

Building knowledge by sharing information

Working Through Local Record Centres Seminar Report 19 March 1998

Working in partnership towards the NBN

577.4.087

The National Biodiversity Network is a partnership of local and national custodians of wildlife information providing access to all within a framework of standards. This report was prepared as a contribution to the NBN by The Wildlife Trusts, a member of the consortium helping to establish the National Biodiversity Network.

The Wildlife Trusts are leading the Local Record Centre Project on behalf of the NBN consortium. This project is funded by Countryside Council for Wales; English Nature; Scottish Natural Heritage; The Esmée Fairbairn Charitable Trust and The Wildlife Trusts.

For further information about this and future NBN seminars contact Rachel Hackett at Ē.

C

The Wildlife Trusts The Green Witham Park Waterside South Lincoln LN5 7JR Tel: 01522 544400 Fax: 01522 511616 E-mail:nbn@wildlife-trusts.cix.co.uk

Or visit the NBN web site: http://www.nbn.org.uk

Barcode –



Information & Library Services Scottish Natural Heritage 2 Anderson Place Edinburgh EH6 5NP

TEL: 0131 446 2479

Location - AP

Class No - 577.4,087

© The Wildlife Trusts June 1998

Working Through Local Record Centres

National Biodiversity Network

S

Building knowledge by sharing information

Introduction

This report is a summary of the seminar 'Working through Local Record Centres' held on 19 March 1998, at the Linnean Society, London. The day long seminar, arranged by the National Biodiversity Network's, Local Advisory Group, was targeted at people running, contributing to or using Local Record Centres (LRCs).

A series of presentations looked at the plans to develop the National Biodiversity Network, work already underway to establish a framework for LRCs, the role of LRCs in Biodiversity Planning and how recorders can get involved. The seminar was concluded with an open forum, which provided an opportunity for questions and comments about the proposals and future development of the NBN.

Contents	Page
1. Introduction	1
2 Programme	2
3 Presentations	
Chairman's Introduction, Sir John Burnett	3
Developing the National Biodiversity Network, Dr Andy Brown	4
Local Record Centre Project, Sara Hawkswell	9
The role of LRCs in local Biodiversity Action Plans, John Everitt	14
The biological recording community as part of the NBN, Trevor James	18
Open forum, chaired by Graham Wynne	22
Closing remarks, Sir John Burnett	25
4 Papers	26
Establishing a Framework for Local Record Centres:	
Project Summary March 1998	
5 Local Advisory Group contacts list	31
6 Delegates list	32

Working Through Local Record Centre

National **Biodiversity** Network

Building knowledge by sharing information

19th March 1998

PROGRAMME

Chairman's Introduction Sir John Burnett

Developing the National Biodiversity Network

Dr Andrew Brown, Chair, NBN Executive Group

- Overall aims of the NBN
- Who's involved in the NBN
- Programmes to develop the NBN and the long term future of the NBN

Local Record Centre Project

Sara Hawkswell, Biodiversity Information Manager, The Wildlife Trusts

- The LRC Team and an overview to the project
- Progress with pilot LRCs
- Work towards developing agreed approaches

The role of LRCs in Local Biodiversity Action Plans

John Everitt, Biodiversity Action Plan Co-ordinator, The Wildlife Trusts

- The role of local BAPs
- Data needs for writing and implementing a local BAP
- Using LRCs to meet information needs for BAPs

The biological recording community as part of the National Biodiversity Network

Trevor James, Chair, National Federation of Biological Recording

- The role of recording societies and groups
- Involving the "amateur naturalist" in the NBN
- Taking advantage of the opportunities the NBN presents

Open forum

Chair: Graham Wynne, Director of Conservation RSPB

Panel of representatives of NBN, Local Advisory Group and LRC Project will take questions and comments. There will be an opportunity for open discussion.

Closing remarks and summary of action points

Sir John Burnett

R R R R R R

Œ

H

Chairman's Introduction Sir John Burnett

I'd like to welcome you on behalf of The Wildlife Trusts and the NBN organisation. I am here in that curious capacity as independent chair. Let me say straight a way that I'm not independent at all, I'm highly committed.

This is an important meeting because firstly we're meeting in the Linnean Society, where much of the activity which resulted in the NBN project started and secondly because recording starts in the field or in the town and with the volunteers, specialists and amateurs who are an absolutely crucial resource on which any recording scheme is based. This is a resource which I think must give us all cause for concern because it is not increasing.

The people who make records are nearly all volunteers and have no obligation to do anything with their records other than keep them for their own interest. If we are going to develop an efficient recording system the first step will need to be the Local Record Centre. There are some of these already but like many national societies that are researching and recording biological information, they don't cover the whole of the UK, in some places there are gaps, in others they may be too close together. The existing LRCs are variously funded or under funded as the case may be.

Local Record Centres, as I see it, should be the first port of call, so it is very appropriate that this first public meeting of the NBN should in fact be dealing with the LRC. In the same way that voluntary observers and recorders are the crucial resource, the LRC is the crucial first step in bringing information together and making it available to the wide range of users of biological records.

An Overview of the National Biodiversity Network Dr Andrew Brown, Chair of NBN Executive Group

9

đ

I have recently moved to a new post as a Director with English Nature and I am pleased to continue my involvement in the National Biodiversity Network as Chair of the Executive Group. In this capacity I am acting on behalf of the Joint Nature Conservation Committee and hence, all of the statutory nature conservation agencies in the UK. On behalf of the Executive Group may I add my welcome to you all today.

Why do we need the NBN?

I believe our natural heritage is valuable, it should be treasured for cultural, social, economic and scientific reasons. Yet, I still feel that a short term perspective pervades society and with human nature being what it is, we are still losing more of the natural environment than we are gaining. To reverse this trend we need effective action and decision making which is crucially dependant on having relevant, up to date and accurate information about the natural environment.

Decision makers at all levels in society need access to data about the nation's wildlife. We are fortunate in the UK to have very rich holdings of biodiversity data which has been collected over many years, by many individuals and organisations. So what is the problem? If we have such a rich collection of biological data, why do we need to pursue something called the National Biodiversity Network? We need the NBN because:

- there isn't a clear picture of what data there is, where it is and how to access it;
- data is held in so many different formats: much of it is recorded on paper and poorly documented;
- data is held in many different locations. We can't yet collate information from different sources and present an overall picture about what is happening to the natural environment; and
- information cannot be examined at different scales, or presented effectively to the public or its potential users.

In the past we have seriously undervalued and under invested in the maintenance of information about our natural environment. However, in recent years a number of factors have combined to give us a much better opportunity to address these issues than ever before.

- A few years ago, the Coordinating Commission on Biological Recording produced a very influential report. This report set out a number of recommendations on how to improve the position and address many of the problems with regards to biological recording. The ideas from this report were picked up by the UK Biodiversity Action Plan.
- The UK Biodiversity Group (which is a mixture of different organisations interested in conserving the natural environment for this country) has recognised how critical it is to get our biological recording and all of the data held locally and nationally, into good order and to improve the accessibility of that information base.

- Government and public interest in the natural environment is forever increasing. There is now a recognition in central government about just how important it is to society to have a healthy and sustainable environment.
- Many of the technological problems with exchanging data have been largely overcome and the costs of investing in information technology are continuing to decline.
- The need to increase accessibility of biodiversity data is being reinforced by a more open and participatory style of government.
- New funding opportunities have emerged in recent years through schemes like the national lottery.
- A number of organisations have at long last begun to get their act together and appear determined to make a very real improvement in this area.

