



Minutes of the 6th meeting of the Biodiversity Delivery Group
held on Monday 28th March 2022 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, DoI	(SF)
Maddie Dunlop, Placement Student, DoI	(MD)
Hannah Cawkwell – Environmental Officer, Manx Utilities (MU)	(HC)
Karen Westcott – (via Teams) – Board Secretary & Governance Manager, MU	(KW)
Leigh Morris – CEO, Manx Wildlife Trust	(LM)
Alan Jackson – Manx Game Preservation Society	(AJ)
Erica Spencer – Environmental Planner and Ecologist, Manx National Heritage	(ES)

In attendance:

Sophie Costain – Ecosystem Policy Officer (minutes)	(SC)
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22.08 Apologies

Andy Lees

22.09 Consideration of the minutes of the meeting held on the 14th February 2022 (Paper A)

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

22.10 Actions and matters arising from the February meeting

Action 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 – this action has been completed

Action 2 - AT to remind Cabinet Office about the UN Biodiversity COP 15 press release in April – this action is ongoing.

Action 3 - LM to send Agri-environment Scheme biological data collection proposals to the Director of Agriculture and Lands, (AL) and the Ecosystem Policy Manager (RS) at DEFA – this action is ongoing. A small amount of funding for the upskilling of farmers on farmland biodiversity has been secured by MWT, from DEFA, and two workshops are to be delivered, after which the key species are to be decided on. The MWT's new Community Ranger will help with this once they are in role. They are also looking at the use of butterfly data for farmland monitoring in co-ordination with the MWT Education Officer and the Isle of Man Invertebrate Group.

Action 4 - AT to send out clarification about how all of the groups and committees work – Complete. The hierarchy for decision making was queried. This centres on the Ecosystem Policy Team who

papers should be submitted to, and who can then escalate papers and decisions through to the other meetings (Directorate and Policy and Strategy), as required.

A discussion was had about how to actively engage and encourage members of the Manx Nature Conservation Forum (MNCF) and others outside of the BDG to report on actions under the Biodiversity Strategy. It was decided that MNCF members should be encouraged to send actions to AT for inclusion in a separate section of the BDG plan.

1. AT to send a blank template 2022/23 delivery plan to MNCF members and encourage them to report actions under the Biodiversity Strategy to her for inclusion in the main delivery plan.

Action 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 action is ongoing.

Action 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 – on the agenda for discussion at this meeting.

Action 7 - NM to put Birds of Conservation Concern to the Richard Selman for DEFA endorsement – completed and agreed.

Action 8 - LM to bring a proposal for a Manx State of Nature document to the Ecosystem Policy Manager (RS) for possible funding and endorsement – the MWT are progressing with the project.

Action 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. 14th March is the soft deadline for comments. AT to include a key for how she would like the plan to be filled in – this action has been completed.

Action 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 – this action has been completed.

Action 11- ES to bring back a summary of the different MNH funds for the next meeting (carried forward from the November 2021 meeting) – reporting back, there is an MNH Biodiversity Fund. Anybody is able to apply for funding but the criteria are that it has to show how it benefits biodiversity and conservation and it must have a link with MNH – it could be a project on MNH land or something that co-ordinates with an existing MNH project etc. There is currently £26,000 in the fund. To apply, people need to contact gary.lark@mnh.im.

22.11 Delivery Plan for 2021-22 – verbal report summarising updates received from members regarding the delivery of their tasks as compiled in the end of year report (Paper B)

156 tasks were on the Delivery Plan for 2021/22, of these 43 are complete (blue), 55 in progress (green), 51 ongoing/on track (orange) and only 6 not started (red). Many of the tasks are to be carried over into next year.

2. All BDG members to check over the 2021/22 end of year delivery plan to see if the end of year status is correct. Any corrections to be send to AT by Monday 4th April so that the Plan can be finalised and uploaded to the website.

