



**MINUTES OF MEETING
THURSDAY 19 SEPTEMBER 2007
WILDFOWL & WETLANDS TRUST, PENCLACWYDD, LLANELLI**

Present

Jane Hodges (JH) Vice-chair	Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority (PCNPA)
Julian Atkins (JA)	City & County of Swansea (CCoS)
Blaise Bullimore (BB)	EMS Officer
Anne Bunker (AB)	Countryside Council for Wales (CCW)
Phil Coates (PC)	South Wales Sea Fisheries Committee (SWSFC)
Sally Curran (SC)	Environment Agency Wales (EAW)
Simeon Jones (SJ)	Carmarthenshire County Council (CCC)
Rebecca Wright (RW)	CCW

1 Welcome & apologies

Apologies:

Deb Hill Chair	City & County of Swansea (CCoS)
Jill Howells	EAW
Trevor Theobald	Pembrokeshire County Council (PCC)
Isabel Macho	Carmarthenshire County Council
Ziggy Otto (ZO)	CCW
Dusi Thomas	Dwr Cymru-Welsh Water (DCWW)

JH (vice-chair) took the chair in the absence of Deb Hill on long-term sick leave. JH welcomed members; introductions were made for the benefit of JA.

It was agreed to reorder the agenda in order to accommodate RW's and PC's needs to leave the meeting early.

2 Annual (re)appointment Chair & Vice Chair

Noted: the RAG MoU requires the annual review and reappointment or appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair.

Members were invited to make recommendations, taking account the elected Chair's likely prolonged absence.

Proposal (PC): re-elect DH; Vice-chair to be acting Chair in her absence. Seconded RW; carried unanimously.

Proposal (AB): re-elect JH as Vice-chair. Seconded PC; carried unanimously.

JH continued to Chair the meeting.

3 Minutes of meeting 19 July 2007

Received without amendment.

4 Matters arising from minutes of 19 July 2007 & not on the agenda

Item 3

- Meeting between SWSFC, CCW and WAG Fisheries had taken place; WAG is involving both CEFAS and CCW in some appropriate assessments.
- BB & SJ continue to strive to arrange a meeting with senior CCC officers.
- No other action noted on RA awareness raising. All to take appropriate action to secure awareness raising opportunities with senior colleagues. **ACTION: ALL**
- JA identified specific possibilities for renewed awareness raising within CCoS. **ACTION: JA**
- No further scorecards returned. Agreed to abandon the exercise.

Item 7

Website: no further comments received; agreed to press on with translation, and make the further identified additions as time permits¹.

Item 9

Three Rivers cockle fishery: opened for four fishing days; closed at mean density of 68 cockles m⁻², after which density approximately halved within ten days, and had collapsed to 6 m⁻² six weeks after closure.

5 Work programme: review and forward planning

BB guided members through work programme dated May 2007.

Noted:

- Apparently on track with management scheme development timeline; however:
- Key background tasks including activities identification, determination of management information are incomplete for various reasons and considerable further work is required;
- Production of a discrete, time-limited, activities report should have been removed from the work programme following previous agreement to replace it with maintenance of updateable GIS datasets;
- Development of scheme is dependent on scope and amount of RAG feedback to the pressures threats and issues draft;
- Focus on above tasks has resulted in liaison and awareness raising tasks having slipped.
- BB has been invited to participate in several tasks apparently additional to those identified in the work programme, though each in some way contributes to one or more of the specifically identified tasks;

¹ Note: since the meeting, the former carmarthenbaysac.org.uk website is no longer active, but simply redirects web visitors to the new site.

- Concerned was expressed about the amount of time spent providing advice to the South & West Wales Fishing Communities regarding their EC funded research project on electric fishing for razor-clams. During the following prolonged discussion it was confirmed that:
 - research into effects of new fisheries and their management was of critical importance and relevance to management scheme development and close liaison to represent the interests of the site is legitimate and necessary;
 - objective scientific advice to the SWWFC is essential, and pending scientific engagement with CCW by the SWWFC's project team, BB should continue to contribute to this role.
- BB's time contributions to GEMS liaison and to the Virtual UK MPA centre steering group were not queried.

