

**Scottish Borders LBAP Partnership Annual Forum**  
**Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2011**  
**Tweed Horizons Conference Centre**  
**St Boswells**  
**Scottish Borders**

**Chair:** Andy Millar, Built and Natural Heritage Manager, Scottish Borders Council

*Presentations are available on the Council's website*

[http://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/1225/countryside\\_farming\\_and\\_wildlife/964/biodiversity](http://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/1225/countryside_farming_and_wildlife/964/biodiversity)

### **1. Welcome and introduction**

*Andy Millar, Built and Natural Heritage Manager, Scottish Borders Council*

The Chair welcomed the LBAP Partnership and introduced the new approach to running the Partnership as an Annual Forum. It is proposed to run the partnership in this manner to make effective use of scarce resources. The success of this approach will depend on the support and commitment of the LBAP partners. AM introduced the key agenda to inspire action. The focus of the Partnership will be on less meetings and more major outcomes.

### **2. National biodiversity update and LBAP Overview**

*Andy Tharme, Ecology Officer, Scottish Borders Council*

Update from the recent LBAP Network meeting at Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park(LLTNP). The Scottish Biodiversity Strategy is under review, an addendum to existing strategy will be produced and submitted for ministerial sign-off in summer 2012. A stakeholder consultation event will be held on 15<sup>th</sup> Feb 2012 at Battleby. SNH gave an update on advice on renewables and the planning system, update from Scottish Government on Wildlife and Natural Environment Act 2011 and invasives- code of practice, voluntary agreements, special orders and Lead agency approach, LLTNP presentation on run-of river renewables, Central Scotland Green Network and LBAP officer updates. The LBAP Overview revision to be completed by end of March 2012. Habitat Action Plans to be revised reflecting ecosystem approach of Scottish Biodiversity Strategy.

**Action point 1:** *LBAP Overview revised document to be complete by end of March 2012 (AT)*

**Action Point 2:** *AT to initiate revision of first Habitat Action Plan (Rivers & Burns) with Tweed Forum (LA), to meet to discuss by end of January 2012*

### **3. Modelling ecosystem services-opportunities emerging from Wales,**

*Dr Katie Medcalf, Environment Director, Environment Systems*

An innovative and exciting approach to modelling ecosystem services commissioned by Countryside Council for Wales and the Welsh Assembly. Holistic approach incorporating economic (Sustainable land use), societal (fair and equitable sharing) and environmental benefits (conservation of biodiversity), rules-based approach mapping ecosystem services at different scales: all Wales. South East Wales development area, Bridgend County Council. Bundles identifying the costs and benefits of different land use options

measures against economic, societal and environmental factors. Depends on availability of data, practicalities of mapping, formulating a method (rules), analysing and interpreting data. Information in bundles to show synergies, conflicts and trade offs. An integrated ecosystem services approach can be developed for Scottish Borders, the data is largely available, habitat and ecosystem services inventory, sound science & sharing integrated knowledge, targeted spending to give best value scheme, opportunities for a natural flood defence system to be installed.

Further information can be found at: <http://www.ccw.gov.uk/landscape-wildlife/managing-land-and-sea/sustaining-ecosystem-services.aspx?lang=en>

Points raised:

1. How do species priorities e.g. willow tit and lesser spotted woodpecker, fit in with an ecosystem approach in Wales?- A). Keystone species would be included as High biodiversity value measures in the modelling as would indicator species.
2. Habitat Network bundles- how were agricultural variables including livestock density measured, they appear as negative effects in the bundles?- A). Measured by use of high, medium and low effects. Livestock not a closed system, livestock imported and exported from Wales. Careful interpretation of the rules basis is required- see paper on CCW website (link above)
3. What weighting is given to the economic, societal and environmental aspects of the model? A). Each aspect is scaled as high, medium and low. Interpret case by case at appropriate level.
4. What level of stakeholder involvement fed into the process?-A). Some targeted key stakeholder engagement to inform the development of the rules basis.
5. Has the model for Bridgend been applied against earlier planning determinations?- A). no, but this is a very good suggestion.

**Action Point 3:** *Following the meeting a number of partners have expressed the wish to explore the possibilities of developing a pilot project for Scottish Borders adopting this approach. AT to liaise with interested partners and KM to discuss further.*

**4. Workshop: Considering Borders biodiversity priorities for SRDP2 –an ecosystem approach?** *Sam Smith, Rural Policy Officer, Scottish Borders Council (additional facilitators John Dougan (FCS), Katie Medcalf (Environment Systems), Andy Tharme (SBC)*

The workshop split delegates into 2 groups, to discuss the 4 questions below relating to the SRDP.

