

**East of England Biodiversity Forum Meeting Minutes 25 November 2011  
Hatfield Broad Oak Village Hall**

<p><b>Present</b></p> <p><b>Steve Scott (chair)</b>~Forestry Commission  <b>Gen Broad</b> ~ Suffolk LBAP  <b>Rebecca Banks</b> ~ Essex LBAP  <b>Mark Iley</b> ~ Essex LBAP  <b>Scott Perkin</b> ~ Norfolk LBAP  <b>Catherine Wyatt</b> ~ Herts LBAP  <b>Catherine Weightman</b> ~ Natural England  <b>Heather Webb</b> ~ Beds &amp; Luton LBAP  <b>Will Akast</b> ~ Environment Agency  <b>Simon Odell</b> ~ Landscape East  <b>Laura Watson</b> ~ Wildlife Trust BCN/Cambs and Peterborough Biodiversity Partnership  <b>Siân Williams</b> ~ Wildlife Trust BCN/Cambs and Peterborough Biodiversity Partnership  <b>Fran Hutchinson</b> ~ Lincolnshire Biodiversity Partnership  <b>Laura Kitson</b> ~ Central Bedfordshire Council  <b>Catherine Cairns</b> ~ Cambs GI Forum and LNP  <b>Jennifer Faulkner</b> ~ National Trust  <b>David Hooton</b> ~ Deer Initiative  <b>Liz Anderson</b> ~ Central Beds Council  <b>Stuart Warrington</b> ~ National Trust  <b>Jana Erhardt</b> ~ Essex Wildlife Trust  <b>Mary Norden</b> ~ RSPB</p>	<p><b>Apologies</b></p> <p><b>Ben Hammond</b> ~ BCTV  <b>John Cornell</b> ~ CPERC  <b>Ellie Henderson</b> - Woodland Trust  <b>Andrea Kelly</b> – Broads Authority  <b>Michelle Russell</b> - Natural England</p>
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<b>Agenda Item</b>		<b>Action</b>
<b>Minutes from the last meeting</b>	Held on 21 July 2011 were agreed as correct	
<b>Matters arising and action points from previous meeting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mark Iley confirmed that the EEBF website had been updated and this will be forwarded to the contractor in due course.</li> <li>• Will Akast to make a presentation at this meeting on the Water Framework Directive due to postponement from previous meeting.</li> <li>• Mark Iley informed the forum that no project funding suggestions had been put forward to consider at this time.</li> </ul>	

<p><b>Natural Environment White Paper</b></p>	<p><b>Nature Improvement Area's update</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catherine Weightman gave the forum an update regarding NIA applications. 9 applications were submitted from the East of England. 3 have been successful Lea Valley, Greater Thames and Nene Washes</li> <li>• In total there will be 20 NIA's to be reduced to 12. Business plans are to be submitted by 16 Dec.</li> <li>• Will Akast informed the forum that the Environment Agency will be looking to support projects that are directly linked to the Water Framework Directive. He also confirmed that the EA would be waiting for feedback on the final 12 projects before funding will be released.</li> <li>• Simon Odell suggested that it may be a good idea to send a message of support to the successful applicants from the EEBF. It was agreed that Steve Scott would draft a letter and circulate to the forum for approval and sent to the 3 successful projects by 16 December 2011. Catherine Weightman has contact details for each group.</li> <li>• Suggestions were made that projects could still be carried out on areas without funding as only a small percentage of the country will be represented. Mark lley suggested that EEBF small budget of £12,700 could be offered to help the process.</li> </ul> <p><b>Local Nature Partnership (LNP) progress</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An update from Catherine Weightman confirmed a total of 54 applications in England, 22 were successful. For the Eastern Region, Norfolk/Suffolk, Bucks, Lincs and Northants. Unfortunately Essex and Beds were not successful bids.</li> </ul> <p><b>Update from Catherine Cairns from Cambs GI Forum and LNP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catherine explained that they were looking to expand their stakeholder groups. The LNP would have a meeting once a year with MPs and all stakeholders. £1 million has been put aside for capacity building and a deadline has been set for 31 July 2012. There will be a programme from March to June but money will have to be spent on projects by end of March 2012. Meetings will be held with Local Authority Members, Universities, NFU, RICS, community based meetings and the development sector. A major event is organised for the second</li> </ul>	<p>SS</p>
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week in May for a stakeholder gathering with high profile members and a DEFRA keynote speaker. Hoping to elect a chair from the county to take the project forward and ways of working with existing groups. RSPB will continue to be part of the project.

