



**Highland Biodiversity Forum  
REPORT  
MAY 2007**

## **1.0 Background**

The Highland Council area holds at least 42% of the high priority species listed in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP), which makes Highland the most important place in the UK for threatened, rare and declining biodiversity. The Highland Biodiversity Partnership was set up to provide guidance and support to an existing network of local biodiversity groups, and to make progress on the key strategic biodiversity issues in the Highlands.

Implementation of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan is to be partly achieved through a series of Local Biodiversity Action Plans (LBAPs). Within the Highlands this has been taken forward by the Highland Biodiversity Partnership and seven Local Biodiversity Groups comprising relevant agency staff and local enthusiasts. Over the last 2 years they have co-ordinated the delivery of seven Local Biodiversity Action Plans covering the Highland Council area. This overall work has involved many agencies but has largely been funded through the Council, SNH and Leader+, with active support from Highlands & Islands Enterprise, Forestry Commission Scotland and RSPB Scotland.

The Cairngorms Biodiversity Partnership also has a Local Biodiversity Action Plan and runs a biodiversity grant scheme covering Badenoch & Strathspey as well as parts of Moray, Aberdeenshire and Angus.

The wider Highland Biodiversity Forum meets annual to hear about progress and provide feedback to the Partnership.

## **2.0 Summary**

The Highland Biodiversity Forum event was held at the Waterside Hotel, Inverness, from 10.30am – 4.00pm on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2007. The purpose of the day was to provide an opportunity for all those involved and interested in Highland's Biodiversity to find out more about what was happening at a Highland-wide and a more local level. Over 50 participants attended from a range of organisations and local groups (see Appendix One – Attendee Listing). The event was chaired by Dr Kenny Taylor with presentations made by members of 8 local biodiversity groups.

Feedback from the event indicated that participants found the presentations and workshops helpful, with many noting the importance of this opportunity to network with other local groups, share ideas and experiences, and find out about that is happening on the ground (see section 7 – Feedback).

## AGENDA

10.30am	<b>Registration and Networking Opportunity</b> <i>Tea/Coffee</i>
11.00am	<b>Welcome and Introduction</b> <i>Chair: Kenny Taylor</i>
11.15am	<b>Morning Session: Local Biodiversity Work</b> <i>Series of presentations by the local biodiversity groups on the projects they ran with funding from the Highland BAP Implementation Programme.</i>
12.45pm	<b>Lunch</b>
1.30pm	<b>Afternoon Session: What's Next?</b>  Highland LBAP Review <i>Jonathan Willet, Highland Biodiversity Officer</i>  Funding and Update on HLF Bid <i>Janet Bromham, Highland Biodiversity Officer</i>
2.00pm	<b>Workshop Sessions:</b>  Workshop 1: Capacity Building & Local Biodiversity Groups - What do local biodiversity groups need to help them function?  Workshop 2: Biodiversity & Planning - What should a planning guidance leaflet for Highland biodiversity cover?
3.00pm	<b>Feedback</b>
3.15pm	<b>Conclusions and Closing Remarks</b> <i>Chair: Kenny Taylor</i>
3.30pm	<b>Conference Ends - Networking Opportunity</b> <i>Tea/Coffee</i>

### **3.0 Introduction**

The event was introduced by Dr. Kenny Taylor who welcomed those present and gave a short background to the issues before introducing the morning speakers. (see Appendix Two – Speakers Biographies).

### **4.0 Local Biodiversity Group Presentations**

The morning session comprised eight short presentations from the Local Biodiversity Groups on projects they have been working on funded from the Highland BAP Implementation Programme. The Highland Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Implementation Programme ran from August 2004 to March 2007, with sponsorship from

Scottish Natural Heritage, Highland Council and the North Highland and WHELK Leader+ Programmes. It allocated over £90,000 to 37 community-led biodiversity projects that helped deliver Highland's seven Local Biodiversity Action Plans.

**Biodiversity Food Link:** This project, by the Lochaber Biodiversity Group, attempted to increase the amount of food produced locally with good environmental management. Working with 10-12 local food producers, it helped them to identify and take forward good practice as well as producing a promotional leaflet and labelling scheme which identified the farm produce as "biodiversity friendly". Overall, the project raised awareness of biodiversity, land management and the role of customer choice.

