



HUMBER ADVISORY GROUP

Minutes of the Meeting – 16th January 2008 6:30pm at Waters' Edge Visitor Centre.

1. Introductions: Each attendee formally introduced themselves at the meeting.

Attendees:

Phil Winn	(HERAG Vice Chairman) Environment Agency
Adrian Koster	HAG Chairman
John Rowley	HAG Vice Chair
Kat Sanders	Humber Project Officer.
Jon Capel	Yorkshire Naturalists' Union
Daryl Burdon	IECS ¹ , Hull University
Hellen Hornby	South Humber Bank Wildlife & People Project
Martin Broadbridge	Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust
Darren Clarke	Humber INCA (Conservation Manager) ²
Andrew Gibson	Yorkshire Wildlife Trust (Spurn)

Apologies:

Heather Armstrong	British Horse Society
Dave Mouncey	Humber Yawl Club
Michelle Lindsay	RSPB
Emma Hawthorne	Natural England
Anna Moody	Alkborough Flats Manager
Bill Rigby	City of Hull Environmental Forum
Jack Hardisty	Hull University
Chris Manning	Lindsey Marsh Drainage Board
Steve & Jill Webb	Humber Parasailing
Mike Elliott	IECS, Hull University
Nev Jones	Ex HAG Chair

2. HAG Chairman/Vice 08/09

Adrian Koster started the meeting and each attendee introduced themselves in turn. Adrian then reminded the group that it was almost a year since he was elected as chairman of HAG and would like to use this meeting as an opportunity to seek the group's approval to continue in the position. Darren Clarke proposed Adrian to continue and he was seconded by Phil Winn. John Rowley said he was happy to continue as Vice Chair for the foreseeable future, however, if there was interest for the position from someone else; he would gladly stand down and let another take over.

3. Matters arising from the last meeting

¹ Institute of Estuarine & Coastal Studies.

² Darren took up the position of Conservation Manager 1st Jan 2008.

Chairman, Adrian Koster guided the group through the minutes of the previous meeting. The following comments were noted:

- Andrew Gibson requested further information regarding the comment Hazel Armstrong has made about plant gathering. He reported that the site at Welwick has accumulated significant amounts of samphire recently. Kat said she would contact Hazel for further information to pass on to Andrew.
- On the matter of Humberside police presence at a meeting; Martin Broadbridge noted that he felt very strongly that as a force they could be seen to be doing a great deal more. Martin reiterated that compared to Lincolnshire, Humberside did not seem to be taking a proactive approach to the matter of wildlife crime. Andrew Gibson responded by saying that he was in regular contact with Tony Newiss (neighbourhood officer for South Holderness) and that Tony had been aware of the meeting and thought Sgt Hine was attending. He also noted that although the police have yet to attend a meeting, progress had been made as they are fully aware of HAG and the issues with which it is concerned. Kat replied by saying both officers had been invited and sent their apologies due to prior commitments. Kat also explained that due to the police logos on the signs, both Humberside and Lincolnshire had been included in correspondence and asked for their comments. Both forces have shown support of the project and agreed to attend a launch in the future when the project is complete. The group agreed that contact should be maintained with Humberside Police and continued efforts made to get them to attend a future meeting.
- Kat noted that the subject of Sub-Tidal targets which had been discussed at the previous meeting would be pushed forward to the next agenda as Emma Hawthorne was unavailable for tonight's meeting. She requested that HAG continue to think about the targets and refer to the BAP website for ideas for how they might be set.

Action Point HAG (ongoing): Refer to BAP lists and report back on species known to be present in the Humber. Ideas for SMART targets for those species.