Agreed as priorities:

- further and renewed efforts to improve corporate awareness and engagement within member RAs (*ie* additional to RAG representatives), in line with agreed RA awareness raising strategy documents (last circulated 13 August 2007);
- production of location-specific, site information panels for long-term installation at suitable venues directed more toward local communities than visitors; *eg* WWT, Millennium Coastal Park, Pembrey Country Park etc;
- continued development of website.

Agreed: target audience and rationale for, and likely efficacy of a glossy leaflet, even a non time-limited limited with long life expectancy, needs to be fully explored before devoting resources to production. In meantime, production of a leaflet remains low priority.

Noted: detailed consideration of several tasks was postponed.

Agreed:

- frequent revision of work programme document creates difficulties in assessing progress. Annual revision at the time of the September meeting, as identified in the MoU, was confirmed as agreed interval;
- revision of work programme and detailed consideration of outstanding tasks to be carried forward to next meeting.

6 Pressures, threats & issues report

(Agenda item 9 brought forward)

Noted:

- specific comments and additions were recorded for action and amendment;
- PC returned an annotated hard copy to BB.

Agreed:

- Data sources are relevant to RAG working only, and would not be required if this document eventually becomes targeted at the public. Move identified data sources to new column for easier management;

- Audit trail of rationale behind identification of pressures, threats and issues is critical. Complete rationale entry where gaps;
- Use standard phrases where possible;
- Because of the likelihood that not all readers will be able to print this document in colour, differing font styles or other stylistic mechanisms other than coloured text boxes should be used to distinguish or emphasise specific issues;
- Clarify and increase emphasis on relationships with development planning;
- Revise page 19 footnote to apply in general to all examples where management capability is constrained.
- Members to forward outstanding comments, additions or other feedback to BB as soon as possible. **ACTION: ALL**

7 Management strategy

(Agenda item 8 brought forward)

Noted:

- The management scheme strategy as drafted (v.3) had been previously agreed (November 2006) subject to final clarification of members' Welsh language requirements.
- RW had sought comment on the strategy from CCW's International Sites Officer. His response included comments that no comparable request had been previously received for any other EMS and he was unclear as to the target readership for the document. RW to forward to BB to accommodate specific comments. **ACTION: RW**
- The target audience was reconfirmed as the RAG membership; *ie* the strategy is the RAG's own approach to planning and compilation of the management scheme, and the explanations it contains are self-reminders for the RAG members as to the rationale underlying the strategy.
- The management scheme has potential value as supplementary planning guidance within local authorities.
- Formal sign-off of the strategy at a more senior level within RAs than by RAG representatives would improve corporate awareness, engagement and commitment.

Agreed:

- all members to determine appropriate senior sign-off point within their respective RA;
- BB to revise strategy, accommodating additional comments, and recirculate. **ACTION: BB**
- carry finalisation of strategy forward to next meeting.

(*Note added after meeting.* The meeting moved on without the final Welsh language requirements being reported. All members except Carmarthen County Council were content with a bilingual summary to what was considered to be a technical document, but with full translations available on request. However, CCC require the full document except technical annexes to be bilingual. Consequently, following previous agreement, CCC's Welsh language requirement will be reflected in the strategy.)

8 Relevant authority updates

(Agenda item 11 brought forward)

a) information exchange

Noted:

(RW) CCW plan to complete the tasks arising from the 2001 SPA review (<http://www.jncc.gov.uk/page-1412>) this financial year, including renotification of owner / occupiers. Guidance from JNCC is that the species identified as features will include those present in both the extant (original) and revised lists.

RW left meeting at 12.40.

(PC) Cockle mortalities. Grant-aid provided to South & West Wales Fishing Communities (industry association) by CCW and Sea Fish Industry Authority. Contract let to Centre for Applied Marine Studies (Bangor School of Ocean Sciences) to undertake literature search in first instance. Project planning steering group meeting planned for 5 October. Other funding bids are being pursued.

(PC) Industry awareness of Habitats Directive and requirements. SWSFC is considering arranging a meeting / seminar for industry on EMS, legal background and legal consequences and obligations.

PC left meeting at 13.00.

b) research & monitoring reports

Carried forward to next meeting

9 Budget reporting & finance planning

As a consequence of so few members being present by this stage of the meeting, several items were not discussed, outstanding actions not reported on and no decisions were taken. However, members briefly explored several ideas.