*Alan Boulton, Lochaber LBAP*

**WREN Projects:** The Wester Ross Environmental Network were involved in administering a small grants scheme for a wide range of local projects – from clearing the burn for the local angling club to supporting the Wester Ross Fisheries Trust Arctic Char discovery project. The group itself also developed a travelling exhibition about biodiversity written by local people and produced a biodiversity tool-kit that can be lent out to interested parties.

*Aaron Forsyth, Group Chairman Wester Ross Environmental Network*

**Caithness Biodiversity Group – Activity Update:** CBG had undertaken a number of projects including habitat enhancements for the Small Blue Butterfly, boxes for Barn Owls and nesting barrel for Sand Martin. The group had also provided advice about biodiversity issues including Thurso cemetery and Swifts. The group noted the importance of risk assessment and control measures being considered at the outset of the project.

*David Glass, Group Chairman Caithness Biodiversity Group*

**Easter Ross Agricultural Projects:** The Highland Cornflower project run by SAC looked to identify the location of cornflowers in Highland. Easter Ross was identified as a key area for cornflowers in Britain. The Easter Ross Cornfield Annuals Project run by FWAG aimed to raise awareness of locally rare and threatened arable weeds like cornflower, corn marigold & poppy. In February 2007, SAC held a well attended seminar to report on the two projects.

*Gillian McKnight, Ross & Cromarty (East) Biodiversity Group*

**Stratherrick & Foyers Biological Training and Recording Project:** Boleskine Environmental Network received funding for a 2-year project on training and recording. They employed specialist tutors for series of field day/ recording and training events aimed at adults. Recording equipment and identification guides were also purchased.

*Jane O'Donovan, Boleskine Environmental Network*

**Wildlife Watching in Skye & Lochalsh:** The Highland Council Ranger Service and Skye and Lochalsh Environmental Forum produced 10,000 copies of a wildlife guide leaflet, which highlights the wildlife watching opportunities in the area and gives tips on biodiversity, wildlife watching, eagles and wildlife on the web. The leaflet "Wildlife: A guide to finding wildlife on Skye and Lochalsh" was designed locally and used a number of wildlife photographs taken by local people.

*John Phillips, Highland Council Rangers/ Skye & Lochalsh Environmental Forum*

**Update from the Cairngorms:** It was reported that the Cairngorm National Park Authority had carried out a review of the LBAP and identified targets for biodiversity to be included in the 2007 Park Plan. They had also been involved in a number of projects – including the Cairngorms Water Voles survey, Butterflies and Moths project that included offering training courses in identification throughout the summer months, producing a leaflet for amphibians and an Aspen survey.

*Justin Prigmore, Cairngorms Biodiversity Partnership*

**Aspen Woods and Wood Pastures in the far North:** Steve Robertson reported on a number of projects which the SPBG had been involved with, including village wildlife audits for Scourie and Rogart. In addition to these, The Northern Aspen bank project, run by the North Highland Forest Trust gathered and propagated Aspen cuttings from Caithness and Sutherland to create a bank of local saplings available for local planting.

*Steve Robertson, Sutherland Partnership Biodiversity Group*

## **5.0 Afternoon Sessions**

In the afternoon, participants heard about progress with the LBAP Review, the Heritage Lottery Fund application and other funding opportunities from the Highland Biodiversity Officers. The Highland Council 'Landfill Communities Fund', which will fund practical, site-based biodiversity projects, was launched.

### **5.1 Highland LBAP Review**

Jonathan Willet, Highland Biodiversity Officer presented details of the Highland LBAP Review eight months on. It was reported that the main outcome of the review had been:

- A list of local projects to be put forward for the HLF bid.
- An outline of Highland-wide projects to be delivered through the HBP.
- A list of UKBAP species and habitats found in Highland and their importance at the Scottish and UK level.

The Species and Habitats Review had found that for habitats, one third (15) had 50% or more of their Scottish distribution in Highland, and for species, one third (159) had 50% or more of their UK distribution found in Highland.

The Species and Habitats Review also highlighted a general lack of information on habitats and species in Highland. To address this a Scientific and Technical Advisory Group (STAG) was formed. Its remit – “To provide advice to the Partnership and the local biodiversity groups on issues relating to the UK BAP & Scottish Biodiversity List habitats & species, and any other issues requiring a scientific or technical input.”