UK Biodiversity Action Plans: <http://www.ukbap.org.uk/newprioritylist.aspx>

Example of a "SMART" target (intertidal): *"Create by the year 2015, 6,835 ha of intertidal sediment habitat to offset current and historical losses".*

4. Report from HERAG Chair – 12th October 2007

Phil Winn (Vice Chair of HERAG) reported back to the group on the latest HERAG meeting held on the 12th October 2007 at the EA offices in Willerby. He spoke briefly on each of the agenda items and their outcomes, most notably:

- HMS bank account in good health and likely to be in a position to fund projects in 2008 i.e.) codes update.
- Humber Conference 2007 to be organised in partnership between Humber INCA and HMS. (Adrian Koster, Phil Cowing and Kat Sanders gave a presentation on HMS).
- Order for signs had been placed with Shelley signs. Mike Hayes from Shelley's gave a demonstration of the materials and example artwork at the meeting.
- A three year business plan is to be produced for HERAG and HMS spending. Ideas for project work put forward by Kat at WG meeting. Approved projects and associated costs to be included in plan. Plan to be approved at WG and HERAG meetings in March 2008.

5. Annex G/Monitoring Questionnaire

Kat Sanders reminded the group that at previous meetings members of HAG had started to write monitoring reports. This information had proved to be interesting and useful but not very easy to analyse. The reports showed a snapshot of a given site and a more rolling system was needed of an accurate picture of the activities was to be gained. In an effort to do this, Kat referred to the draft questionnaire which she had circulated prior to the meeting. She explained that the questionnaire had been developed in conjunction with Jon Capel with the view that HAG members would be able to act as the recorders to gather the information. It could also be used for a self completion format which could be left at visitor centres and reserves. The objectives of the questionnaire are to gather information of which activities are most frequently practised on the estuary.

- Where on the estuary they take place.
- Demographic of people who undertake the activities.
- Level of awareness of the Humber's conservation status.
- Level of awareness and uptake of the codes and conduct

She asked the group for their comments and feedback on the questionnaire:

- Hellen Hornby felt that some of the questions were rather subjective and that wherever possible a tick box option should be made available.
- Andrew Gibson reiterated Hellen's point and said that he thought the questionnaire would be useful as an observation sheet for wardens on reserves such as his at Spurn.
- Martin Broadbridge noted that the users of the estuary vary widely from inner to outer and sometimes within a very small area due to the flood banks etc. The questionnaire should take this into consideration.
- Daryl noted that the main objectives of achieving a demographic of users would be better achieved if 'male/female' and 'age' were included as questions too. Daryl also explained that IECS had recently carried out questionnaires at Flamborough Head to gauge the level of awareness and care for marine biodiversity. Phil Winn suggested using IECS's experience to help improve the questionnaire.
- Kat thanked everyone for their comments and explained that the questionnaire was primarily aimed at gathering information to assist in the reporting of the Annex G activities. She agreed to make the suggested changes but felt that the questionnaire needed to be used in order to be able to truly know how useful it will be. Kat explained that in addition to the questionnaire an Incident reporting form is now available to record the activities regularly and also any occasions when damage/disturbance may result. Kat encouraged HAG members to post use the questionnaire and Incident Reporting Form (IRF) on a trial basis and continue to provide feedback on its improvement. She said she would set up a HMS display within Waters' Edge to trial the self completion version.

The updated questionnaire (in both recorder and self completion format) is included with these minutes along with the Incident Reporting Forms. They are also available to download from the HMS website.



Monitoring
Questionnaire - recor



Humber EMS IRF
2008.doc



Monitoring
Questionnaire - self c

Action Point Kat: Post updated questionnaire and IRF on HMS for immediate use. Following ongoing feedback, develop format. Self completion forms to be included at Waters' Edge and other visitor centres.

Action Point HAG: Begin trial use for questionnaire and IRF – assist in circulating questionnaires for self completion at visitor centre's reserves.

6. Humber Flood Risk Strategy Update

Phil Winn circulated a copy of the 'Tide Times' to each attendee and gave an update on the progress of the strategy to date. He reported that the final document would be published 7th March 2008. The final strategy separates the estuary into geographical sections and sets out the viability for each area to have the defences maintained there.

