



**Minutes of the 5<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Biodiversity Delivery Group**  
**held on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> February 2022 at 2pm**  
**in the Boardroom, Department of Environment, Food & Agriculture,**  
**The Slieau Whallian, St Johns**

**Present:**

Jan Gledhill – Independent Chair	(JG)
Aline Thomas – Senior Biodiversity Officer, DEFA	(AT)
Sofia Rodriguez Fernandez, Environmental Assistant, Highways Division, DoI	(SF)
Maddie Dunlop, Placement Student DoI	(MD)
Neil Morris – Managing Director, Manx Birdlife	(NM)
Leigh Morris – CEO, Manx Wildlife Trust	(LM)

**In attendance:**

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

Steve Blackford, Richard Selman, John Payne, Karen Westcott, Erica Spencer, Climate Change Team, Alan Jackson, John Payne, Hannah Cawkwell.

**22.02 Consideration of the minutes of the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> October (paper A)**

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

**22.03 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 – The MWT have scoped the list out and have are in the process of speaking with the IoM Woodland Trust Chairman and Manx Native Trees. They are hoping to get consensus and to bring an agreed list to the next Wildlife Committee.

Action 2- Members to provide a list of species which they considered invasive but which are not yet included on Schedule 8 –

1. AT to circulate the invasive species document which can be used to determine whether a plant species is invasive and can be included on Schedule 8 Part II of the Wildlife Act 1990.

Action 3 - Members to provide a short paragraph and photograph of a collaborative project for biodiversity to AT by the 17<sup>th</sup> November, for inclusion with the UN Biodiversity COP 15 press release – some fantastic examples have been received. The press release will now be timed to follow the Conference in May.

2. AT remind Cabinet Office about the UN Biodiversity COP 15 press release in April.

Action 4 - MWT and MBL to discuss how the Agri-environment scheme can work for bird conservation – this action is to be carried forward. LM reported that he had a positive meeting with Manx Ornithological Society and a meeting is scheduled with Manx BirdLife later in February. NM said he supports the MWT and acknowledges that there is a period of settling down required in the first year of the scheme but that it is also important to look for future opportunity for improvements, particularly in regards to targeted enhancements for wildlife, which is missing at present.

LM said that another area that requires review is the collection and use of biological data (e.g. number of breeding pairs of curlews) as a metric for measuring the scheme's success, which requires good baseline data. The KPIs are currently based on stats such as number of farms visited and how many initiatives accepted. There is an opportunity here to upskill farmers in I.D Skills and LM thinks the best groups for recording would be birds, butterflies and plants with the help of a simple I.D sheet. The initial training could come from IoM NGOs or potentially form part of the role of the new MWT Community Ranger.

This training can't be funded by the Agri-Environment scheme. It was asked if this was something that the Ecosystem Policy Team could fund. AT responded that Biodiversity Strategy Task No 11. Focuses on the improvement of ecological research and survey on island and DEFA have a specific action under this to decide on what training is required, so the principal of the need for additional research and survey is agreed. The Ecosystem Policy Manager (RS) would be the appropriate channel for an enquiry about funding.

3. LM to send agri-environment biological data collection proposals to the Director of Agriculture and Lands, (AL) and The Ecosystem Policy Manager (RS) at DEFA.

Action 5 - ES to send AT links to case studies regarding Metrics and BAPs – ES has sent this now so AT will circulate.

Action 6 - AT to find out if there is a map available or being developed containing all of the DEFA landholdings. AT reported that there is a wider Government one but this is not widely available. There is no map specifically for the DEFA landholding, additionally not all of DEFA land has been digitised.

LM reported that the MWT reserves and Wildlife Sites are now available to view on the Island Environment map available at [www.gov.im/maps](http://www.gov.im/maps). LM also confirmed that he was happy for SC to send Planning the Manx Wildlife Sites layer file for ArcGIS.

LM said that it was agreed with the Chief Minister and the Biosphere Stakeholder Partnership Group that the Nature Recovery Network will be the Biosphere's E (Environment) project this year. Central to this is the creation of a map showing all of the different areas of land across the Island that have been dedicated to nature and this could include nature friendly farming areas.

MTW have also proposed that the Manx Wildlife Sites be added into the Agri-Environment scheme, with a supplement paid to farmers who volunteer their land for designation. Agriculture sound positive about this proposal at present.

Action 9 - 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 – Andree Dubbleddam provided an update to the BAPs meeting.

Action 8 - Priority habitats and species in the agricultural landscape to be brought to the Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) group as a topic for discussion in order to provide a helpful strategic steer for potential future Agri-environment Scheme targeted actions – Some BAP parties have provided lists but this hasn't yet been compiled into one priority list but it will be for the next BAP meeting. Additionally David Bellamy and Paul Fletcher (Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group) are now joint lead of a new Arable and Field Boundaries BAP Group.