**Update from Laura Kitson, Central Bedfordshire Council**

- Laura informed the forum that a joint group bid had been submitted with neighbourhood plans for localism at community level and an enterprise partnership. It was a strong bid inviting a partnership opportunity with the health and environment sector along with research and academic input from Cranfield Environmental sector (more feedback to follow). Working closely with the Local Record Centre for evidence based information. The five groups represented in the bid are: communities, enterprise, health and environment. Laura confirmed that the only restricting factor would be timescale.

**Update from Fran Hutchinson ~ Lincolnshire Biodiversity Partnership**

- Fran pointed out that Lincolnshire group made up of Biodiversity Partnership, Local Records Centre, Local Wildlife Sites Partnership and GeoDiversity was in a unique position and had 45 partners. Work was already being carried out and Local Authority sub groups will be approached, no other smaller groups are to be considered. At present the sectors not involved are Health, Environment and Education but would be targeting groups to work with them. The bid has enabled Lincolnshire to employ a person until June 2012 starting on 5 December to deal with the business strategy. Fran will concentrate on advocacy. The forum praised Fran for the positive way the Lincolnshire Biodiversity Partnership are running the project.

**Update from Catherine Wyatt Herts LBAP**

- The LNP for Herts would be a new body comprising of several existing forums with some key participants countywide. Groups would include Green infrastructure, Local Records Centre and the Local Wildlife Sites partnership. A bid for £20k was submitted, however, £13k was received until March 2012 with no further funding after March. The bid

will comprise of 2 parts 1. Stakeholders and events  
2. Vision and priorities. The main goals will be identifying stakeholders and running events and working with smaller groups which have expressed interest. Catherine Wyatt confirmed that the work would have been completed anyway but the funding will help to achieve this.

**Update from Mark Iley ~ Essex LBAP**

- Mark Iley told the forum that Essex originally talked to Kent regarding a joint bid, however, eventually it was decided to just put in an Essex bid with no other strategic forum. The bid was biased towards aspirations rather than capacity building and was unfortunately not successful. Key areas were bio-offsetting, ecosystem services audit/baseline and localism working on Living Landscapes and Local Wildlife Sites with Parishes, Local Authorities etc. Mark felt that the application guidance was poor. The application has been updated and resubmitted following consultation with Essex County Council. He also informed the forum that an application will be made for recognition without finance as the work will be carried out anyway. Catherine Weightman asked whether Essex could work with the successful Thames Estuary bid, Mark said Essex Biodiversity Project and Essex Wildlife Trust would be happy to be involved as appropriate.

**Update from Scott Perkin for Norfolk/Suffolk LBAP**

- Scott confirmed that Norfolk and Suffolk already work closely together on eco-systems and local enterprise community work. A bid was submitted for £50k securing a final allocation of £31k. Plans are taking place for stakeholder engagement to ask what expectations are. These are the key areas:
  1. Key organisations and contacts.
  2. Business and Biodiversity Forum – business partnership in the natural environment.
  3. Visitor payback scheme with a voluntary contribution on top of tea or bills for goods sold in the area to generate revenue.
  4. Stakeholder workshops engaging: Health, Marine Industries, Offshore energy companies, fishermen and community groups.
  5. Constitutions and terms of reference.
  6. Environmental vision
  7. Results will be presented to a consultation