When was the NBN formed?

In 1996, a number of organisations were involved in preparing two bids to the Millennium Commission. One focused on national biodiversity data and the other on local biodiversity data. These two bids were combined to produce a single proposal to the Millennium Commission, supported by JNCC, Natural Environment Research Council, The Natural History Museum and The Wildlife Trusts.

Unfortunately, this bid failed, but the organisations and the individuals involved were all still very determined to make progress. The chief executives from all these organisations, agreed to commit their own staff resources to put an NBN Executive Group together. The group was charged with the very simple task of delivering the National Biodiversity Network.

Who is/should be involved in the NBN?

- *Everybody interested in collecting, managing and using biodiversity data* needs to be engaged in this process. We want people to help us address these complex issues and develop the arrangements which significantly increase the quality of biodiversity data and its accessibility. Potentially this is a huge audience and engaging those who have an important contribution to make will be a difficult task.
- *The UK Biodiversity Group* a strategic UK group, retaining an overview of the implementation of the Biodiversity Action Plan on all the individual Species and Habitat Action Plans and to strive to bring about many of the policy changes that are required, if we really are to be successful in conserving nature in this country.
- A consortium of organisations JNCC, Natural Environment Research Council, The Natural History Museum, The Wildlife Trusts, The National Federation for Biological Recording and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. These are all organisations who are sufficiently committed at this stage in the process to provide their own resources to make things happen. We expect the consortium to expand in due course.
- *The NBN Executive Group* which includes a representative from each of the consortium organisations.

- *The NBN Planning Group* which focuses on developing the detailed Business Plan.
- A National Advisory Group which covers the National Schemes and Societies.
- A Local Advisory Group which covers local interests.

What are the Broad Aims of the NBN?

• to give people access to biodiversity information. We want everybody to be able to find out about the nation's wildlife. Access will be provided through a broad range of biological and non-biological information. This will be in the form of statistics and/or interpreted material. Information should be easily accessible, so that the public are well informed and able to make their own individual and collective contributions to conserving our natural heritage.

<u>а а а а а а а а а а а а а а а а а</u>

- to encourage new generations to participate in conservation. There is a very real concern that we must get more young people involved in natural history and biological recording and actively contributing to nature conservation activities.
- to create a much better picture of the status of UK wildlife and the habitats and landscapes across the country. The NBN will provide an essential mechanism to ensure that the investments by large numbers of organisations can be more effectively harnessed and better coordinated to provide a comprehensive and complete picture. The NBN should provide a mechanism to help us assess progress on individual habitat and species action plans.
- to maximise the value of individual contributions of data. People need reassurance that their own efforts are making a valuable contribution and they need to see their information in its wider context by having access to other peoples data.

What is the NBN?

A system which links the use and demand for wildlife information to its collection. Only by its use can we redefine the collection requirements and priorities.

It is a system of distributed data sets owned and managed by different organisations which operating under common standards and networked together, make data accessible to maximise its use.

The National Biodiversity Network has four broad components:

- 1. *It's a Partnership* open to all of the individuals and organisations interested in collecting and using wildlife information. Within the partnership the opportunities to co-operate to improve the quality and the value of the data can be identified and maximised.
- 2. *It's all of the local and national custodians of data* the people that actually collect the raw data, hold it, maintain it and make it accessible. These custodians will be providing a service to a number of users by incorporating new data, ensuring it is used within the terms and conditions set for providing access to that data. They will also help to identify the future information requirements.
- 3. *A framework of standards* data is collected in many different formats and described in lots of different ways. The costs of actually accessing and understanding that data are

huge. A widely adopted framework of standards would enable the data to be collected consistently and managed so that it is actually relatively easy and inexpensive to exchange. These standards will help us to protect against the infringement of copyright and protect the release of sensitive data.

4. It's an electronic network - using web technology to enable everyone to tap into data wherever it is held.

The Plan to deliver the NBN

The delivery plan is divided into three main phases:

- 1. *The foundation phase*, 1996-1998. The aim of the foundation phase is to establish the building blocks necessary; identify the requirements and problems; gain consensus and agreement with a large number of interested organisations. The estimated cost of this phase is £1.7 million.
- 2. *The demonstration phase*, 1998-2001. The aim of the demonstration phase is to establish a working system, linking a number of national and local custodians of biodiversity data in order to: test the ideas and prove they work; show there is a real need for this kind of system and that the demand can be met; demonstrate it to a wide audience and illustrate its value as a public information service. The estimated cost of this phase is £12 million.

The demonstration phase will need to bring together best practice, pilot new ideas and find solutions to some difficult problems. It will be a fully working system but will not cover the whole of the UK or include all of the potentially available data.

3. *The expansion phase*, 2000-onwards. The aim of this phase is to expand and incorporate other local and national custodians into the network, so that by the year 2004/2005 we have a system that covers the whole of the UK. The estimated cost of this phase is £13 million.

The costs of this project may appear high but in terms of the potential benefits it is actually a modest investment. If we are serious about moving to a more sustainable environment this has to be an investment we are prepared to make. Not all of it has to be new money, much of it is about re-directing existing funds. However, it is clearly too big an investment for any one organisation. It will need all of us to use our powers of influence and persuasion to find the resources to make this happen. I think this is simply too important to fail and we have to be prepared to make this sort of investment.

Progress to date with the foundation phase.

To date progress has been good. We have:

- a well developed set of ideas and outline plans of all the projects that are needed to make the NBN a reality;
- a strong body of public and political support;
- a web site up and running;
- a glossy brochure describing the NBN;

- established initial communication processes;
- a pilot version of a web based catalogue of data sources. This is a single entry point which taps into a series of other catalogues maintained by different organisations;

C

E

C

C

¢-

t

t

C

- redesigned the Recorder software to bring it up to date and there are well developed plans for 'collect and collate' software, which allows information from different schemes to be collated and maintained at a local centre;
- three pilot Local Record Centre projects in operation; and
- the determination to make it happen.

Outline of the Demonstration Phase.

There are four key programmes to the demonstration phase:

- 1. Co-ordinating development: management, communication, accreditation and membership.
- 2. Standards for contributing data: data, software, identification and sampling.
- 3. Giving access to that data: linking together societies, schemes, Local Record Centres and national custodians.
- 4. Using the data: building an index of everything that is available and providing the gateway so that the data can be accessed. There will be different levels of access. Open access will be provided for members of the public to obtain basic summary information and a different level of access to more detailed data will be available for participating organisations. The customer services will have a series of pilot projects on education and a public information service.

Future management of the NBN

The intention is to either:

- use an existing organisation who would make use of the pre-formed consortium, or
- establish an independent Trust. Such a Trust would have an independent Chair and Trustees from many of the organisations currently involved. The Trust would employ its own staff who would be charged with the overall development and provision of the long term central functions of the NBN.

The pros and cons of these different options are being explored.

I hope that you will agree with me that we need to make the NBN a reality and that in due course you will join the network.

Local Record Centre Project

Sara Hawkswell, Biodiversity Information Manager, The Wildlife Trusts UK National Office

Background

Į.

1

1

1

The LRC project is part of the NBN and is given direction through the NBN Executive Group, primarily on the advice of the Local Advisory Group. The Local Record Centre project is not an isolated project, it is one of the many NBN projects, which are all interlinked.