Jonathan reported that their initial work programme was designed to:

- rationalise and amend the Envirocentre Habitat & Species Review in collaboration with the biodiversity officers and lead partners.
- identify those habitats & species where local action would make a real difference, and work up projects accordingly with local groups, biodiversity officers, lead partners and others.
- progress the Records Centre / data management issue in conjunction with the Highland Biological Recording Group, Scottish Natural Heritage & others.

## **5.2 Funding and Update on HLF Bid**

Janet Bromham, Highland Biodiversity Officer, presented the Forum with an update on the Heritage Lottery Fund application, and a summary of some other funding sources.

The HLF bid was submitted in March, and Janet reported that it is due to be assessed at a meeting on 30 May. This means that the earliest start date for projects (assuming a positive response) is 31 May.

Possible sources of funding for biodiversity projects include:

- *SNH Grants Schemes* (small <£10,000; large >£10,000)
- *HLF Your Heritage* (£5,000 - £50,000)
- *Esmee Fairbairn Foundation* (2002 Average £33,500)
- *Tubney Trust* (£30,000 - £250,000)
- *Marine Stewardship Fund* (small <£10,000; large >£10,000)
- *Awards For All* (£500 - £10,000)
- *The Bromley Trust* (£ variable)
- *The Conservation Foundation* (O2 Awards) (up to £1,000)
- *Moray Firth Partnership Grant Scheme* (£1,000)
- *SEPA Habitat Enhancement Initiative* (£ variable)

Janet also gave details of the new “Landfill Communities Fund”. The Highland Council had agreed to allocate its Landfill Communities Fund solely towards biodiversity and related projects. This means that an additional £40-£50,000 per annum would be available for wildlife projects taking place in the Highlands.

The Landfill Communities Fund (formerly called the Landfill Tax Credit Scheme) was designed to help mitigate the effects of landfill upon local communities. It encourages partnerships between landfill operators, their local communities and the voluntary and public sectors. The Fund aims to provide, conserve, restore or enhance a natural habitat; and to maintain or recover a species in its natural habitat.

It was noted that awards of up to £10,000 will be available to groups on a competitive basis, at a grant rate of up to 90%\*. Applications will be judged by a Councillor-led panel on the level of community involvement and practical biodiversity benefit to the Highlands.

\* After the Forum, Steve North from SNH agreed to fund the remaining 10% so the Highland Landfill Communities Fund can now fund biodiversity projects at a grant rate of up to 100%.

Information on the “Landfill Communities Fund” was distributed by leaflet and it was reported that further guidance would be available from the Highland Biodiversity Officers.

## **6.0 Workshops**

Two workshop sessions were held to look at two key issues - Capacity Building & Local Biodiversity Groups, and Biodiversity & Planning.

## 6.1 Capacity Building & Local Biodiversity Groups

### **Background:**

What do the local groups need to help them function? Some groups are operating well as sub groups of existing community planning partnerships. Others have become constituted and set up their own bank account so that they can apply for grants and other types of funding. Some however are struggling to find time to meet as a group let alone apply for funding or run projects.

All local biodiversity groups are heavily dependant on volunteer time and input and, whilst the funding partners are not able to support project officers, they do recognise that local groups need support to help them function effectively. The Biodiversity Officers have been tasked with putting together a funding proposal to the next meeting of the Highland Biodiversity Partnership to cover this capacity building element within local biodiversity groups, and hope to base their paper on the outcomes of this workshop.

Capacity building might include helping local groups to draw up and agree a constitution and set up a bank account; providing assistance for administrative duties such as applying for grants, reporting on projects, completing risk assessments, etc; sourcing training for group members and others – either in wildlife related subjects or to provide e.g. new computer, project management or budgeting skills; securing funding and insurance for local groups to help them undertake biodiversity projects and subsidising advertising, travel and meeting expenses.

### **Workshop Feedback:**

The group identified the following key needs:

- Funding for training especially volunteers  
*Overall, it was felt that the focus should be on biodiversity training for ages 14-25 and it was agreed that Janet Bromham would contact an EU funded programme & Violet Dolphin, Volunteering Section of NTS, regarding the Scottish Executive run “Project Scotland” which can provide ranger-type training for volunteers.*
- Advice for legal/insurance issues  
*Local Groups need simple forms at the start of the project. It was agreed that simple Risk Assessment forms should be circulated to all project leaders for completion prior to work starting (along with other documentation as needed). It was also felt that there is a shortage of advice on insurance & employment law – including Employers Liability Insurance. It was agreed to investigate various options and advise local groups / take out cover on their behalf as appropriate.*
- Aid in starting up the group in the early phases and tools to get in going:  
*Lack of funding for paid employment in conservation / environment due to availability of volunteers was noted as a key issue. Volunteers to help local groups is one thing, but finding volunteers to do what could otherwise be paid work is another and it was noted that this needs to be borne in mind when applying for and distributing funding.*
- Help with involvement costs to individuals:  
*It was noted that groups need to meet quite often to be effective, and capacity building should cover travelling expenses etc where these cannot be reclaimed some other way. Groups would like small expenses account or fund that they can distribute as they see fit (training, T&S, etc), but funders don't like this approach*