	<p>workshop with all stakeholders.</p> <p>8. Set up a board with a Chair. Separate groups will also be set up to work in specialised areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Steve Scott suggested that this would be a good opportunity for the forum to offer help to groups.</li> <li>• It was agreed that hearing of other groups bids was helpful and informative.</li> <li>• There would be challenges from other groups and forums in the county.</li> <li>• It was agreed that other agencies such as EA, NT and FC would be represented in several projects throughout the county but may not be sustainable in all LNP's.</li> <li>• Simon Odell said that Landscape East still want to communicate but have restrictions imposed. He felt that strategic networks are important and as well as localism. There is limited time but decisions need to be made about investing time.</li> <li>• Mary Norden from the RSPB confirmed that support would be given where possible and integration more with LNPs.</li> <li>• Steve Scott said it is important to carry on the EEBF to offer the opportunity to get together and give support and guidance to one another.</li> <li>• The forum felt it would be good for leads to meet and update on LNP progress soon.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Overview of the Water Framework Directive</b></p>	<p><b>Will Akast gave a presentation – copy of powerpoint attached</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All funding bids must link to the WFD to be eligible.</li> <li>• The environment Agency is looking at working with partners that have expressed an interest and are keen to gain good ecological status.</li> <li>• A good biodiversity project does not always mean a good WFD project.</li> <li>• Funding will be released in April 2012.</li> <li>• There is a CD of easy WFD guidance available from the EA via Will Akast if required.</li> </ul>	<p><b>WA</b></p>
<p><b>Presentation from Scott Perkins</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IUCN guidelines on translocation/ reintroduction were circulated</li> <li>• Scott Perkins gave a presentation – Powerpoint attached</li> <li>• Stuart Warrington pointed out that NT receives 20</li> </ul>	

	<p>approaches a year to move various species. NT policy is surveying to determine whether there are any resident populations, as sites are not always suitable and conflicts can occur.</p>	
<b>AOB</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catherine Weightman informed the forum that Helen Phillips has resigned and will be leaving in February 2012.</li> <li>• Mark Iley asked about the future of FWAG due to recent administration. Suffolk to carry on, Cambs/Herts to carry on and Beds to carry on, each county are making their own decisions and 'going alone'.</li> <li>• Simon Odell asked the forum if they were aware of the revocation of the Regional Spatial Strategy and would it have a significant effect. He asked the forum to make comments about what would be missed. Comments should be made to the Government website by 6.1.12. Steve Scott agreed to look into this and circulate a response to the forum, he felt it could be a good opportunity.</li> <li>• Heather Webb informed the forum of her article analysing LOWs and visitor pressure in the in the next In Practice. The original report with the full methodology is on the publications page of <a href="http://www.bedslife.org.uk">www.bedslife.org.uk</a>. Highlighting whether certain sites may not be appropriate for the general public.</li> <li>• Gen Broad asked JNCC recently for feedback regarding BAPs, she spoke to Sarah Webster from DEFRA who said decisions should be made at county level whether to carry on with BAPs but the conversation was confusing and not clear. Heather Webb said that NE has no UK targets now and Local Authorities will not employ anyone to carry on the work.</li> <li>• Scott Perkins informed the forum that this was his last meeting as he was moving to Asia to work for IUCN, he thanked the forum for their support. Haidee Bishop will be his replacement and will be concentrating on LNPs.</li> <li>• Steve Scott thanked Heather and Scott for their contribution to the Forum and wished them good luck.</li> </ul>	<b>SS</b>
<b>Dates of meetings for 2012</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tuesday 27 March 2012</li> <li>• Tuesday 3 July 2012</li> <li>• Thursday 11 October 2012</li> </ul>	

	The meeting closed at 13.45 p.m. and was followed by a guided site visit by Stuart Warrington to NT Hatfield Forest to view the new venison processing unit.	
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