A broad hypothesis for the Local Record Centre Project is: LRCs can and should act as local nodes in a functioning NBN.

The project aims to achieve three key objectives:

- demonstrate how locally held information can contribute to local and national conservation strategies;
- build on existing local wildlife information management systems; and
- develop and test a flexible, viable model for establishing local nodes within the NBN and encourage others to use it.

Recently in Scotland, there have been a number of successful funding initiatives to either develop existing Local Record Centres or create new ones. In other areas of the UK however, financial cuts have resulted in the partial or complete closure of Local Record Centres. One of the reasons that funding is not widely available is because in the past we haven't been up front about the purpose of our actions.

What do Local Record Centres do?

Local Record Centres should provide a range of services to provide:

- support for the planning process eg. information on priority sites to be identified in local plans;
- support for the production and implementation of local BAPs;
- sound information on which to base decision-making and policy formulation;
- support for local recording through a range of schemes and societies, facilitate effective targeting of conservation action, including restoration and management of priority habitats; and
- an information service for the public.

Local Record Centres should coordinate what people are doing and give added value to that activity by ensuring the information that specialists produce is taken and used in decision making processes that actually influence what happens to our wildlife.

The Relationship between the Local Record Centres and National Recording Schemes.

We have a lot of very effective national recording schemes and good national data sets but in many instances the data is not made available back to the local level. This means that local decisions and actions are often made without taking into account all of the information. We need to investigate the relationship between local and national recording schemes and develop some good working models in order to find better ways of mobilising data in the network.

C C

Access Terms and Conditions

This is a separate NBN project, looking at who should have access to data and under what terms and conditions. Access to sensitive data is a big concern for a lot of people and a problem that we know has to be addressed.

The Local Record Centre Project: The Programme of Work

The programme of work is a carefully thought out strategy. We haven't got the answers to problems but instead a series of projects to address these problems. We are going to be working with a range of different people on these projects, to come up with different ideas and approaches. This will be achieved by testing and demonstrating everything in real situations rather than developing theoretical models.

There are four main areas to the programme:

- 1. Development Plan process for establishing and managing LRCs
 - A LRC Development Plan should relate the products required to meet its users needs, to the activities it has to undertake and the data holding that it has to have in order to make the services happen effectively. The idea of the Development Plan is to have a structured way of looking at this, so we know what a Local Record Centre will and won't provide. Work on establishing the Development Plan process is already underway and involves:
 - *Review of existing practice* Some of this work is already in progress as part of a contract, which is assessing six existing Record Centres to look at how they plan and manage their work and get the resources and data they require. We will also be collecting information and Development Plans from the full range of existing LRCs to give a complete picture of operational practice.
 - Learn from partners and other sectors We recognise that the work of Local Record Centres has got to integrate with a range of different organisations and the way in which they plan their work. We are therefore going to examine the planning processes used by
 - partners of the Local Record Centre eg. Local Authorities; and
 - other organisations who are not linked to conservation but are involved in similar activities -bringing groups of people together and providing information products, such as The Citizens Advice Bureaux.
 - *Test a structured approach through pilots* by identifying needs and how to meet and fund them using a series of three pilot local record centres.
 - *Promote a strategic approach to establishing and running LRCs.*

2. Operational Standards for LRCs

Standards for operation are not meant to be constraining, they need to be broad guidelines so that Local Record Centres can operate together and learn from each other rather than reinventing the wheel. Operational standards are about allowing us to operate as a network so that one Local Record Centre can exchange data effectively and efficiently with neighbouring Local Record Centres, national schemes and societies and other holders of data. The process will:

- Build on existing practice assessment of existing LRC and collation of material on current practice. The contract which is reviewing what is happening already in six Local Record Centres is going to be addressing existing operational standards by collecting material, assessing current practice and proposing a mechanism for developing guidelines;
- *Integrate with other NBN projects* which will actually be establishing operational standards;
- Consider different aspects of LRCs:
 - services to users/suppliers products
 - data holdings and data management processes
 - LRCs as effective businesses;
- *Test proposals in "real" situations* We are going get people to test these proposals to see if they work.; and
- Open processes of seeking consensus We must build consensus, because we won't achieve our aims of sharing unless everyone uses the same standards.
- 3. Accreditation Scheme
 - *Recognition of LRCs working to standards.*
 - *Facilitate flow of data through the network.*
 - Linked to membership of the NBN.
 - *Recognise different levels of operation.*

Whilst we recognise the need for some form of accreditation so that everyone can recognise how the other is working we cannot focus on the accreditation scheme for the next eighteen months until we have completed some of the first phases.

4. Support for LRCs

- *Facilitate networking sharing information.*
- *Promote adoption of standards.*
- Support and advice.
- Workshops and training.
- *Team of three LRC Support Officers* who are focusing on pilot Record Centres over the next four or five months, before they start to be more proactive. They will then be available to give or facilitate support, advice, deal with networking and run workshops and seminars.

- **ה ה ה ה ה ה ה** C C C C C C
- *Web Site, newsletters, and seminars.* These are about exchanging information and letting people know what we are doing. As well as providing information we need information back.

LRC Project – The Approach

Selection of Pilot Local Record Centres

It was agreed with the Local Advisory Group, that one of the ways we were going to need to test these ideas was to work through the process of setting up and running a Record Centre from scratch. Over twenty groups submitted applications. The pilots were not selected because they'd make the best Record Centres or because they presented the easiest option. Some of the areas were actually selected because we thought they would be difficult and challenging. We looked for where we could use existing partnerships that were working already. Three pilots were selected, one in Scotland, one in Wales and one in England.

We haven't got a pilot in Northern Ireland because CEDaR, the Record Centre is already based there and is going to be integrated in our first phase – assessment of existing LRCs.

The pilots were identified last October. Since then we have had a couple of meetings with all the people involved and recruited a team of three Support Officers. The Support Officers are responsible for getting these Record Centres started. By working with all the partners, they are writing a Development Plan, the first phase of which is under way in all three instances and is looking at "What people need biological information for?" We want to know that what we put in place actually meets people's needs.

There are plans in place to hold meetings, workshops and discussion groups to establish What services would come out of the Local Record Centre? What the data holding needs are? What it's relationship with other recorders in the area would be? By October 1998 we should have three development plans for the pilot Local Record Centres.

Second Tranche of Pilot Studies

The second tranche of pilots is very different to the first. It will involve setting up a series of *in situ* projects that will address the significant problems that are currently limiting the success of Local Record Centres.

We want to take on board the work that is going on at the moment in terms of existing centres, setting up pilots and feedback from this meeting. The Local Advisory Group is just starting to consider how we might address the second tranche of pilots. In the next few months, when we have some proposals, we will be letting people know how we are going to proceed and obviously we will be looking for people who are willing to participate.

The Local Record Centre Team

I am responsible for managing the team and I'm based at the Wildlife Trusts UK Office. The three Support Officers are out posted so they are based near their respective pilots, one in a Wildlife Trust, one in a Local Authority and one in a University. There is also an Information Officer who is doing a lot of the coordinating; dealing with the web page and responding to enquiries.



Summary Timetable of Progress

October 1997	Pilot LRCs identified.
Winter 1997	LRC Team recruited.
April 1998	Report on effectiveness of existing LRCs.
June 1998	Start second phase of work on standards for LRCs.
Summer 1998	Identification of second tranche of pilot LRCs.
September 1998	Draft guidelines for managing LRCs.
October 1998	Development plans for pilot LRCs.
October 1998	Draft Development Plan guidelines.
November 1998	Workshops for LRCs and partners starts.