*these days. It was agreed that Janet / Jonathan would circulate a Travel & Subsistence Claiming Form to members of local groups.*

- Underlying general support systems  
*Groups need more steer on what are the tasks that are best delivered locally. Can we draw up shopping lists of what local people can deliver? It was noted that STAG would be producing guidance on this and that Jonathan would advise on timescale. UK Priority Species information to local groups by August, UK Priority Habitat information to local groups by late Autumn 2007. It was also felt that members of local groups need help with writing proposals. It was agreed that Janet would look at the work done by other organisations and provide guidance.*
- Help to develop clear links between similar groups. Group associations?  
*There is a need to define what the roles of the local biodiversity groups are and how they fit into other groups and associations. It was agreed that Janet would draw up paper for Highland Biodiversity Partnership and work on guidance for local groups to help them look and plan ahead. A concern was expressed about links between LBAP groups and lead partners and it was noted that it was important to ensure that all project leaders contact relevant lead partners before work started.*

In general, it was felt that the role of Highland Biodiversity Partnership was to act as a catalyst, putting in place structures to allow groups to access funding from Trusts and that the target was to get groups to a point where they are self-sustaining.

## **6.2 Biodiversity & Planning**

### **Background:**

What should a planning guidance leaflet for Highland Biodiversity cover?

It is intended that some of the strategic development management policies of the Local Plans will be included in a new Highland-wide Plan, which is due to be drafted later this year. The Biodiversity Officers hope to prepare supplementary Highland-wide planning guidance on biodiversity and insert a 'hook' in the Strategic Highland-wide Plan to ensure that Development Control staff take it into account when considering applications. They have started to collate similar guidance notes from other local authorities and are looking to organise some practical biodiversity training for planning & development control staff this summer. It is hoped that the outputs of this workshop will feed into a Highland Biodiversity & Planning guidance note.

### **Workshop Feedback:**

Firstly the group looked at who the audience for the planning guidance leaflet would be. The potential *audiences* identified were:

- Planners
- Developers
- Statutory Consultees
- Private House Builders
- Community Councils
- LBAP groups
- Estate Owners.

It was suggested that two versions or a series of documents might be required. A simple outline version/ bite size pieces and a more detailed version with clear guidance for planners containing all the relevant legislation and detailed information. However, it was noted that the full version should be available to all on request (not just planners).

**Content:** The groups also discussed the potential content and format of a leaflet. It was suggested that the leaflet should have:

- Biodiversity information – how important it is (covering all aspects of biodiversity)
- Details of legislation that applies – with clearance guidance on this for planners.
- Suggestions for simple positive measures that people can take.
- A simple layout to make it easy to select relevant pieces of information
- More than just protected species information – include locally important species and habitats.
- Biodiversity Check list – in line with other areas, it was suggested that planners should use a Biodiversity Check list – sent to applicants as part of planning process and used by the planners to help determine the success/failure of the application.
- Clarify on specific issues
- Good practical advice for developers.

It was noted that the new legislation would be implemented next year that would change the way that the planning process operates – and that this would be an ideal time to produce supplementary guidance notes on biodiversity for planners – which would need to be actioned within the next 9-12 months to maximise benefits.

**Constraints:** It was reported that at the moment Planners do not necessarily know about biodiversity issues and legislation. Action needs to be taken on training and raising awareness.

It was noted that the role of the LBAP would be:

- to provide added value to the planning process by pointing out the species and habitats that are locally important in Highland
- make sure that the planning officers know what the priority species/habitats are and what they need to do to protect them.