Summary budget position showing anticipated income and planned expenditure was tabled (copies attached for non-attendees).

Noted:

- apparently healthy current financial position - resulting initially by long gap between site officers in post and subsequently by postponement of expenditure in 2006-07;
- planned expenditure exceeding income in current and future FYs;
- requirement to agree expenditure and secure income commitments from RA members for current and following FYs;
- agreements on expenditure have potential consequences for work programme.

Agreed:

Awareness raising

- Location-specific site information panels for long-term placement at suitable venues. Approx £150 – £200 ea for A1 size.
- Further consider additional promotional give-away items to pens, including car window stickers and “green” (eg jute) bags (noted as highly successful at Swansea’s *Breathing Spaces* event). Decisions postponed.
- Interpretative video DVD focusing on site features (cf Pembrokeshire Marine video) is valid aspiration but costs of collecting necessary video footage very high.
- Members to identify opportunities in their authority’s publications and contacts to facilitate inclusion of CB&E information. **ACTION: ALL**

IT

Noted:

- several software purchases postponed until now will need to be made in near future;
- existing RAs e-portals etc are potential low cost opportunities for both internal RA and public awareness raising.

Agreed: all members to determine their authority’s e-portal or other public-facing IT links and contacts to facilitate inclusion of CB&E information. **ACTION: ALL**

Information gathering

Noted, detailed discussion and decisions postponed:

- Potential partnership project with Pembrokeshire Marine SAC undertaking desk-study summarizing environmental effects of fishing techniques on site features.
- Bait collection effort survey. Potential partnership with proposed CCW project (Mike Camplin).
- Potential contribution to the PCF managed SW Wales Recreation Audit project to secure additional data gathering tailored to CB&E site.

Actions carried forward from 19 July meeting :

- secure written confirmation of resource commitments for current FY and/or initiate MoAs or other formal paperwork as appropriate, and forward to BB;
- commence internal bidding to secure resources for next FY.

ACTIONS: ALL MEMBERS

Outstanding issues requiring discussion / resolution / confirmation:

Expenditure planning – all issues identified above and others itemised in budget.

Agreed: BB to prepare and circulate comprehensive list. **ACTION: BB**

10 Annual review MoU and ToR

Noted: in addition to approval of management scheme strategy, endorsement of MoU and ToR by RA senior officers would potentially enhance corporate awareness, engagement and commitment.

Agreed: carry review forward to next meeting as few members present by this stage of the meeting.

11. EMS Officer report

Noted:

- many items postponed as few members present by this stage of the meeting.
- Request has been submitted to take down old, CCoS hosted, Carmarthen Bay SAC website and replace with a redirection to new cbeems.org.uk website.
- BB to attend UK Virtual MPA steering group meeting on following day (20 September); UK EMS conference (Scarborough) from 2-4 October; ICZM workshop (Pembrokeshire) 9-10 October; and is provisionally booked onto CCW monitoring workshop (Aberystwyth) November 27-28 pending confirmation of the programme – possibly as little as one day of the workshop will be directly relevant.
- Report on recent Welsh GEMS officers meeting postponed except to note opportunities for presentations to the Wales Coastal & Maritime Partnership and Wales BAP Partnership are being pursued.
- Watching brief being maintained on developments in and integration between education & marine awareness projects by CCW, Marine Conservation Society, GEMS and others.

12 Other business

Noted:

EMS status reporting to Europe

- draft EMS site assessments and six-yearly report to EC have been posted on the JNCC website (www.jncc.gov.uk/Article17²) for comment prior to submitting to Commission;
- assessments of some CB&E features are difficult to understand both alone, in comparison to other features in the site and in comparison with other sites;
- Requests to CCW (made independently by BB and PC) for rationale and audit trail not fulfilled to date.
- Series of oblique aerial photographs collected for the Gower AONB available from CCoS

JA left meeting at 14.20

- Receipt of request for attendance by non-member of RAG. RAG policy on non-RA member observers required. *Carried forward to next meeting.*

² Note: it is unknown how long this link will remain active following the consultation period.

13 Date(s) of next meeting(s)

Next meeting rescheduled to **10.30 Tuesday 20 November 2007.**

Please plan for a meeting that will extend to mid afternoon.

Subsequent meeting: **10.30 Tuesday 26 February 2008**

Meeting closed at 14.30