How is this work being resourced?

A consortium of five organisations is funding most of this work: The Countryside Council for Wales, English Nature, Esmée Fairbairn Charitable Trust, Scottish Natural Heritage and The Wildlife Trusts. Some of the resources needed for the Pilot Local Record Centres have been found from the Charitable Trust, but the local consortium is going to have to find some of their own resources.

In addition to this are the other partners; the pilot LRCs – local consortia and existing LRCs who contribute resources to this work by taking time to listen about the project and contribute to what we are doing. A number of Local Record Centres have given time and commitment during the assessment of existing Local Record Centres.

For Further information:

- Establishing a Framework for Local Record Centres Project Summary –March 1998 Paper (page 25).
- Local Advisory Group contacts (page 33).

The Role of Local Record Centres in Local Biodiversity Action Plans John Everitt, Biodiversity Action Plan Co-ordinator, The Wildlife Trusts National Office

9

E

What is Biodiversity Planning?

Biodiversity Planning can be highlighted by activities at international, national and local levels, over the last six years:

- 1992 Rio Earth Summit Convention on Biological Diversity
- 1994/1995 UK Government National Plan Biodiversity: The UK Action Plan Biodiversity: The UK Steering Group Report Government Response
- 1995 onwards Local Biodiversity Action Plans

What are Local Biodiversity Action Plans?

Local Biodiversity Action Plans can be defined as

'the development of a long term process of biodiversity conservation in the local area and a means of monitoring progress.'

Two very important aspects of local Biodiversity Action Plans are to reflect and implement national and international priorities and to take into account local considerations and priorities.

The Local BAP Process



Figure 1 shows the biodiversity planning process. This can be applied at a local, regional, national and international level. It is a cyclical and long term process. It has to be dynamic and able to move as new information comes on board and we start to meet targets. It also has to be an all encompassing process. Whilst we are concerned about total biodiversity, we are having to focus on priorities and we will always have to focus on priorities because of restrictions on resources and information.

Partnerships

We will never deliver this process if we work in isolation. Working in partnership offers the benefits of:

- pooling resources;
- ensuring all the relevant partners are working together; and
- increasing a sense of ownership in what we are doing.

What do we mean by partnerships? It means more than getting everyone together and talking. It's about sharing the agenda. If we have a shared agenda, we then have shared responsibilities and this starts to link everyone into a common understanding about what we are trying to achieve.

Partnerships need to be planned. We can't just bring everyone together to talk about biodiversity planning. We need to make decisions about which people are relevant for particular stages of the process. By bringing people on board at different times, the partnership will be dynamic.

These principles of partnerships apply as much to Local Record Centres as they do to local BAPs. Figure 2 illustrates a very simple connection between the recording and the action. It shows how we have a partnership of recorders and recording on the one hand and a partnership of practitioners, people determining local biodiversity action, on the other.



Figure 2



R R R R R R R R R

Figure 3: Data Needs For Local BAPs

Figure 3 shows in more detail the connection between recording and action and how the Local Record Centre contributes to the UK biodiversity planning process through the principle of the local Biodiversity Action Plans.

Using LRCs to Meet Information Needs

Local Record Centres and recording can assist the local biodiversity planning process in several important ways:

Collaboration. If data are centralised, it means there will be an existing partnership that can be built upon. Worcestershire have started this process by developing their partnership with the LRC to produce a 'Guide to the Preparation of an Agenda 21 Biodiversity Action Plan for the County'. They are now starting to work towards the production of a Biodiversity Action Plan.

West Lothian are at a slightly more advanced stage, having produced a document, 'Planning for Biodiversity Action in West Lothian'. Again, a collaboration of practitioners and recorders has developed the process by producing the auditing and planning stages.

Validity. Decisions that we make in both auditing the status and distribution of species and habitats and also when setting priorities need to be based on very sound information and judgement. If we can get details on populations and statuses of species, we can start to get a rigorous process under way. This is what Cornwall have done producing the first phase of their BAP, 'Cornwall's Biodiversity – Audit and Priorities'.

Northamptonshire does not have a Local Record Centre. Despite this, they have been able to take the planning process forward by producing an 'Introductory Guide to Biodiversity Planning.' This guide has shown the connection between recording and action by highlighting the need for a Local Record Centre.

Long Term Process. It is important to have a monitoring programme. There is no point in trying to undertake action if we have no idea whether it has been effective in meeting the targets set out. An ongoing monitoring process also means that an audit can be obtained at any moment in time, rather than having to go out and collect data each time it is required. Mid-Derbyshire Local BAP and BAPs in Somerset have recognised the importance of monitoring in their respective Biodiversity Action Planning processes.

Efficiency. If we are efficient with the information we have, we can ensure that the same information can be used for a variety of sources. This links back to the idea of collaboration, if information is held at a central point it can be used for all information needs, saving both time and resources.

Leicestershire and Rutland have demonstrated efficient use of data through their work on integrating species and habitats. They have minimised the amount of repetition by incorporating species where possible within habitats. Again, it is not possible unless you have the recording systems in place to enable you to do this.

Coordination is an extremely important aspect of what we are trying to do in order to link local, regional, national and international plans and to ensure information flows both ways. Hertfordshire and Middlesex have highlighted areas where their Local Biodiversity Action Plan can deliver a proportion of the UK Plan. Coordination is required to ensure that Local Plans integrate with and collectively deliver the UK Plan. This can only be achieved through co-ordination of recording.

To summarise, "Local Record Centres are an essential pre-requisite to successful implementation of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan at the local level". I think this line from The UK Steering Group Report shows the importance of integrating recording and action.

The Biological Recording Community as Part of the National Biodiversity Network Trevor James, Chair – National Federation of Biological Recording

E

F

C

Ē

¢

C

E

¢

Œ

Œ

As well as Chairman of the NFBR, I am the Manager of Hertfordshire Environmental Record Centre and a Recorder for the Botanical Society.

The Structure of Biological Recording in the UK

Figure 4 is a diagram I have drawn to illustrate the problem that faces Biological Recording in Britain. It shows a modal split down the middle between those at the local level and those at the national level, in terms of where the data comes from, how it is managed and where it goes. This is a problem that must be addressed because the field recorder, represented in the middle of the diagram, needs to know who is doing what in order to contribute data effectively and efficiently.

A relatively ideal situation, as the diagram depicts, would be to have a Local Record Centre. However, even with a Local Record Centre, poor communication systems can still result in difficulties and ineffective transfer of material.

Relationships with at least <u>some</u> kind of statutory basis are marked as 'S' on the diagram and illustrate the activities, which are supported by policy. It can be seen that such policies only affect the organisations at the top of the diagram and those lower down, including the field recorder have no obligation to undertake the activities they do.

The modal split between local and national activities is a crucial problem that needs to be tackled by the NBN through the establishment of mechanisms which allow effective communication between the two sides. The business of validation is also an important issue. The word 'validation' means different things to different people. Here I refer to it in the context of identification and the processes involved in getting specimens verified. The field workers are obviously people that rightfully know what they are looking at on the ground, but they need to know how and in what circumstances to get verification.

Missing Links/Nodes

What happens when various bits of the diagram are missing? In Hertfordshire's case we have a Local Record Centre supported by local authorities. It is a consortium funded Record Centre with a budget of £183,000 per annum. It has five and a half members of staff and services 7 out of 10 districts, EN and the County Council. The Centre carries out the process of coordinating, supplying and interpreting biological information and providing advice.