Adrian Koster asked Phil if consideration for defence would be given to other factors such as, in areas where the land is listed as Grade 1 agriculture. Phil explained that despite the value for agriculture, if the area is sparsely populated, it is still unlikely to be economically viable to maintain the flood defences.

Kat asked Phil if there was a way in which HAG could usefully contribute to the strategy. Phil acknowledged the importance of consulting as widely as possible (including stakeholder groups such as HAG), he explained that 'drop in sessions' are planned between in now and March to allow people to come and ask questions on a one to one basis. He also thanked Kat for the opportunity to use Ebb & Flow as a means to get the message out to as wider audience as possible. Phil concluded by saying he would be happy to attend any meetings of individual HAG member groups if they wished to know more about the strategy.

7. Signage Review

Kat referred the latest proof of the sign design which had been circulated to the group prior to the meeting. She asked for comments.

Phil Winn asked whether or not the background map was necessary as he felt it was almost invisible and was unclear. Kat explained that it was not meant to provide information as such but was meant as a relevant background that would not be too distracting from the text (as the previous photograph option as proved to be). She explained that she would see how the map looked when the printed proof came through and would change it accordingly if it still looked faint.

Kat tabled the original map of 30+ sites earmarked for signs; she had highlighted the Phase 1 signs in yellow and potential phase 2 signs in pink. Sites at Marshchapel (Horse Shoe point), Saltfleet, Spurn, Hull and Blacktoft were currently on the list. She explained that the 6th location for the second phase signs was still to be decided and invited ideas from the group. Andrew Gibson, noted that if the sign at Spurn was to go on the peninsula, YWT would expect their logo to be included. Kat explained that she had thought it more likely for the sign to be situated near the Blue Bell pub by the car park. Andrew agreed that this would be a good location for attracting large numbers of people and would also solve the problem of including the YWT logo.

John Rowley suggested Humberston Fitties as a good location as there have been reports of unsustainable activities there as well as it being a popular visitor location. Kat agreed with John's comments and explained that she had visited the site when looking at Cleethorpes to investigate.

Kat also showed the group the paint colour selection for the sign frame she explained that the choice was likely to be a turquoise green or bright blue; she asked if there were any strong feelings against this. The group agreed that either choice would be fine.

8. Codes of Conduct Update.

Kat explained that at the previous meeting she had asked the group to review the codes and bring ideas for an update to this meeting. She noted that the update was to be included in the business plan and therefore to be undertaken throughout 2008 to coincide with the launch of the signs.

The group discussed the format of the leaflet and felt that a more narrow option might be better to allow it to be put in a pocket. Kat noted that it might be useful for users to have it in a laminated design which would allow for individual activities to be separated depending on user's specific interest.

Kat said she would look further into design options and bring a draft for each one to the next meeting for discussion.

Action Point Kat: Prepare a draft update design of the codes for comment at the next meeting.

9. Any other Business.

- Andrew Gibson asked the group if anyone could suggest contacts to find out more information on bait digging by-laws. Spurn has been experiencing issues with bait digging and unsuitable methods of doing it. Kat suggested the team at North Sea Fisheries at Flamborough, she noted that Flamborough's codes of conduct (currently in development) included information on bait digging.
- Kat advised the group that Issue 8 of Ebb & Flow is due out end of March and invited ideas for articles.
- Hellen Hornby publicised a forthcoming course on saline wetlands on the 30th April. The course is organised by Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust and aimed at environmental professionals.
- Jon Capel explained that as a member of IEEM³ he has been discussing the idea of organising a programme of training courses for ecologists in the Yorkshire and Humber region for which there is presently a shortage. The hope is to have IEEM accredited courses available for training professionals by 2009.

10. Date of next meeting

The next Humber Advisory Group meeting will be held on the north bank at Swanland Village Hall at 6:30pm, Wednesday 28th May.

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