23.11 Looking ahead to the Delivery Plan for 2022/23

- Manx BirdLife hasn't had a chance to look at new tasks and submit these for the new plan yet.
- MU have provided their draft plan.
- DEFA have lots of ongoing tasks to be carried over and a few more tasks possibly to be added in depending on staff resources. However, the DEFA Ecosystems Team continues to be short staffed, with 1.5 FTE dedicated biodiversity advisory staff in the office from the beginning of April, instead of 2.5, so they will be limited in what additional actions they can take on. One of the DEFA actions under the new Political Strategy is to engage and embed biodiversity consideration across Government. This is therefore an Ecosystem Policy Team priority which will have to be delivered in the next five years and there is a second one to deliver the Biosphere Strategy and review, which will include biodiversity work.

MWT are having discussions about what they do, they have been looking at Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs) and Action for Wildlife (AfW). The history of these was clarified. BAPs have been slow to start as there are a limited number of people on the Island able to assist with the work and in their absence, the AfW project was initiated to identify priority species and habitats projects that can be taken forward now and engage with the public

Although there is a whole list of AfW projects which the MWT is looking to deliver on, some of these require input and collaboration with others and have stalled because of this. Top of the priority list was the Ballaugh Curragh project and they had sponsor funding offered. MNH are currently working on the Management Plan and MWT are currently focussing on projects that they can deliver in the short term with appropriate funding, e.g. Billown Quarry restoration, Agri-Environment Scheme action for curlew, dubs and the coppicing at Hairpin Woodland Park within Ramsey Forest, but they would love to come back to the other projects. Additionally, they intend to get the AfW website live shortly and are hopeful this will re-invigorate others.

The BDG members can help raise awareness about these projects and look at the list to see if there are any projects that they can help deliver on.

3. LM to send the link to the AfW webpage to all BDG members when it is live.

- MNH is working on the Ballaugh Curraghs Management Plan and the first draft should be ready to go to consultation shortly and they would like to get stakeholders involved as soon as possible. This work will require collaboration with DEFA to identify and contact private landholders in the Ballaugh Curragh Ramsar Site.
- MU is currently working on creating environmental constraints mapping so everyone has access to mapping showing their landholdings and the habitat data, so they can identify what habitats they have, important hotspots and enable collaboration with partners to see how they can better manage, protect or enhance it. They also intend to bring in protected sites, registered trees, invasive species, peatland mapping layers etc.

MWT are looking to create a candidate list of Wildlife Sites and there is potential for MU land.

DEFA are creating a remote-sensed map that provides an update on the habitat survey.

4. HC to speak to LM and DEFA about Wildlife Sites and mapping.

- DoI is currently working on compliance with the Planning conditions for the Jurby Airfield housing, in relation to grazing licences for the conservation of skylark habitats. Five hectares of land has been set aside to be managed for skylark, payments will be provided to the tenant through the Agri-Environment Scheme.

- MNH are hoping to carry out a survey of their lands in order to update the phase 1 and phase 2 habitat mapping so they can get a better idea of the required management and for the creation of short management plans for each area.
- It would be useful if there could be collaboration between MNH, MWT, DoI, MU and DEFA to identify neighbouring landholdings, for bigger, better and more joined up targeted action.

The deadline for finalising the Delivery Plan for 2022/23 was set as Friday 22nd April.

Further actions for MU will be identified over the coming year as they work through how they are going to deliver on climate change targets etc. JG clarified that the Delivery Plan is a living document so things can be added to it over the year.

22.13 Update on the Manx Nature Conservation Forum (MNCF)

The MNCF met on 10th March to discuss the future of the Forum. It was agreed that the current format would be retained, with a Political Chair, but it would be streamlined with themed meetings in order to focus views and to prompt papers from members in line with these themes. Three more meetings are scheduled for 2022 – June, September and December. Additionally, sub-groups are to be set up as and when required. A sub-group on eco-tourism was agreed.

22.14 Any other business

No business was raised.

22.15 Agreement of dates for future meetings up to end of March 2023

The dates for the 2022/23 meetings were provisionally set for the afternoons of 27th June – to discuss actions under the new Biodiversity Delivery Plan and outcomes of the UN Biodiversity Conference that may prompt a revision of the Biodiversity Strategy, 31st October – to discuss any changes to the strategy, 30th January – to look at how tasks in the Delivery Plan for 2022/23 are progressing and 27th March to discuss the Delivery Plan for 2023/24.

The meeting ended at 15:19

Signed:  [Chair]

Date: 18/7/2022