In Hertfordshire the system works pretty well, although we:

- *don't get support from all the local authorities* although we do have a network which operates fairly successfully;
- *still haven't got very efficient data transfer links between us and the national schemes.* As a botanical recorder, where does my data go to? Does it go to the BSBI or do I take it in to the office and add it to the database. Obviously I would do both but this makes it inefficient. We must implement a system, to overcome this practical difficulty.



The systems in place vary across the Country. Some areas do not have:

- a Museum Biological Department (important for local validation of information);
- a Local Record Centre;
- a local Natural History Society;
- local specialists.

The Importance of Local Coordination

Coordinating locally based national schemes through the Local Record Centre and trying to maintain a local structure can create difficulties. There are different ways of approaching these potential difficulties:

9

- *The BTO model* has a very centralised and coordinated system, which allows the bird club to work efficiently through it. But sometimes it can be difficult to get information from the BTO.
- *The BSBI model* is less centralised, but can still lack efficient links at the local level.
- *The Local Record Centre as co-ordinator.* One of the most important functions of the LRC is to act as the co-ordinator of local effort and as a catalyst.

The NBN as a Focus for Biological Recording

What does the NBN offer us? It provides:

- A national structure and recognition organisations working together under the NBN can build the missing links and nodes. Even if you don't have a LRC you can bring the plan off the shelf and say this is what we should be doing and roughly how we should be doing it;
- *Standards for data collection and management* creating the means to interchange data and provide the formats to facilitate research;
- A recognised focus for financial support which is extremely important. If everyone can see that they are tapping into more than just the local bird club information, then it will be a major plus when trying to gain support and funding;
- *Facilitating communication* bringing to bear information technology, will increasingly allow others to understand the environment.

Getting the Network Right

It is important that everyone in the NBN should not forget that we need to get things right. The NBN should:

- *Recognise local differences in priorities and potential;*
- *Encourage local partnerships* the LRC is key to getting local people involved;
- *Helping and not hindering local naturalists* we don't want to establish a bureaucratic structure that prevents people from getting involved. What we want is something that

encourages and focuses people, to make them think about their methods and provide a framework within which they can work;

- *Solving technical problems* this is an important issue. Developing appropriate software which is up to the minute;
- Engendering local support, especially from LAs: the NBN as "carrot";
- Gearing up existing operations without unnecessary loss or damage; and

1

5

I

ſ.

• Balancing demand for information against volunteer 'fatigue' - we don't want to waste time establishing systems that don't actually deliver the goods.

The NFBR does not have huge financial resources to bring to this initiative. However, it does have the encouragement, enthusiasm and interest of all the supporting and member organisations that it represents. The organisation and its members, can be used as a mechanism to get the message across to the people on the ground.

Open Forum Chaired by Graham Wynne, Director of Conservation, RSPB

C

q

¢

C

C

E

Having listened to the proposals for the NBN and the range of issues we need to address, I'm convinced there will be tremendous benefits if we can succeed in this area. As a conservationist, I know it is impossible to deliver effective actions without adequate data. Not only do we need to know what is happening but we need to know how to demonstrate this clearly. Two examples from my experience illustrate the importance of this.

- When the ESA was first introduced on the Somerset Levels, the prescriptions were completely inadequate for breeding bird conservation. Everyone, including MAFF officers knew this, but for a range of reasons (inertia, resources etc) there was no willingness to do anything about it. On a ministerial visit to the Somerset Levels, we separated Mr Gummer from his advisors and showed him the maps, which gave clear historical data of local breeding birds. He realised instantly that the facts bore out our claims. As a result he went back and put in motion the discussions to ensure the ESA was reviewed.
- Farmland bird declines This was only acknowledged three years ago after a range of data was combined to give a detailed record of the decline over a 20 year period. When presented to Ministers and advisors, they recognised that the facts were true and action was needed if this trend was to be reversed.

The views from this discussion will be taken forward to the Local Advisory Group meeting on Friday 20 March and by the individual project leaders, working on planning the NBN.

Key Points from the discussion

- Why are there no local Natural History Societies or actual data providers represented on the Local Advisory Group? NFBR, BRISC and BCG are all represented on the Local Advisory Group. Representatives from these organisations, try to communicate with a wide range of groups and individuals and channel views, on their behalf to the NBN Executive Group. A structure like the NBN will not be able to talk directly to everyone involved. A realistic long term means of communication will be through LRCs and National Schemes and Societies.
- Do people want their data to inform decision-making processes? If people don't want to be involved then the NBN is going out to stop people from recording for pleasure. However, we hope that collectively we can persuade everyone to see the benefits of sharing data and working in a co-ordinated and co-operative way.
- Recorders need to receive adequate feedback and be clear that their data is not going into a black hole. There is an incredibly diverse range of recorders and communication with them is essential. In general the type of feedback they want is: acknowledgement of their data and effort; an understanding of what happens to the data; feedback on the context for their data; help with publishing flora or maps and access to local sites for recording.
- Validation of data the "accreditation" scheme and in particular, identification skills, must not become so costly or bureaucratic as to limit access. It was recognised that in

many circumstances, the same experts who generate the records are needed to help train others in identification skills and to make the accreditation schemes work.

- How do the existing societies fit in? Many of these societies are "old and idiosyncratic" and have been running in a particular way for a long time. They are unlikely to see any reason to change for what will be seen as "the latest scheme". The intention is to use a Development plan process to identify priorities and needs for societies and schemes and to test the approaches using a number of demonstration projects. This will involve increasing the capacity of schemes and mobilising their recording effort.
- A major problem for recording is the lack of keys for some groups. This makes it difficult for existing recorders, let alone bringing new ones on board. It would be helpful if the production of keys could become demand led. This also relates to the other fundamental problems of training and recruiting naturalists. Whilst the NBN will not be able to deal with every issue relating to recording, it will be able to mobilise information on who's doing what projects, such as the Checklist work will help significantly.
- Both in terms of promotion of recording and wider availability of data there is a suspicion, amongst landowners that biological recording increases the demand for access to land. Good relationships with CLA, SLF etc are critical to managing this issue sensitively.
- How can the NBN help solve some of the problems that are still limiting the success of existing LRCs? There is a need to find further resources to tackle these problems and bring more LRCs, national schemes on board. However, this doesn't limit the ability for those with the resources, to participate.
- There is a lot of information around which people don't know about this is where the NBN can succeed.

1

- Environment Agency considers that it will be a node on the system. Currently there is no process to get the data it holds internally to the relevant experts and schemes and vice versa. Being part of the NBN will allow this sort of access and flow of data.
- A number of aspiring LRCs have gone to the wall because they didn't think enough, about the needs of the users and the products they required.
- LRCs need to be bought up to a threshold, (over a period of two to three years), so that they can deliver a range of services to their users and become a valued resource. Funding must be sought to resource this establishment phase. The three pilots are being supported through the expansion phase and their success will be determined by their ability to operate viably at the end of the demonstration period.
- Resources currently available to the LRC project are extremely limited and the decision has been to target spending to the issues that will be most influential over the whole of the UK therefore work on agreeing standard guidelines and demonstrating them in a relatively limited number of LRCs has been the priority. Almost 50% of the resources already secured will go towards local work on Record Centres. If further monies could be found then it would be possible to work with other LRCs to help them reach the operating threshold, using the agreed guidelines. This is the work proposed under the

"expansion phase" of this project. The degree of activity in the expansion phase for LRCs, will be dependent on availability of resources.

