

Task Group for Trees, Woods and Forest Biodiversity
Friday 11th April 2008 – Forestry Commission, Worcester

Attendees: Justin Milward (Chair, Woodland Trust), Tony Fleming (English Heritage), Amanda Pearce (Forestry Commission), Chris Hastie (Warks DC), Sara Roberts (RFF Delivery Plan Manager), David Lovelace (Herefordshire Native Wood Restoration), Jeff Edwards (WM Biodiversity Partnership Coordinator), Stephanie Wickison (Staffs CC), Becky Allen (Newcastle-U-Lyme DC)

Apologies Bill Heslegrave, Andy Grundy, Helen Woodman, Martin Sutton, Richard Thomason

1. Issue of no NE rep now - Chris Hogarth has moved on

ACTION: Justin to contact Mike Wilkinson and Charlotte Reeves to identify new NE rep

2. Minutes last meeting - David Jam has moved on – in relation to deer initiative we need to keep people such as Peter Watson at Deer Initiative involved

3. Case studies.

- New SITA funded project at Edge Wood (sustainable coppice management with offshoot into wood fuel supply) – Andy Grundy
- Queen's Wood, Dymock- latest SITA funded project in region. Case suggested by David Lovelace – lots going on there and very biodiversity -rich site. Important PAWS restoration going on. Lot new good management about to start . FC call it Dymock Forest – most of it is in Herefordshire. David Lovelace - lot info and contacts with FC
- Staffs Wildlife Trust, - Wood pasture project – Needwood - SITA funded – Stephanie Wickison
- English Heritage wood pasture site at Credenhill fort, Herefordshire – Justin Milward

ACTION: Andy to work up Edge Wood case study

ACTION: David to draft up the Dymock project and send to Justin, to forward to Andy.

ACTION; Stephanie Wickison to find out about Needwood project

ACTION; Justin to contact Jeremy Evans (Woodland Trust) to get info on Credenhill

4. Woodland targets

Justin queried the overview of national BAP targets - how were regional figures arrived at?

Woodland creation

ACTION; Amanda to check on amount of woodland already planted in years 1998-2008

Questions asked whether, if we have already achieved the target, should we go for bigger target. Decided not to at this stage - maybe for future.

Need to consider planting by Highways Agency and other organisations.

National consultation on regional targets asked us to consider the approaches for calculating targets – our group consider Approach 1 to be best

Given current target, we may have already achieved is this region

Decision of group - to adopt Approach 1 one and its target of 5479ha.

Woodland Restoration

Method of calculations outlined by Justin

Regional target should be met given FC work to date and work in private sector.

6000 ha FC work in next 10 years.

Decision of group - accept target of 4750ha and tighten up definition to speed up restoration - 'minimum' non-native component in canopy – figure needed to define change from plantation to semi-natural woodland - but this creates issue of how this could be monitored - time consuming

Point raised that FC's field work for next NEWT starts in 2010 for publication in 2016: definitions need to be clearer.

Wood Pasture

Targets just a guess – 60 sites allocated to WM for Restoration.

National Trust Management plans suggest target is no problem.

But what is a 'site'? Large estates equal more than one site?

Removal of FC conifers on old wood pasture could enable achievement of target

Possible datasets – National Trust; Staffordshire; Herefordshire soon; Worcs ?

Staffordshire – new archaeological survey helps to show where wood pasture and parkland used to be by comparing old maps

Have we actually got 60 sites in region?

Issue of definition – what is 'restoration'

ACTION; Justin to ask Simon Barker what capacity National Trust have to deliver list of sites

Expansion target – use old boundaries to show change

Decision of group - recommend we accept target but it could be challenging-not much HLS uptake to date re this habitat – 2 sites?

5. Wood pasture and Parkland initiative

NE lead partner – Just Ecology consultants-have been contracted to work on WAPIS – wood pasture and parkland information system –collecting info on location and status of the habitat – put onto a WAPIS website for four pilot areas, Warwickshire being one.

Possible data sources: Staffordshire have new archaeological data and Wildlife

Trust have field survey data

Worcs - ancient tree database and historic environment project - getting going to create

GIS layer - landcover layer now complete

Woodland Trust - able to access 'Ancient Tree Hunt' data - only few sites at moment for this region

Would be good to put all data together to create database for region –how would we do this ?

NE funding for this habitat not likely to be a priority even though NE is lead partner

Suggestion that we pull info together and write a document to provide case for resources to put regional product together

Or build on WAPIS?

Or could we ask local authorities to produce a GIS level for their counties which can be brought together for a regional picture – set up brief for each local authority – need to add in requirement for total number of sites as well as location

Idea of 'Wood Pasture Opportunity Map' - add new GIS layer to the WOM
Idea of exploring this with WOM group - local authorities have already engaged with WOM – ask them to re-engage with a new layer

Idea of Subgroup working on this to explore idea of adding to WOM –how to be achieved, resources required etc.

Need to remember Grow with Wyre data project re ancient trees- surveying work.

Suggestions for membership of group - Steve Falk; Jez Bretherton

ACTION; *Stephanie to ask Steve Potter (Staffs) if he prepared to be involved in Scoping Meeting re audit of wood pasture and parkland and potential to create new WOM layer*

ACTION; *ALL - invite other county reps to Scoping Meeting - All to send contacts to Justin.*

ACTION; *Output of Scoping Meeting - a method of working together, developing an audit of woodpasture/parkland/veteran trees in West Mids and proposal ideas for possibly creating bid*

ACTION; *Jeff to check with WAPIS to check no overlap*

ACTION; *Amanda to run idea past Bill and Simon* **Completed action:** *Bill happy for this to go ahead. Simon to be contacted by Amanda*

ACTION; *Date for scoping meeting – June*

6. Next meeting of this Woodland Task Group - early September - email correspondence in between such as identifying wood pasture sites for restoration

Date next meeting: Friday morning 12th September – Worcester

ACTION; *Gaynor to book room and confirms date.* **Completed action:** *Spur 8 Conference Room booked for morning of 12th Sept.*