attend today as this week was Big on the Beach in North Ayrshire and was building on the success of last year's event.

Lowland Raised Bogs – B Philp

BP had hoped that over the summer would be able to make links to establish a demonstration site. However he has not been able to progress to date but hopes to select site and progress over the autumn. ZC asked whether there are any potential sites close to coalfield sites. Only ones would be Dalmellington Moss & Low Moss, Lugar. ZC wondered whether it would be possible to develop a project suitable for either SRDP or CSGN funding. General discussion, as to the importance of Bogs and how the EU message has to be recognized and delivered at local scale.

Farmland – Z Clelland

Unfortunately no progress on the actions as detailed in the ALBAP and reasons are already well documented. While ALBAP actions have not progressed there is still work being undertaken to protect Farmland birds via RSPB work and SRDP. RSPB is undertaking a national review of SRDP projects and their success – still to be published.

Water Vole – S Brabbs

SB was not able to attend so FR provided update. This SAP is progressing well; over 100 captive bred (with Ayrshire stock) water voles have been released in the past two days in the Darley Burn area of Troon. This is the first lowland Scotland project of this kind. Prior to release there had been mink rafts out for some time - to the surprise (pleasant surprise) to ART there was no evidence of mink in the area.

3. Reminder to Group Leaders re specific SMART actions

IH asked that all group leaders get any and all late responses back to him ASAP to allow him to complete Review / SEA Env Report. It is the intention that we have the 2007 – 10 document reviewed and updated by the end of this year.

4. Biodiversity Management Inventory

FR invited comment from the steering group re: the value of the data and how to make the best use of it. BP felt that it was very useful in highlighting the range and type of activities that are occurring in South Ayrshire; it gives the LBAP a good idea of what is happening. AE suggested that if permission could be sought from those who provided information that it would be good to place it on the ALBAP web site. BP would confirm agreement and pass details to AE.

ACTION B PHILP

AE also thought that the information helped in relation to CSGN.

The issue of the Annual Meeting was raised and that asking some of those on the Inventory to showcase their project may be a good way to engage local people and special interest groups. All agreed that this should be tabled for next meeting.

ACTION F ROSS

5. CSGN Update

AE informed steering group that the Ayrshire Green Network Consultancy Study is now complete. Consultants based in the North of England where there is a lot of interest in Green Infrastructure – woodland, wetland, rivers consultants looked at the services that these habitats provide. AE is in the process of writing a more focused document re:

- green network and what the major challenges would be,
- develop a clear concept of what a Green Network is,
- what the main environmental, social & economic challenges,
- to look at the development of an Ayrshire Green Network Steering Group and,
- developing a forum event to move the above forward.

In relation to the Forestry Strategy, consultants have been appointed and aim to be completed May 2012. The intention is to identify the sensitivity of land to / for forestry. AE is keen to make links with Scottish Water & SEPA to gain their input into the document and asks that if any of the steering group has a contact could they forward the details to him at the joint planning unit.

ZC asked what level of consultation was undertaken in relation to either. AE reported that due to the restricted timescale caused by the need to spend the funding the former was limited, the latter will be developed.

ZC asked AE what he felt the relationship between CSGN and LBAP would be? AE stated that they must be linked in some way as both the LBAP and the Woodland Group would be key to the delivery of CSGN. A CSGN steering group would be comprised of a range of organizations - many of which already sit around this table.

General discussion followed on the subject of CSGN and ALBAP and their relationship to each other. All agreed that delivery of biodiversity projects on the ground is key; ZC had no problem with group's title if it helps to deliver projects – many of the steering group nodded their agreement. All agreed that LBAP is still valuable and the role that it plays in the Planning Service. The two are not mutually exclusive. Currently CSGN is a way to gain resources to deliver LBAP.

6. AOB

FR brought to the groups attention that under the Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act Public Bodies require to report on the delivery of their Biodiversity Duty, though to date there has been no guidance on the methodology required i.e level of detail, to whom

FR and LJ also wished to inform steering group that South Ayrshire is reviewing how it as an authority relates to and interacts with the ALBAP. It is felt that we need to examine how ALBAP information is reported back to the Authority and how we can improve delivery of our Biodiversity Duty.

ZC wished to remind the steering group that the Hunterston Addendum was currently out to consultation, and ask that all promote the RSPB web site.

7. Date of Next Meeting

14th September 2pm, County Buildings, Wellington Square, Ayr KA7 1DR