**Delivery of Biodiversity duty by planning:** It was felt that a process should be developed/ created to help planning deliver their biodiversity duty. This would include:

- The ability to prevent development that would seriously damage biodiversity (above the statutory protection)
- Clear guidelines
- Good records of what is there already (and how to find this information)
- Checklists or other methods to flag up biodiversity at strategic points in the planning process.
- Mechanism for who provides information and when
- Have a specialist Ecologist(s) to refer planning issues too (note: this is not with the current job description/capacity of the Highland Council Biodiversity Officers)

- Check-list for applicants/developers at application stage which provides list of potentially important species/habitats on site.

## 7.0 Event Feedback

Delegates were asked to complete and return feedback forms at the end of the event. Twenty-three completed forms were returned - representing 48% of all attendees.

### Timing

#### 1. Do you think this is a good time of year to hold this event?

	Number	%
YES	19	83%
NO	3	13%
D/K	1	4%
TOTAL	23	100%

The majority of attendees (83%) felt that April was a good time of year to hold the event. Suggestions for better times of year to hold the event included late March and Autumn.

#### 2. Is a Saturday event better than a week-day event?

	Number	%
YES	14	61%
NO	9	39%
TOTAL	23	100%

61% of participants preferred a Saturday for the event.

#### 3. Do you have any comments on the timing of the day itself?

- “Fine – but good to have had some demonstration or some even brief biodiversity contact or practical inspiration as part of the day eg fieldtrip or demo”.
- “Fine”.
- “Great timing for travelling in and out”.
- “Just right”.
- “Packed agenda, but timed well. Enough time was allowed for the travel to/from Inverness from outlying areas”.
- “Spot on – given the high % of attendees will have travelled for a least an hour”.
- “Thought it worked well”.
- “Timing was stuck to very well and all elements kept up to speed”.
- “Useful to have reasonable travel time at both ends”.

### Organisation

#### 4. How would you rate the organisation of the event?

	Number	%
Excellent	8	35%
Good	13	56.5%
Average	2	8.5%
Poor	0	0%
Total	23	101%

The majority of attendees (91.5%) rated the organisation of the event as excellent or good.

**5. Did you feel that you received all the information you needed for the event?**

	Number	%
YES	20	87%
NO	1	4%
N/R	2	9%
TOTAL	23	100%

One participant noted that as a newcomer, they would have lived more information about the Highland Biodiversity Forum/ Local Biodiversity Action Plans etc.

**The Presentations**

**6. How useful did you find the presentations and update sessions?**

	Number	%
Very useful	18	78%
Quite useful	5	22%
Not useful	0	0%
Total	23	100%

All the participants (100%) found the presentation and updates sessions very or quite useful.

**The Workshops**

**7. Which workshop did you attend?**

	Number	%
Capacity Building & Local Biodiversity Groups	13	56.5%
Biodiversity & Planning	10	43.5%

**8a. How useful if you find the workshop (overall score for both workshops)?**

	Number	%
Very useful	12	52%
Quite useful	10	43.5%
Not useful	1	4.5%
Total	23	100%

95.5% of participants found the workshops very or quite useful.

**b. How useful if you find the Capacity Building & Local Biodiversity Groups workshop?**

	Number	%
Very useful	5	38.5%
Quite useful	7	54%
Not useful	1	7.5%
Total	13	100%

**c. How useful if you find the Biodiversity & Planning workshop?**

	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
Very useful	7	70%
Quite useful	3	30%
Not useful	0	0%
Total	10	100%

**9. Are there any additional points you would like to make?**

- “Biodiversity needs to be given far more importance by our politicians” (*Biodiversity & planning workshop*).
- “Could have done with more time for workshops” (*Biodiversity & planning workshop*).
- “I never prepared beforehand and I am new to environmental application form filling” (*Biodiversity & planning workshop*).
- “It was very good to get an overview of what is happening Highland wide and interesting to see the different ideas and approaches” (*Capacity building workshop*).
- “Jargon & Acronyms – far too much!” (*Capacity building workshop*).
- “Keep support advice of the web” (*Capacity building workshop*).