1. What are main lessons learned from your experience of the current SRDP, and its delivery of biodiversity objectives?
2. What should the 'guiding principles' be for the design of the new SRDP?
3. What are the high level biodiversity priorities for Scottish Borders? (& where?)
4. Does an ecosystem approach help to identify these?

Feedback from workshop

Lessons learnt from SRDP:

- Tension of targeting vs accessibility
- Scale of investments related to benefits
- Landscape scale projects difficult to deliver – multiple applicants
- Complex bureaucracy
- Lack of spatial targeting – 'bang for buck'

- Lack of monitoring data

#### Guiding principles

- Moving away from 'short-termism' (GAEC link for investments)
- Continuity needed- keep best of SRDP
- Strengthen LMOs and retain competitive Rural Priorities – same principles applied to both; outcomes & results focused
- Success criteria at start
- Use existing datasets
- RP need regional budgets and decision making, but what level of region? Not one size fits all
- What size region – pilot in Borders

#### Priorities

- Keep in mind drivers for land use change – food security, woodland strategy, climate change, and complexity of business decisions and grant incentives....
- Focus on strengths rather than gaps?
- Focus on habitat networks – if not in priority area don't fund it & designated sites (mapping key)
- Differential rates linked to priorities
- Some difficult political decisions?

#### Ecosystem approach?

- Yes! Helps prioritisation, but location and quality also important
- Consequences also important
- Helps identify conditions
- Helpful to see multiple benefits of investments
- Need better awareness raising & communication

The next steps will be for direct feedback from the workshop to The A Working Countryside Theme group (AWC) by SS and AT. The process of discussion on priorities should continue over the next year, this will require further stakeholder engagement with the LBAP to identify the priorities and where measures should be targeted for these priorities. This is likely to include an ecosystem approach that includes key priority species and key sites such as Local Biodiversity Sites and may be focussed within catchments or landscape areas.

*An example spreadsheet of SRDP measures and ecosystem services that they provide can be downloaded from the Council's website.*

**Action Point 4:** *Following AWC meeting in December 2012, AT and SS to contact LBAP in first consultation on SRDP biodiversity priorities by end of February 2012.*

## **5. Interim review of Scottish Borders Woodland Strategy, a preview**

*Andy Tharme, Ecology Officer, Scottish Borders Council*

Background to the Scottish Borders Woodland Strategy 2005 which had its roots in the LBAP Woodland Habitat Working Group. 9 key implementation projects delivered. 5 year interim review planned with full review for 10 years. Interim review to identify long list of actions that are priorities (10-12) this to be prioritised by stakeholder consultation (including LBAP partners) to further to identify 3-4 key priorities for revision under the interim review. Revision and recommendations to be made by spring 2012 to compliment the reporting of the national Woodland Expansion Advisory Group.

**Action Point 5:** *AT to collate list of partners who wish to be consulted on the SBWS Interim review, to be included in consultee list.*

## **6. Workshop: Biodiversity Action Reporting System (BARS) and Scottish Borders LBAP.** *Steven Hannah, GIS and Data Officer, The Wildlife Information Centre (TWIC)*

Scottish Borders LBAP Actions have all been loaded up onto BARS by TWIC under the service level agreement with SBC. SH ran live session on BARS to demonstrate how reports can be uploaded and how LBAP progress reports can be generated. LBAP partners invited to participate by receiving administrative levels to assist SBC report on LBAP progress.

Discussion key points: very useful feedback from partners and particularly neighbouring LBAP Officers who have experience of using BARS. Partners not keen to commit to additional reporting and administrative burden. Suggested that actions are targeted for specific partners for reporting. With new Dumfries & Galloway LBAP, actions submitted onto BARS are simplified, biodiversity officer inputs data and generates an annual report for partnership. East Lothian LBAP- all actions loaded on BARS, but focus is on reporting against projects. Reports generated every 5 years. Northumbreland LBAP- focus is on project delivery (Habitat Working Groups) rather than all actions. New SB HAPS to have ecosystem approach, smaller number of key actions to load onto BARS.

