

Ceredigion Local Nature Partnership Steering Group Meeting



Minutes

Date:	24/10/25
Location:	Cardigan Castle – Hybrid Teams

Present

Jake Rayson (Chair)	JR	Biodiversity Assistant, Ceredigion Nature Partnership
Rachel Auckland	RA	Coordinator, Ceredigion Nature Partnership
Gillian Clark (Minutes)	GC	Service Support Officer CCC, Ceredigion Nature Partnership
Fiona Moran	FM	Biodiversity Assistant, Ceredigion Nature Partnership
Chris Harris	CH	Biodiversity Assistant, Ceredigion Nature Partnership
Sarah Smith	SS	Interim Senior Ecologist, Ceredigion County Council
Bob Jacques	BJ	Pencoed Top
Carole Fielding (Online)	CF	Natural Resources Wales
Chesca Ross	CR	CAVO
Daniel Williams	DW	Dŵr Cymru
Molly Gilbert	MG	Member of public: Horse breeder, Llanarth
Paul Taylor	PT	County Recorder, Butterfly Conservation
Rebecca Wright	BW	Natural Resources Wales
Tim Strang	TS	Farmer, Bwlchllan
Yusef Samari	YS	West Wales Biodiversity Information Centre

1	JR agreed to stand in as Chair for the meeting in the absence of Eryl Evans.
---	--

2	Introductions from attendees
---	-------------------------------------

3	Dates of Future Meetings
	<p>A decision was made to move the dates of future meetings to a Tuesday to avoid clashes with people's schedules.</p> <p>20th January 26 – Online 21st April – New Quay</p> <p>There were no minutes to agree.</p>

4	Coordinators Update
4.1	RA reminded those that may be unaware that Ceredigion County Council (CCC) Senior Ecologist Alison Heal had handed in and worked her notice and welcomed SS who had taken the job of Interim Senior Ecologist.
4.2	RA informed the group that she had handed in her notice and that this was her last meeting as coordinator of the Ceredigion Local Nature Partnership (CLNP).
4.3	<p>JR wanted to know if there would be a leaving party for RA and CF enquired if it was open to members of the CLNP or just CCC. RA said it would be nice to extend the invitation to a few current and retired members as inviting everyone would be too much, but that AH was having a leaving party first.</p> <p>RA – Intends to remain a member of the partnership.</p> <p>RA – The Grants Scheme has been launched with 350k of applications for a 100k pot of money. All 100k was awarded over 11 projects.</p> <p>RA – Saw a lot of retired ecologists at the Wales Biodiversity Conference and can see a group forming.</p> <p>RA – Will hand over the work on the Terms of Reference (ToR) to SS, JR, GC and FM to integrate the latest comments and then take it forward to Council.</p> <p>RA – Has had a lot of trouble finishing the 2nd draft of the NRAP. Ensuring footnotes are correct in the English and Welsh versions of the document has caused difficulties but is hoping that it won't be too long before it is on the consultation pages and the CLNP website if it is ready.</p>
Actions	

