

**10am Wednesday 6th May 2015
 NWT Offices, The Old Ragged School**

Present:

Janice Bradley (Chair)	Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust (NWT)
Nick Crouch	Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC)
Emma Wright	Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC)
Janet Valenti ((Mins)	Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC)
Sue McDonald	Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC)
Abi Smith	Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC)
Chris Jackson	Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Action Group (BAG)
Katie Swindley	Environment Agency (EA)
Paul Phillips	Rushcliffe Borough Council (RBC)
Linda Davey	Notts Federation of Women's Institute (WI)
Rob Fitzsimons	Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust (NWT)
Imogen Wilde	Canal & River Trust (C&RT)
Sheila Wright	Nottingham Natural History Museum (NNHM)
Michael Walker	Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust/Notts Bat Group
Phil Carter	Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust/Notts Bat Group
Brian Dunning	Natural England (NE)
Rob Johnson	NBGR

1. Apologies & Introductions

Bill Bacon	Butterfly Conservation (BC)
Steve Fisher	Broxtowe Borough Council (BBC)
Ian Major	Sherwood Forest Trust (SFT)
Andy Hollis	Sherwood Forest Trust (SFT)
Chris Manning	Trent Valley Internal Drainage Board (TVIDB)
Jago Moles	National Trust (NT)
Lesley Sharpe	Farm Environment Advisor (FEA)
Ruth Tall	Natural England (NE)
Emily Aron	Nottingham City Council (NC)
Leila Mills	Nottingham City Council (NC)
Rosy Carter	Lowland Derbyshire & Nottinghamshire LNP (LDNLNP)
Leila Mills	Nottingham City Council (NC)

2. Brief welcome - Rob Fitzsimons CEO of NWT

JB welcomed Rob Fitzsimons who was appointed as CEO of NWT on 1st April 2015.

Rob advised the group his remit has been to look at the next 5 year Strategic Plan focussing on the sustainability of the organisation in the longer term. NWT is currently going through a re-structure to ensure a more sustainable basis for the conservation activities they do, and what they can achieve in the longer term, after several years of major project delivery that has been externally funded. . In terms of conservation and estate management, one team will be responsible for delivery, which will better achieve a Living Landscape approach to delivering conservation on the ground.

There will not be any changes as far as reserve and conservation officers are concerned, the familiar staff will remain in post covering the same geographical areas and specialisms. NWT will continue to be the lead conservation organisation in the county, delivering against core biodiversity principles. However, it was confirmed Charles Langtree left the organisation last week.

The initial task is to develop a business strategy to take forward the Notts Wildlife Trust continuing its role within its charitable cause. Rob confirmed NWT's commitment to this group will continue.

Rob and JB are available to answer any queries on the re-structure of the organisation.

3. Previous minutes; accuracy and actions

The Minutes were accepted as a true record of the proceedings.

Action 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 15, completed.

NottsBAG Delivery Group Work Plan

Monitoring and reporting

Action 2: carry forward. CJ to circulate spreadsheet for data collection. All completed spreadsheets to be sent to CJ for collation.

CJ has received one completed version so far by Nottingham City Council.

Biodiversity Opportunity Mapping

Action 3: PP and JB to contact Newark & Sherwood and Gedling for contributions to BOM mapping.

Action 4: JB to follow up ADC for funding.

Carry forward – JB is reluctant to pursue these actions until all work has been completed on BOM to date, due to CJ's workload..

New SAP species

Willow Tit – Unfortunately, many people were unaware of the workshop at Brierley Forest Park. Carl has agreed to provide a follow-up course.

Hedgehog - JB and MW to take this forward.

Action 10: Ongoing. CJ to circulate updated SAPs as they get updated.

Local Nature Partnership Update

Action 16: ongoing. RC would welcome ideas from this group as to the LNP's role in the future.

RC was unable to attend today's meeting, an update was not provided. JB to feedback on agenda item.

Notts BAG Communication Strategy

Action 17: carry forward. Email CJ with comments on the Communication Strategy.

Chris has not received comments from the partnership. PP offered to look at the document which is quite lengthy with a view to shortening it. The revised document will be available for the next meeting on 14th July.

Dates of next meetings

Action 18: carry forward. January 2016 – CJ will talk to Jago Moles (NT) to see if they can have a meeting on a Thursday (they generally have team meetings on Tuesdays).

4. NottsBAG Delivery Group Work Plan

JB provided an update.