**The Day Generally**

**10. What part of the day did you find *most* useful, and why?**

- “All of it!”
- “Both – but the planning guidance issues is an important doc which needs priority”.
- “Finding out what others are doing – networking – bringing together knowledge and experience”.
- “I thought all elements were interesting – it was a good opportunity to network”.
- “Interacting with others – I found several contacts to work with”.
- “Janet and Jonathan’s presentations”.
- “Local presentations”.
- “Morning – sharing experiences”.
- “Morning LBAP – more general”.
- “Networking”.
- “Pre-lunch sessions because it provided good examples of what can be done”.
- “Presentations and updates outlined a variety of projects ongoing in region and different ways of management of projects”.
- “Reports on local projects (morning session) – very interesting and informative session – useful to find out what has been done”.
- “Short presentations”.
- “The little I managed to glean about the organisations”.
- “The workshop and networking”.
- “Update from the Cairngorms and funding info from Janet”.
- “Updates from area – very good overview on an annual basis”.
- “Updates from areas – better feel of what is going on on the ground”.
- “Workshop discussion – able to get quite a few peoples opinions”.
- “Workshops – issues could be raised and debated”.

**11. What part of the day did you find *least* useful, and why?**

- “After lunch session – did not hold attention”.
- “All elements of the day were useful”.
- “Easter Ross Agri Projects – very interesting but not relevant to my work”.
- “It was all useful!”
- “No part was particularly notable for its lack of use”.
- “None of the presentations was on Inverness – virtually all were from rural areas or at least areas with local population density –I am Inverness based”.
- “Perhaps a couple of the presentations were not as useful to me – Easter Ross Agri Projects, Aspen Woods”.
- “Post lunch session – but it did provide examples of bureaucratic hoops (which have to be) jumped through”.
- “Workshop”
- “Workshop – I never prepared”.

**12. Will you or your organisation be taking action on any of the issues raised today?**

	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
YES	13	57%
NO	5	21.5%
N/R	5	21.5%
TOTAL	23	100%

57% of participants said that they would be taking action on the issues raised. Issues to be addressed included:

- “Asking if bat licenses could be improved by the addition of a check visit to ensure any mitigation has been correctly dealt with”.
- “Contacting Jonathan further regarding planning document”.
- “Funding proposals from Landfill”.
- “HBP discussions”.
- “I am trying to get a job in the industry so I can be more involved”.
- “I personally would like to work towards local community action”.
- “Linking in with local projects”.
- “New funding sources – work towards having a small grant scheme available to the community”.
- “We will continue to take in the ideas raised”.
- “We will put into action species and habitat action plans and work closely with Lochaber Biodiversity Group”.
- “Working with Skye on development of constitution”
- Oich Bridge: “We are not specifically a biodiversity group, but it is something important for our project to succeed”.

**13. How can the Highland Biodiversity Forum help and support you further with this issue?**

- “Assist with updating sources, looking at proposals and putting in touch with appropriate people who can help eg experts”.
- “Bat licenses: Inform Scottish Executive of the need for follow-up visit to check any mitigation”.
- “Funding basic expenses – travel and secretarial”.
- “I hope there will be some convergence on how groups are organised”.

- “Keep providing opportunities for networking”.
- “Local community action: By talking to potential participants in a locals group (in Urquhart)”.
- “Offer training/advise on species recording/monitoring”.
- “Oich Bridge: Advice for my bridge on who to contact re what lives on it”.
- “Planning: I will discuss this further with Jonathan”.

**14. Are there any other things that you would like to see from the Highland Biodiversity Forum?**

- “A separation of practical projects from the academic ie. awareness raising and recording so that actual biodiversity outputs can be identified”.
- “Keep up the meetings and email a newsletter”.
- “More communication/continuity between different groups – individual biodiversity groups/fora appear to be affected by similar problems – more communication might help solve problems more quickly/ provide support network eg. how to set up group/meetings/funding applications etc”.
- “More hands on workshops on specific issues”.
- “More regular updates”.
- “Regular email with information/news etc”.
- “Set up a database of available expertise ie. those people willing to share their knowledge from survey work to book keeping!”

**15. Do you have any general comments/suggestions about the event or any follow-up events that you think are needed?**

- “As mentioned in one of the workshops, Biodiversity sounds very scientific, I didn’t know what it meant until a few days before”.
- “Event was very beneficial in bringing everyone together for exchange of information and ideas”.
- “Good. Keep momentum up”.
- “No – It was very good”.
- “Very interesting and useful day. Good networking opportunity”.

**8.0 Conclusion**

Overall, the event was highly successful – creating an opportunity for groups to share knowledge and experience and to find out about new projects and funding routes. All the participants (100%) found the presentation and updates sessions very or quite useful, while 95.5% of participants found the workshops very or quite useful. Over half of the participants (57%) said that they would be taking action on the issues raised as a result of the event.

**Rowan Tree Consulting  
May 2007**