



Minutes of the 4th meeting of the Biodiversity Delivery Group
held on Monday 15th November 2021 at 2pm
in the Boardroom, Department of Environment, Food & Agriculture,
This Slieau Whallian, St Johns

Present:

Jan Gledhill – Independent Chair	(JG)
Aline Thomas – Senior Biodiversity Officer, DEFA	(AT)
Richard Selman – Ecosystem Policy Manager, DEFA	(RS)
John Payne – Senior Architect, Department of Infrastructure (DoI)	(JP)
Sofia Rodriguez Fernandez, Environmental Assistant, Highways Division, DoI	(SF)
Alan Jackson – Manx Game Preservation Society	(AJ)
Neil Morris – Managing Director, Manx Birdlife	(NM)
Leigh Morris – CEO, Manx Wildlife Trust	(LM)
Karen Westcott (via Teams) – Board Secretary & Governance Manager, Manx Utilities	(KW)
Erica Spencer – Environmental Planner and Ecologist, Manx National Heritage	(ES)
Glen Geeves – Climate Change Transformation Group	(GG)
Maddie Dunlop – Student, DoI	(MD)
Hannah Cawkwell (via Teams) – Environmental Officer, Manx Utilities	(HC)

In attendance:

Sophie Costain (minutes) – Ecosystem Policy Officer, DEFA	(SC)
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21.18 Apologies

Steve Blackford, Head of Properties, MNH

21.19 Consideration of the minutes of the meeting held on 18th October (paper A)

The minutes of the previous minutes were accepted as a true record.

21.20 Actions from the previous meeting and matters arising

Action 1 - MWT to put forward a paper for discussion and consideration at the next Wildlife Committee meeting about the creation of a Manx native tree list.

1. When the paper has been written the Department will then determine whether to refer matters to the Wildlife Committee.

Action 2 - Biodiversity Metrics – covered in section 21.23.

Action 3 - DEFA to circulate the delivery plan to the MNCF for the next meeting and see if they would like to input actions to a separate but mirrored document – the MNCF have not yet met as DEFA are waiting to find out who the new political Chair will be. AT has sent the delivery plan and a link to the website to the MNCF members.

Action 4 - AT to insert the DoI actions into the Delivery Plan and circulate this to JP for approval – This action is ongoing.

Action 5 - AT to speak to the Biosphere officers about making links between the Biosphere website and the Biodiversity Strategy webpage – a link has now been added on the Biosphere website.

Action 6 - AT to consider the wording of some actions to ensure it is obvious that financial regulations and due process have been followed – complete

Action 7 - AT to update the Delivery Plan with RAG and blue ratings – complete

Action 8 - AT to circulate the link to the UN Biodiversity Conference press release and draft post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework – complete

2. Action 8 from the May 2021 minutes- Members to provide a list of species which they considered invasive but which are not yet included on Schedule 8 - to be carried forward.

21.21 Delivery Plan 2021-22

Members to note that the delivery plan has now been uploaded to the website at www.gov.im/biodiversity-strategy

This is a living document which can be updated as and when new actions are added.

21.22 UN Biodiversity COP 15 and Delivery Plan PR (Paper B)

DEFA is preparing a press release following on from the October 2021 UN Biodiversity Conference COP 15, to publicise the outcomes of this meeting and how this links with the island's Biodiversity Strategy and delivery plan and positive action on the Isle of Man. DEFA would like some positive examples of collaborative projects that are delivering for the benefit of biodiversity to include with the press release.

The following projects were suggested:

- MWT Community woodland and Ramsey Forest Project.
- Peatland restoration project
- Birds of Conservation Concern
- Point of Ayres Bird Reserve.

3. Members to provide a short paragraph and photograph of a collaborative project for biodiversity to AT by the 17th November, for inclusion with the UN Biodiversity COP 15 press release.

21.23 Biodiversity metrics

Biodiversity metrics are a useful tool to help us understand how successful our actions are. NM provided an example of biodiversity metrics using the Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC). The BoCC Red, Amber, Green (RAG) lists were created for each bird species based on their Isle of Man population using specific criteria and thresholds and also using some national and international perspective.

Using this you can then create a list of priorities where action could and should be taken based on a rationale which includes: species showing the most severe declines; where there is a proven track record of conservation success; where action is likely to make a difference at population level and where action provides benefits for other assemblages. You can then set targets against this and monitor progress.

This same method can be replicated for other species groups and from this a priority list for the island. However, it would be down to the individual Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) leaders to do this for their groups.

4. MWT and MBL to discuss how the Agri-environment scheme can work for bird conservation.

The MWT are currently talking to farmers through the Agri-environment Scheme about bird identification training. They want to have standard way of obtaining and recording bird data on farms in order to get qualitative data about the success of the Agri-environment Scheme.

Biodiversity metrics are not the same as the net gain metrics used in Planning, which are being trialled by some developers in housing developments in the Isle of Man.

5. ES to send AT links to case studies regarding Metrics and BAPs

JP asked if it would be possible for Government Departments to identify land in their ownership that is worth more for biodiversity conservation than for other uses. An ArcGIS layer of biodiversity constraints for use across Departments could also be useful to show what things of interest are on site and inform the use of the sites as some uses can be damaging in one area but not in the other. E.g. wind turbines.

6. AT to talk with Andy Lees to find out if there is a map available or being developed containing all of the DEFA landholdings.

It was acknowledged at the last BAP meeting that the Island's primary focus should be on habitats rather than species, to bring cohesive action and multiple benefits. This is to be discussed further at the next BAP meeting. The biodiversity indicators work could be brought back to the BAP meeting for discussion. However, though cohesive, this was thought to be too long-winded, and something simpler was needed to get the BAP work moving.

Action for Wildlife came about as a result of the Back for the Brink project in the UK. AfW projects were not necessarily the most important/priority species or habitats but they were selected by a working group and fit a specific criteria, which included habitats and species that could garner public interest and support. AfW is a MWT and DEFA joint initiative led by MWT who work with BAP leaders.

7. AfW projects that have not already been started to be brought to the Biodiversity Action Plan group meeting to see if these need changing or updating.

8. Priority habitats and species in the agricultural landscape to be brought to the BAP group as a topic for discussion in order to provide a helpful strategic steer for potential future Agri-environment Scheme targeted actions.

It was confirmed that DEFA currently do not have a fund people can apply to for projects for biodiversity net gain. MNH have money in a biodiversity fund for projects MNH is working on in partnership with others for biodiversity, and there is also a sum of money in a Friends of the MNH fund which can be used for MNH projects though this is not specifically for biodiversity.

9. ES to bring back a summary of the different MNH funds for the next meeting.

It was clarified that the BDG is a group of partners who are working together towards the delivery of the Island's Biodiversity Strategy, part of the role is to advise Government. DEFA does have a big role in the group because they are responsible for the delivery of the strategy and therefore need a mechanism for people to report back to them but the group has an independent Chair. The group doesn't have funding available from Treasury for projects.

10. Members to identify what work/tasks relating to Biodiversity Strategy delivery are not progressing due to lack of funding or other resources.

It was confirmed that Dr Michelle Haywood MHK has been delegated responsibility for the Environment Directorate of DEFA.

21.24 Next meeting

Monday 14th February at 14:00 hrs in the Boardroom, Thie Slieau Whallian.

The meeting ended 16:02

Signed: J. Uedall [Chair]

Date: 14/2/2022