Action 9 - ES to bring back a summary of the different MNH funds for the next meeting – not yet received, AT to send a reminder.

Action 10 - Members to identify what work/tasks relating to Biodiversity Strategy delivery are not progressing due to lack of funding or other resources – NM said that he does not yet feel well informed about the new administration, their direction and priorities. SC said that the next step under the Island Plan will be for the creation of the separate Department plans which will provide greater clarification. NM responded that this has been done before and though it went out to consultation, it was effectively finalised at this point, with little room for alterations based on what those outside of Gov felt should be

the top priorities. NM also asked if there were opportunities for the NGOs to speak directly to the Department members to tell them what they see as the big priorities before this document gets written. AT responded that any organisation can request a meeting with the political members.

The Department is still yet to confirm a date for the next Manx Nature Conservation Forum Meeting and the main topic for this meeting will be the review of the forum. Peter McEvoy's review found that the forum doesn't function well at the moment and it needs improving. Peter also concluded that the NGOs need a separate forum, which can bring all of the NGOs together so they can agree on the strategic imperatives to be put forward to Government. NM agrees with the need for this.

LM said that he has five separate regular meetings with DEFA and he doesn't see how they inter-relate or which one he needs to bring a paper to in order to get action. LM also asked about how non-members get papers into these meetings if they are not invited members?

4. AT to send out clarification about how all of the groups and committees work.

JG said that she is very keen for this BDG meeting to be effective and therefore if anyone has any suggestions for anything that can be done better she asked them to please get in contact with her.

AT said that there will be opportunities to update the Biodiversity Strategy after the UN Biodiversity Conference in May.

5. ALL BDG members to think about what updates they would like to see in the Biodiversity Strategy for consideration after the UN Biodiversity conference. This will be discussed at the meeting after next.

#### **22.04 Delivery Plan 2021-22**

The next meeting of the BDG will be in March and the focus of this meeting will be on updating the RAG status of the actions in the 2021/22 delivery plan, prior to the creation of the 2022/23 delivery plan.

6. All members to look through their actions in the delivery plan, update the RAG ratings and send this to AT prior to the next meeting.

SF reported that John Payne is still continuing to work with biodiversity influencers across the DoI and this will be ongoing. John has provided a spreadsheet of actions for the DoI but this still needs high level approval before being added into the delivery plan.

NM reported that Manx Birdlife are working on targets for nature and a person from the RSPB will be joining them in summer to work on this. Other ongoing actions under the strategy are a review of the Bird Watchers Code of Conduct, review of Schedule 1 and 2 of the Wildlife Act 1990, input into the Agri-Environment scheme, discussion about the use of biological data and the Point of Ayre Bird Reserve which has secured funding for the next few years and which now has a three year management plan. NM has found private funding for the 2022 hen harrier census but the chough census funding is an issue and may have to be pushed back to 2023. Lastly NB said that Manx BirdLife are going to be writing a green paper about alien threats to native birds.

7. NM to put Birds of Conservation Concern to the Richard Selman for DEFA endorsement.

LM said that he is keen for the production of a Manx State of Nature report as has been done in the UK, which pulls together and summarises the data and conservation position of all of the wildlife on the Isle of Man into one document. Though LM probably has someone who can write it, he thinks it would be better if it was a Biosphere or MNCF document and he also asked if there could be funding available from DEFA for the writing of it.

8. LM to bring a proposal for a Manx State of Nature document to The Ecosystem Policy Manager (RS) for possible funding and endorsement.

**22.05 Looking ahead to Delivery Plan for 2022/23 – to let members know what will be required for the next meeting**

9. AT to circulate the most up-to date delivery plan with an extra column for an updated RAG status and an indication of whether this action is to be carried forward to the 2022/23 Delivery Plan. 14<sup>th</sup> March is the soft deadline for comments. AT to include a key for how she would like the plan to be filled in.
10. AT to circulate the new blank 2022/23 delivery plan. Members to think about and be ready to share and discuss actions to be included in in the new delivery plan at the next meeting.

**22.06 United Nations Biodiversity Conference part 2 (25th April to 8th May 2022) which is to decide on the new Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework – short verbal update**

As previously stated, there will be some opportunity for a discussion on changes to the Biodiversity Strategy after the Conference. AT has checked the UN website and they haven't yet put up the revised Global Biodiversity Framework.

**22.07 Next meeting**

Monday 28<sup>th</sup> March

The 2022/23 meeting dates will be discussed and set at the March meeting.

**22.08 AOB**

JG reported that possible changes in the GCSE science specification in high schools may increase the teaching of biodiversity topics, this may also allow for increased input by NGOs and use of Manx examples.

The meeting ended 16:05

Signed: J. Wellis [Chair]

Date: 28/3/22