• The application to HLF will be heavily dependent upon what HLF are likely to fund – the NBN team is working with HLF advisors and trustees to look at which elements of the NBN are eligible and of interest to them. The ideal situation would be for HLF to provide enough resources to enable all LRCs to reach the operating threshold, to ensure co-ordination and support so that this work contributes to the development of the whole NBN. If we are to persuade HLF to provide "start-up" money, we need to convince them of the long-term prospect of the NBN and LRCs. Obviously the NBN team can't make any promises on behalf of HLF!

E

• It is essential to keep lines of communication open with a wide range of people, through newsletters, web pages and regional meetings. Equally it might be appropriate to use existing fora targeted at particular groups to get a wider base for the general information.

Closing Remarks Sir John Burnett

A number of people asked, "why isn't the Government paying for all this?" An interesting historical parallel that we ought to take into account and use in lobbying Government, is the Sites & Monument Record, set up in 1996 by an Order of Council. There was no debate in parliament, because the opposition couldn't oppose it. It's very easy to get Government to set up a procedure like this, if you can persuade the relevant Ministers to do so.

Today's meeting has reminded me how valuable the NBN will be in enabling people to find out what else is going on, giving the bigger picture of the UKs biodiversity and increasing the value of everyone's existing work.

We haven't solved all the problems, but the discussions today show that collectively, we understand the issues and have some good ideas about how to tackle them. To make the NBN work, we need to ensure that we keep in touch and share experience.

T.

Į

1

1

Working in partnership towards the NBN

The National Biodiversity Network is a partnership of local and national custodians of wildlife information providing access to all within a framework of standards. This paper was prepared as a contribution to the NBN by The Wildlife Trusts, a member of the consortium helping to establish the National Biodiversity Network.



Building knowledge by sharing information

a

a

â

ESTABLISHING A FRAMEWORK FOR LOCAL RECORD CENTRES PROJECT SUMMARY – MARCH 1998

This paper summarises the work currently underway to develop and test a framework of Local Record Centres (LRCs) as part of the National Biodiversity Network (NBN). This area of work is being led by The Wildlife Trusts on behalf of the NBN consortium. It covers a three-year programme of work, which started in July 1997, and includes work to ensure the long-term stability of LRCs within the NBN

1 LOCAL RECORD CENTRES WITHIN THE NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY NETWORK

LRCs will fulfil three key roles within the NBN:

- meet the information management needs of a range of local organisations
- provide a local focus for naturalists and recorders
- link with national datasets
- ٠

• There will need to be considerable flexibility in the development of LRCs within the bounds set by a national framework for LRCs. A LRC operating within the NBN will be service-based and part of a UK-wide network facilitating sharing of data.

1.1 What will a Local Record Centre acting as part of the network do?

The core functions of a LRC acting within the National Biodiversity Network will be to manage data and support their use by others. This will include:

- acting as a focus for biological record management within the area
- acting as contact point for access to datasets by local and national users
- providing a link for local users and suppliers to other LRCs and national data centres
- providing support and guidance for recorders
- promoting the collection, validation and maintenance of key biological datasets
- managing specified datasets on behalf of partners
- researching the availability of data sources, at an appropriate level
- supplying data to decision makers, educational establishments and the public

1.2 What services will a Local Record Centre provide?

The focus of LRCs acting within the NBN will be the provision of services to users. These services will identify what a LRC should be doing and clarify what funding bodies are paying for. They will include:

• providing support for the local planning process, such as information on priority sites to be identified in local plans and information to assist with decisions relating to planning

applications

- enabling decision-making and policy formulation based on sound information
- supporting local recording through a range of schemes and societies
- acting as a local "node" in the NBN, facilitating access to data across the whole
- network
- facilitating effective targeting of conservation action by a wide range of organisations and individuals
- providing an information service for the public.

1.3 Who will run each Local Record Centre?

An effective LRC, working as part of the NBN, will provide a central source of information in the area and be recognised by everyone as holding accurate data. The LRC will be funded and run by a consortium comprising local organisations that require or generate biological information. Each consortium will be formed according to local circumstances, but is likely to involve local authorities, the local Wildlife Trust, statutory environmental agencies and naturalists' societies. Data will be made available to decision makers, educational establishments, the general public etc. Information will be easily fed in, extracted and used and a wide range of standard information products provided.

2 LOCAL RECORD CENTRES - DEVELOPING A FRAMEWORK

An effective, coordinated network of LRCs, linked to national datasets, will need the development of a common framework. This will increase the efficiency and effectiveness of each LRC – by resolving a range of issues and providing common tools. By working in a common way each individual LRC will form a local node within the NBN. Each LRC will draw on, and contribute to, national datasets, sharing data with other NBN nodes.

The LRC Project, led by The Wildlife Trusts on behalf of the NBN consortium, has been designed to develop and test a framework for LRCs over a three-year period. Its purpose is to firmly establish the infrastructure needed to maintain the LRC network in the future. This will include developing new LRCs and working with existing LRCs. Availability of funding will influence the scope of this work programme.

There are links between this work and other elements of the NBN, for example the development of access terms and conditions and re-development of the *Recorder* software. The approach taken is pragmatic – we have identified a problem and have outlined a programme of work to address the problem. There will need to be considerable flexibility within the programme to accommodate developments as the organisations involved go through a learning process. The programme of work will be kept under review and adjusted as experience dictates.

The work programme can be broken down into five key projects (outlined below). These projects are complemented by a series of core activities that will help the overall development of the network and facilitate its long-term viability. These activities include contributing to fundraising and ensuring effective communication.

2.1 Operational Standards for LRCs.

LRCs will need to operate to agreed standards, shared and recognised throughout the network. This will enable them to deliver the defined functions, contribute effectively to the national network and provide reliable services to users and data providers. It is also important to foster a sense of trust in the LRCs' ability to deliver services, manage data.

A series of products will be developed to help individual LRCs operate to the required standards and give an overall picture of the functions and requirements of LRCs. The final products will not be a "rule" book but a practical narrative showing how to go about delivering effective services. These will be based, wherever possible, on existing good practice. Examples of existing practice will be collated and assessed working in partnership with practitioners, such as LRCs, and suppliers and users of data. In particular the standards will build on the experiences of the pilot centres. The standards recommended will take a practical approach, being ambitious but realistic.

The first phase of work in this area is underway. A contract – "Developing operational standards and good practice guidance Phase 1 – assessing the current situation" has been let to Cornwell Affiliates. This contract involves a formal assessment of the effectiveness of six existing LRCs and a review of how this information could be used to start developing guidelines and operational standards for other LRCs. It will provide an invaluable resource for the three pilot LRCs as well as a useful review for the six LRCs concerned and a source of information for other existing and new LRCs. The next phase will be considered once this work is completed (due late April).

2.2 Establishment of LRCs – pilot studies.

A first tranche of three pilot LRCs to operate within the NBN have been selected. These are in areas where there is no existing centre and considerable work needs to be done to establish an effective LRC. However a range of local partners have committed to working to developing each centre and they have the support of many key recording groups and organisations. The pilot LRCs have been selected so that, collectively, they can be used to test how LRCs can be established in a wide range of different circumstances. They will provide valuable experience for developing LRCs throughout the UK. The pilots have not been selected to be easy and many challenges and significant work lay ahead.