Monitoring and reporting

HAPs and SAPs will be reported on a three yearly cycle (SAPs reported in year 1, HAPs in year 2 and a gap in year 3). Concern was raised as to whether CJ has time, considering his heavy workload, to achieve this? JB referred to the key target review, which we hope to be able to undertake at the back end of the year, subject to the completion of the BOM mapping, which will feed into HAP reporting in the future.

PP suggested having separate meetings with all leads. All information could be combined together, perhaps someone else could take on the task of producing a report?

JB suggested it would be good if all of us could get together in 1 exercise and come back as a separate Task & Finish Group. The BOM mapping needs to be finished first. Two-thirds of the county has been covered already, but there is still a great deal to do.

PP suggested concentrating on a small number of habitats and pulling together a report from the forum.

MW suggested the need to share ground truth information with partners with layers available to other groups, we need to be more 'joined up'. NC agreed we should all be working off the same figures. JB suggested CJ pass information of layers to MW, NWT could also offer some help here.

CJ and JB agreed to have a discussion after the meeting to discuss this further.

SW feels the new Slow Worm SAP should be shown on the Work Plan. JB concurred.

Action 1: JB to add Slow Worm SAP to the Work Plan.

The Work Plan needs some revision with the whole partnership helping to deliver.

Nick referred to HAPs, we need to review where we are at, are they all updated? Should we have a separate discussion on this subject? CJ to check and slot updated figures into the Work Plan.

Action 2: CJ to check if all HAPs are updated and slot figures into Work Plan.

5. Biodiversity Opportunity Mapping

Rushcliffe East BOM: A workshop was held on 11 February at Cropwell Bishop. CJ circulated the draft report in February. The last piece of work is now being done.

Trent Valley BOM: NC has taken on this piece of work which has still to be updated.

Sherwood BOM: CJ and KT have a lot of re-jigging of information to do. As and when Rushcliffe is complete, a report will be drafted.

Broxtowe Borough Council BOM: CJ will circulate the finalised version.

Bassetlaw/Idle Valley BOM: mapped and updated with aerial photographs. Funding options are needed to continue. Any ideas, please contact JB. JB will have a chat with CJ to discuss costs.

JB went on to say these are useful, powerful documents providing accurate data for monitoring and reporting purposes. The early version for Sherwood was used for the LPS bid, whilst BBC have integrated BOM mapping into their Green Infrastructure Strategy.

6. Updating the Notts SOCC list

NC confirmed there is little to update. There have been some issues in identifying specialists for species groups. The documents are ready to go out to species specialists, Michael Walker offered to 'road test' the documents and get back to NC with any comments.

Action 3: NC to send documents to MW for his comments.

SW has provided NC with an updated moth list.

7. BigBAG Annual Forum Event

CJ confirmed 120 people attended the event on 22nd April at Brackenhurst.

Feedback questionnaires were provided to all attendees, 85 were completed and returned. All scored highly, including presentations, workshops were rated between 3-5 (1-poor, 5-excellent). Generally the feedback was very positive.

Some useful comments were made, many were of the opinion the event provided a good opportunity to network.

A total of 83 attendees said they would come back again to another event. We didn't receive any responses saying they would not wish to attend again.

Suggestions were made on how to improve the workshops. Some attendees expected more detailed knowledge from the content of the workshops and felt the workshops did not meet expectations. As some attendees were of the opinion elements of the workshops were fairly basic, CJ suggested we could run more in-depth technical workshops at future events.

We need to cover a wide variety of skills which should be mentioned in the text of the programme and provide a more accurate description of what the workshop is about. An example was the hedgerow workshop which provided fairly basic information and was probably better suited for local groups working with schoolchildren. We should be more clear as to the target audience we are aiming for at each workshop, this kind of detail should be provided on the booking form/programme.

PP suggested these points can be discussed at the next BAG planning meeting.

NC mentioned Jayne Francis-Ward, Corporate Director for Policy Planning & Corporate Services had enjoyed the event saying there was a real 'buzz' during the lunch break as people chatted and networked with each other. There was definitely a good vibe.

CJ mentioned Clumber Park have offered their venue for next year's event. Bearing in mind Brackenhurst provide their venue free of charge and numerous rooms are made available for our use, we need to ascertain how much we may have to pay for Clumber

and the type of facilities they can provide. CJ agreed to contact Jago to ascertain costs we may incur if we use Clumber as the venue.

Action 4: CJ to discuss with Jago Moles, National Trust, the possibility of using Clumber Park as a venue next year and potential costs. CJ to provide details at the next meeting.

The group explored holding the next event in the Autumn, however, we should take into account the Sherwood Forest Trust Habitat Forum takes place at that time of year. NC suggested sticking with February/March. JB agreed but suggested we keep this under review. We need to get volunteers along to a sub-group late this year/early next year to discuss the theme for next year's event.