5	Member Updates and Discussion
5.1	<p>PT – Thanked everyone for sending in their records. Numbers of Butterflies have improved since 2024. Marsh Fritillary have had some good numbers on a different part of the Rhos Llawr Cwrt Site, other sites were good and some not so good.</p> <p>New sites for White-letter Hairstreak have been found in Gilfach yr Halen and Bow Street. Large Heath numbers recorded at Cors Caron possibly because they have a new project officer Simon Batty. There are no results for Cors Forchno yet but are expected to be the same if not better than those from 2024.</p>
5.2	<p>PT had to step in for Doug Lloyd and cover the Wildlife Trust's sites.</p> <p>There is a new Large Heath Recovery Officer based in North Wales covering Cors Fochno and Cors Caron. She is now being supervised from Head Office of Butterfly Conservation. The loss of staff members Claire Williams and Alan Sumnal has been a huge blow for Ceredigion. New staff members should have been appointed but no adverts have been placed yet.</p>
5.3	<p>PT raised the issue of funding. He had been to a Brown Hairstreak funding meeting with Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire partnership. For a variety of issues there was no one from Ceredigion. He would like to get funding for items like mileage.</p> <p>PT has not been able to go everywhere because of the issues stated above.</p> <p>PT reminded SS of some trees that were important to butterflies.</p> <p>Brown Hairstreak egg surveys will begin in the first week of November at the Welsh Wildlife Centre and continue until March 2026 along the Teifi Valley and as far as Llandysul. The hope is to do two surveys a week.</p> <p>On Saturday 15th November there will be a survey at Naturewise Community Forest garden starting at 10.am. He would like GC to continue promoting these items.</p>
5.4	<p>CR suggested PT get in touch with Cavo about funding for volunteers.</p> <p>YS suggested a chat with PT about whether West Wales Biodiversity Information Centre (WWBIC) has got some funds that could be allocated for recording. YS had noted the differences between the councils that are signed up to their Pick Your Patch project and suggested contacting other LNP Coordinators to see how they manage things.</p>
5.5	<p>TS had about 20 people turn up for an informal farm walk on his land. There were sceptical people there, but the outcome of that was that we've now got a cluster of six people who are adjoining land-owners with 400 acres between them that are interested in the notion of rewilding.</p> <p>TS put in a funding application to rewilding Britain's Innovation Fund to get funding towards doing a baseline monitoring exercise on two of the holdings. They are going to employ the Rewilding Britain monitoring and evaluation NET Framework.</p>
5.6	<p>Some of the techniques they will be using are sound recording and aerial work.</p> <p>Once the cluster of people has a name, they will likely start a website, do publicity and do farm walks to engage more people.</p> <p>Within the 400 acres is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). There was a grant funded project previously to open-up the causeway to allow horse rider access. The work included ½ metre diameter pipes to improve drainage which has not been beneficial. TS contacted NRW about this who have engaged a hydrologist to do a survey.</p> <p>FM asked if TS has any works planned at the moment. TS is interested in peatland restoration. JR will pass on details of the Peatland Restoration Group.</p> <p>CF reminded attendees that the Wildlife and Countryside Act determines what work gets approved. When CCC asks to do works on a SSSI for public rights of way NRW can only</p>

5.7	<p>advise them. CF would also like the CLNP to think about the balance between the need for public access against biodiversity and how to balance the competing needs.</p> <p>With regards to the work on the land NRW had raised concerns previously. CF would like to see someone from CCC Public Rights of Way (PROW) team at a meeting to give a presentation on the challenges they face.</p> <p>FM suggests that if they are looking for funding for any work he should ask the Biodiversity Team at CCC.</p>
5.8	<p>BW had added to the chat a repeat of what had gone out in the previous newsletter which included funding and webinars regarding Peatland.</p>
5.9	<p>DW Cardigan Works has had planning granted and the work has started and is on track for its finishing date mid 2027. Lampeter Works Phosphate removal scheme has been completed and is in the commissioning stages now with its new permit taking effect on 01/01/2026. This will take out a large portion of DCWW's Phosphate from entering the Teifi.</p> <p>DW's secondment is coming to an end in December so will try and get another representative from Dŵr Cymru to attend.</p> <p>GC requested a short break to deal with a charging issue.</p>
6.0	<p>YS talked about the Your Wild Patch project which is about people adopting a chosen specific patch and reporting on the biodiversity there and wanting each patch to have a bit of ecological context. There has been a logo created for the project by Carys from WWBIC.</p> <p>Currently people are able to choose 1 kilometre squares. This just shows a breakdown of the total records and the number of different species recorded. This will be augmented to provide context about what these numbers mean so you have a bit of information about the habitats in your square.</p> <p>WWBIC has been working with a lot of different groups doing recording training and asking questions about what is important to them. There will be a form which will be linked to each square to get an idea of what biodiversity it could support, and what's there now. WWBIC are talking with lots of partners and starting conversations with experts in different taxonomic groups.</p>
6.1	<p>The project has been funded by LPfN until March 2027. It has been harder to get the project started due to delays in getting the funding approved by CCC in comparison to the other counties.</p> <p>They have had regularly Wild Watch events in each county (Ceredigion, Carmarthshire, Pembrokeshire) and YS would like everyone to promote these and invites people to have Wildpatch training with their community groups. Ceredigion has been slow in the uptake of open events. People can adopt a patch of any size and shape.</p> <p>Over the next year there will be four events to try to build a bit of biodiversity monitoring.</p>
6.2	<p>BJ is trying to restore habitats that have been previously planted with coniferous trees. There have been problems with Sitka regeneration. A big job to do is felling trees and trying to rewet the land. BJ also wants to maintain the glades there which had remnants</p>