đ

q

9 9 9

These pilot LRCs are part of the process for developing the framework for LRCs and, with the assistance of three support officers, will be used to test the proposed standards and guidelines. Further pilot studies will be bought on board at a later stage to prove the case for local information management in a range of further situations. Each pilot will seek to achieve two things:

• establish an effective local biological information management centre within a defined area - managed and run by co-operation between a wide range of relevant local organisations, conforming to standards developed as part of the NBN;

• contribute to the development of a framework for LRCs which applies throughout the UK by assisting with the development and testing of standard tools and methods for use by other LRCs.

Collectively these studies will establish whether the framework is robust in a wide range of different situations and provide a number of demonstration LRCs. The first tranche of pilots are:

Cheshire, Merseyside, Halton and Warrington

Involving a wide range of local authorities and conservation bodies work on this pilot is covering a very varied area, including significant urban developments, Cheshire Plain and the Pennines in the east and a marine interest.

North East Scotland

This pilot is closely linked to the Local Biodiversity Action Plan - being led by the same consortium of organisations. This is a large diverse area with significant population centres and an extensive coastline and will involve co-operative working between a range of local authorities

Powys and the Brecon Beacons National Park

This pilot will look at establishing a pilot in the area covered by Powys and the Brecon Beacons National Park. This area is large and rural with no major population centres. The Working Group developing this proposal includes statutory and voluntary bodies.

2.3 Development Plan Process for LRCs.

Funding and co-ordinating this work is in itself new and complex work. This project will establish a "development planning" process for LRCs. This will be a problem solving technique - helping local partners define the scope of LRCs, form partnerships, develop plans and budgets, and seek funding. The process of preparing a development plan will involve considerable management of local politics; the output of the process will be a plan for an LRC with full backing of local partners.

The development plan prepared for any LRC should cover both the establishment phase for the centre and initial years of service delivery. A process for establishing service level agreements is needed. This project will develop and test such a process by working with the pilot LRCs. The approach developed must be validated with representatives of suppliers and users to lend weight to the local process. By preparing this approach on behalf of local consortia duplication of effort will be prevented and best practice shared.

2.4 Support for LRCs.

The new network will mean a considerable change to existing practice for many organisations and volunteers, initially within the areas with pilot centres but eventually throughout the UK. There needs to be a proactive approach to working with local organisations to provide information and help local partnerships to develop proposals for their local area. New standards and approaches to working will need explaining to potential and existing LRCs particularly while these are being tested through the pilot studies. A team of support officers will provide an advisory service to existing and potential LRCs. The team will be a key source of information, guidance and coordination for LRCs as well as assisting local partners in developing and implementing proposals for their local area. In particular the team will work with the selected pilots to test the framework for LRCs. The team will work closely with LRC consortia through sites visits, workshops and training sessions to promote the standards and methods of working advocated by the network.

2.5 Accreditation Scheme.

An accreditation scheme will help ensure that the functions and services provided by LRCs are delivered to known standards. The NBN aims to develop a network of LRCs that are the focus for local biological information management and are recognised as a reliable source for information. To demonstrate that LRCs do meet the standards required to fulfil this role it is proposed to develop an accreditation scheme.

The development of an accreditation scheme, with independent assessors and a peer review group (including key users, suppliers and LRC representatives), will ensure the effective implementation of quality assurance throughout the LRC network. Added value for LRCs will come in the long-term as it is likely that greater weight will be given to data derived from accredited LRCs. This scheme will be developed as part of the establishment of the NBN and related membership systems.

3 MANAGING THE LRC PROJECT

3.1 NBN Structure

The **NBN Executive Group**, involving senior representatives of the consortium members, has overall responsibility for co-ordinating work on the NBN. This group is supported through two advisory groups looking at issues from the local and national perspective respectively. The Executive Group will ensure that the programme of work for developing the framework of LRCs is relevant within the overall context of the NBN and endorse standard policies and methodologies once these have been tried and tested.

The Local Advisory Group has a key role in developing the LRC Project. The group involves representatives from voluntary and statutory conservation bodies, local authorities and the biological recording community. It assists with the development of proposals, advises on the implementation of the work programme and ensures people are kept informed of progress through their own networks.

3.2 Delivering the work programme

The Wildlife Trusts' UK office employs a team of five people who are working on developing proposals for the NBN and running the LRC project.

Day to day responsibility for delivering the project is delegated to Sara Hawkswell, Biodiversity Information Manager.

Three LRC support officers are currently working closely with the three pilot LRCs, preparing development plans. They will also provide support to LRCs, potential LRCs and users and data suppliers, as well as assisting with the development and review of operational standards and an accreditation scheme.

3.3 Funding

Resources have been found for the three years of this project from a range of sources, Countryside Council for Wales, English Nature, Esmèe Fairbairn Charitable Trust, Scottish Natural Heritage, The Wildlife Trusts. Further funds are being sought to increase the scope of the project.

4 FURTHER INFORMATION

Those involved in running or establishing LRCs should contact their nearest support officer

Ross Andrew
LRC Support Officer
Natural History Centre
Zoology Building
University of Aberdeen
Tillydrone Avenue
Aberdeen AB24 3TZ
Email: andrewr@cix.co.uk
Tel/Fax: 01224 493169

Patrick Cloughley LRC Support Officer Planning Department Powys County Council County Hall Llandrindod Wells Powys LD1 5LG Email:pcloughley@cix.co.uk Tel: 01597 826066 Fax: 01597 826244 Elisabeth Halliwell LRC Support Officer Cheshire Wildlife Trust Grebe house Reaseheath Nantwich Cheshire **Email:** lizhalliwell@cix.co.uk **Tel:** 01270 610545 **Fax:** 01270 610430 C

E

For information on the whole project or the NBN please contact: Rachel Hackett, Biodiversity Information Officer, The Wildlife Trusts, The Green, Witham Park, Waterside South, Lincoln LN5 7JR. Email: nbn@wildlife-trusts.compulink.co.uk, Tel: 01522 574570, Fax: 01522 511616.

Local Advisory Group Contacts List

Nicky Court c/o Hampshire County Council The Castle WINCHESTER SO23 8UE Tel: 01962 846 741 Fax: 01962 846776 Email: plannc@hants.gov.uk

Tony Hams

LGMB Layden House 76-86 Turnmill Street LONDON EC1M 5QU Tel: 0171 296 6595 Fax: 0171 296 6666 Email: local.agenda.21@ lgmb.gov.uk

Paul Harding

BRC Institute of Terrestrial Ecology Monks Wood Abbotts Ripton HUNTINGDON Cambridgeshire PE17 2LS Tel: 01487 773 381 Fax: 01487 773 467 Email: p.harding@ite.ac.uk

Gordon McGlone

Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust Dulverton Building Robinswood Hill Country Park Reservoir Road GLOUCESTER Gloucestershire GL4 6SX Tel: 01452 383 333 Fax: 01452 383 334 Email: gordonm@gloucswt. compulink.co.uk

Steve McWilliam NFBR

c/o 4 Priory Close Halton RUNCORN Cheshire WA7 2BN Tel: 01928 573 697 Fax: 01270 610 430 Email: stevemc@consulteco.ndirect.co.uk

Michael Meharg

Environment and Heritage Service Commonwealth House 35 Castle Street BELFAST BT1 1GU Tel: 01232 546 592 Fax: 01232 546 660