JB thanked everyone behind the scenes who had helped organise such a successful event. It was appreciated that Nottinghamshire County Council had underwritten some cost of the event administration.

JB thanked PP for chairing the event.

8. Local Nature Partnership Update

RC sent her apologies as she was unable to attend today's meeting.

The Natural Capital Project is running and has been updated since the last meeting. NC provided an update.

The LNP has set up a Natural Capital Group that is collecting and collating data on natural capital in the Lowland Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire area. Derbyshire County Council has collated data on areas of unimproved grassland in Lowland Derbyshire and Notts. We need to get spatial data which is consistent in both counties.

Many groups and organisations have been involved in pulling together data ie BGS and Center Parcs. However questions have been raised as to the sustainability of this process ie DCC and Toyota are to produce a final Natural Capital report, but this could slide.

There is a consultation process with the 2 BAP groups who will check if there is any missing data.

JB feels this is a useful exercise which provides the LNP with a clearer idea of the roles of the 2 BAP groups. The LNP has been unclear as how to influence the LEP regarding the value of wildlife, NC suggested this is the way to start to get there.

9. Future Speakers

NC will provide a talk on Black poplar at the next meeting, 14th July 2015.

MW will ask Lorna Griffiths to provide a talk on Dormice at the meeting on 15th October.

Action 5: MW to ask Lorna Griffiths to provide a talk on Dormice at the meeting on 15th October 2015.

SW will ask John to give a talk on Slow Worms at the meeting in January 2016.

Action 6: SW will ask John to give a talk on Slow Worms at the meeting January 2016.

Imogen is happy to give a talk on the Midia midas. CJ suggested Imogen talk to Ian Major about this.

Action 7: Imogen to contact Ian Major to discuss a potential talk on the Midia midas.

10. Items arising from the Partners Update

As few updates had been received prior to today's meeting, the following provided:

Katie Swindley - Environment Agency

Work has been completed at Toton Scrapes, this site has held water until recently.

There are 2 large areas on the Long Eaton side of the Trent which are being used by horse riders. It is planned to provide interpretation boards to highlight the fact these areas are for wildlife and not amenity. Dan Widdowson has spoken to local stables about this. It is planned to have an event to draw in in volunteers/stables.

Michael Walker - Notts Bat Group

Rushcliffe hibernaculum: a Brown Long-eared bat was spotted in one of the bat bricks in the January survey.

Rushcliffe Borough Council provided funds for a vent.

The Nottinghamshire Mammal Group conference is taking place on Saturday 9th May. All are welcome. There is an attendance fee of £5, booking is essential. If anybody is interested, please contact MW.

Chris Jackson

Last month a signal crayfish was found in Papplewick Dam, this is the 3rd in 4 years. CJ aims to get people over the next few days to find it.

There have been sightings of the Grizzled Skipper during the last 10 days on the disused line down to Bottesford.

Sue McDonald – Nottinghamshire County Council

There has been a great deal of felling at Bestwood Country Park, this is as a result of squirrel damage.

A new Management Plan has been adopted for Bestwood Country Park.

As this is now the Himalayan Balsam season, Sue and community groups are happy to help.

Rob Johnson – Nottinghamshire Biological and Geological Record Centre (NBGRC)

Surveying has been taking place on sites not visited for a while.

Ash dieback has been recorded in Southwell, this is the 2nd or 3rd outbreak in the county.

Sheila Wright – Nottingham Natural History Museum

There has been an introduction of Creeping Willow into Nottinghamshire. It would be good to have this plant introduced to Budby and see moths come back.

11. AOB

JB referred to the Badger Vaccination Programme in the Long Clawson and Cropwell Butler area, within the district of Rushcliffe in Notts. The vaccination of badgers helps to reduce the spread of bovine TB. Farmers are happy to go along with this programme – farmers want to co-exist with badgers and have “clean badgers” across their land.

Long Clawson Dairy want to support the programme. JB will keep everyone posted. Gaynor Jones-Jenkins will provide a talk on the Badger Vaccination Programme at the Nottinghamshire Mammal Group Conference on Saturday 9th May.

12. Date of next meeting(s)

10.00am Tuesday 14th July 2015, Nottingham City Offices, Loxley House

10.00am Thursday 15th October 2015 tbc.

10.00am Thursday 21st January 2016 – National Trust offices, tbc.

10.00am Thursday 14th April tbc

Once venues have been confirmed CJ will Outlook to all.