**Action Point 6:** *AT to discuss further with TWIC and AM by end of February 2012, to streamline approach to BARS and discuss further with partners who left contact details on feedback forms.*

## **7. LBAP Partner updates:**

- SRDP & woodland creation- Ian Laidlaw, Forestry Commission Scotland- IL showed map of woodland creation approved under SRDP in Borders. 2,318ha of all woodland created since 2009.
- Gala water, Eddleston water and Bowmont water- Hugh Chalmers Tweed Forum- implementation projects for natural flood management using creative measures and funding streams including SRDP and biodiversity offsets
- Dumfries & Galloway LBAP- Peter Norman, Dumfries & Galloway Council- varied area, western parts not unlike Borders, Galloway coast very different. 2<sup>nd</sup> LBAP adopted in 2009, strong focus on local distinctiveness and communities.
- Northumberland LBAP- Elaine More, Northumberland Wildlife Trust Under White Paper *Natural Choice*, LBAPs to be superseded by Local Nature Partnerships. Northumberland's lowlands and coast LNP has received DEFRA funding to develop the partnership. Also, 2 red squirrel officers about to be recruited with 5 grey squirrel control posts.
- East Lothian LBAP- Stuart MacPherson, East Lothian Council- 75% of area farmland, 75% of which is arable. Key delivery projects such as grey partridge wild bird cover scheme have become more difficult to implement (SOA and SRDP). Key grassland management and management of urban areas (wildflowers). Strong focuses on education and awareness e.g. the excellent Curriculum for excellence guide for biodiversity.
- Lothian & Borders Mammal Group- Lorna Anness, Tweed Forum- new group set up in 2011. AGM 29<sup>th</sup> November Midlothian. SNH grant received. Small mammal monitoring sites set up (2), otter training day, bat training event, Riverwatch

about to be launched. Facebook site set up, website to follow. Part of Mammal Society and will host SE Scotland regional seminar in autumn 2012

- Butterfly Conservation Scotland update- Barry Prater- updates on butterfly surveys and records, key moth records from 2011 (oak tree pug, V-pug, both are Scottish Border firsts), maple pug (Scottish first). Key issues for BCS- fragmented habitat, impacts of land use change, gaps in data management. BCS has no management control of important sites and membership of LBAP gives BCS the opportunity to raise awareness of key species and sites to help guide land management decisions at key sites.

## 8. Summing up

The Chair thanked the speakers and the delegates for their enthusiasm and input. Very positive feedback was received from delegates. **The next LBAP Annual Forum will be held in autumn 2012. AT will consult with partners on setting an agenda in summer 2012.**

List of delegates attending:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Maggie Magee	Borders Woodland Services
Barry Prater	Butterfly Conservation Scotland
Peter Norman	Dumfries & Galloway LBAP
Stuart MacPherson	East Lothian LBAP
Katie Medcalf	Environment Systems
David Kennedy	Forestry Commission Scotland
Iain Laidlaw	Forestry Commission Scotland
John Dougan	Forestry Commission Scotland
Charles Cuthbert	Forestry Commission Scotland
John Thomas	John Muir Trust
Sandy Maxwell	John Muir Trust
Elaine More	Northumberland LBAP
Mike Fraser	RSPB
Derek Robeson	Scottish Agricultural College
Andy Millar	Scottish Borders Council
Andy Tharme	Scottish Borders Council
Charles Johnstone	Scottish Borders Council
Sam Smith	Scottish Borders Council
Lorraine Quinn	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
	Scottish Government Rural Payment and Inspections Directorate
Lesley Muirden	Scottish Natural Heritage
Andrew Panter	Scottish Natural Heritage
Anne Brown	Scottish Natural Heritage
Pip Tabor	Southern Upland Partnership
Graeme Wilson	The Wildlife Information Centre
Natalie Harmsworth	The Wildlife Information Centre
Steve Hannah	The Wildlife Information Centre
Hugh Chalmers	Tweed Forum
Lorna Anness	Tweed Forum
James Hunt	Tweed Foundation

**Apologies**

Callum Rankine

Nic Hunt

Tim Frost

Hugo Straker

Liz Auty

Georgia Conolly

Liza Cole

Claire Carey

Mike Scott

Ian Davidson

Sian Whitehead

Luke Comins

Borders Forest Trust

Borders Forest Trust

Borders Forest Trust

The Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust

John Muir Trust

National Trust for Scotland

National Trust for Scotland

Northumberland County Council/ European Marine Site

Scottish Borders Council

Scottish Government Rural Payment and Inspections

Directorate

South Lanarkshire LBAP

Tweed Forum