

Name of Meeting: Biodiversity Steering Group**Date 10/11/09 Time: 10.15 Venue: 4th Floor Meeting Room****Present:** Bill Waller – Chair & Minutes, Kate Dewey (Staffs Wildlife Trust), Kathryn Edwards (EA)**Apologies:** Ali Glaisher (SCC) Paul Candlin (Natural England), Claire Waterson (SWT) Naomi Perry (SBC), Karen Davies (SBC)

Item	Discussion/Decision	Action
1. Welcome		
2. Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising	Last meeting we discussed the idea of holding a joint meeting on Biodiversity open to all the Borough and District councils in the County. It was difficult to find a subject to hang the meeting on. KateD is currently undertaking a study of all Staffordshire Councils biodiversity performance, constructing a comparison table. It may be possible to use this as a means to bring everyone together to discuss good practice, etc.	BW and KateD to consider further
3. Biodiversity Programme i) LNRs	<p>Update on Projects and Initiatives:</p> <p>The cattle have now left Barlaston Common for the second year of grazing. They have controlled the vegetation well and have enhanced the acid grassland with new plant species being recorded this year. The grazing is being carefully monitored and a report is available. Tree and scrub control continue this winter. The BTCV recently did 2 days heather scrape work on the top common.</p> <p>At Astonfields, the Legal Team are investigating ownership of a boundary fence after a complaint from the Industrial Estate.</p> <p>Meadow restoration work at Ferndown has been a great success this year. Further work has increased the meadow area, with Natural England approving extra funding through Stewardship payments.</p>	BW to liaise

<p>ii) Planning</p>	<p>BW attended Stone Town Council's Environmental Committee to advise on improvements to the Crown Meadows. Ideas included connecting this area to the Goodall Meadow to the east to create a circular walk.</p> <p>KateD commented on concerns that planning applications were not being validated against the biodiversity checklist that has been adapted and therefore there were issues with some apps where a biodiversity survey had not taken place. This could potentially hold up an application. By using a checklist, as used by most other Staffordshire Councils, validation could be more streamlined.</p> <p>Kate D enquired if MAPINFO had the layer of Phase 1 Habitat Survey data. This layer indicates the type of habitat present though it does not have complete coverage across the Borough.</p>	<p>BW has found the layer on MAPINFO.</p>
<p>4. Victoria Park</p>	<p>BW reported on the Ecological Appraisal written by SES on Victoria Park. There are some good suggestions as to how to improve the park's biodiversity. This report was presented to the Friends of Victoria Park. Work needs to be planned for the year ahead in order to help realise these aspirations, working in conjunction with other relevant teams, such as Parks and Open Spaces.</p>	
<p>5. Green Infrastructure</p>	<p>NP supplied a summary of Green Infrastructure (GI) work undertaken so far. A GI – SPD is being written and will relate to the standards and contributions new development will need to provide in order to contribute to the overall GI Strategy.</p>	
<p>6. Potential Sites (link to National Indicator 197)</p>	<p>Trent Wood is a County Site in Stone owned by SCC. By developing a management plan for the woodland, the site will contribute to NI 197 targets. BW has been working in partnership with SCC officers to undertake this work. There has been a lot of interest in this from SWT, EA and On Trent.</p>	

	<p>Hough Drain, a Borough Council owned site now under a Higher Level Stewardship agreement has had its annual work completed. The site has been cut and improvements made to the ditch system.</p> <p>The site has a lot of potential, as an old floodplain meadow and could benefit from green hay strewing from a source like Motte Meadows.</p>	BW to look at next year
7. Dates and Events	<p>Andy Rouse – Wildlife photographer at The Gatehouse, SWT, 12/11</p> <p>Friends of Riverway – planting day 15/11</p> <p>Friends of Ferndown AGM – 18/11</p>	
8. Any other Business	<p>KE reported on work to the County Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP). A revised, habitat based landscape approach is being developed to tie in with Regional targets and strategies. A draft is hoped for next year.</p> <p>Friends of Riverway have been working on the Riverway field. Two new sports pitches are being created with space left for meadow areas. These will be enhanced by sowing annuals.</p> <p>The Floodplain Meadow Partnership will be visiting Staffs next year. They will be looking at how Floodplain meadows are being enhanced. KE suggested they might be interested in works at Hough Drain, especially if the site could be enhanced with Motte Meadows hay.</p> <p>KE asked that consideration be given to the frequency of the meetings with a suggested change from quarterly to every 4 months.</p>	<p>BW to contact FMP</p> <p>To be considered by group</p>
9. Date of next meeting	Feb 9 th 2010	