

**South West Regional Biodiversity Partnership
Woodland and Forestry Working Group Minutes**

Friday 26th January, Natural England Offices, Renslade House, Exeter

Present: Mark Durk - Chair (Forestry Commission), Naomi Brookes (SWRBP), Justin Milward (Woodland Trust), Steve Russell (Wilts County Council Woodland BAP), Brian Muelaner (National Trust), Colin Hawke (Cornwall County Council), Roger Griffin (Natural England)

1. Apologies	Actions
Ray Perrins (South West Observatory), Helen Booker (RSPB), Oliver Lucas (Forestry Commission), Matt Low (NE), Simon Brenman (SWWT)	
2. Minutes and Matters arising	
<p>Nature Map GIS layers are available on South West Observatory Website.</p> <p>Mark Robins (RSPB) attended Custodians Group and fed in this group's comments and recommendations.</p> <p>RIPSW has now been submitted to DEFRA to form part of England RDP bid. October 07 sign off anticipated. Group established now to draw up how RIP delivered. NE, EA and FC are part of consultation so contact Mark Durk, Gerry Hammersly or Laura ?? for information.</p> <p>Landscape Characterisation Project moving forward, once finalised invite one of the consultants to group to discuss outputs.</p>	
3. Structure of – how to integrate this group and Ancient Woodland Working Group/Forestry Implementation Groups – feedback and discussion	
<p>RG, MD, JM and NB undertook exercise to compare Regional Woodland and Forestry Framework and the Biodiversity Implementation Plan Woodland and Forestry to being to clarify what this BIP group had in its remit to take forward. It is a draft so it needs confirmation from group. Main comments from this discussion recorded on the BIP Objective sheet (attached). General support for actions highlighted by this exercise for action. NB to circulate.</p> <p>Question to consider what are the risks and what are the things that group should be focusing on.</p>	NB
<p>4. Moving Forward the Programme of Actions:</p> <p>a. What's already being done?</p> <p>b. How to move forward and identifying key projects – meeting targets set in RSS</p> <p>c. Indicators</p>	
<p>Need to find out what is already being done across region. Action table to be circulated by NB to group. ALL to fill in action they know about. NB will then collate and circulate for review. The purpose of this exercise is to identify the gaps in work towards actions. Point raised that some of these actions would not have been met 18 months ago and that this exercise has shown that resources are being directed now so targets are being met. It was agreed that a key function of the group was to share information of action across the region so gaps can be identified.</p> <p>A big issue relates to landowner management of woodlands (and other related habitats of this group). If they are doing certain work to deliver certain benefits why should they if the cost of the work is not met. Some cases where this will help other needs landowners have, but this is not always the case. Fundamentally need to review rates paid in schemes. The new England Forestry Policy will be published soon. Some of the priorities are for public benefit but how do we know is sustainable in future? To deliver public benefits there needs to be long term sustainability for woodlands and woodlands should pay.</p> <p>We don't know if action concerning wood pasture is being met as we do not know how much wood pasture there is in the region. There is a register but not all parkland is picked up in this register. There is a need for an exercise like the Ancient Woodland Inventory to</p>	NB ALL/NB

find out what parkland/wood pasture there is. Cornwall is doing some research in this area ,but unsure how this work is funded. There are no records either for orchards, but these are now being taken up into HLS. Old maps can be useful to identify both wood pasture and orchards.	
5. Agreement of key priorities and feedback to wider partnership	
<p>The South West Biodiversity Partnership is undertaking a review of its work programme for the next two years and the structure of the partnership. Want the sector groups to contribute to this review by looking at their own work programmes and key priorities.</p> <p>It was decided that open ground and woodland a priority for this group as this falls under Nature Map.</p> <p>A barrier to taking woodland work forward in the region was the lack of contact details held by any organisation on the ownership of woodland. No organisation has extensive contact with owners to promote biodiversity value of woodlands, and it was felt that this is the type of advice people wanted. A mapping exercise could be undertaken to collate information held by organisations on owners to pull data from FC, EA, ELS and HLS. Concern that there may be data protection issues with this. Group discussed the possibility of working with LBAPS to produce a leaflet similar to the woodlands and climate change highlighting biodiversity information. Information giving a priority, especially to those owners not already engaged.</p> <p>Group felt working on Water Catchment Management Plans important as these policy documents identify planting woodland as a priority and getting this right is key.</p> <p>Group felt that invasive alien ‘things’ are a priority and possibly a cross sector priority that requires joined up thinking and a holistic overall approach.</p> <p>Also key is answering question of how use and deliver Nature Map. There is a desire to make it delivery driven to show that it works and what can be achieved. Using Ancient Woodland example as a case study highlights the way this could work by showing how funds are targeted to priority areas. There is a need for a practitioner’s workshop to keep driving this process forward.</p> <p>Less known habitats to include ancient trees, orchards, wood pasture, wet woodland need to be as well documented as Ancient Woodland. An inventory of these habitats is a key action, but need to consider how this could be delivered. The Ancient Woodland Inventory is being re-launched in autumn 2007 and this could be an opportunity to tie in regional activity with a national campaign.</p> <p>Group also felt that influencing grants was a priority to ensure that they achieve what we want them to regionally. Need to influence targeting of grants, but this will be dependent on Rural Development Plan. Also need to consider levels of grant giving and landowner by in to these grants.</p>	
All to feed comments to NB on SWRBP refresh by 7 th Feb.	ALL
6. Members feedback on work	
No feedback as time was short.	
7. AOB	
10. Date of next meeting	
April 30 th 2007	