6.3	<p>of peat. He has been talking to Doug Lloyd of the Wildlife Trust about what can be done to attract butterfly activity.</p> <p>BJ is working on supporting woodland habitat and has been looked at the aspect of native species that will survive in the future as our climate continues to change rapidly. This will include speaking to local provenance groups. This may mean planting a selection of species to see if they are suited. JR may have a source of seedlings.</p> <p>BJ took part of the Forest Research UK climate resilience in in London. There was a series of interviews if anyone wants information on that. JR would like this information.</p> <p>BJ confirmed to TS that the climate matching tool is freely available.</p> <p>TS suggested that some species of pine might work well. Eg possibly Corsican Pine or Scots Pine.</p> <p>BJ wants to see some kind of transition so that the invertebrate species that depend on existing tree species can survive. JR spoke about work by Canterbury University on assisted migration and says it is a contentious issue but worth thinking about.</p>
6.4	<p>CR said that Ceredigion Association of Voluntary Organisation's (CAVO) Green Spaces awards had recently closed, and they have a Celebrating Ceredigion's Green Spaces event on Monday 27th October. They had 12 groups who were awarded approx. £2000 each. They've got the Ceredigion Connect grant which is for £250 for community groups to connect with their community and inform about services. CAVO also has a town grant which aims to enhance the accessibility of food and reduce isolation in Lampeter and Cardigan.</p> <p>They have a project working with organisations who want to be more socially enterprising and deliver health and social care services and help groups develop resilience and sustainability.</p> <p>CR reminded attendees that CAVO is a there as support with help with funding, volunteering, governance and much more.</p> <p>RA asked if Hazel Lloyd-Lubran was chair of the Ceredigion Public Services Board (PSB) and CR confirmed this.</p>
6.5	<p>CF – They have spent the summer working towards notifying 2 new SSSIs 1 grassland site near Tregaron, and near Nant y Moch. They've been doing a lot of surveys over the summer. They've done a bryophyte survey associated with the water courses in Coed Rheidol, another in Cambrian Mountains for Merlin and hydrological assessments of some of NRW's wetland SSSIs.</p> <p>They have been doing positive habitat management on sites such as Grogwynion nature reserve. This site is really important for dry heath and the lichens associated with it so they've been working towards removing the invasive gorse.</p> <p>The Sustainable Farming Scheme is starting in January and they're involved in giving advice on SSSIs.</p> <p>Previously the CLNP has helped fund a project for Ringed Plovers in Ceredigion whose numbers are under stress because they breed on beaches probably only in Borth and Ynys Las. Of the seven clutches that were monitored over the summer only one chick was successfully fledged.</p> <p>There was a seal pup on Borth that was being disturbed by dog walkers.</p>