Howard Mendel

BCG c/o Natural History Museum Cromwell Road LONDON SW7 5BD Tel: 01719389206 Fax: 0171 9388799 Email: hmendel@nhm.ac.uk

Alison Miller Local Government Association 35 Great Smith Street LONDON SW1P 3BJ Tel: 0171 664 3036 Fax: 0171 664 3008 Email: alison.miller@lga.gov. uk

Graham Oliver National Museum & Gallery of Wales Cathays Park CARDIFF CF1 3NP Tel: 01222 573 221 Fax: 01222 239 829 Email: Graham.oliver@ nmgw.ac.uk

Keith Porter English Nature Northminster House PETERBOROUGH Cambridgeshire PE1 1UA Tel: 01733 455 000 Fax: 01733 68834 Email: keith.porter@englishnature.org.uk

Sue Rees North York Moors National Park Authority The Old Vicarage Bondgate Helmsley YORK YO6 5BP Tel: 01439 770 657 Fax: 01439 770 691 Email: northyorkmoors@ compuserve.com

Bob Sargent

SEPA Erskine Court The Castle Business Park STIRLING FK9 4TR Tel: 01786 457 700 Fax: 01786 446 885 Email: bsargent@sepa.org.uk

Stella Schultz

Countryside Council for Wales Plas Penrhos BANGOR Gwynedd LL57 2LQ Tel: 01248 385 533 Fax: 01248 355 782 Email: S.Schultz@ccw.gov.uk

John Sheldon COSLA Strategic Services West Lothian Council County Buildings LINLITHGOW West Lothian EH49 7EZ Tel: 01506 775 278 Fax: 01506 775 265

Anne-Marie Smout BRISC Chesterhill Shore Road Anstruther Fife KY10 3DZ Tel: 01333 310 330 Fax: 01333 311 193 Email: AMSmout@aol.com

John Steel

Environment Agency Thames Region Lambourn House Howberry Park Wallingford Oxon OX10 8BD Tel: 01491 828360 Fax: 01491 828352 Email: john.steel@environmentagency.Gov.uk

Lawrence Way JNCC Monkstone House City Road PETERBOROUGH Cambridgeshire PE1 1JY Tel: 01733 562626 Fax: 01733 555 948

Email: Way_Le@jncc.gov.uk

James Williams

Scottish Natural Heritage 2 Anderson Place EDINBURGH EH6 5NP Tel: 0131 446 2457 Fax: 0131 446 2405 Email: eab@rasdsnh.demon. co.uk

Delegates List

Ross Andrew Dr M E Archer Charlotte Aybes John Badmin **Christine Bailey Donald Baker Charles Baker Professor R J Berry** Liz Biron **Keith Bloor Dr Colin Bowlt John Bratton** Wendy Brooks **Dr Andy Brown Paul Bruce Melanie Bryer** Sir John Burnett **Bill Butcher** Ian Carle John Clarkson **Patrick Cloughley Annie Cooper Charles** Copp Iain Corbyn **Timothy Corner** Nicky Court **Dr Paula Cox Cameron Crook Imogen Davenport Dr Linda Davies Ruth Day Marie-Claire Edwards** John Everitt **Clive Faulkner Dr** Anthony Fletcher **Simon Forrester Phill Fox Ralph Gaines Meg Game Peter Gateley Dr Honor Gay Nigel Gibbs** Jenny Glanville **Nick Gordon Richard Grogan Daniel Hackett Paul Harding Sheroo Hartley** Sara Hawkswell

The Wildlife Trusts Yorkshire Naturalists' Union London Mammal Group Kent Field Club **BBONT** Sussex Wildlife Trust Bedfordshire Natural History Society University College London Somerset Environmental Records Centre Stoke on Trent City Museum London Natural History Society Countryside Council for Wales **English Nature** JNCC **Buckinghamshire County Council RSPB** CCBR Somerset Environmental Records Centre Devon Wildlife Trust Brecknock Wildlife Trust The Wildlife Trusts Association of Local Government Ecologists **Environmental Information Management BBONT** Freelance Ecological Consultant Hampshire County Council **Babtie** Group **BSBI** Dorset Wildlife Trust Kent County Council London Natural History Society Mitcham Common Conservators The Wildlife Trusts Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust Leicestershire Museums Service The Wildlife Trusts Milton Keynes Council London Wildlife Trust London Ecology Unit **PSG Vegetation Surveys** Heritage Lottery Fund Dacorum Borough Council Devon Wildlife Trust **Bucks County Museum** Isle of Wight Council London Natural History Society **Biological Records Centre, ITE** Leicester City Council The Wildlife Trusts

Sarah Heath **Melanie Heath Stephen Hewitt Pat Hill-Cottingham Joanne Hodgkins Andy Horton** Jonathan Hughes **Trevor James Andy Jones** Jenny Jones Sarah Kenyon **Roger Key** Peter Kirby **Alistair Kirk Andrew Leak Caroline Lidgett Derek Lott Niall Machin Kirsty Maddocks James Marshall Ruth Mathias** Paul McCartney **Dr Damian McFerran** Keith McNaught Andy McVeigh **Steve McWilliam Brvan Michie Neil Mitchell Dr Timothy Moffat Nicholas Moyes Malcolm Muir D R Nellist Amanda Newsome Dr Graham Oliver Morgan Parry Roger Payne Colin W Plant Keith Porter Amanda Samuels Tim Sands Jacqueline Shane** John Sheldon Sandra Skipworth **Tony Smith Anne-Marie Smout Ross Spalding** John Stafford **Carolyn Steele Alison Stewart Darwyn Sumner Chris** Thain

The Wildlife Trusts English Nature Tullie House Museum Somerset Invertebrates Group Bucks County Museum British Marine Life Study Society Scottish Wildlife Trust Herts Environmental Records Centre The Wildlife Trusts Herts Environmental Records Centre Saffron Walden Museum English Nature

London Wildlife Trust Staffordshire County Council Warwickshire Museum Leicester Museum Service London Ecology Unit North Yorkshire County Council The Wildlife Trusts DETR Cornwell Wildlife Trust Ulster Museum English Nature, Norfolk **Bucks County Council** Cheshire Wildlife Trust Sussex Wildlife Trust West Sussex County Council Planning Dept Institute of Terrestrial Ecology Derbyshire Biological Record Centre South Lanarkshire Council Spider Recording Scheme Kent County Council National Museum of Wales North Wales Wildlife Trust Southend Museum **Consultant Entomologist English Nature** Corporation of London The Wildlife Trusts **Richmond Biodiversity Group** West Lothian Council The Wildlife Trusts Somerset Invertebrates Group BRISC Scottish Borders Biological Records Centre Isle of Wight Biological Records Centre Dorset Environmental Records Centre Dorset Environmental Records Centre Leicestershire Museums Radnorshire Wildlife Trust

Gillian Thompson Andrew Thompson Mrs Eileen Thorpe Geoff Trevis Paul Walsh Lawrence Way Suzanne Waymont Jonathan Webb Dr James Williams Peter Williams Mary Wood Graham Wynne Essex Wildlife Trust Warwickshire Wildlife Trust Amateur Naturalist Worcestershire Wildlife Trust Heritage Lottery Fund JNCC

Greater Manchester Ecology Unit Staffordshire Wildlife Trust Scottish Natural Heritage Countryside Council for Wales Bristol Regional Environmental Records Centre RSPB

<u>, 1</u>

Ë,

F

Ē

Ē

C

C