	<p>BW - Their forest resource planner will be updating the forest plan for the Cambrian Mountains which will include drop-in sessions in Tregaron but no confirmed dates. If anyone is interested, they should contact BW.</p> <p>AP – They’ve been involved with Woody's Lodge, the veteran charity developing their sites and building a rounded infrastructure there for them for people to come and do well-being sessions. They’ve started making a compost toilet for Nanteos and they've been involved with Penparcau Community Hub to make a climbing area for the kids. They’re still in the process of putting application together for the Heritage Fund and are looking for sites around the county to be able to do coppicing and if anyone knows any sites they should get in touch. CF said they might have some sites available.</p> <p>MG – Has a small scrap of land and is attending the meeting to be able to see how she can improve it and get involved with networking with other people. She had been in contact with JR since the previous meeting and complemented him on his help.</p>	
	<p>JR will sent TS details of the Peatland Restoration group.</p> <p>GC will arrange for a member of CCC PROW team to give a presentation at the January meeting.</p> <p>JR to contact BJ about Forest Research UK climate resilience</p>	<p>Before Jan 26 meeting.</p> <p>Before Jan 26 meeting.</p> <p>Before Jan 26 meeting.</p>

BREAK

7	STAFF UPDATES
7.0	<p>RA said that using LPfN funding they had extended CH's hours from three days a week to five. The two funded days must meet the LPfN objectives. Coed Geufon and and Coed</p> <p>CH has been working in Parc y Lynn with the robo mowers and at Pendinas. There is still storm Darragh clean up happening. Has been working with Fiona on plans for Parc Natur Penglais and Llyn yr Eos. He has been working on signage for some of the nature reserves and using National Forest funding with Fiona.</p> <p>CH has done bramble clearing in Cenarth and Llanina. Cefn Garsai has been important for the slow worms. Maes y Porth is almost unrecognisable from what it as to what it is now after work. The hope is that this will be transferred from the Town and Community Council.</p> <p>RA hopes with CH in post it will bridge some of the gap between the rest of the Ecology Team and Estates.</p>
7.1	<p>PT said that previously there had been some Buckthorn at Pen Dinas and wanted to know if they would be replaced?</p> <p>FM wanted to know if the robo mower could be used on other sites. CH says he is qualified to use it but has to use it with someone from maintenance.</p>
7.2	

7.3	<p>FM has been helping people with the LPfN grant scheme and has applied for the National Forest for Wales Landscapes Grant. The money is going to a lot of different partners to do projects, mainly in the Dyfi Biosphere area.</p> <p>FM has been working with the people from Fisherman's Rest - Catch of the Day to help people in the fishing industry and support small businesses. There is going to be open days.</p> <p>JR talked about historical places names and would like to publicise this at every meeting. Anyone wanting for information or a workshop should get in touch at biodiversity@ceredigion.gov.uk</p> <p>JR reminded everyone to share the newsletter which has been getting good reviews from people and asked about FB. GC explained that the FB page would be launched with the website.</p> <p>JR showed some of the LPfN Grant funded projects that he is working on. The website is still under construction and JR hopes to launch it in November. It will include the Wild Patch project. JR is interested in Community Enterprise Agroforestry combining education and sustainable livelihoods. JR looking into a project providing grant funding for physical and social infrastructure. Focusing on working with schools and the Wales National curriculum.</p> <p>GC Most of what she had to say about her work had been covered by other people. GC thanked YS for the help and arranging contacts with regards to Multi-Fruited River Moss and Vervain which she needs a photograph of for an information board. She is very grateful to Phillip Wilson who is a member of the public who in his own time has been helping to gather the items she needs at a professional level.</p> <p>In the January meeting GC will be doing a short presentation on the LPfN Grant Scheme 24/25 and show some of the work that was achieved.</p> <p>The Flying Ring voluntary ban has been shelved/will not be continued. GC was disappointed as this was an opportunity to connect with other LNPs but hopes that it will lead to a much bigger far-reaching project.</p> <p>GC is going to try switching the CLNP meeting to a Tuesday so as not to clash with the Chair Eryl Evans all Council meetings.</p> <p>FM is working in Partnership with Aberystwyth University Film and Television department to make a short film about careers in conservation, nature friendly farming, land based work to show to secondary school children. It is based in the Dyfi Biosphere but will be in the whole of Ceredigion. If anyone is interested they should contact Fiona directly or contact biodiversity@ceredigion.gov.uk</p>
Actions	<p>CH, PT and JR to have a conversation about the buckthorn in Pendinas.</p>